

MALCOLM HARDY: THE LAST WAIORONGOMAI MINER

Philip Hart

Te Aroha Mining District Working Papers

No. 106

Historical Research Unit
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

ISSN: 2463-6266

© 2016 Philip Hart

Contact: prhart@waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

MALCOLM HARDY: THE LAST WAIORONGOMAI MINER

Abstract: *Malcolm Hardy was notable for his artistic skills but not for his dynamism until becoming interested in gold mining during the 1920s. A self-taught geologist, he was enthusiastic about the prospects for finding gold, but was also completely wrong and thoroughly pig-headed about the wondrous outcome he anticipated. In 1931, his father, Edwin Henry Hardy, took him to Waiorongomai to show him the spot where good gold could still be found, but died before reaching it. Undeterred, Hardy acquired several claims and set about re-opening old workings and doing some prospecting, being assisted by a few others off and on.*

Hardy was notable for his assertions of having traced millions of tons of payable ore – and for demanding government assistance to test and work these – but his special pleading and misrepresentations exasperated officials and experts. In response to their criticisms and failures to see the glowing prospects he proclaimed, he accused them of incompetence and bias, ignoring the fact that all the assays and tests disproved his claims.

Attempts to obtain financial backing had little success, and a company, Hardy's Mines, established in 1940, was stillborn. Even Hardy abandoned active mining during the 1940s, but he encouraged the Auckland Smelting Company and then South Pacific Mines to explore all the mountain, insisting, despite all the evidence, that Te Aroha would become a leading mining centre.

EARLY YEARS

Malcolm York Hardy was born in Sheffield, England, on 17 January 1896, the third son and youngest child of Edwin Henry Hardy¹ and his wife, Annie Shales Hardy.² The first time newspapers recorded anything about his life was in July 1908, when he came third in the examinations of the Standard 5 class at the Te Kuiti school, receiving 94 marks out of a potential 120.³ In December, he had the second lowest marks for reading, the second highest for writing and spelling, the highest for composition, and

¹ See paper on his life.

² Death Certificate of Malcolm York Hardy, 15 August 1963, 1963/26982, BDM; ancestry.co.uk.

³ *King Country Chronicle*, 3 July 1908, p. 5.

equal second for arithmetic.⁴ He remained in Standard 5 the following year, being second in the class with 89 marks in the term examination and second once again with 97 in the annual examination (the top pupil received 109).⁵ In the Standard 6 quarterly examination held in April 1909, he was second with 111 marks, the maximum possible being 140.⁶ In his last examination, at the end of that year, he was a narrow second with 115, the top pupil obtaining 118.⁷ Out of a class of six, he was equal second in reading, arithmetic, and geography, second in drawing, equal top in writing and spelling, and top in composition.⁸

A member of the school cadets, in his last year at school he came third in a shooting contest with a score of 19, the highest being 26.⁹ He did not fight in the First World War, for although his name was drawn in the eighth ballot under the Military Service Act, as his two older brothers were in uniform he was exempted.¹⁰ A 1915 report in the *King Country Chronicle* revealed that part of his time was spent in very unwarlike pursuits: 'The current issue of the Motion Picture monthly magazine, published in New York, announces that the Photoplay Clearing House prize for the best photoplay submitted during the month has been awarded to Malcolm Y. Hardy, of Te Kuiti, for a drama entitled "The Mystic Legacy"'.¹¹ Some surviving sketches indicate that he had considerable artistic skills.¹² He may have studied art in the 1920s, either at an art school or by correspondence.¹³ His nephew considered that he had inherited his father's skills: 'He could have been a cartoonist, no doubt of it, his cartooning ability was really extraordinary.... He did a lot of advertising drawings and that sort of thing'.¹⁴ His will left paintings and two textbooks on painting and

⁴ Te Kuiti School, Class Lists and Examination of December 1908, Standard 5, YCAF 4135/70a, ANZ-A.

⁵ *King Country Chronicle*, 9 October 1908, p. 2, 17 December 1908, p. 5.

⁶ *King Country Chronicle*, 3 May 1909, p. 5.

⁷ *King Country Chronicle*, 2 December 1909, p. 2.

⁸ Te Kuiti School, Class Lists and Examination of November 1909, YCAF 4135/72a, ANZ-A.

⁹ *King Country Chronicle*, 17 May 1909, p. 5.

¹⁰ *King Country Chronicle*, 6 June 1917, p. 5.

¹¹ *King Country Chronicle*, 28 July 1915, p. 5.

¹² These are in the possession of his nephew, David Calder Hardy, of Paeroa.

¹³ Interview with David Calder Hardy, Auckland, 6 November 1986.

¹⁴ Interview with David Calder Hardy, Auckland, 19 April 1986, p. 15 of transcript.

decorating to the Te Aroha Borough Council.¹⁵ Like his father, he was very interested in spiritualism, and in his will left all his books on 'psychic science' to the Psychic Research Society of Christchurch.¹⁶

His nephew David Calder Hardy's recollections of him, based in part on what he had been told by family members, were unflattering. He had a reputation of being a know-all at school, and tried to show up the teachers by asking questions that he knew they could not answer.¹⁷ 'He used to enjoy taunting the teacher by asking him a question that he'd already got the answer from his father and trying to get the poor bloody teacher - trapped, and things like that. He was a nasty type!'¹⁸ David Hardy considered that 'he was a very critical person and if he didn't agree with something he told everyone about it in no uncertain terms. He'd pooh-pooh things if they just went contrary to what he thought',¹⁹ a trait which would become extremely obvious in his disagreements with Mines Department officials. Politically he was extremely conservative, and he was '*very teetotal*'.²⁰ An unhappy youthful love affair was believed to have formed his difficult personality displayed in his later years.²¹

Hardy had very different relationships with his father and mother. Whilst he admired his father, he 'also detested him' because 'he couldn't eclipse him. He couldn't beat him and he was jealous of him'.²² His father used to make fun of his lying in bed of a morning, and 'used to call him the lodger, and things like that'.²³ In contrast, his mother 'absolutely doted on him: he couldn't do any wrong'.²⁴ Although he received nothing in his mother's will when she died in 1939,²⁵ he gained possession of her engagement ring, and in his own will, written 24 years later, he asked the

¹⁵ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4421, 556/63, ANZ-A.

¹⁶ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986; Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4421, 556/63, ANZ-A.

¹⁷ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 1 November 1987.

¹⁸ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 21 of transcript.

¹⁹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 2 of transcript.

²⁰ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986.

²¹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 1 November 1987.

²² Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 21 of transcript.

²³ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 3 of transcript, with additional comment noted in margin on 6 November 1986.

²⁴ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986.

²⁵ Probates, BBAE 1570, 946/39, ANZ-A.

Auckland Provincial Comforts Association to create an endowment fund, to be known as the Annie Shales Hardy Fund, to maintain the Sunset Old Folks Home at Blockhouse Bay, Auckland, where she must have spent her final years.²⁶

HIS FIRST JOBS

Hardy did not farm with his two brothers, Jason and Bernard.²⁷ His first occupation to be recorded was manager of his father's garage at Te Kuiti, known as the Imperial Motor Company, from at least 1919 to at least 1922.²⁸ Throughout the 1920s, he remained in his parents' home.²⁹ During these years he also ran the local cinema.³⁰ In the electoral rolls for 1925, 1928, and 1931 his occupation was given as 'traveller',³¹ presumably meaning a commercial traveller. Upon arriving in Te Aroha in 1931 he described himself as a motor mechanic, and in the following year as 'formerly of Te Kuiti Engineer'.³² His nephew David believed he was 'quite a good engineer really, automotive engineer'.³³ Yet in an agreement he signed in December 1931 he described himself as 'formerly of Te Kuiti Farmer'.³⁴

In 2007, Frank McAdam, whose father Francis had married Malcolm's sister, Isabel Lydia Hardy,³⁵ recorded his 'Memories of Uncle Malcolm':

As children we saw very little of him, when staying in Te Kuiti he rarely woke before ten o'clock, Granddad would tell us to go and waken the "Lodger." We were not happy about doing this, as he woke with a roar like a sea lion. He went out every evening, and

²⁶ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4421, 556/64, ANZ-A.

²⁷ See paper on Edwin Henry Hardy.

²⁸ *Waitomo Electoral Roll, 1919*, p. 54, *1922*, p. 39; A. & G. Price to Malcolm Hardy, 21 June 1920, Letterbook 1919-1920, p. 957, A. & G. Price Archives, Thames; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 374 no. 2086, ANZ-A.

²⁹ *Waitomo Electoral Rolls, 1919*, p. 54; *1922*, p. 39; *1925*, p. 57; *1928*, p. 59; *1931*, p. 64.

³⁰ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986.

³¹ *Waitomo Electoral Rolls, 1925*, p. 57; *1928*, p. 59; *1931*, p. 64.

³² *Te Aroha News*, 27 April 1931, p. 1; Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 18 August 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 10046, M6, ANZ-A.

³³ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 6 of transcript.

³⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Registrations 1931, no. 4115, BCDG 11288/10a, ANZ-A.

³⁵ Marriage Certificate of Frank Cecil McAdam and Isabel Lydia Hardy, 1910/6484, BDM.

was a great friend of the Jewellers, where, my mother suspected, he repaired jewellery and watches. The Jeweller was a very popular person, but had a poor record with regards to repairs. Malcolm according to my Father took three days to dismantle a car, became tired of it, and threw it back together in a day.³⁶

David Hardy recalled that 'Malcolm's years in Te Kuiti seemed to revolve around the garage, known as Holler and Hedley's, his running of the picture theatre and his involvement with movie making. At least one of the large cans [of film] dumped' on the family farm 'when we left in 1936/7' showed 'a woman dressed in traditional clothing, on the first few frames'.³⁷ He did some filming himself,³⁸ but nothing has survived.

INTEREST IN GOLD MINING

According to David Hardy, Edwin Hardy had not wanted to encourage his son's interest in goldmining.

I don't think he wanted to, no. Whether he thought that Malcolm wouldn't stick at it or something, I don't really know.... I think his father must have had misgivings about the whole venture.... He was his mother's favourite boy and perhaps his mother didn't want him to be up there on his own or something.... It was depression time and I suppose it was hard for Malcolm to get a good job.

He had heard his father talking about his mines,

and there was a romantic side to it, I think that had a lot to do with it... I think that Malcolm must have heard his father talking about this and that to do with the mining and he'd built up quite a lot of romantic notions and that ... by the time the slump came along he was raring to go.... Everybody was dashing off to the goldfields, trying to upon up this, that and the other that had been abandoned in the earlier days, and he hoped to get very rich.³⁹

³⁶ Frank McAdam to Philip Hart, n.d. [December 2007].

³⁷ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 23 July 2007, email.

³⁸ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 20 July 2016, email.

³⁹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, pp. 6, 9 of transcript.

Previous to returning to Waiorongomai, his only recorded involvement in mining was in April 1922, when he followed his father's example by acquiring 500 of the 100,000 shares in the Caledonian, Kuranui, and Moanataiari Consolidated Company; two years later, he sold the last of these.⁴⁰ A self-taught geologist, he believed that Waihi's Martha reef crossed the North Island from Waihi Beach through Karangahake and Waiorongomai and on through Cambridge, Otorohanga, and Te Kuiti until it reached the west coast at Awakino. To prove his point, he had taken samples at various points along the line of this supposed reef.⁴¹ Another variant of this theory traced this reef from Great Barrier Island to Mokau.⁴² David Hardy, who prospected with him for some months in 1947, recalled him as 'a very enthusiastic amateur'. He did not believe he had studied geology and mining academically, but 'he would have studied it from books, he was an avid reader, and he would have studied every book he could have laid his hands on'.⁴³ His will mentioned his books on mining.⁴⁴

According to David Hardy, who recalled seeing the map, Edwin Hardy had a plan of Waiorongomai (since lost) showing where 'good gold tellurides' were to be found, on the tramway level at the top of Butler's Incline;⁴⁵ on or near the old Loyalty Palace ground, where his father had mined in the first decade of the twentieth century? Despite this indication of where good gold was located, Malcolm Hardy would try to find gold elsewhere, close to the end of the tramway.

OBTAINING HIS FATHER'S OLD CLAIMS IN 1931

On 26 April 1931, when on his way to show his old mines to his sons Jason and Malcolm and two other men from Te Kuiti, his father died at the top of Butler's Incline.⁴⁶ On 24 June, Malcolm took out a miner's right,⁴⁷ and three days later applied for a prospecting license over seven acres,

⁴⁰ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 374 no. 2086, ANZ-A.

⁴¹ Interview with Eric Coppard, at Waihi, 4 August 1985, p. 15 of transcript.

⁴² Interview with David Calder Hardy, 1 November 1987.

⁴³ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 2 of transcript.

⁴⁴ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4421, 556/63, ANZ-A.

⁴⁵ Interview with David Calder Hardy, Rotorua, 21 July 2007; David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 20 July 2016, email.

⁴⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 27 April 1931, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 14/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

being the former Colonist claim.⁴⁸ Another three days later he asked the Mines Department how to apply for a prospecting grant, for he was ‘contemplating taking up prospecting operations in the Waiorongomai District’.⁴⁹ He was informed that although funds to assist prospectors had been exhausted he could apply towards the end of the year.⁵⁰ But before he could do this he had to secure his title to the ground, which was challenged on the same day that he had applied for it by Walter Joseph Gibbs,⁵¹ who stated that ‘my party and myself have completed the pegging of the ground on June 24th, also that Malcolm York Hardy saw my pegs and discussed the private marks K on same with Norman Neilson⁵² one of my men’.⁵³

The merits of the rival applications were argued before the warden on 16 July. Gibbs’ lawyer pointed out that as Hardy had pegged out within the 55 acres Gibbs had already pegged out, Gibbs ‘had the fundamental right by priority’. Hardy’s lawyer countered that ‘no person was entitled to more than one claim unless devoting all their time to the working of them. As Mr Gibbs was an engineer this was not possible in his case’. In his evidence, Hardy stated that ‘some time’ after the death of his father, he had taken out a miner’s right.

