

company and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, from which it will be seen that the company made an application for an area of 250 acres on the 22nd August, 1902. The application is as follows: "August 22, 1902.—The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland.—SIR,—On behalf of the Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited) I beg to apply for a lease for coal-mining purposes of that portion of Lake Wahi fronting Allotments 27, 26, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, in the Parish of Pepepe, as shown on the plan attached hereto, marked blue. I beg to enclose cheque for £37 10s., being deposit at the rate of 3s. per acre on the estimated area of 250 acres." On the 26th August, 1902, the Commissioner of Crown Lands wrote as follows: "In reference to your application of the 22nd instant on behalf of the Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited), I have to inform you that Mr. Rossenbeck has already applied for a coal lease for that portion of the Wahi Lake opposite to Section 48, Pepepe Parish. Therefore your application will have to be amended before it can come before the Land Board." I would like to call your attention, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, to the fact that this shows the first application made by the Prospecting Syndicate. Here is their Allotment 48 [Allotment indicated on plan] and here is the area of 100 acres for which they applied [Indicated]. It is marked "Huntly Coal-prospecting Syndicate's original application." Under date the 30th August, 1902, the secretary to the company wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, "In reply to your letter of the 26th instant, informing me that Mr. Rossenbeck has already applied for a coal lease for that portion of the Wahi Lake opposite to Section 48, Pepepe Parish, and that therefore our application would have to be amended, I now beg to apply for a lease of that portion of Lake Wahi fronting Allotments 26, 27, 28, 29, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 145, 53, as shown by red lines on the tracing enclosed herewith, less that portion of the lake opposite Section 48, already applied for by Mr. Rossenbeck." On the 10th February, 1903, the Commissioner of Crown Lands wrote, "Coal lease, Wahi Lake: With reference to your application relative to above, I have to request you to comply with the provisions of section 4 of 'The Coal-mines Act, 1891,' by advertising twice at an interval of one week in some newspaper circulating in the locality, and furnish copies of advertisements to this office. And as the area is computed to contain 408 acres, I have to request you to pay to the Receiver of Land Revenue, Auckland, £23 14s. in addition to the £37 10s. paid. If this request is not complied with within two weeks from this date the application will be considered lapsed." On the 4th March, 1903, the company wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands as follows: "Re coal lease, Wahi Lake: In reply to your letter of the 10th February, I beg to inform you that I have paid to the Receiver of Land Revenue £23 14s., being the balance due for application, and that I have inserted the notice required by section 4 of the Coal-mines Act in the *Waikato Argus* of the 20th and 27th February, copies of which papers are forwarded herewith." This is a copy of the notice: "Public notice under 'The Coal-mines Act, 1891,' and its amendments. Notice is hereby given that pursuant to section 4 of 'The Coal-mines Act, 1891,' the Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited) have made an application to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for a lease for coal-mining purposes of that portion of Lake Wahi fronting Allotments 26, 27, 28, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 145, and 53, Parish of Pepepe." On the 6th April, 1903, the Commissioner of Crown Lands wrote to the company, "Proposed coal lease, portion of Wahi Lake: In reference to your letter of the 4th March I have to inform you that the Land Board wish to know what the proposed expenditure and output during the first five years are to be. The Board have postponed consideration until this information is supplied." On the 24th April the secretary to the company wrote to the Commissioner as follows: "Re coal lease, Wahi Lake: In reply to your letter of the 6th April, I am directed to inform you that the company are now carrying on boring operations in order to ascertain the coal-measures in connection with above lease. As soon as ascertained a scheme for working the property will be determined upon." On the 30th April the Commissioner wrote as follows: "Coal lease: In reference to your application for a coal lease for land under the Wahi Lake, I have to inform you that the matter has been considered by the Land Board, when it was resolved that you be requested to explain the proposed course of working and indicate on litho. or plan the approximate position of shaft, machinery, buildings, and trams, and that the following are the conditions that the Board propose to recommend the Minister to approve of when granting a lease: Term, twenty-one years; royalty, 4d. per ton, payable half-yearly; rent, 5s. per acre per annum; expenditure in opening and developing, within twelve months, £500; within twenty-four months, £1,000; within thirty-six months, £2,000; output, first year, nil; second year, 1,000 tons; third to seventh year, 2,500 tons; eighth to twenty-first year, 5,000 tons." On the 12th May, 1903, the secretary to the company wrote to the Commissioner as follows: "Re coal lease, Wahi Lake: In reply to your letter of the 30th April, I beg to state that our company has been carrying on boring operations for the last eight months, testing the coal-measures towards the Wahi Lake, at an expenditure of about £300. At the present time a bore is being put down at the edge of the lake. Our company intend to work the area applied for from their present shaft, by constructing a level from the dip heading through Sections 43 and 44." A further letter addressed to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, under date the 20th May, 1903, is as follows: "In support of my company's application to lease a portion of Lake Wahi, I beg to state that we have been working in the direction of the lake for the last three years, and in addition to driving headings in that direction, we have put down a series of boreholes for the purpose of ascertaining the trend of the seam. This is costly work, as in some places running sand overlies the coal-measures for a depth of 119 ft. This has to be piped, and makes the work slow and expensive. Seeing that our developments in the direction of the lake were proving satisfactory, the question of applying to the Crown for a lease of a considerable area was actually discussed by the directors long before the Huntly Coal Syndicate made any application to you, and we were surprised to find on inquiry at your office that 100 acres of the lake had been applied for by them. Two of the syndicate are, and have been for years, working in the company's mine, and in undertaking this prospecting there can be no doubt but that they have acted on information gained while in the company's service 'The