

PRINCESS GOLD MINE, LYNCHFORD. 2013-4

(Collation of available information by F. Blake, 1949).

SITUATION.

The Princess, or Princess River, Gold Mine is situated west of Lynchford on a high spur separating the valleys of Queen and Princess rivers, and about fifty (50) chains north of the junction of the streams.

The workings are confined to the extreme northern portion of mineral lease No. 11517/M, 20 acres, in the name of M. Hevighty.

PREVIOUS REPORTS.

References to the Princess Mine appear in the following Mines Department reports:-

- A. Montgomery:- Report on the State of the Mining Industry
25.4.1890 on the West Coast, Page 6.
- A. Montgomery:- Interim Report on the Discoveries of Coal
11.4.1893 at Barn Bluff, and on the Progress of the Mineral Fields of the County of Montagu, etc., Page 10.
- A. Montgomery:- Notes on the Queen River and Mt. Lyell
9. 7.1894 Mining Districts, Page 3.

Mention of the workings is also made in the following series:-

Secretary for Mines Annual Reports -
Years 1888-89 to 1894-95 inclusive.

The Progress of the Mineral Industry of Tasmania
(compiled by W.H. Twelvetrees, Government Geologist).
Quarters ending December 1902 and March 1912.

HISTORY.

A gold bearing reef was located and the ground pegged in June 1886, by Laurence Harvey. Applications for two adjoining

leases were lodged later in the same year by James Fitzgerald and Thomas Miller respectively. Several sections were also acquired by other individuals in the following year and, by 1888, three companies had been formed, viz., Princess River Co., Princess River Extended Co. and Princess River Prospecting Association.

By 1889 the Princess River Co. had erected a turbine driven 10-head battery and was extracting gold bearing ore, varying in value from 11 dwts. to 17 dwts. to the ton; by way of two adit levels. The richest ore occurred near the top of the hill above the higher adit but it proved to be low grade nearing the lower level. Although the company is reported to have obtained £4,000 worth of gold from stone averaging 16 dwts. per ton, insufficient capital was available for deeper development in the form of required shaft sinking, and pumping machinery for use below the water table, and the mine closed down in 1890.

Two years later the ground previously held by Princess River and Princess River Extended companies was acquired by C. Grining and party. Two crushings by this syndicate are reported to have yielded satisfactory results. Another report states that a block of stone left by the former company yielded 52 oz. of gold from 60 to 70 tons of quartz. A limited amount of development, presumably below the Princess River Company's lower adit, continued until 1895 when efforts, which had been made to float a larger company, failed and work ceased.

In 1902 the mine was leased to L.G. Thompson; in 1907 to William Smith and again in 1910 to T.M. Brennan, but apparently no mining was carried out during these periods.

The next, and final, stage in the development of the Princess Mine occurred in 1912 when James Elliott commenced work. This consisted in cleaning out the lower adit for a distance of 300 feet at which point a winze was sunk to a depth of 40 feet. The reef was reported as entering the winze on the north side at 25 feet down, but was small and low grade at this point. A limited

amount of cross-cutting and driving was undertaken from an old drive intersected in bottom of the winze. In the absence of information with reference to production during Elliott's tenure, it can be assumed that little, if any, gold was won.

The present lease was taken up in 1935 by John Hevighy and, on his demise, was transferred to Mary Hevighy.

THE WORKINGS.

The underground plan and sections (by S. Richards, undated) of the Princess Gold Mine show that the surface workings on Princess Reef consist of an open cut 80 feet in length, bearing 118° along the line of reef.

Underground workings comprise two adit levels. No. 1, or Upper Adit, was commenced at a height of 60 feet below the crest of the ridge and driven on a bearing of 104° for 85 feet, where the reef (2'6" wide at this point) was cut and sloped to surface along a length of approximately 95 feet, in a south-easterly direction.

A shaft sunk from the hill top connects with the top adit.

The main, or lower adit, was located 75 feet below No. 1 adit and cross-cut on a bearing of 199° before intersecting the reef. Drives were then extended 100 feet north-westerly and 90 feet south-easterly on the course of the lode. In a short cross-cut from south-east end of the drive, near a probable fault, the reef is indicated as one foot in width. Stopping up to No. 1 Adit extended south-easterly over an average length of 100 feet from a point in the north-west drive, 35 feet from the main cross-cut.

The plan shows winzes Nos. 1 and 2 sunk from the floor of the south-east drive at 15 feet and 25 feet respectively from main cross-cut. The depth of No. 1 winze is doubtfully indicated as 40 feet, or about 10 feet below water level at time of survey. No. 2 winze is shown as 25 feet deep.

From the report, in the Mineral Industry of March 1912, of the work undertaken by James Elliott it would appear that a drive on the reef of about 75 feet in length had been cut from the bottom of No. 1 winze by the Princess River Company.

THE LODE.

The lode consists of a white quartz reef ranging in width from 1 to 4 feet. It trends on a general bearing of 130° and has been traced underground over a maximum length of 200 feet on the Main adit level. It dips to the south-west at angles ranging from 46° (between surface and No. 1 adit) to 64° (between No. 1 adit and Main adit).

A break, possibly a fault, occurs in the lode near the south-east end of the workings and, although the reef was again cut to the east of the break, little attempt was made to follow it further in that direction.

SUMMARY.

The Princess reef consists of a well defined quartz lode ranging from one to four feet in width. It has been tested along a maximum length of 200 feet and down to a depth of 175 feet from surface. The ore-shoot was worked to a depth of 135 feet over an average length of 100 feet.

Production figures are not available but reports give the value of the ore worked as ranging from 11 dwts. to 17 dwts. of gold per ton, with a general average of 16 dwts. per ton. The higher values were obtained in the upper parts of the mine and the values diminished towards the lower levels.

At various stages in the development of the mine, between 1886 and 1912, efforts were made to obtain sufficient capital

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to explore the reef at greater depth by way of a main shaft
and also to purchase adequate pumping equipment, but each
attempt proved abortive.