The clerk of the court said that to the best of his knowledge the land was available for pegging. On Thursday 25th he and his brother [Jason] departed for Waiorongomai and had been directed to the Premier claim (his father’s old property) by a man named [Charles Thomas] Young.⁵⁴ On arriving there they found that a peg had been erected in a cairn of stones on a rock ledge in the vicinity of the claim. The peg gave the impression that it would not include the property that they intended taking over but an area slightly to the north. On the way down they had met a man named Neilson, who had informed them that the peg belonged to Mr Gibbs. Witness had queried this as there was a “K” marked on

⁴⁸ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Applications 1921-1934, Hearing of 16 July 1931, BBAV 11505/6b; Mining Applications 1931, 14/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁹ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 30 June 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

⁵⁰ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Malcolm Hardy, 6 July 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

⁵¹ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

⁵² See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

⁵³ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1931, 14/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁴ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

it. The man had then admitted that it meant nothing and the claim was open. Their informant had also said that the Colonist Claim had not been pegged out. Young had also said that the peg was of no consequence. The next day he and his brother had visited the spot and placed four pegs in the claim (about 7 acres). Tracks had been cleared but no trenches dug on account of the rocky nature of the ground. They had considered their actions quite sufficient to delineate their boundaries. The entire work was completed by 2 p.m. When coming down they had been acquainted by Neilson that the Colonist had been pegged out already by Mr Gibbs.

To Mr Arthur [Gibbs' counsel], witness admitted that they filed their application after Neilson told them that the claim had been taken up. It was not true that he (witness) had led Neilson to believe that it was the Premier claim they were inquiring about. Witness had seen no stones defining a boundary or any sign indicating that the land they had in view was claimed or pegged. Witness drew a sketch illustrating the position of the claim and the pegs driven in by him. He had had no previous experience at mining but possessed eyes and a certain amount of brain. Lengthy details of the situation were given.⁵⁵

In the warden's notes of his evidence, Hardy claimed that Neilson laughed when asked about the peg marked K, and said, 'Its nothing etc What there for He didn't know Its nothing I sd its there to scare people away He agreed'. When they met Young, who was 'well known' to Hardy, they 'asked him about the peg - He also sd its of no consequence I sd is Colonist marked out? He ansd No'. After pegging out, he again met Young and told him 'we had pegged out Colonist He wished us good luck I sd are you sure not pegged He sd yes - go ahead'. Under cross-examination, Hardy admitted that he 'had no previous experience of pegging'. Asked why he had pegged out this ground, he answered, 'I picked this 7 acres as I thought it a nice property - I had good reasons',⁵⁶ a hint that his father had advised him to take it up.

In corroborating his evidence, Jason Hardy stated that 'he was really a disinterested party and had merely come down to assist his brother survey the claim'. Gibbs explained that, although he already held 45 acres, he wanted to increase the area to 100 acres, pegging out the extra ground on 24 June at about 3 p.m. but being unable to register it immediately because of urgent business. Gibbs claimed that

⁵⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1931, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 14/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

Hardy's boundary as shown on the plan was incorrect. The pegs driven in by Hardy were no indication of the boundaries he intended observing. Witness had employed men on his claim since February. He and Mr R[eginald Walter] Devey⁵⁷ had put in the first pegs on the 9th June. He suggested that his claim had been jumped.⁵⁸

Hardy's counsel, George Gilchrist, 'objected strongly to this allegation'. In reply to Gilchrist, Gibbs said

he had had no word from any of his men that Hardy was making inquiries about the claim.

Counsel: Do you contend, then, that he was jumping your claim?

Witness: I do. On top of the information given him by my men, I have no hesitation on saying it.

Counsel: Well, I consider that is most unfair to my client.

Mr Arthur: You asked for it and now you've got it.⁵⁹

Neilson gave evidence that Hardy 'had not asked him anything about the pegging of the Colonist', while Young stated that the Hardy brothers had told him they were going to peg out the Premier; both men denied making the statements attributed to them by Hardy.⁶⁰ After Devey corroborated Gibbs' evidence, the warden reserved his decision; Hardy's counsel asked that 'his objection be noted to Gibbs' suggestion that his claim had been "jumped" '.⁶¹

At the next sitting, on 13 August, judgment was given for Hardy because of Gibbs' inadequate pegging out and the avoidable delay in lodging his application.⁶² On 15 August, Hardy applied for a residence site on the Canadian ground (the site of 'Hardy's Hut', now in ruins), on 22 August for the Premier ground as part of an eight-acre prospecting license, and on 16

⁵⁷ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

⁵⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1931, p. 5.

⁵⁹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 July 1931, p. 11.

⁶⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 14/1931, BCDG 11290/2a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1931, p. 5.

⁶¹ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1931, p. 5; Te Aroha Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 July 1931, p. 11.

⁶² *Te Aroha News*, 19 August 1931, p. 5.

October a 19-acre prospecting license adjoining his existing one: all were granted, although the 19 acres was reduced to 15.⁶³

REOPENING SOME MINES IN 1931

In a 1975 interview, Russ and Les Hill, two sons of John Samuel Hill, the former tramway manager, recalled Hardy arriving at Waiorongomai and, being 'moneyless, appealed to Russ Hill's generosity to look after him. It was depression. Malcolm Hardy did odd jobs and got a bit here and there to re-open the Hero. Which he did and Mr Hill joined him there'.⁶⁴ In August and November that year, Hardy gave his address as 'c/o J.S. Hill, Waiorongomai'.⁶⁵

On 30 August, Hardy informed the under-secretary that he was opening up and exploring 'the Colonist Creek Level Tunnel', meaning the 1400-foot level, 'and am making good progress'. He sought maps and information about McLean's level, otherwise the 1100-foot level, because he did not have any plans or other records about it, 'although well informed as to other portions of the field'.⁶⁶ John Francis Downey, the mining inspector, could not provide any plans because none had been deposited in his office, but asked Albert Augustine Adams, who had some in his possession, to show them to Hardy.⁶⁷ Adams, a miner who was a son of Henry Hopper Adams,⁶⁸ had been involved in the Tui district.⁶⁹ In mid-September Hardy

⁶³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 17, 21, 23/1931 BCDG 11289/2a; Register of Applications 1921-1934, Hearings of 10 September 1931, 12 November 1931, BBAV 11505/6b, ANZ-A.

⁶⁴ Russ and Les Hill, interviewed by David Bettison, 13 June 1975.

⁶⁵ Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 17 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A; Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 6 November 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 6/61, ANZ-W.

⁶⁶ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 30 August 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W; see also Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to J.F. Downey, 12 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M4, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷ J.F. Downey to Malcolm Hardy, 14 September 1931; J.F. Downey to A.A. Adams, 14 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

⁶⁸ See paper on his life.

⁶⁹ For examples, see Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1916, 6, 8-12, 23, 24, 26, 45/1916, BBAV 11289/22a; Mining Applications 1917-1921, 19/1917, 9-10, 24-25/1918,

thanked Downey for ‘the kind and generous interest you have shown in my inquiry’, and told him that ‘I remember my father made a complete plan of this locality’, including McLean’s level, which he had given to Hardy’s Mines. He was prospecting the Hero reef because of receiving possibly inaccurate information from an unnamed source, and claimed that, with the exception of himself, all the prospecting taking place at Waiorongomai was ‘being carried on in the dark. I have by me all my father’s records, assays, crushings etc and latest plans of my immediate locality and am thus placed at a decided advantage’. He claimed to have taken ‘important assays’.⁷⁰

Before these assays were tested, Hardy encouraged Downey to visit his ground, although warning that it took two hours of ‘heavy going’ to reach it. He offered to collect Downey in his old Ford car and to provide a bunk in his hut. A sketch enclosed with his letter showed all the levels in the Colonist: he labeled the low level ‘my drive’, and estimated it to be 1404 feet above the battery.

I am making most earnest and conscientious endeavours to carry on my late father’s work.... I am, as far as I know, the only individual with sufficient knowledge of the workings reefs etc to be enabled to do so with any likelihood of success. I received most valuable information from my father before he died and have by me as confirmation all his books plans etc and the assay reports of certain sections of the country dating as far back as 1897, so that I have something tangible to work on.⁷¹

In the third letter he wrote to Downey during September he expressed opinions about McLean’s level based on ‘definite information’ and his examination of it. ‘I understand that some thirty veins were cut by this drive and am quite able to believe it judging by the number already passed through in the short distance which I traversed. This tunnel is undoubtedly a most important one and should not be neglected’. He was glad that Downey had agreed to spend a day or so at Waiorongomai ‘and feel sure that you will be most interested as there is much to note of value’. He

2-3, 15-16/1919, 21/1920, 3136-3137/1921, BCDG 11290/1a; Mining Applications and Complaints 1929, 6/1929, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁰ Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 17 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

⁷¹ Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 23 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

advised Downey to bring rugs but assured him that he had 'a roomy hut quite close to the claim and will endeavour to make you comfortable'. To ensure that he would be recognised, he described the clothes he would wear at the railway station and his 'decrepit looking Ford car painted dark blue and possessing a much patched white hood'.⁷²

Downey spent part of two days with Hardy, took aneroid readings of the elevation of the adits, and arranged for the free testing of 'a reasonable number of assays' at the Waihi School of Mines. 'In view of the strong likelihood' that Hardy would request financial assistance, Downey explained to the under-secretary, Alfred Henry Kimbell, Hardy's 'obsession' with the story that a mine manager employed by Hardy's Mines had deliberately sought to create the impression that the mines were worthless.⁷³ Downey considered 'such a story as a pure figment of the imagination', and gave his view both of the prospects and of Hardy:

It is quite possible that some patches of good ore have been left in the mines, and that some fresh bodies may yet await discovery, but I do not think they are likely to be of such importance as to justify the very large expenditure that would have to be incurred in again providing a local treatment plant. In coming to this conclusion, I am basing my opinion to some extent on the conclusions reached by Dr [John] Henderson regarding the Waiorongomai reefs, and expressed by him in Geol. Bul. 16 p.119,⁷⁴ and on the fact that the mines were previously abandoned as unpayable at a time when they were fully equipped, when good mining labour was plentiful, and when operating costs were only about half what they are at the present time. Consideration of the position from these points of view seems to furnish further reasons not merely of the unlikelihood of there being anything in the story Mr Hardy tells, but also serves to show the improbability of the mines being worked again profitably, and gives some idea of the great caution that would need to be exercised by the Department in giving any encouragement to your correspondent.

I may mention that Mr M.Y. Hardy is not a miner, and has had no experience whatever of mining, and that he has no competent

⁷² Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 30 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

⁷³ See paper on Edwin Henry Hardy.

⁷⁴ John Henderson, assisted by J.A. Bartrum, *The Geology of the Aroha Subdivision, Hauraki, New Zealand: Geological Survey Bulletin No. 16 (New Series)* (Wellington, 1913).

miner associated with him. I asked him definitely what his plans were, and he informed me that he had no money and could do no more for the present, but would have to look round and try and get others interested in the mine. If some samples he has sent to the Waihi School of Mines turn out satisfactory, he hopes to be able to use the results in this direction. On asking him where he took the samples, he merely answered vaguely that he took some at this place and some at that place, but I could see no signs of systematic sampling. He admitted that he had not broken out the samples and quartered them in the usual way, but had gone across the reef and picked what he considered representative pieces. On reference to the Director of the Waihi School of Mines, I found that most of the samples only consisted of about three pieces of stone. These could not be looked upon as representative samples.

I regret having to write all this, but you are sure to hear more concerning Mr Hardy's proposals, and it is only proper you should have the information I give so that you may know how to deal with any further applications from him.⁷⁵

The day before this letter was written, the school of mines had assayed the samples Hardy had taken from three levels of the Hero reef.⁷⁶ All 12 samples 'consisted of quartz mineralized with copper pyrites, zinc blende and a little galena'. The values per ton were 1s, £2 13s 7d, £4 8s 11d, £65 15s 2d, £5 2s 10d, £2 18s, 7s 4d, 14s 7d, £3 10s 9d, 1s 3d, 1s 4d, and £1 4s 2d.⁷⁷ A very erratic result, but one Hardy considered encouraging. On 6 November, he wrote to the Minister of Mines, Charles Edward de la Barca Macmillan, enclosing an incomplete copy of part of the assay certificate. Only half of the results were included, and only two of the values, £3 10s 9d and £1 4s 2d, were the same as he had received from the school of mines; the other values were given as £4 2s, £6 13s 5d, £67 11s 7d, and £8 0s 5d. On this basis, he claimed the average value to be £16 per ton. His six-page letter protested against plans to remove Waiorongomai township from the control of the Mines Department, for he anticipated the need for a large

⁷⁵ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 16 October 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

⁷⁶ Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 30 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A; Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 6 November 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 6/61, ANZ-W.

⁷⁷ Waihi School of Mines, Assay Certificate, 15 October 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

battery and miners' housing when mining revived, as he predicted. He wrote 'as a holder of a valuable mining grant in the neighbourhood' who was 'seriously endeavouring to open up certain rich ore deposits which I have located':

These deposits were worked most successfully some years ago by my father, the late Mr E.H. Hardy and it is my intention, if possible, to interest capital in this ground and to recommence mining operations here on a sane and businesslike scale. Waiorongomai, as far as geologists are concerned, has never been thoroughly inspected or adequately reported upon. The nature of the country, its ruggedness and its dense clothing of undergrowth and bush, make such an examination, except spread over a very great period, almost impossible. Also the immensity and vastness of the quartz and reef systems would render any such examination otherwise than by intensive underground prospecting, well nigh futile.

Driving at low levels with the exception of one comparatively short tunnel [the Aroha Gold Mines low level, 1,254 feet long],⁷⁸ has never been extensively carried out, but as far as the higher levels are concerned, values have been proved from grass to over five hundred feet down, to my documentary knowledge, and there is no doubt but that values continue for almost two thousand feet. This fact can scarcely be disputed in the fact of information supplied by men who know this district intimately and who have made their living from the dish on the lowest levels of the hill.

It must be understood that with the exception of my father's activities here from 1897 to 1905 and later for a few years by Hardy's Mines Ltd nothing of any importance has been done in this field in the way of exploiting known reefs since 1886. Since those days many new methods of mining have been introduced, and also new systems of treating refractory ore such as is found in their neighbourhood, although my father, by a simple system of extraction succeeded in making his property an extremely payable one.

