

Mines Department,

HOBART, 15th July 1924

Dear Sir,

Herewith report on the proposal to devote to Plantation Purposes the Blue Tier (Salisbury) area near Beaconsfield.

The Blue Tier is a low range of hills representing the south-easterly continuation of the Cabbage Tree Hill, Beaconsfield, from which it is cut off by the gorge (locally known as The Gorge) of the Middle Arm Creek. It rises to an altitude of 400 feet above the sea, and is flanked on the west by the valley of Johnson's Creek, and on the east by that of Sassafras Creek both of which are between 100 and 200 feet above sea-level.

The range is composed of the same series of Cambro-Ordovician conglomerates, grits, sandstones etc. (The Cabbage Tree Series) that form the Cabbage Tree Hill. These rocks include the favourable zone in which the shoots of auriferous quartz occurred in lode of the famous Tasmania Mine at Beaconsfield. Narrow dykes of a basic igneous rock now altered to serpentine occur in these strata.

Small areas of alluvial or detrital gold-bearing material have been found at the south end of the range. These proved to be rich but occurred in a very irregular manner. Lodes containing gold have also been proved to exist in the numerous mine workings. When occurring in the Cambro-Ordovician strata these lodes consist of quartz and pyrite containing gold and silver. When the lodes occur in or at the serpentine contact, the latter has been altered to chalcedonic silica containing gold.

Mining operations have been carried on at intervals since the late seventies, and a large amount of development work has been performed. This work has proved the presence of the lodes etc. referred to above. A considerable amount of gold has been obtained, but no important mine has so far been developed. The late Mr. W. H. Twelvetrees, Government Geologist in his report in 1903 states "From the above remarks it appears that the Blue Tier ground has not yet been proved in the mining sense of the term. Only surface and shallow explorations have been conducted. These, such as they are, showed the existence of gold in good quantity, though with a highly irregular distribution. Deeper work is essential to establish the nature of the deposits. If such work prove successful, the ground to the north of the present mines will also deserve exploration."

Since 1903 little or no work has been performed and the above recommendation has not been carried out.

From the above it will be readily understood that the district has been one in which the process of lode-formation was active, and also that it has not been properly tested from a mining point of view. For these, reasons, therefore, it is recommended that it should be continued as a reserve for mining purposes.

Another matter affecting the question at the present time is that of easements in connection with the proposed cement industry at Flowery Gully. The locations of the limestone and clay deposits are marked on the accompanying plan.

The plant will probably be erected at Beauty Point and a tramway will be constructed between Flowery Gully and Beauty Point. Three alternative routes are shown on the plan and of these it is certain that one of ~~these~~ along the Blue Tier will be selected. The cement industry is of the utmost importance to Tasmania, and to Beaconsfield in particular, as it involves the capital expenditure of several hundreds of thousands of pounds and employment of a large number of people, and the bringing of considerable sums of money into Tasmania as a result of its export trade. It is therefore necessary that no obstacles should be placed in the way of the Company obtaining easements for tramway purposes, such as would occur if the district were not continued as a reserve for mining purposes.

Yours faithfully,

P. B. NYE.

GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST.

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