

and various reefs driven on, this syndicate gave up the option, and the land reverted to the owners. On the inclusion of this island in the Hauraki Mining District, on the 1st September, 1896, the owners of the prospecting licenses secured titles under the Mining Act, and the following special claims were applied for and granted by the Warden at the Thames on the 30th November, 1896 :—

ABSTRACT of LICENSES for SPECIAL CLAIMS, issued from the Warden's Office at Thames, in the Great Barrier Island, and registered on or before the 31st March, 1897, in the Books of the Mining Registrar, Thames.

Date of License.	Area.	Locality.	Block.	Survey District.	Name of Claim.	Name of Registered Owner.
30/11/96	A. R. P.					
30/11/96	100 0 0	Great Barrier	VII.	Fitzroy ..	Aotea ..	Aotea Gold- and Silver-mines Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Aotea No. 2 ..	"
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	III.	Tryphena	Argyle ..	Iona Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).
23/12/96	62 0 36	"	VII.	Fitzroy	Edgerton ..	Alexander D. Robertson.
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VI.	Fitzroy ..	Fitzroy ..	Great Barrier Gold-mining Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VI.	"	Great Barrier Ex-tended	Great Barrier Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Great Barrier Ex-celsior	William Ernest Cossar.
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Great Barrier Proprietary	Original Great Barrier Gold- and Silver-mining Co.
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Iona ..	Iona Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VI.	"	Kaitoke ..	Kaitoke Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VI.	"	Kaitoke No. 2 ..	Kaitoke Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Mount Argentum	Mount Argentum Gold- and Silver-mining Co.
30/11/96	100 0 0	"	VII.	"	Premier of Great Barrier	Original Great Barrier Gold- and Silver-mining Co. (N.L.).

As soon as titles were completed work was vigorously carried on in the following mines :—

Original Great Barrier Mine (Area, 200 acres).—In addition to the prospecting and development work done by the Anglo-Continental, the owners have commenced to drive a level 1,150 ft. to cut the reef at a depth of 120 ft. below the surface. There are four reefs in the ground, varying from 3 ft. to 5 ft. in width, and carrying gold and silver in sulphide form. A drive was also made on No. 1 reef, 80 ft., and another on No. 2 reef, 50 ft. Seven men are employed.

Aotea Mine (Area, 200 acres).—A level has been driven a distance of 90 ft., with a view of cutting the Proprietary reef. Trenching has also been done on the surface.

Iona Mine (Area, 200 acres).—A drive has been put in 150 ft., and a large reef about 42 ft. in width cut into. The quartz is generally of a hard flinty nature, containing gold and silver. Five men are employed.

Kaitoke Mine (Area, 200 acres).—A level has been driven 123 ft., to be extended to cut the Iona reef, near the southern boundary of the claim. Three men are employed.

Great Barrier Mine (Area, 200 acres).—There are a number of reefs running through this ground; only two, however, are at present being worked. Lee's reef has been cut and driven on 100 ft. in the top level, and a cross-cut is being put in to cut it at a depth of 80 ft. under the top level; another cross-cut is also being driven to cut the reef to the eastward of the present workings. Lee's reef is about 18 in. in width, and the ore is of a rich character: 1 ton gave a value of £15, and a parcel of 10 tons has been shipped for treatment at Swansea. The Iona reef runs through this ground, and a cross-cut is being driven to cut it. Twenty-five men are employed in this mine.

Mount Argentum Mine (Area, 200 acres).—A low-level tunnel has been driven 250 ft. to cut a reef about 12 ft. in thickness. Several other smaller veins were cut, in which a trace only of silver was found. Seven men are employed.

Prospecting has also been carried on in the Edgerton, Excelsior, Bonanza, Comstock, and other claims.

Ryan's Freehold (Area, 80 acres).—Mr. A. McKay, Government Geologist, who has recently visited the island, describes this property as follows: "This is the area contiguous to the Great Barrier, on its western boundary, the reef from which passes into Ryan's Freehold at the waterfall, in the bed of the creek. In this the reef has been explored west a distance of 60 ft. The ore-band is continuous, and at the upper level shows a thickness varying from 12 in. to 15 in. or 18 in.; 15 in. may be considered the full average thickness of the lode in this part of its course. The ore is richer here than in the Great Barrier Claim, and magnificent samples might have been collected from the heap when the mine was visited. At that time a winze was being sunk to cut the lode at a further depth of 25 ft. to 30 ft. This has now been done, and it is reported that in the winze the lode shows 30 in. in width, carrying ore quite as rich as may be had from the upper level. A low-level adit is contemplated, which may be made to cut the lode 70 ft. to 80 ft. below the present workings, and at which it is hoped the thickness of the lode will be further increased. Many tests on small samples of the ore have been made, leading to the conclusion that the value of the ore is not less than £36 per ton, and from the character of the ore coming from the mine at the time of my visit the above seems to be a very moderate estimate of what the average yield will be should the ore continue of the same grade. A sample analysed at the Thames School of Mines yielded at the rate of 500 oz. silver to the ton. The country on the foot-wall of the lode within Ryan's Freehold is fairly well decomposed to a kindly-looking 'sandstone,' but this will probably not continue to any great depth,