There is no doubt but that Waiorongomai represents a vast and rich mineral field, only partially explored, scarcely worked and almost ignored until the present time, when conditions have become more favourable and eyes are being turned towards this district as being a potential treasure ground which it undoubtedly is, as any experienced prospector very quickly realizes. Capital, and encouragement from the Government is what is required and I am convinced that the results will amply repay such enterprise. Such sentiments would be confirmed by all those who possess an intimate knowledge of this wonderful field. In the past much

⁷⁸ See paper on the New Zealand Exploration Company and Aroha Gold Mines Ltd.

money came out of this field and there is nothing to prove that such should not happen again, in fact everything points to such an event being highly probable.

I am taking the liberty of enclosing herewith a copy of an assay report from the Waihi School of Mines, covering a parcel of sample ore forwarded by me some weeks ago to them, and obtained from the face of a six foot reef, & at three different levels of the same reef. This reef ranges from six feet at the upper levels to thirteen feet at the lowest (some five hundred feet below) and the values increase as the depth becomes greater.

I am at present in touch with a well known established mining company regarding the opening up and exploitation of my ground and have arranged for their expert to very shortly inspect my property with a view of thoroughly working the territory. This will of course involve the erection of a battery, buildings & houses etc and will be the means of employing a large number of men on the undertaking.⁷⁹

This letter was breathtaking in its special pleading and misrepresentation of both geology and mining history, but possibly he had convinced himself that what he wanted to be true was in fact true. Asked for his opinion, Downey was blunt:

Despite anything Mr Hardy has said, the likelihood of any revival of mining at Waiorongomai is very slight indeed. Mr Hardy is not a miner, and has had no experience in geology or any branch of mining, and the conclusions he draws regarding the field are not to be relied on. Further, apart from the fact that I have no reason to think he has had any experience in the taking of samples, I have to point out that in sending you the results of assays made on his behalf at the Waihi School of Mines, he has evidently made a deliberate attempt to mislead, by keeping back the full results of the assays. As a matter of fact, 11 [correctly 12] assays were made for him, but he has not given you all the poor results. When I come to examine the figures of the full range of assays, I find that if the results of the large assay (£67:11:7) are eliminated, or reduced to the tenor of the rest - a course which any mining engineer who knew his business would realize was absolutely necessary, this result being purely a freak which does not correspond to any previous results obtained on the field - the average values of all the samples for all minerals was only £1:15:0 per ton instead of the £16 he shows; and ... I am convinced

⁷⁹ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 6 November 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 6/61, ANZ-W.

that this figure is not a payable one and that it more nearly represents the true average value of any stone available.⁸⁰

On 16 December, Hardy wrote to Macmillan again:

I have succeeded in interesting a number of monied people, including a well known mining man, in my proposition with the result that arrangements have now been made to employ several men to conduct certain further prospecting work including the clearing out of necessary drives, cutting tracks etc. There is further capital available for actual working purposes which I have every hope will be commenced, together with the erection of plant etc in the very near future.

Eyes are now being turned towards Waiorongomai as being a profitable and almost untouched source of gold, and I have been recently receiving numerous inquiries upon the matter not only from local sources but from Australia.⁸¹

Under an agreement made on 19 December, in the following February Hardy transferred his mining licenses to three Te Kuiti residents: Bernard J. Drake, the borough engineer,⁸² Norman Alexander Davidson, the Waitomo Electric Power Board's engineer,⁸³ and William Ernest Gray, a farmer who had formerly been a partner in Auckland Taranaki Motors and subsequently was manager of the Waitomo Lime Company,⁸⁴ retaining only a one-tenth interest himself; no monetary consideration was recorded.⁸⁵ Presumably these were the 'monied people' referred to in his letter to the minister; however, none was 'a well known mining man'. The extent of their financial resources is not known, and only the estate of William Ernest

⁸⁰ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 3 December 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 6/61, ANZ-W.

⁸¹ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 16 December 1931, Mines Department, MD 1, 6/61, ANZ-W.

⁸² See *Waitomo Electoral Roll, 1931*, p. 44.

⁸³ See *Auckland Star*, 19 August 1929, p. 8.

⁸⁴ See *Auckland Star*, 6 July 1928, p. 5; *New Zealand Herald*, advertisement, 13 July 1928, p. 22, 23 September 1933, p. 15.

⁸⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Mining Privileges 1913-1932, folios 201, 203, 204, 207, BBAV 11500/4a; Mining Registrations 1931, no. 4115, BCDG 11288/10a, ANZ-A.

Gray has been traced: at his death in 1955 he was a retired contractor, and the value of his estate was a modest £3,010.⁸⁶

PROSPECTING HIS MINES IN 1932, AND HIS EXTRAVAGANT CLAIMS

With the assistance of Les Hill, in early 1932 Hardy reopened McLean's level, hired a sledge and horses 'and brought ten tons with difficulty out of the Hero', which were placed in sacks and sent for testing at Thames.⁸⁷ In April, the *Te Aroha News* described him tapping 'the Hero tunnel', meaning the 1400-foot level, which was

found to be flooded to a depth of five feet. Water flowed from its mouth for three hours before the prospectors could venture in. It is here in the intermediate level that it is claimed the richest reef is situated. Rails and trucks were found just as they had been left 30 years ago, and actually in one tunnel were found the working tools and wheelbarrow of a miner as he had placed them. All were in an excellent state of preservation. Along the roof runs a 12in. air pipe, little the worse for sealing in a damp mine for 30 odd years. The galvanizing has successfully withstood the rust. The reef, which is 14ft wide, flutters along the roof of the tunnel about 200ft from the entrance, and in places the yellow glitter of the minerals in its heart can be plainly seen.

High hopes are also entertained for the McLean tunnel (2,000ft), which is prettily situated alongside the Premier Stream. Here a reef missed by the early miners has been discovered and promises a handsome return.

All the surrounding drives have come in for attention and in all there are 13 workable reefs being investigated, the largest being that in the Hero.⁸⁸

It must be assumed that Hardy was responsible for these claims about the value of the ore.

In 1955 Hardy recalled clearing out McLean's level: 'The marks of the truck wheels' flanges could still be distinguished on the floor between the

⁸⁶ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420, 344/55, ANZ-A.

⁸⁷ Les and Russ Hill, interviewed by David Bettison, 13 June 1975; note Louis Burkard to H.L. Hill, 8 July 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM222, ANZ-A.

⁸⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 11 April 1932, p.5.

rails' in the dry part of it, 900 feet from its mouth.⁸⁹ Two samples, from unspecified places, were sent in late March to the Thames School of Mines, Hardy informing its director, Hugh Crawford, that, 'should these samples, representative of two extensive ore lodes, prove encouraging, I should like to have a trial crushing made of say five tons'. He wanted the assay results at the earliest possible moment.⁹⁰ Three samples were tested: each produced one pennyweight, one valued at 4s 1d and the other two at 4s 2d.⁹¹ The Waihi School of Mines received another four samples on 14 April. The first, of brown quartz taken from the surface of the Premier, was valued at one shilling per ton, while the second, 'mineralised quartz and country' rock from the 'Blue reef' was worth only ten pence. A sample from the south branch of the Hero reef gave £2 13s 10d, and another from the 'Hero main drive' produced 4s 1d.⁹²

As these results were not what Hardy would have wanted nor were in line with what he claimed the reefs were worth, he failed to obtain the funds needed, which in turn led to another letter to Crawford, written on 1 June:

As you are of course aware Mr S[tephen] J[ohn] Fortescue of Otorohanga⁹³ has recently been in touch with me in business matters relating to the floatation of a company for the exploitation of my holdings here. You are possibly aware of the fact that not long ago he abruptly terminated negotiations with me, and with those associated with me, following a conference he had with Mr [John William] Smith [Supervisor of the Unemployment Scheme at Thames]⁹⁴ and yourself at Hamilton some three weeks or so again, and this in spite of his repeated offers to undertake certain business matters in connection with the arrangement he made with us and which undertakings he

⁸⁹ Malcolm Hardy, Report for South Pacific Mines, n.d. [1959], p. 28, handwritten copy made by and in the possession of Eric Coppard, Waihi.

⁹⁰ Malcolm Hardy to Director, Thames School of Mines, 24 March 1932, Correspondence: Inwards 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

⁹¹ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 11 February 1932-5 September 1933, entry for 30 March 1932, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

⁹² Waihi School of Mines, Assay for M.Y. Hardy, 20 April 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

⁹³ See *Evening Post*, 7 October 1919, p. 8, 20 December 1919, p. 7; *Waitomo Electoral Roll, 1931*, p. 52.

⁹⁴ See paper on mining in the Te Aroha Mining District during the Depression.

had failed to fulfil, also as a result, so I am led to believe, of this same conference.

Mr Fortescue's explanations of his sudden change of heart are, to my mind, vague and entirely unsatisfactory and leave much unanswered, and leave us in a very unsatisfactory position. Also, in a certain letter, this gentleman appears to have come to the conclusion, also apparently as a result of this conference between himself and you, in proving to his own satisfaction that I am guilty of misrepresentation as far as my holdings are concerned. This aspect of the case is rather serious and as it called for an explanation I wrote requesting one but to date have received no reply.

He asked Crawford 'to acquaint me with your side of the question' and to give his opinion of the property and which parts he had condemned to Fortescue.

In fairness to myself I should like to point out that upon my interview with Mr Fortescue at the commencement of negotiations I showed him all the data I had available relating to my activities here together with previous returns, plans, present assays and other important items. These he professed as being of no interest to him being concerned only with the financial aspect of the matter and my offer to leave these documents with him for perusal was refused. As I was not requested to attend your conference, I can safely consider that valuable information and data which I possessed was systematically ignored.

As Fortescue only had a sample of concentrates, his reference to surface ore must have referred to two small samples sent for assay some weeks beforehand, taken from 'a small, newly discovered reef located in a distant portion of my ground', unrelated to his main mine.⁹⁵ Crawford tersely denied having spoken to Fortescue, 'but I believe he mentioned the matter to Mr J. Smith, the nature of their conversation I do not know'. He had not released the results of the assays to anyone apart from Hardy, and was unable to give any opinion about his claims.⁹⁶

Despite these assay results and Fortescue's realisation of the true value of the property in which he had been invited to invest, one week later

⁹⁵ Malcolm Hardy to Director, Thames School of Mines, 1 June 1932, Inwards Correspondence 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

⁹⁶ Hugh Crawford to Malcolm Hardy, 4 June 1932, Outward Correspondence 1932-1936, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

Hardy announced to the local newspaper that, after 'living on the field for the past year', he had 'definitely established the existence of millions of tons of payable ore in the old workings which will with the assistance of modern machinery yield a handsome return'. He planned to start constructing a tramway to his battery site almost at once, and because 300 miners would be employed foreshadowed the rebirth of Waiorongomai township.⁹⁷ The tramway and battery sites, owned by Peter Ferguson in the late nineteenth century,⁹⁸ had been granted to Hardy on 9 June.⁹⁹ Taking Downey's advice, the warden granted them for two years, rather than the normal 42, to prevent their being locked up should he be unable to erect his battery.¹⁰⁰

Hardy supported the request by residents that the government should provide a public crushing battery to assist prospecting. After this was declined,¹⁰¹ he immediately gave a detailed response to the minister's letter, which he claimed represented the views of Downey, whom he believed opposed reopening the field:

What area, he asked, was the Minister referring to as having been abandoned previously as unpayable. If he was referring to the eastern area, above Waiorongomai, he was wrong. The most important part had not been abandoned for the reason given and had been proved to be highly payable by the results obtained by Mr J[osiah] C[lifton] Firth,¹⁰² who sold out for a large amount and the New Find Company,¹⁰³ which had worked the ores profitably; also by the late Mr E.H. Hardy. These people merely worked free milling ores. It had to be remembered that Waiorongomai on the eastern side had 2000ft of "backs" which had only been worked 300ft from the top but had been penetrated a further 600ft without working the ore, in which values were found all the way and were there today.

Past history had no bearing on the present position and it would be as reasonable, said Mr Hardy, to condemn goldmining at

⁹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 13 June 1932, p. 4.

⁹⁸ See paper on Peter Ferguson and his New Era.

⁹⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Mining Privileges 1913-1932, folios 224, 225, BBAV 11500/4a; Register of Applications 1921-1934, Hearing of 9 June 1932, BBAV 11505/6b, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 20, 21/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰¹ *Te Aroha News*, 19 August 1932, p. 4.

¹⁰² See paper on the Battery Company at Waiorongomai

¹⁰³ See paper on the New Find mine at Waiorongomai.

Waihi because the Martha mine in the old days was considered absolutely worthless. Yet after it had been condemned the Martha reef returned gold worth an enormous amount. There were still in Te Aroha district immense areas which had never been touched.

Regarding the geological survey [*Geology of the Aroha Subdivision*], Mr Hardy said it was absolutely impossible to make a survey that would be of any value because it was not possible to get at the reefs and only surface indications were taken into consideration. The nature of the country precluded the possibility of a proper survey for precious metals. Since the late Mr Hardy's time no serious effort had been made to exploit or even test the area on the eastern side (Waiorongomai).

He claimed the oil flotation system and the perfected cyanide process would treat local ores cheaply, and insisted the field had been worked successfully by his father, Firth, and the New Find Company; as well, the New Zealand Exploration Company 'had admitted that the values were payable, though circumstances prevented it from carrying on', a claim at total variance with the facts.¹⁰⁴

It was ridiculous, said Mr Hardy, to say that since the "sampling" by his father there had been no new development which had served to reveal any body of payable ore. His own experience had shown an immense body of payable ore. As to the geological survey, it meant nothing at all. It could not take the place of prospecting. The Mining Inspector had shown complete ignorance of the district and the views set out in the Minister's letter would carry no weight at all with men of experience and judgment. The Minister should come to Te Aroha and hear what men with practical knowledge of the local conditions have to say. Mr Hardy said he thought the people of Te Aroha should take a greater interest in the prospecting and do their best to push it along. When the Te Aroha goldfields were formerly worked the ore returned £2 per ton and only 60 per cent of the gold was saved. To-day there were many advantages. Practically the whole of the gold was recoverable, electric power for working mines was to be had, and a much more convenient system of transport. It was a cheap and effective way of handling all sulphide ore deposits with a minimum of loss. When his father started mining at Waiorongomai the losses were 75 per cent and these were later reduced to 3/9 per ton....

