

Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited), Auckland, 12th May, 1903.

SIR,—

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.

I have, &c.,

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland.

F. SCHERFF, Secretary.

SIR,—

Taupiri Coal-mines Office, Fort Street, Auckland, 20th May, 1903.

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 learn 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 Coal-mines Act, 1891," says, "Precedence shall be in the order of the receipt of the applications by the Warden or Commissioner," and as my company's application was in first, we claim in all fairness that it shall be granted. I would further point out that from the surface to the bottom of the coal-seam in our last borehole, the distance was 350 ft., 119 ft. of which was running sand, water, and boulders, as the hole now being put down on edge of lake is further to the dip, we do not expect to bottom the seam under 400 ft. The initial expense of shaft-sinking in such country, and the attendant difficulties would be almost sure to result in failure to a new company, whereas my company have only to continue the present headings to work the lake coal and bring it through the present workings. In conclusion, sir, I trust that in dealing with our application, consideration will be given to the fact that we are prior applicants, that my company have already paid the Crown thousands of pounds in royalty, and that we have already spent some hundreds of pounds in development-work in anticipation of working this lake coal.

I am enclosing plan showing headings and boreholes testing the deep channel of country; this was ascertained after driving in various directions, and the proposed main heading is set on that course.

Yours, &c.,

G. Mueller, Esq., Commissioner of Crown Lands.

FRANZ SCHERFF, Secretary.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Auckland, 2nd June, 1903.

*Coal Lease, Lake Wahi.*

IN reference to your application for a lease of a portion of the above lake, I have to inform you that the Land Board resolved to adjourn consideration.

HUGH BOSCAWEN,

The Secretary, Taupiri Coal Company.

For Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Auckland, 1st July, 1903.

*Coal Leases, Wahi Lake.*

At a meeting of the Land Board held 26th June last, the following resolution was passed: "That the persons interested in the Wahi coal-lease applications be communicated with, so that they may come to some understanding between themselves as to a satisfactory division of the area, to enable the Commissioner to report to the Board at the next meeting." Will you please see the Huntly Coal-prospecting Association with a view to the settlement of the difficulty.

HUGH BOSCAWEN,

The Secretary, Taupiri Coal-mines Company, Auckland.

For Commissioner of Crown Lands.

SIR,—

Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited), Auckland, 17th July, 1903.

In reply to your letter of the 1st July—i.e., recommending our company to communicate with the Huntly Coal-prospecting Association *re* division of area of Lake Wahi applied for by both the above prospecting association and by this company, I beg to inform you that our Mr. W. J. Ralph interviewed Mr. Leather at Huntly on Tuesday last, with that object, and was informed by him "that his syndicate was not prepared to consider any suggestion for the division of the area referred to, that he had been acting on the advice of the Crown Lands Office all along, that he knew that his syndicate was entitled to the whole of the lake, and that it must be granted to them."

Under these circumstances I regret there seems no hope of coming to any terms with the applicants for lease of Wahi Lake, and I therefore trust that your Board will now grant the applications made by us on the 23rd and 30th August last, they being made in accordance with the provisions of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891."

I have, &c.,

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland.

FRANZ SCHERFF, Secretary.