

Introduction

The following account of the Mineral Resources and the Mining Industry of Tasmania has been prepared by the Mines Department at the request of the State Commission, and is intended for distribution in pamphlet form at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, England. It is necessarily brief, and should be read in conjunction with the display of Tasmanian minerals, ores, etc., contained in the Australian Mineral Exhibit, and the "spot" maps, photographs etc., used to illustrate that exhibit.

The Mineral Exhibit contains specimens of practically all the minerals, ores, rocks, and other substances referred to in this report. The "spot" maps show at a glance the locality of the mineral deposits and mining fields described herein, and from which specimens have been obtained and are exhibited.

It will be observed that Tasmania possesses deposits of a large number of minerals, ores, rocks, etc., and that the Mining Industry is a valuable one and one which has played a large part in the settlement and development of the State. The Industry did not attain any great dimensions until the "seventies", but its initiation occurred at a period of depression throughout the State, and its great services have been fully appreciated.

The principal deposits are distributed as follows:- Copper, silver-lead, zinc-lead, iron and tin (lode) ores occur on the west coast and in the north-western districts; gold and alluvial tin ores are restricted to the north-east; oil-shales occur only in the north-west; coal and sandstones are found in the south-east, midland, east, and north-western parts.

The principal mines and industries operating at present are:- Mt. Lyell (copper); Read-Rosebery group (zinc-lead) North Mt. Farrell, Magnet, Swansea and Round Hill (silver-lead) Mt. Bischoff, Bischoff Extended, Renison Bell, Briseis, Pioneer, Endurance, Monarch, Argonaut (tin); Storeys Creek (tin and wolfram and bismuth) S.&M. Mine (tin & wolfram), Golden Gate (gold); Cornwall, Nicholas and Jubilee (coal) National Portland Cement Co., Carbide Works, Electrolytic Zinc Co.

The total production of minerals and metals since 1880 amounts to £50,640,398, the average annual output being £1,125,342.

The total dividends paid by mining companies to the end of 1924 were £10,000,000 which represents 20 per cent of the total production. In addition numerous mines have been equipped with mining and Metallurgical plants, transport facilities &c out of profits, while the profits made by small syndicates, parties and individuals are not included because no figures are available in connection with them. The profits indicated in these last two items must in the aggregate amount to a considerable sum, probably of the same order of magnitude as the dividends paid.

The State Government has always assisted the industry by the provision of a Geological Staff, aid to mining grants, etc., and more recently by the equipping of an assay laboratory.

The principal officers of the Mines Department staff are:-

Secretary for Mines	W.A. Pretzman
Chief Clerk & Account	A.B. Bryan
Government Geologist	A. McIntosh Reid
" "	P.B. Nye M Sc., B.M.E.
Chief Inspector of Mines	J.O. Hudson
Government Chemist & Assayer	W.D. Reid (Launceston)

The Mines Department offices are situated in Hobart and correspondence and enquiries should be directed to the Secretary for Mines, Mines Department, Hobart. The most complete information available is given in answer to requests for same.

A large amount of valuable information is contained in the reports and publications of the Geological Survey, copies of which are available at the above address, and also at the office of the Agent-General for Tasmania, Australia House, London.

The mineral lands of the State are dealt with under special laws and regulations distinct from the Crown Lands Acts. The Department is controlled by the Minister for Mines, through the direct supervision of the Secretary for Mines, under whom are appointed Wardens of Mines for each division of the State, who act judicially in the settlement of disputes and conduct of all business matters connected with the mining industry.

The Mining Regulations provide for the issue of:-

1. PROSPECTORS LICENCES, under which, at the annual cost of ten shillings (or five shillings if issued after June), the holder is authorised to take possession of and hold for prospecting purposes: Twenty acres for gold, or 100 acres for coal, shale, slate, freestone, or limestone, or 40 acres for any other mineral. Provision is also made for authorising increased areas under special authority, where the nature of the prospecting operations render such desirable, and for the issue of special licences to search for coal or oil. Should a discovery be made, the discoverer may secure a claim free of rent of an area varying in extent from 20 acres up to 240 acres, according to the mineral to be worked, the nature of the deposit, and the distance from any known similar deposit of a like mineral or metal.

2. LEASES are granted for gold mining purposes in areas not exceeding 40 acres for a term of 21 years, at a rental of 10s per acre per annum, with statutory right to renewal. For coal, shale, slate, freestone, or limestone, in areas not exceeding 640 acres for a term of 21 years, at a rental of 2s 6d per acre per annum with statutory right to renewal. For any mineral other than the above in areas not exceeding 80 acres for a term of 21 years, at a rental of 5s an acre per annum, with statutory right to renewal. For oil, area 640 acres at a rent of 1/- per acre per annum and a royalty.

3. MACHINERY SITES:- Sites for machinery at an annual rental of 5s per acre of areas not exceeding 10 acres, and for a term of 21 years for mineral or gold, with right of renewal.

4. GRANTS OF WATER RIGHTS for a term of 21 years,

renewable, at an annual rental of £1 per head, carrying the right to construct races, dams and reservoirs.

5. EASEMENT LICENCES are granted to lessees at a rental of 5s per acre per annum for the conveyance of tailings and debris, construction of roads, tramways, tunnels, shafts and subways.

6. LEASES TO WORK RIVER BEDS :- Provision is made for the issue of leases for 10 years to work the beds and banks of rivers at an annual rental of 5s per acre per annum.

Provisions are made for the settlement of disputes and partnership questions, regulating the mode of marking and applying for claims and areas, the shape and survey of claims, priority of rights, conditions of working, mode of forfeiture, regulating appeals to the Supreme Court, regulation and inspection of mines, acquisition of water rights and easements through private lands, etc., etc., and under separate Acts for the incorporation and winding-up of mining companies, the working and inspection of mines, the granting of certificates of competency to managers of mines.

PB NYE

6 April 1925