Finally, Mr Hardy said, if the Minister wished to tell the Te Aroha prospectors that as a matter of economy he could not grant

¹⁰⁴ See paper on the New Zealand Exploration Company.

a battery why could he not have done so without throwing discredit on mining possibilities. After all, he did not think it would matter much, for anyone interested financially would be guided by more substantial facts.¹⁰⁵

Five days later, Hardy again criticized Macmillan's views, claiming that the gold and base metals were 'of considerable value'. He wanted the minister to 'send a mining expert from some other part of New Zealand who will have no preconceived notions about the possibilities of the Te Aroha goldfields and he will arrive at conclusions from a thorough inspection and a survey of the whole of the facts having any bearing on the position'.¹⁰⁶

During the time that Hardy was attacking Downey and Macmillan for unfairly denigrating the mines, he was sending samples for testing. The first from the Premier went to Thames in late July, when he informed the *Te Aroha News* that 'the ore taken was particularly rich, the gold being visible in many instances to the naked eye'. He expected the high value would lead to a large number of men being employed in it.¹⁰⁷ Les Hill, on his behalf, had already told Louis Burkard, whose Sydney firm purchased concentrates,¹⁰⁸ that the ore assayed 'about £67', meaning that 16 3/4 ounces of gold per ton must have been obtained. (Burkard, who had salvaged a ship wrecked on Great Barrier Island in 1922, would re-visit New Zealand in 1934.)¹⁰⁹ Burkard offered to assay the ore: 'The quantities you mention (2 or 3 tons per month) are very small, but I would be able to take same from you subject to parcels being accumulated till you have 5 tons'. He offered to buy the ore if it produced four ounces per ton, and arranged for his Hauraki agent, Hugh Crawford (who was the director of the Thames School of Mines), to assay a parcel and telegraph the results to him.¹¹⁰ Assays made on 2 August on quartz showing free gold, presumably

¹⁰⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 19 August 1932, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 24 August 1932, p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 25 July 1932, p. 1.

¹⁰⁸ See Hugh Crawford to Malcolm Hardy, 23 January 1933, Outwards Correspondence 1932-1936; Malcolm Hardy to Hugh Crawford, 17 March 1933, Correspondence Inwards 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁰⁹ *New Zealand Herald*, 29 September 1922, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 6 January 1934, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Louis Burkard to H.L. Hill, 8 July 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM222, ANZ-A.

taken from the Premier, gave 2oz 16dwt, the value being £11 11s.¹¹¹ On 11 August, further assays of six samples taken from an unspecified part of Hardy's ground by Nevin Buchan¹¹² gave the following values per ton: 4s, 2s, 3s, £2 17s, nil, and £1 15s, being an average of 16s 10d.¹¹³ Fifteen undated assays of samples from the Hero reef gave six valued at under 1s per ton, the lowest value being 5d and the two highest 2s 10d and 4s 7d.¹¹⁴ Knowing these results, departmental officials were in no mood to be impressed by Hardy's claims (or those of others) of fortunes awaiting amateur miners.

On 18 August, in applying for a renewal of the first of his prospecting licenses,¹¹⁵ Hardy declared that he had 'vigorously and continuously prosecuted prospecting operations ... on the surface and underground, samples taken, assays obtained, 1000 feet of drives opened and unwatered, drives have been timbered, tracks cut and formed', all at a cost of at least £150.¹¹⁶ Asked for his opinion, Downey expressed 'grave doubts if it should be granted. The applicant is at present evidently holding at least three other prospecting licenses, and I have no reason whatever for thinking he is carrying out on any of them the "vigorous and continuous prosecution of prospecting operations" required'. One man should have been employed prospecting each license continuously, but he did not believe Hardy had 'employed any labour or that any other than himself has been at any time employed on the areas. This is not complying with the provisions of the Mining Act, and really amounts to "shepherding" the areas'. He recommended granting the application only if satisfied that Hardy would

¹¹¹ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1932-1933, entry for 2 August 1932, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹¹² He has not been traced, apart from his sending ore to be tested at Thames on behalf of Milton and Co in September 1933: see Milton and Co to Hugh Crawford, 13 September 1933, Correspondence: Inwards: 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹¹³ Thames School of Mines, Assay made on 11 August 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM216, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁴ Results of Assays of Samples from Hero, Hardy's Mine, n.d., Mines Department, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

¹¹⁵ See map by Malcolm Hardy, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁶ Malcolm Hardy to Warden, 18 August 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

man all his licenses.¹¹⁷ At the hearing at the end of August, Hardy declared that he had been living on the site since August 1931, had de-watered 1,250 feet of McLean's level and 500 of the Hero, had done some re-timbering, 'prospected all reefs & assays taken', and had cut two and three quarter miles of tracks, 'going there all the time' in addition to working his other three licenses.¹¹⁸

On 7 September 1932, Downey informed Kimbell that Hardy's licenses covered 'most of the area at Waiorongomai from which gold was produced in the old days. To the best of my knowledge he has not done a single foot of fresh development, and has not employed any labour'. Twenty samples had been sent to Waihi and Thames for assaying:

Reducing one abnormally high result to the tenor of the rest, the average value shown was 26/8d per ton, which was not payable. In any case, there is no saying how, or from where, these samples were taken. My opinion is they were mainly picked samples, and not representative of any body of available ore. This opinion is justified by the fact that the Komata Reefs Company's sampling [in 1913] only showed an average value of 13/-, while I have reason for thinking further recent sampling by an outside engineer showed somewhat similar values.¹¹⁹

At the end of that month, he wrote that Hardy and James Donald Cumming¹²⁰ were the two men 'behind the whole trouble' at Te Aroha, Hardy 'being the chief agitator for the battery'. Both troublemakers were 'evidently bent on getting their own way right or wrong'.¹²¹

To strengthen his claims of developing his ground, on 10 September Hardy wrote to Kimbell outlining all his work. He had cleared and unwatered 1,600 feet of McLean's level, clearing and timbering two heavy falls. In the Colonist, he had dewatered the highest level and assayed the reef, taken assays from the open cut, and deepened a 'shallow winze' for an

¹¹⁷ J.F. Downey to Warden, 22 August 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁸ Notes of hearing of 31 August 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁹ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 7 September 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

¹²⁰ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha District in the 1930s.

¹²¹ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 29 September 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

unspecified distance. In the 1400-foot level, he had cleared a fall of 60 feet at the entrance, baled out a 14-foot winze, and cleared a drive on the reef and extended it (how great an extension was not stated). Thirty feet had been timbered, rails laid for 150 feet, and after intensive prospecting two deposits were located. The fallen entrance of the low level of the New Find had been cleared. In the Premier the No. 2 level had been dewatered, a 10-foot rise timbered, and assays were taken in it and the dewatered Nos. 3 and 4 levels. A sledge track from the Colonist to Army Creek had been cut, and he had laid a pipeline and prepared the ground to erect a test plant beside the 1400-foot level. 'Intensive surface prospecting' had been done, and more assays were planned. He had employed labour 'as necessity arose', one man currently being at work, and his own time and energy had been spent exclusively on the leases.¹²² At the warden's court, shortly afterwards, Hardy declared that 'he was negotiating for something more than prospecting at present. His chief work now was to make the mine accessible'.¹²³ Despite Downey's unfavourable report, all the licenses were renewed.¹²⁴

DEMANDING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

As a consequence of the agitation for government assistance for prospecting by the prospecting association, the chamber of commerce, and the borough council, Kimbell held a conference with representatives of these bodies and several would-be miners at Te Aroha on 10 October. He was accompanied by Downey and Smith, who was supervising the unemployed men doing prospecting. During this meeting, chaired by the mayor, Robert Coulter,¹²⁵ several people criticized the geological survey published in 1913, and when Kimbell pointed out that the geologists had spent ten months exploring the area, Hardy responded that the hillside

was very steep and a lot of it was inaccessible. There was an immense area to cover and 10 months was practically useless. He

¹²² Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 10 September 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹²³ *Te Aroha News*, 19 September 1932, p. 5.

¹²⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1921-1934, Hearings held on 15 September 1932, 20 October 1932, 8 December 1932, BBAV 11505/6b, ANZ-A.

¹²⁵ See paper on mining in the Te Aroha Mining District during the Depression.

had a prospecting claim of 45 acres and though he had been there a year he had not seen it all. It was a very difficult thing for a geologist to say that there was or was not gold in any place. Gold mining was a fine art and to know what was in the ground it was necessary to put in tunnels.

Asked by Kimbell if he would show Smith his work, he replied, 'certainly'.

His father had been a successful miner in the area he was prospecting. Others had failed, not for lack of ores but because of mismanagement or lack of finance. At Waiorongomai, after 50ft one came upon sulphide ore and he could point out where it had been left and the free milling ore over it. The sulphide ore remained to-day and was carrying values. The base metals were also available. He was not asking for monetary assistance but that the Mines Department would give him a fair hearing and not show prejudice. He was not referring to Mr Kimbell. There seemed to be a great prejudice against Waiorongomai. When he applied for a renewal of his prospecting license his case was prejudiced by an unfavourable report from the Mines Inspector. He had worked on his area and had spent money. He did not care what any geological report said, he had seen the stuff and knew it was there.

Mr Kimbell: That is what we want to see.

Mr Hardy: Come up and see it. At Waiorongomai there are millions of tons that will run from 15s per ton.

Mr Kimbell: And less.

Mr Hardy: And is that not the case with Waihi too?...

Mr Hardy said he did not want to be up against it every time he went to the Warden because of reports from Mr Downey.

Mr Kimbell: Do you put in a report to the inspector showing what you have done? I would suggest that you do that. It would be helpful.

Mr Hardy: The Inspector is here and let him answer for himself. When my license came up for renewal Mr Downey put in an adverse report and said I was sitting on the claim and that he had grave doubts about any gold being there. I hold four areas close together and have opened up a tremendous amount of country and have had assays taken.

Mr Kimbell: When will your next application for a renewal be heard?

Mr Hardy: In a few days and I want to know why there should be adverse reports. Is there a prejudice? He was not talking through his hat. He wanted the Mines Department to help him and cease pin-pricking.... All I ask is that the claims shall be inspected before a report is put into the Warden.

Mr Kimbell: Have you done any driving?

Mr Hardy: Certainly. I have opened up about 3000 feet of drives and made a track.

Which was not what Kimbell had asked. Hardy later claimed officials were biased, and, when Kimbell said there was no evidence of this, responded, 'I can produce it'. After Gibbs described the good values he had found, Hardy 'said if previous returns were required he was in a position to supply the figures. He had received from Mr Firth the returns obtained at Waiorongomai by his father [Josiah Clifton Firth], who gave up mining because of financial difficulties. He had the returns from free milling and sulphide ores'. Kimbell asked for this information on Firth's and Edwin Hardy's mining. After others claimed to know where good ore could be found, Kimbell announced that he was prepared to recommend that a geologist, Eric Ogilvie Macpherson, be sent to select suitable areas for prospecting.

Mayor Coulter repeated that when Hardy had applied for the renewal of his license 'an adverse report had been put in without an inspection'. When Kimbell pointed out that he had more than one license, Hardy said that he had four, all adjoining but not yet amalgamated; 'I can take up as many as I like providing I don't exceed 100 acres'. When told that he must send Downey a quarterly report about his work and that Downey, if not satisfied, could inspect it, Hardy responded that he had not seen the property for a year. In admitting this, Downey stated it was for Hardy to satisfy the warden that he had fulfilled the conditions of the Act. Hardy responded that 'because of your report I was put to the expense of engaging a lawyer. The adverse report would naturally influence the Warden and he might have been penalised. If there was to be a report it should not be based on hearsay'. When he later stated that 'whether he held his area under four licenses or one it amounted to the same thing', Kimbell retorted, 'It does not. What is the use of talking nonsense'.¹²⁶

After returning to Wellington, Kimbell sent a personal letter to Downey warning that he should have checked Hardy's work before condemning it. If questioned by a solicitor Downey would have found it 'very difficult indeed ... to substantiate any contention that you may put up that you were justified in regarding the report as a reasonable and fair one

¹²⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 12 October 1932, p. 5.

under the circumstances'.¹²⁷ Hardy followed up the conference by thanking Kimbell for sending Macpherson, whom he had shown the information he had mentioned at the meeting. He sent Kimbell his father's 1,003 assays from the Premier and Vulcan lodes, which had produced an average value per ton of £1 0s 2d.¹²⁸ In November, he supported the mayor's trip to Wellington to ensure that the Waihou River remained a sludge channel,¹²⁹ and in January it was reported that he had 'recently rejected a handsome offer' for the Premier.¹³⁰ If this was not one of his exaggerations, he should have accepted the offer.

MACPHERSON'S REPORT

According to Hardy's 1955 report on Waiorongomai, Macpherson spent two days inspecting the Hero section of his ground and made 'a very favourable report'.¹³¹ Macpherson noted in it that Hardy 'kindly permitted me to study the mine plans and assay records of some of the defunct companies', and showed him through the Hero and Colonist levels 'and pointed out the essential features'. He drew different conclusions to what Hardy claimed, stressing that ore worth below £1 10s per ton was not considered payable in the 1890s and that the 1,003 assays made for Hardy's father had averaged £1 3s. The remaining ore must be of lesser value because the richer patches had been extracted; all the free milling ore had gone, leaving sulphide ore which needed systematic sampling before its value could be determined.

Mr M. Hardy holds the lease of these properties and in company with Mr A. Black is attempting to roast the sulphides in a primitive furnace ... and intends then to grind them in an arrestra; they hope to get a little free gold by this method and produce a concentrate. From his discussions with his father who had an intimate knowledge of these mines, Mr Hardy knows the

¹²⁷ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to J.F. Downey, 21 October 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹²⁸ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 4 November 1932, with enclosure, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 25 November 1932, p. 8.

¹³⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 6 January 1933, p. 4.

¹³¹ Malcolm Hardy, 'Report for South Pacific Mines', n.d. [1959], p. 38, Eric Coppard Papers, Waihi.

positions of the richer shoots or patches of ore and he intends to attack these first. These men have done a good deal of hard work opening old tracks, cleaning out workings and erecting their primitive plant.

Although access to the New Find mine was blocked by rock falls, Hardy had 'decided to open up the mine'. Macpherson concluded that the value of the ore was too low to be profitably worked.¹³²

WORKING HIS MINES

As Macpherson's report, with its reference to Hardy's assistant made clear, Downey had been wrong to state that Hardy had not employed any labour. Nothing has been traced about Black, but Macpherson's comment implied that he had been working for some time. Earlier in 1932, and at least until July, Les Hill had assisted him, either for wages or as a partner.¹³³ In the middle of 1933 James David Cumming,¹³⁴ one of the most vocal proponents of Waiorongomai's wonderful prospects, was employed by him for about two weeks.¹³⁵ In 1933, Hardy called his venture Hardy's Gold-mining Syndicate, which consisted of himself and another, unnamed, prospector.¹³⁶ David Hardy thought he probably hired men with such necessary skills as being able to handle explosives,¹³⁷ but doubted he could have found many men willing to work with him:

He was totally Victorian in his attitude towards work. In other words it was from sun-up to sundown, and then cook your meals yourself at the end of it. He was ... a confirmed bachelor and you ... went out with a plate of porridge and plenty of treacle on it to start the day and that was your breakfast.... He had thick slices of bread and cheese or something for lunch.¹³⁸

¹³² E.O. Macpherson, 'Report on Te Aroha Mining District', 14 November 1932, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

¹³³ Interviews with Les and Russ Hill by David Bettison, 13 June 1975; Louis Burkard to H.L. Hill, 8 July 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM222, ANZ-A.

¹³⁴ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

¹³⁵ A.L. Willis to Unemployment Commissioner, 7 July 1933, Mines Department, MD 14, 11/2/18, ANZ-W.

¹³⁶ *AJHR*, 1934, C-2, p. 22.

¹³⁷ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 15 of transcript.

¹³⁸ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 16 of transcript.

In the 1960s, Hardy was remembered as having had the ‘nasty habit’ of employing

local people, just usually one at a time, and he’d get a fair bit of work done by them with great promises of, I suppose, partnerships or whatever, but certainly leading the worker to believe that there were greater things in store. And when he had sufficient ore out he used to sack them and then he would do all the easier work.¹³⁹

A mine manager who met him in the late 1940s recalled a ‘big, tall, raw-boned chap who could take strides about four feet long’.¹⁴⁰ When playing schoolboy rugby ‘he got a kick on the shin and this used to trouble him terribly from time to time’, which must have ‘prevented him from clambering up the hill quite often’.¹⁴¹ He used a ‘very obliging’ little pony to pull a sledge to and from his mines.¹⁴²

On 27 November, Hardy wrote to Kimbell claiming that Macpherson had promised to recommend that he and Black receive a prospecting subsidy, which he now requested. Although he had spent all his available cash and was not ready to extract ore, he hoped that early in the new year ‘the present small plant now under construction may be completed’.¹⁴³ This was erected outside the Hero, or 1400-foot, tunnel, at a site he was almost certainly told about by his father, who in 1904 was quoted as proposing to ‘erect an auxiliary battery of, say, five head of stamps, near the mouth of the tunnel’.¹⁴⁴ After checking with Macpherson, Kimbell replied that no such promise had been made.¹⁴⁵ This news prompted Hardy to express astonishment, claiming Macpherson had ‘expressed himself as being very satisfied at the amount of work done’ and had assured him that he would

¹³⁹ Interview with Eric Coppard, at Waihi, 4 August 1985, p. 14 of transcript.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with J.B. McAra, at Waihi, 4 August 1985, p. 3 of transcript.

¹⁴¹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 3 of transcript.

¹⁴² Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 5 of transcript.

¹⁴³ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 27 November 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54; see also J.D. Cumming to Minister of Mines, 28 February 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 21/2/4, ANZ-W.

¹⁴⁴ *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 October 1904, p. 33.

¹⁴⁵ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Malcolm Hardy, 10 January 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

recommend assistance. Hardy added that he had located a 'rich chute' in the 1400-foot level. 'I am very handicapped for funds in this work but have succeeded so far in erecting the machinery, but have yet to do some timbering inside in preparation for working', as well as completing repairs to the track to enable him to take concentrates out. 'Any assistance would only be temporary as I hope to be self-supporting in the near future'. Very little development remained to be done before stoping began, apart from extending the Hero winze.¹⁴⁶

Downey recommended that no subsidy be granted, for it was not being provided to aid prospecting, as required under the regulations. 'I consider, particularly in view of the general position on the field, that it is inadvisable to grant aid for any work on it that is not genuinely of a prospecting nature, and of a measurable character, that is, in the way of driving, sinking, rising, etc'.¹⁴⁷ The department agreed, but when informed of the decision, Hardy protested to Macmillan. Claiming to be ready to open up a reef from the Hero winze, he argued that his mine should have been inspected before the decision was made, adding that 'the unfortunate letter of wholesale condemnation of the field of some months ago' had 'become almost a cause celebre'. After explaining all the help he had given Macpherson, he made another breathtakingly audacious but counter-productive claim, for officials knew the real story, by stating that all the four prospecting parties exploring the mountain were 'on values, and exceptionally good values at that'. He urged Macmillan to visit the field and meet those trying 'to resuscitate this neglected and much maligned field'.¹⁴⁸

Macmillan replied that he would visit and discuss the matter with him.¹⁴⁹ When they met, on more than one occasion before and during May, Hardy provided photographs of his plant and samples from his winze along with details of his proposed developments. He intended to sink 50 feet in the existing winze on the Hero reef at the northern end of the 1400-foot level, where he claimed to be in 14 feet on a six-foot reef containing high

¹⁴⁶ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 19 January 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁴⁷ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 10 February 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁴⁸ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 14 March 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁴⁹ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 30 March 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

values. He would also develop a chute at its southern end, and a short rise and winze, both of ten feet, at this point, where he again claimed there were good prospects.¹⁵⁰ Kimball recommended a subsidy of ten shillings per foot in the winze and two shillings per foot for the timbering thereof plus two shillings per foot for driving fifteen feet at the southern end.¹⁵¹ When thanking Kimball, Hardy announced he would not take advantage of this subsidy at this time, for he had opened up the winze sufficiently to work back along the reef at the depth of the winze and for some distance along the floor of the drive. As there was a great quantity of payable ore there, it would be 'some little time before my machine handles this quantity'. His limited capital meant he could only do necessary work in the winze, and further sinking was not needed to reach the ore. He hoped soon to employ a couple of men sinking and opening up the southern chute, and claimed that the winze had produced 'a lot of gold'.¹⁵² In response, Kimball warned that the subsidy was only available for three months, and if not used he would have to reapply.¹⁵³ It was not used.¹⁵⁴

At the same time as he was seeking assistance, Hardy was attempting to make contact with overseas purchasers of concentrates. Recalling no doubt that his father had sold these to Dapto, an Australian firm based south of Sydney,¹⁵⁵ in January 1933 he informed Hugh Crawford that he was 'anxious to get in touch with a smelting firm named Depto, of, I think, Cocell Creek, Sydney'. He sought confirmation of the address, and indeed whether the company still existed, for he had heard it was now called the Sulphide Corporation. 'I should also be pleased to know whether you could put me in touch with any individual or firm who is at present purchasing gold bearing concentrates at Thames. I hope to be producing in the course of

¹⁵⁰ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 2 May 1933; Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Minister of Mines, 4 May 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁵¹ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Minister of Mines, 4 May 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁵² Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 24 May 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁵³ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Malcolm Hardy, 1 June 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁵⁴ *AJHR*, 1934, C-2, p. 22.

¹⁵⁵ Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended: A history of Australian mining* (Melbourne, 1964), p. 278.

a week or two and wish to establish a market'.¹⁵⁶ He was advised to get in touch with Louis Burkard.¹⁵⁷ Burkard, expressed interest, but required a fee to test the metallic contents of a sample of concentrates that Hardy had sent; in mid-March he agreed to pay, 'although I already know the gold and silver and metallic contents of the particular concentrates which he has. However, I am at present working at a lower level on the same reef from whence these concentrates came'. He was ready to start work 'in a small way' and was 'only waiting for the rain to fill my race to enable me to make a start'. Within weeks he would send his first parcel of concentrates to Crawford, but was unable to 'determine at the present moment of course how much per month I can turn out. I hope though to have from two to three tons at the commencement of operations'. His intention was to work on 'some very rich sulphide' which he expected to crush well, for he believed a small parcel of that ore had been crushed 'some years ago with very good results'.¹⁵⁸

In April the Thames School of Mines assayed a sample of concentrates which produced 7dwt of bullion, valued at £1 11s 4d.¹⁵⁹ This result prompted Hardy to inform the Minister of Customs that he had 'commenced operations for the purpose of extracting gold bearing quartz', but because the ore was refractory his concentrates could not be treated in New Zealand. 'I am now in negotiation with a buyer in Australia who will handle the gold contents upon the London price of gold which is at present time some 30/- less than the Australian price of same'.¹⁶⁰ He was advised of the amount of gold duty to be paid, which could not be waived.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Malcolm Hardy to Hugh Crawford (Director), Thames School of Mines, 20 January 1933, Correspondence Inwards 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁵⁷ Hugh Crawford to Malcolm Hardy, 23 January 1933, 4 February 1933, Outward Correspondence 1932-1936, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁵⁸ Malcolm Hardy to Hugh Crawford, 17 March 1933, Correspondence Inwards 1932-1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁵⁹ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1932-1933, entry for 4 April 1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁶⁰ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Customs, 10 April 1933, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

¹⁶¹ Comptroller of Customs to Malcolm Hardy, 24 April 1933, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

Despite announcing he was about to break out ore, his mining was largely limited to cleaning out existing workings and taking samples.¹⁶² By February 1933 he claimed to have spent at least £200 since acquiring his leases, and by October at least the same amount in the current year.¹⁶³ At his request, the council used unemployed men to clear the track to his mines; he supervised their work for two weeks for free.¹⁶⁴ He was granted a dam and water race for his small battery and applied, seemingly unsuccessfully, to use the assay house at Waiorongomai.¹⁶⁵ The council granted him permission to use 'a shack' at the top of the May Queen incline.¹⁶⁶ In June, an Auckland newspaper reported that he had 'laboured consistently for over 16 months', doing a 'considerable' amount of work on the Hero lode, and had installed 'a full battery plant', which was crushing ore from which concentrates would be sent to Australia 'to undergo treatment not available here'. The newspaper, no doubt on the basis of Hardy's information, reported that his method of working was 'practically on the same lines as that of the late Mr Hardy'. The cost of opening up the mines and erecting the battery had been 'considerable', but judging by samples of ore 'now on view in Te Aroha' this spending was justified because improved methods of extracting gold and its increased value meant he should succeed.¹⁶⁷

Macpherson had described his 'full battery plant' as a 'primitive plant'.¹⁶⁸ The machinery had been brought from Te Kuiti and carried up in

¹⁶² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 11, 51, 61/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁶³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 11, 51/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁶⁴ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 11 April 1933, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; J.D. Cumming to Minister of Mines, 23 October 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 21/2/4, ANZ-W.

¹⁶⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 2, 3/1933, BCDG 11289/2a; Register of Applications 1921-1934, Hearing held on 16 February 1933, BBAV 11505/6b, ANZ-A; Thames High School Board of Governors, Minutes of Meetings of 27 June 1933, 24 October 1933, High School Archives, Thames.

¹⁶⁶ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 24 May 1933, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

¹⁶⁷ *Auckland Star*, 3 June 1933, p. 4.

¹⁶⁸ E.O. Macpherson, 'Report on Te Aroha Mining District', 14 November 1932, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

pieces to the mouth of the 1400-foot level, which he named the Hero tunnel.¹⁶⁹ His treatment was to crush the ore into small pieces before burning it in kilns for several hours, then further pulverizing it, after which water conveyed the ore to sluice boxes on different levels. The blanket system collected the fine metals.¹⁷⁰ In the following year he was to enlarge the plant, as described below.

HARDY'S GOLD MINES DEVELOPMENT SYNDICATE

To go beyond the stage of reopening old mines, erecting a small plant, and taking samples required more capital than Hardy possessed. As by 1933 his Te Kuiti backers were no longer recorded as having any involvement, on 21 May that year he formed Hardy's Gold Mines Development Syndicate. Of its capital of £1,500 in 60 shares of £25 each, Hardy would retain 20 as fully paid-up, and when another 20 were subscribed 'the syndicate may be formed'. Its Objects were restricted to making further investigations:

1. To provide funds for the immediate extension of what is known as Hero No. 1 winze on the Hero reef. This winze is already projected some 14 feet on a 6 foot reef carrying very good values, and there is every indication that these values will continue down for a considerable distance, most probably as far as the long main drive (low level) [McLean's level] some 300 feet below, where the same reef has been opened up for working and similar ore is showing of great width.
2. To test and investigate other known gold bearing portions of the same reef at various levels.
3. To test and investigate known gold bearing reefs in the Northern portion of the property in the Premier section where formerly rich ore was mined.
4. To obtain trial crushings from the Hero winze as work proceeds.
5. To consolidate the tenure of the ground.
6. To ultimately devote a portion of the funds subscribed towards the formation of a company with sufficient capital to adequately work the property on a practical basis.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986.

¹⁷⁰ *Auckland Star*, 3 June 1933, p. 4.

¹⁷¹ 'Hardy's Gold Mines Development Syndicate, Te Aroha', 21 May 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

(It should be noted that the winze discovered by Hardy's Mines Ltd had been found not to contain any gold, and that although the Hero reef in McLean's level was wide it was of no value.¹⁷² Had Hardy really examined the records as closely as he claimed, he would have known this.)

Norman Gibbs, a Te Aroha accountant who had been secretary and treasurer of the Thames Harbour Board for two and a half years before admitting, in 1923, to 28 charges of theft and five of forgery,¹⁷³ was the secretary *pro tem*. He informed the Mines Department that the syndicate, formed by local businessmen, had the mayor as its chairman. Before developing the mine they wanted a trial crushing done at Thames, using the government subsidy for transporting and treating it.¹⁷⁴ Instead of doing the driving for which he had obtained a subsidy, Hardy took out samples to prove to his syndicate that the ore had the values claimed; if proven, he had been promised private capital.¹⁷⁵

Although the first tests appeared to be encouraging, as his claims were not proven, his syndicate was stillborn. On 8 August, six samples of 'Grey quartz with abundant Sulphide' produced values ranging from £3 6s 10s to £11 15s 3d. Galena concentrates gave an approximate lead content of 41.2 per cent and were valued at £408 4s 9d.¹⁷⁶ A week later, two samples of pyrite concentrate, two of tailings, and one of roasted ore were tested, the lowest result (the tailings) being £1 1s 4d and £2 10s 3d; the highest concentrate value was £23 11s 7d.¹⁷⁷

At the start of September, Hardy started to drive south on the Hero reef. After two feet, Francis Vardon Hennah, a miner who was supervising

¹⁷² Matthew Paul to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 31 March 1910, *AJHR*, 1910, C-3, p. 18; Matthew Paul to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 22 September 1922, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁷³ See *Auckland Star*, 1 October 1923, p. 4, 13 October 1923, p. 7, 7 November 1923, p. 8; *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1931*, p. 59; advertisement, *Evening Post*, 8 October 1941, p. 1.

¹⁷⁴ Norman Gibbs to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 26 June 1933, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁷⁵ F.V. Hennah to J.F. Downey, 19 June 1933, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

¹⁷⁶ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1932-1933, entry for 8 August 1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁷⁷ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1932-1933, entry for 11 August 1933, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

prospecting in the district,¹⁷⁸ reported that the ore 'looks good and pans off quite well'.¹⁷⁹ Two parcels were treated, one of 1 ton 12 3/4cwt and the second of 4 tons; the value of the first parcel of concentrates produced was £19 13s per ton and the second was £23 11s 7d, but no bullion was produced.¹⁸⁰ Downey immediately sent this information to his superiors,¹⁸¹ for it vindicated his refusal to entertain Hardy's claims.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

In March 1934, Hardy informed the warden that over the previous 12 months he had spent £350 on prospecting.¹⁸² On 20 May, Downey successfully recommended the cancellation of the subsidy granted in May 1933 to drive short distances, because it had not been used.¹⁸³ One week previously, Hardy had spoken to Macmillan and shown him samples of ore before applying for £25 to complete his small, single-stamp, battery. He also wanted to erect a light aerial cable from the portal to the plant, using No. 8 wire and buckets. In the mine, he planned to stope out ten feet of the northern face of the reef. Until the plant and other developments were completed, he needed money for his own sustenance, for his sole income came from mining. 'I am making this application on my own behalf and am not associated with any syndicate or company',¹⁸⁴ thereby revealing the stillbirth of Hardy's Gold Mines Development Syndicate. Downey informed Kimbell that Macmillan wanted to grant assistance, a waste of money he felt because the 'mine generally may be considered valueless. Only recently' James Robert Noble, a very experienced miner who had been for several years a battery manager at Waikino and manager of the Muir's Gold Reefs

¹⁷⁸ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

¹⁷⁹ F.V. Hennah to J.F. Downey, 8 September 1933, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁰ Hugh Crawford to J.F. Downey, 3 November 1933, Outwards Correspondence 1932-1936, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁸¹ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 4 November 1933, MD 1, 23/1/20, Part 1, ANZ-W.

¹⁸² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1934, 10/1934, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

¹⁸³ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 20 May 1934, BBDO 18634, MM174, ANZ-A; *AJHR*, 1935, C-2, p. 25.

¹⁸⁴ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 14 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

Ltd near Te Puke and of the Golden Dawn mine at Owcharoa,¹⁸⁵ ‘sampled it on behalf of a syndicate that had taken an option over it, and could get nothing approaching pay values’. Noble’s confidential report stated that there was ‘no ore in sight to warrant the erection of any kind of treatment plant’. All Hardy possessed was ‘a remnant of ore left by the old workers in the extreme cap of the reef’, insufficient to keep him mining for very long, and any results scarcely warranted the cost of supervising the grant. He would prefer Macmillan to give a straight-out grant that Hardy could spend as he chose, without the need for supervision.¹⁸⁶

A week after requesting the grant, Hardy complained to Macmillan that delays in providing the money would mean that he would be ‘starved off my ground as has been the fate of every other prospector on the Te Aroha mountain except myself’. (He ignored the fact that they had not found anything worth extracting.) Claiming to be so successful that he was about to go into production and was planning to form a company, he asked that the earlier grant for driving be converted into a straight-out grant. In stating he had obtained 20 tons from the lip of the winze he failed to indicate that this was in the previous August or to give the assay results. The crosscut had been extended ‘a short distance on rich ore, but work was suspended through want of funds’. The ore he showed Macmillan was taken from the Premier reef, which he claimed Macpherson liked. A little assistance would, he claimed, lead to a ‘highly productive proposition’ of benefit to the district. ‘Actual trial crushings have shown conclusively that rich ore exists here in quantity as may be very easily verified’.¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately for his argument, Downey had in the previous year sent his department a copy of assays made for Hardy’s Mines in 1922 of the Hero lode in McLean’s level that proved ‘the complete absence of any payable ore’

¹⁸⁵ Minutes of Meeting between Malcolm Hardy and Minister of Mines, 9 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W; advertisement, *Waihi Daily Telegraph*, 16 January 1906, p. 3; *Auckland Star*, 23 May 1911, p. 4; *New Zealand Herald*, 4 March 1921, p. 8, 10 March 1923, p. 10; *Evening Post*, 11 October 1935, p. 8; *Thames Electoral Roll, 1935*, p. 131.

¹⁸⁶ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 16 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁸⁷ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 21 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

at lower levels.¹⁸⁸ Despite this, Macmillan decided to pay £25 if given the amount required to pay workers for stoping and the length of time he required sustenance; the cost of materials for both plant and aerial tramway would be paid to the firms providing them. This grant was to be repaid from profits, or refunded either if a company was formed or he sold up.¹⁸⁹ Downey was not required to supervise its use, for which Macmillan would take full responsibility.¹⁹⁰

As requested, Hardy itemized his request: £6 9s 6d for material for his plant, £2 15s for his aerial tram, £5 14s 6d for a semi-skilled man to stope for two weeks, and sustenance for himself for 8 weeks at £1 5s per week, his 'usual weekly expenditure'. Damage to the water race had to be repaired, and he would work without assistance for two weeks to make his plant operative and do most of the work required to erect the aerial tram and take out a parcel of ore.¹⁹¹ After four letters protesting at the non-arrival of the money for his sustenance, in one of which he reported 'having difficulty in carrying on', it arrived in mid-July, having been mistakenly sent to Waihi.¹⁹²

HARDY'S PLANT

At the end of July, Hardy informed Macmillan that his plant was completed, apart from the roof.¹⁹³ A week later, he informed Kimbell that his one-stamp mill was working well and he was putting through low-grade ore to saturate the plates before treating high-grade ore. 'As this plant is somewhat unique and novel in construction you may be interested to have particulars of same for the benefit of other prospectors who possess few

¹⁸⁸ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 7 August 1933, with enclosures, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁸⁹ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 26 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹⁰ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to J.F. Downey, 29 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹¹ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 31 May 1934, Mines Department, MD1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹² Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 17 June 1934, 23 June 1934, 5 July 1934, 12 July 1934, 14 July 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹³ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 31 July 1934 [second letter written on same date], Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

funds and wish to construct their own plant at small expense'.¹⁹⁴ Late in August, Charles Ernest Jennings, an unemployed Te Aroha carpenter,¹⁹⁵ who did some prospecting locally on his own account in 1933,¹⁹⁶ assisted him to erect the roof.¹⁹⁷ By the beginning of September the building was complete, and all the £25 had been used up.¹⁹⁸ When Eric Coppard explored the area for South Pacific Mines in 1962 he found it still standing, with an old car engine and a small stone crusher inside. It 'was made from junky sort of limbs off trees and so forth', with 'a bit of corrugated iron over it'.¹⁹⁹

Early in October, Hardy sent details and photographs of the plant to the department. The stamper was an 'adaption of the power hammer as applied to quartz crushing through a spring which actuates on the stamper stem. The machine is driven by a pelton [wheel] actuated by pipeline brought from a dam or a stream above', with sufficient water pressure for 120 drops a minute, which enabled about two hundredweight of hard ore plus some softer material to be passed through a 36-mesh screen in eight hours. A '[quick]silver plate and blanket riffles are added to catch free gold and concentrates. I am saving all tailings with the idea of getting a berdan later for further treatment'. He was obtaining a return averaging ten shillings per hundredweight, but had yet to have a complete clean up.²⁰⁰

CLAIMS OF EXTRACTING LARGE AMOUNTS OF ORE

At the end of 1934, Hardy complained that Downey had not included him in discussions at Te Aroha about revoking permission to use the

¹⁹⁴ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 8 August 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹⁵ Thames Hospital, Fees Register 1914-1916, entry for 29 June 1915, YCAH A431/76, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Charles Edward Jennings, 10 September 1958, 1958/29813, BDM.

¹⁹⁶ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

¹⁹⁷ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 21 August 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹⁸ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 5 September 1934, 21 September 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Eric Coppard, Waihi, 4 August 1985, pp. 5-6 of transcript.

²⁰⁰ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 6 October 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

Waiorongomai Stream as a sludge channel, an issue he wanted debated before the warden:

I have no capital for the purpose of transporting ore to the valley level for the purpose of treatment there, nor have the Department provided facilities for such work otherwise than a derelict tramway which it does not appear anxious to repair, therefore must crush my ore on the spot which in any case is the most economical method.

Being required to stack tailings would 'automatically put me out of business immediately' and stop all mining over several thousand acres of 'one of the most valuable gold deposits in the whole of New Zealand'.²⁰¹ Downey confirmed that he had nowhere to stack tailings and that he had 'no money' with which to comply with extra requirements, but considered that 'his small plant, which is little more than a toy', would produce a 'negligible' amount of tailings.²⁰² Accordingly, all such single stamp batteries were permitted to discharge tailings into the stream.²⁰³

At a meeting held at Te Aroha on 25 February 1935, when Macmillan discussed this issue with the miners and their solicitors, Hardy 'asked that no limit should be placed upon his tailings put into the river; and he asked if, in the event of his crushing up to 20 tons per day, would any conditions be attached. He stated that it was almost impossible for him to stack owing to the nature of the country'. Macmillan promised to investigate his request.²⁰⁴ Hardy assured him 'that his tailings after treatment were worth £9 per ton, the same having been assayed at the Thames School of Mines'.²⁰⁵ Informed of these statements, Downey did 'not think for a moment there is anything like sufficient water available on the hill to allow of Mr Hardy putting through anything like the tonnage he mentions in the

²⁰¹ Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 8 January 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁰² J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 12 January 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁰³ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to J.F. Downey, 19 February 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁰⁴ Minister of Mines to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 7 March 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁰⁵ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to J.F. Downey, 9 March 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

vicinity of his claim'. Regarding the value of his tailings, a sample assayed by the Waihi School of Mines in December 1934 gave values equal to £8 19s 6d per ton.

How far the sample was representative of the tailings from his plant, I am not prepared to say. With any such small plant as he is using serious loss of values in the tails is bound to occur in treating Waiorongomai ores - the difficulty of recovering gold by amalgamation there was the greatest source of trouble in the old days - but I do not believe he has any body of quartz available that would yield tailings of this value. No tailing assays were made for him at Thames School of Mines.²⁰⁶

In 1936, Hardy confirmed Downey's statement about losing values by telling the new minister, Paddy Webb, that the loss of bullion in his plant was 'enormous. He really needed a proper amalgamating outfit'.²⁰⁷

In 1940 Hardy published extracts from a report by L. Roy Heywood,²⁰⁸ dated 9 January 1935. Described as a consulting mining engineer who had recently arrived from England, Heywood reported that Hardy's statements were 'substantially accurate in so far as stated facts are concerned. If it were possible to accept the assay returns submitted by Mr Hardy as indicative of the general value of the ore body, the prospects of this mine would be so outstanding that its success could never be in doubt'. Despite this 'if', he believed 'that critical sampling will give satisfactory results. On that assumption I may say that I am very favourable impressed by what I saw, and believe that there is here a proposition which is ideally suited to a sound flotation that can be offered with every confidence to the investing public'. A local company with a capital of £50,000 would be able to re-open the ground, and would have 'a profitable life assured upon known ore bodies'. This plan was 'full of promise and should without question be given the opportunity to stand the test of thorough investigation. I believe it will come through such a test to your entire satisfaction'.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 15 March 1935, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁰⁷ Minutes of meeting between Malcolm Hardy and P.C. Webb, 9 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁰⁸ See paper on mining in the Te Aroha Mining District during the Depression.

²⁰⁹ Prospectus of Hardy's Mines, April 1940, pp. 11-12, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

Downey had asked Hardy in July 1934 whether he wanted to send ore to Imperial Chemical Industries in London for testing, although he did 'not think he has any ore in sight worth sending a sample of'.²¹⁰ Hardy had accepted the offer, for he wanted 'exhaustive and expert tests',²¹¹ and provided about two hundredweight of representative ore from the Hero reef.²¹² In January the following year, he asked for the results, which were not produced until June 1935.²¹³ The thorough five-page report began by citing a letter Hardy had sent to ICI in August 1934 outlining the geology and mineralogy of this reef and stating that 'very high gold values are carried in a heavy zinc band'.²¹⁴ A full description was given of the ore and of the methods of treatment used. Amalgamation followed by cyanidation worked best, extracting 91.8 per cent of the gold and 76.8 per cent of the silver; the report recommended that ICI experiment with at least two tons 'to check the laboratory results on a large scale and ascertain the effects on the metallurgical results produced by circulating the cyanide liquor'.²¹⁵ Hardy described this report as 'extremely valuable' and a 'decided asset'.²¹⁶ He considered that the method recommended would give him a good profit, and claimed, wrongly, that his father had used this method. As he wanted to send two tons to England but lacked the funds to do so, he wanted to

²¹⁰ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 27 July 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 8/46, ANZ-W.

²¹¹ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 31 July 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²¹² J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 11 August 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 8/46, ANZ-W.

²¹³ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 8 January 1935, plus copy of report, n.d. [June 1935], Mines Department, MD 1, 8/46, ANZ-W.

²¹⁴ Imperial Chemical Industries Limited London, Mining Metallurgy Technical Service Department, 'Report on the Treatment of a Complex Gold-Silver Ore from the Hero Reef Submitted by M.Y. Hardy, Esq.', n.d. [June 1935], p. 1, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1936, 13/1936, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²¹⁵ Imperial Chemical Industries, 'Report on the Treatment of a Complex Gold-Silver Ore', Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1936, 13/1936, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²¹⁶ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 8 August 1935, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

discuss the report with Macmillan when the latter visited Te Aroha.²¹⁷ The two tons were never sent.

In October 1934, Hardy amalgamated his prospecting licenses as special quartz claims, 20 acres becoming Hardy's Mines No. 1 and 18 acres Hardy's Mines No. 2.²¹⁸ Clive Nettleton, an Auckland sharebroker,²¹⁹ sought to jump these by claiming they had been badly marked out and that Hardy had not continuously prospected them but held the ground for 'speculative purposes'. After Nettleton adjourned his plaint several times and then failed to appear in court, his case was struck out.²²⁰ When he first heard of Nettleton's plaint, Hardy told Macmillan that it would be a 'very serious blow' to lose any of his ground, and, as he was a 'conscientious miner', asked whether the department would oppose Nettleton. To encourage Macmillan to intervene (which was not within his powers), Hardy stated that some 'monied people in Auckland' were interested in his property and a company might be formed.²²¹

There was another brief clash with Nettleton in January 1935, when the latter sought the forfeiture of Hardy's licenses, but his application was withdrawn once he, Hardy, and another miner informed the warden that they had agreed on a line 'which would separate satisfactorily the land claimed by each party'.²²² Clearly Hardy had come to dislike Nettleton, for in March 1936 he urged the new Minister, 'Paddy' Webb, not to permit Nettleton's Waiorongomai Gold Mines to obtain suspension of labour conditions and reduction of rent. 'Bearing in mind our interview in Te Aroha recently upon the subject of speculators, and your remarks thereon', he wanted Nettleton to be forced either to work his claims or abandon

²¹⁷ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 14 August 1935, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²¹⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1934-1961, 30, 31/1934, BBAV 11505/2a, ANZ-A.

²¹⁹ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

²²⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1934, 2, 4-6, 10, 30, 31/1934, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²²¹ Malcolm Hardy to Minister of Mines, 6 October 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²²² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Plaint Book 1899-1947, Hearing of 24 January 1935, BBAV 11551/1a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 28 January 1935, p. 1.

them.²²³ In December, he gave evidence in the warden's court that Nettleton had done no work since June.²²⁴

Despite his talk of treating 50 tons per day, during all of 1935 Hardy crushed only five tons for 13dwt of bullion, which he reported to be worth £1 15s.²²⁵ In fact, when he sold it to the Bank of New Zealand at Thames in August he received only £1 7s 4d;²²⁶ this was the only bullion he sold to this bank. During that year he employed one man.²²⁷ Almost the only work done during 1936 was to open up the No. 1 winze on the Colonist reef. 'Two tons of picked stone was saved for future treatment. McLean's level was also retimbered for about 90ft to enable sampling to be carried out'.²²⁸ In December 1935 he implied that much more was likely to be extracted by seeking assistance from unemployed workers to repair the upper track 'to enable supplies and output to be carried to and from the prospectors'.²²⁹ He informed Webb in March 1936 that he was 'repairing the road down the mountain in anticipation of sledging away for treatment a further parcel of ore'.²³⁰ In November, the council accepted his offer to 'put men on to this work, provide supervision, tools, explosives etc, provided the County were agreeable to pay half the wages of the men who were receiving 16/- per day'.²³¹

In March 1936, Hardy obtained adjoining Magic special quartz claim,²³² and one month later applied for 12 months' protection for his three claims whilst raising capital to erect a larger plant. He informed the

²²³ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/9/87, ANZ-W.

²²⁴ Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 21 December 1936, p. 5.

²²⁵ *AJHR*, 1936, C-2, p. 52.

²²⁶ Bank of New Zealand, Thames Branch, Statement of Daily Gold Purchases at Thames, 1916-1954, entry for 24 August 1935, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington.

²²⁷ *AJHR*, 1936, C-2, p. 52.

²²⁸ *AJHR*, 1937, C-2, p. 33.

²²⁹ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 16 December 1935, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²³⁰ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/9/87, ANZ-W.

²³¹ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 16 November 1936, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²³² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Mining Privileges 1933-1972, folio 72, BBAV 11500/5a, ANZ-A.

warden that over four and a half years he had cleared and dewatered approximately 5,600 feet of workings and timbered about 200 feet. Thorough assaying had been done of the 1,750 feet of reef exposed, and in the Hero level 'the existing winze in that level has been further projected and a considerable quantity of ore extracted. Rails have been laid for a distance of 250ft for the transport of ore, and a pump and pipes installed for the purpose of dewatering the said winze'. No precise figures were given for the extension of the winze nor of the amount of ore broken out, vagueness repeated in other parts of his statement. 'A short cross-cut' had been made at the southern end of the Hero reef, and in the smithy level, the next highest one, 'a quantity of high grade ore' had been extracted; he did not indicate that most of this work had been done some years previously. After 'intensive development' of a stope in the Premier No. 2 level 'a quantity of high grade ore' had been extracted. Four and a half tons from the Hero reef had been tested at the Thames School of Mines 'with encouraging results', the details of which were not given, 'and a further consignment of high grade ore is about to be despatched to the Golden Dawn Gold Mining Company Owharoa, for treatment'. Having obtained the 'encouraging' report from ICI, he wanted to send them the two tons needed for further treatment 'at an early date'. All the reports of three mining engineers, Heywood, Noble, and J.W. Jamieson of the Waihi School of Mines,²³³ were 'of a favourable nature'.²³⁴ Once again no details were given, and, according to Downey, Noble had been unable to obtain any payable quartz.²³⁵

As the upper track had been improved during the past three months, including re-forming it for nearly half its distance and erecting five bridges and partly rebuilding another, Hardy planned to use it for 'transporting regular consignment of high grade ore from the property for treatment in bulk and for the purpose of transporting plant and machinery to the mine at a later date when the necessary capital is forthcoming'. He claimed to have spent 'approximately £650' on his property, and that 'considerable bodies of high grade ore are now in sight and applicant is seeking protection so that an opportunity may be offered to extract this ore, to have some milled

²³³ See Minutes of Meeting between P.C. Webb and Malcolm Hardy, 9 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W [in this application his place of residence was wrongly given as Walton].

²³⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1936, 13/36, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²³⁵ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 16 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

elsewhere and to devote the proceeds towards the erection of a small practical plant to handle existing payable ore in bulk'. He claimed there was 'a strong possibility of obtaining outside financial assistance' for these purposes, 'but time is required for its fruition as well as to obtain a further test of ore from Imperial Chemical Industries as to suitability of treatment of the class of ore concerned which differs from that which is now being transported from the mine'. He concluded by claiming to be 'the only free lance prospector' at Waiorongomai.²³⁶

Despite refusing 12 months' protection, Webb suggested six months be granted. When questioned by the warden, Hardy 'stated that he had been working on the claim for some four years, having opened up the entire area and taken some 200 assays. He had erected a self-contained plant but had his values represented in concentrates'. Upon reading his affidavit, summarized above, of work both done and contemplated,

the Warden remarked that the report was the most optimistic of many optimistic reports he had yet read.

Applicant: "One must be an optimistic to be a miner, Sir!"

The Warden: "Yes, but there are varying degrees of optimism even among miners."

The six months were granted.²³⁷ Hardy had been trying to meet Webb for some months, telling him in December 1935 that he wanted to discuss amendments to the Mines Act: 'Conditions here are most unsatisfactory and require immediate investigation'.²³⁸ They did meet, on 9 March 1936. Now a Labour Member of Parliament as well as mayor, Coulter was present and urged Webb to supply a small plant that could prove the area. Hardy claimed some of his samples were as high as from £36 to £40 to the ton, but admitted he did not know how long such values would last. When Webb promised to find someone to report on the mines, Hardy quoted examples of those who had visited and were impressed, amongst whom he misleadingly included Macpherson. He claimed that Jamieson had reported favourably when he visited during his holidays from the Waihi School of Mines. Urged by Webb to establish a syndicate, he responded that he did not wish to

²³⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1936, 13/1936, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²³⁷ Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 22 June 1936, p. 4.

²³⁸ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 20 December 1935, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

waste his time doing that,²³⁹ failing to mention that he had already tried to form one.

TESTED BY EXPERTS

Less than a week after their meeting, Hardy wrote that he was anxiously awaiting word from Webb about when he could expect a visit from the mining inspector 'and a representative of the financial concern whom you mention'.²⁴⁰ A week later, the new mining inspector, Edward John Scoble, was instructed to visit Waiorongomai, along with Crawford, to see 'as much as Mr Hardy can show you, not only on his own property but also on any other area,' for Webb wanted their views 'as to the future possibilities'.²⁴¹ On 29 April, Hardy wrote to Scoble to express his pleasure at the visit, enclosing a sketch map showing how to find the way to his hut (below the former site of Quartzville).²⁴² Over four days Scoble and Crawford took over 50 samples from various levels, and expected a few of them to give good results. In a memorandum recording their visit, Scoble noted that practically all the ore in the upper levels suitable for crushing had been taken out earlier and that McLean's level was heading in the wrong direction, the face being parallel to the reef. Hardy was sinking on the Colonist reef at the 1500-foot level, and told them that the stone was worth £15 per ton: 'Paying special attention to this and thinks he can get a living from same'. Hardy 'expressed disbelief in chip sampling and states he prefers bulk work'. He 'openly' admitted that 'his father worked from the assay and operated from the richest portions of the lodes ... but quite fails to see that the taking of such ore from the mines must give lower average returns when compared with the average of the total assay values'. In that sentence the word 'unhonest' was first written, and then crossed out and replaced by 'lower'. Hardy 'seemingly fails to perceive, also, that the average

²³⁹ Minutes of Meeting between P.C. Webb and Malcolm Hardy, 9 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁴⁰ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/9/87, ANZ-W.

²⁴¹ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to E.J. Scoble (Inspector of Mines), 20 April 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁴² Malcolm Hardy to Inspector of Mines, 29 April 1936, with enclosure, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

tenor of the ore remaining in these reefs must now be correspondingly low'.²⁴³

On the day after the last samples were taken, the Thames School of Mines treated 24 taken from the Hero and Colonist reefs, mostly from McLean's level. The lowest value was nil and the highest £10 3s, for 1oz 13dwt, the only sample that contained more than pennyweights of bullion.²⁴⁴ Two weeks after their visit, Scoble and Crawford's report included the values obtained from 34 samples, the Hero and Colonist as given above, the additional ones being from the Premier and Vulcan lodes. Apart from one of 19s, the remainder had low values, two being of two pence and one having no value. The only portion that 'might be worth consideration but is not likely to be extensive' was the 1400-foot level, from whence the highest sample had been obtained. They had not been able to take other assays as the excavated floor of the drive was full of water. The Premier appeared 'to be non-payable', and in McLean's level 'the values got in the Hero reef were exceedingly low' and did 'not justify doing any work at this or a lower level on this reef'. They concluded that the results were 'so poor that we find it impossible to recommend the carrying out of any scheme of operation that would justify the expenditure involved'.²⁴⁵

Accordingly, Webb agreed with the recommendation of his under-secretary that Hardy's application be declined.²⁴⁶ Hardy's response was to request a copy of the report, for he had 'several important comments to make' about how it was made. He disagreed about their way of taking samples, and claimed that, if they wanted to investigate the viability of his property, they should have checked the limited areas containing high-grade ore.²⁴⁷ Webb briefly replied that the report was both thorough and confidential.²⁴⁸

²⁴³ Memorandum on Hardy's Mines, Waiorongomai, 7-10 May 1936, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

²⁴⁴ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1935-1936, entry for 11 May 1936, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

²⁴⁵ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 26 May 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁴⁶ Memoranda by Under-Secretary, Mines Department, and Minister of Mines, 3 June 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁴⁷ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 13 June 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁴⁸ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 2 July 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

Three years later, Hardy wrote that Crawford's first inspection and sampling 'was nothing more of less than a farce as was admitted in as many words by the official', meaning Scoble, 'who accompanied Mr Crawford. I will not go into details as they are much a repetition' of his account of a second inspection in 1939, 'and are painful to recall'. Hardy then gave his version of Crawford's sampling technique:

To sample some 1500ft of reef laid bare by workings, he had equipped himself with a light prospecting pick weighing a pound or two, and an ordinary dust pan. I suppose the idea was to knock off pieces of reef with the pick and catch them in the dust pan. However at the first spot to be sampled on the face of a reef of adamantine hardness at the South of a winze, and about nine feet wide, Mr Crawford discarded the dust pan and knocking off small slivers of the reef matter with the pick head and endeavouring to catch them with his free hand as they wildly flew in all directions. Needless to say many sparks and few retrieved chips resulted. However, this did not deter Mr Crawford, who gave it up as a bad job and turned his attention to the soft country rock on the reef walls where splendid lumps could be easily obtained which were duly bagged and marked, and I suppose assayed as being entirely and satisfactorily representative of the reef in question. This sort of thing went on to the accompaniment of protests from me except that tiring of the chip-catching proceedings I volunteered to get a proper sampling gad and a prospecting dish to catch the fragments, and under Mr Crawford's directions as to exactly what pieces of ore he required knocking off, the farce proceeded to its bitter end, with entire lack of interest on my part.

In the winze just mentioned I have found very rich ore containing fine free gold lying in sulphide of silver, and some of this I had purposely left on the wall of the reef to be shown to interested parties. I pointed out these specimens, clearly to be seen, to Mr Crawford, but he refrained from examining them, neither did he display any interest in various specimens of representative high grade ore which I brought to his notice elsewhere.

The only remark I did manage to get out of him which was of any importance, was when we were standing under the great Hero reef at the main cross cut at the low level drive preparatory to sampling it, and with five hundred feet of backs on the same reef above us. It was then he remarked "What a mine this would make if there was gold in it!"

Unfortunately however he did not appear particularly anxious to find any gold, and had previously indicated before he had even commenced his inspection, that he was of the opinion that there was no gold to be found, consequently his remark lost much of its point.

Also the inspection was carried out partly in the evening when it was dark, and as far as I could see, no attempt was made to become familiar with either the features or the potentialities of the property, or the area as a whole. I was requested by Mr Crawford to forward him my plans (survey) of the ground. This I did with a covering letter enclosed with them, but as they were returned with the letter intact, I naturally concluded that they were never unrolled. I have the letter still as a souvenir of one of the most farcical displays of ineptitude which I have ever witnessed.

He claimed that he had not protested to Webb because he knew 'the hopelessness of such an action in the circumstances'.²⁴⁹

OVERSEAS INTEREST

Webb fulfilled his promise to Hardy by inviting an Australian company, Alluvial Tin, to inspect his property.²⁵⁰ The managing director was not interested, informing Webb that his company had inspected several areas at Waiorongomai some time previously, 'but as they did not prove sufficiently attractive no boring was carried out'.²⁵¹ Webb also drew Hardy's mines to the attention of Howard Natrass, a mining and mechanical engineer then living in England.²⁵² Born in New Zealand in 1888 to a mother named Marie Antionette, Natrass was reportedly a 'forceful and colourful character' who 'smoked cigars and liked to sell Cadillacs'.²⁵³ He sold the latter through his Wellington firm, the Natrass Harris Motor Company, during the 1920s. An inventor, he patented rail tractors, an electric car jack, a rotating viewing screen for ships, and a rotary car engine. He formed Rail Tractors, a private company, in 1925, and continued to improve his design of this successful machine.²⁵⁴ For relaxation, he was a

²⁴⁹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 21 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁵⁰ P.C. Webb to G.H. Watson, 22 April 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁵¹ George Watson to P.C. Webb, 7 May 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁵² Death Certificate of Howard Natrass, 25 August 1960, 1960/2649, BDM; Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1937, 6-8/1937, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²⁵³ Birth Certificate of Howard Natrass, 1888/2649, BDM; Paul Mahoney, *The Era of the Bush Tram in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1998), pp. 146, 148; for photograph, see Ian Beresford Madden, *Riverhead: The Kaipara gateway* (Auckland, 1966), p. 192.

²⁵⁴ Mahoney, pp. 148, 150; for details, including photographs, of the Natrass rail tractor and its variants, see Mahoney, pp. 146-151.

pioneer of motor racing in New Zealand.²⁵⁵ In the mid-1920s he went to England to promote his inventions.²⁵⁶ When he died near Auckland in 1960, he owned Natrass Products (N.Z.), a private company with only one other shareholder,²⁵⁷ and left an estate valued at under £7,000.²⁵⁸

In April 1936, when representing the Auto Electric Hydraulic Jack Company, on behalf of British investors Natrass sought areas with complex ores. Webb provided him with information from the departmental files on Hardy's property.²⁵⁹ The following month, he wrote to Hardy about his 'an attractive proposition'.²⁶⁰ Then, in late July, he asked Webb to confirm his offer that the government would provide a £ for £ subsidy up to a total of £10,000 to develop Hardy's mines: 'present negotiations subject to your co-operation'.²⁶¹ Webb noted: 'I made no such offer'.²⁶² In October, Natrass informed Webb that he had taken out an option over Hardy's property for a British mining group, after a leading mining engineer named Hutton²⁶³ had examined the plans and its mining history and expressed interest. Natrass had returned to New Zealand specially to arrange this deal, but first the property was to be surveyed by a British engineer. The investors he represented were also interested in adjoining properties.²⁶⁴ With Thomas Archibald Felton,²⁶⁵ in October he unsuccessfully sought forfeiture of the Seddon.²⁶⁶ In a conversation with Webb, attended by

²⁵⁵ Mahoney, p. 148.

²⁵⁶ Mahoney, p. 148.

²⁵⁷ Death Certificate of Howard Natrass, 25 August 1960, 1960/26649, BDM; Company Files, BAEA 5181/25500, ANZ-A.

²⁵⁸ Probates, BBAE 1570, 1165/1961, ANZ-A.

²⁵⁹ Memorandum for M. Lyndon, 23 April 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 8/46; T.H. Sherwood to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 23 April 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶⁰ Howard Natrass to P.C. Webb, 4 May 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶¹ Howard Natrass to P.C. Webb, 22 July 1936 (telegram), Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶² Memorandum by P.C. Webb, n.d. [1936], Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶³ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 14 April 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶⁴ Howard Natrass and T.A. Felton to P.C. Webb, 7 October 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶⁵ Details of his life are given below.

²⁶⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1936, 4/1936, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

Felton, Natrass explained that an experienced mining engineer associated with New Zealand Consolidated Gold Mines regarded Hardy's mines as a good proposition. Hardy's terms were reasonable: to take over all his debts and to pay him 'so much a month for a period of 2 years'. Told that the London company was considering taking over the entire field and spending half a million pounds developing it, Webb responded that 'Hardy seemed to be a practical man and had unshakeable faith in the place', without revealing that his officials did not share this faith. Natrass told him that 'the people in London complimented Hardy on the very extensive manner he went into the particulars of the whole property', and wanted access to a Mines Department drill, with an outside engineer making a survey and crushing a few tons. 'Hardy claimed there was 1/4 million tons of ore in sight on his property at a value which was considered to be favourable', and their suitable Canadian plant could treat 1,000 tons a day. As they wanted up-to-date information, for much of it was 30 or 40 years old,²⁶⁷ clearly Hardy had provided the details he had inherited from his father.

Late in 1936, a drilling plant was acquired and men were employed to clear access for sampling, but the government declined to subsidise assaying at the Waihi School of Mines.²⁶⁸ In December, Hardy informed the warden that he was employing three men and an engineer.²⁶⁹ The three men, subsidized unemployed workers provided by the local placement officer of the Unemployment Division of the Department of Labour, had been preparing the mine since October, but he had had to lay them off at the end of the year because of delays in obtaining machinery. In January 1937 he applied to re-employ two of them, one to spend five days assisting to install air pipes and the other for three weeks to drive a horse tram and sledge to bring up machinery. He also requested another man to assist with sampling, which, along with the erection of the plant, would take three months. He had purchased a rock drill of seven feet capacity to take samples from all the reefs exposed, and had bought all the machinery, two horses, and a sledge.²⁷⁰ Downey and George Duggan,²⁷¹ who was in charge

²⁶⁷ Minutes of Meeting between Howard Natrass, T.A. Felton, and P.C. Webb, 7 October 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶⁸ T.A. Felton to P.C. Webb, 17 October 1936, 7 November 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁶⁹ Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 21 December 1936, p. 5.

²⁷⁰ Malcolm Hardy to Secretary, Unemployment Division, Department of Labour, 18 January 1937, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

of drilling, warned that he was planning to drill without using water, illegally because of the health hazard, and any sampling done by Hardy or his men 'would not be accepted by us, nor do we think by any engineer acting on behalf of outside capital'. They warned of the 'danger of such sampling if carried out with Government assistance giving an erroneous impression that it was done under Government supervision, and consequently could be accepted by the public as reliable'. As they considered the mine was no good,²⁷² assistance by providing subsidized workers was declined.

Natgrass arranged for an Auckland engineer, Robert Forbes Moore, who amongst other achievements had explored for minerals in northwestern Australia and constructed the Grafton Bridge,²⁷³ to take about 300 drilling samples early in 1937, at a cost of £1,500.²⁷⁴ Sampling by 'about six men' took several months.²⁷⁵ After Moore's report was sent to London, Natgrass returned with a representative of London investors to view the mine.²⁷⁶ In early July Hardy declared that he had 'recently' granted Natgrass an option to purchase all his claims, adding that Natgrass was promoting a new venture, the British Exploration Company.²⁷⁷ In 1940, Hardy published extracts from Moore's April 1937 report, but in the absence of the complete report it is not known whether less favourable comments were omitted. Moore described the Hero reef as being 'a strong reef of considerable width and good average values of both gold, silver and base metals'. He estimated 120,000 tons of ore was 'in sight', and considered the potential was 'of considerable value'. The mine was 'cheap to work as no timbering would be required beyond the necessary chutes or passes'. His samples, taken by trenching and boring, when tested at the Waihi School of Mines gave an

²⁷¹ Possibly the George Duggan referred to in *Auckland Star*, 18 March 1933, p. 6.

²⁷² George Duggan and J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 23 January 1937, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁷³ See *Auckland Star*, 26 June 1907, p. 3, 14 November 1916, p. 2, 13 September 1928, p. 10, 17 April 1929, p. 7.

²⁷⁴ E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 2 April 1937; Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 3 April 1937; T.A. Felton to Minister of Mines, 13 July 1937, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁷⁵ *AJHR*, 1938, C-2, p. 32.

²⁷⁶ T.A. Felton to P.C. Webb, 13 July 1937, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁷⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1937, 6-8/1937, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

average value of £5 15s per ton.²⁷⁸ Hardy told Webb in 1938 that 500 feet of boring and trenching had been done, producing 650 samples, of which 370 were assayed, and in the following year that ‘for a total distance of 480 feet the Hero reef was bore and trench sampled every five feet in two levels’.²⁷⁹ Either there was more in Moore’s report than Hardy published or Natrass obtained other information, for in 1938 Scoble and Crawford noted that his option had expired and he had ‘no interest in the claim’.²⁸⁰

MORE TESTING IN THE LATE THIRTIES

During 1937 ‘sampling underground by means of a power drill comprised practically the only work done’. The only ore from which Hardy made any money was a 1 ton 3cwt parcel, which by using cyanide produced 1oz 2dwt, valued at £6 5s.²⁸¹ As against that return, when he sought suspension of labour conditions in June Hardy claimed to have spent approximately £1,000 in buying machinery.²⁸² As he did not have that amount of capital, was he referring to money spent by Natrass and claiming it as his own personal expenditure? He was granted suspension for nine months.²⁸³ Once it expired, he employed a man for further sampling and a test crushing.²⁸⁴

In January 1938, when Hardy saw Webb in person and requested assistance to install a plant able to treat four and a half tons daily and costing £2,000, Webb asked the precise sum Hardy or his syndicate could provide.²⁸⁵ Hardy informed him on 16 February that he had raised £1,000, sufficient to provide machinery for a small concentrating and crushing plant

²⁷⁸ Prospectus of Hardy’s Mines Limited, April 1940, pp. 12, 15, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁷⁹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 2 July 1938, 21 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁸⁰ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 14 April 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁸¹ *AJHR*, 1938, C-2, pp. 32, 50.

²⁸² Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1937, 6-8/1937, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

²⁸³ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Applications 1934-1961, 6-8/1937, BBAV 11505/2a, ANZ-A.

²⁸⁴ *AJHR*, 1939, C-2, pp. 18, 31.

²⁸⁵ P.C. Webb to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 26 January 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/34, ANZ-W.

able to treat two tons a day. As the ore was high grade, the result would be good, and he expected to be able to increase the daily capacity to ten tons. Again claimed to have spent over £1,000 in the past year, he applied for a subsidy on the wages needed to repair the upper track, cart in new machinery, shift the existing machinery several chains to a better site for the plant, and operate it for eight weeks. His detailed breakdown of costs estimated all this would cost £398 17s.²⁸⁶

ANOTHER SYNDICATE

When Scoble and Crawford visited Hardy's mine on 5 April 1938 and were shown where Moore had taken his samples, they found that payable ore existed around the ten-foot-deep Hero winze, but as this was underfoot and the lower level was 300 feet below it was not possible to estimate the amount. Boring had disclosed erratic values for 15 feet at the southern end of No. 2 level. They were told that Hardy's syndicate consisted of Thomas Archibald Felton, who had a fifth interest, John Broad Mitchell, who had an eighth, and Hardy, who owned the remaining interest.²⁸⁷ Felton, a public accountant in Auckland,²⁸⁸ was aged 35 in 1932, when he was first associated with Waiorongomai.²⁸⁹ Mitchell, also of Auckland, was a retired railway manager, who, when he died in 1953, would leave an estate of £17,960.²⁹⁰ In 1941 both men were directors of Industrial Assets Ltd, formerly the Waitakere Brick and Tile Company.²⁹¹

MORE TESTING, SIMILAR RESULTS

Scoble and Crawford took four samples, but only included three in their report. At the northern end of the winze they obtained £2 17s per ton,

²⁸⁶ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 16 February 1938, with attachment, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁸⁷ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 14 April 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁸⁸ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A; Howard Nattress and T.A. Felton to Minister of Mines, 7 October 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁸⁹ See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

²⁹⁰ See *Press*, 24 March 1911, p. 5; *New Zealand Herald*, 16 December 1915, p. 8; Probates, BBAV 1570, 2145/53, ANZ-A.

²⁹¹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 65 no. 1028; box 774 no. 5083, ANZ-A.

the southern end of No. 2 level gave 9s, and picked stone taken 20 feet from the latter gave £2 10s. 'No ore of a payable nature opened up, and it is premature to consider erecting a treatment plant',²⁹² a view shared by the department, which declined to assist.²⁹³ Upon receipt of Webb's letter informing him of this decision, Hardy told Crawford that 'if this decision was made on the four pitiful samples taken by you ... I can only hold the opinion that a Mines Department Inspection has degenerated into an absurdity'.²⁹⁴ He later complained to Webb that these 'pitiful attempts' at investigation had been taken in the wrong places, and claimed that testing done by Nattress' agents resulted in an average exceeding any other New Zealand mine. He vowed to carry on despite the department's opposition to him. 'Any mining man who had obtained the results shown on my property would be nothing short of a lunatic to let such a proposition go without a very severe and prolonged struggle', but he failed to reveal why Nattress had done just that despite the splendid results claimed. He would take ore from areas known to be rich and treat it overseas, hoping to build a larger plant later, and insisted he would revive the field and provide work for the unemployed, and that he had 'achieved something of national importance'. In conclusion, in addition to again requesting a subsidy, he sought permission to deposit ten tons of tailings daily into the stream.²⁹⁵

Scoble and Crawford responded to this attack on their sampling methods by explaining that it had been done, with Hardy's assistance, 'at the only available points'. The drilling done for Nattress was the only way possible to get at the reef, but as a number of the tests were in 'mineralised sections' it did not provide reliable data. They repeated that, as Hardy's father had taken out all the ore he considered payable, 'anything now left in the mine must be of a much lower value'. They had checked where Hardy's assay plan had recorded a test result of £10 19s 3d, but could only obtain one of 9s. 'Hardy himself used the pick and hammer when the samples were broken down'. Once more they recommended that he should not receive a

²⁹² E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 14 April 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁹³ Memorandum by Minister of Mines, 2 May 1938; Minister of Mines to Robert Coulter, 6 May 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁹⁴ Malcolm Hardy to Hugh Crawford, 20 May 1938, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

²⁹⁵ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 2 July 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

subsidy,²⁹⁶ and once more their recommendation was accepted. Hardy responded by informing Webb that it was 'common knowledge that your advisers are definitely against any interest being taken by your Dept. in this field, and apparently in any other part of this region where the small man is concerned'. Determined to carry on, he now asked to be permitted to deposit 15 tons of tailings daily in the stream for 10 years or more, to be granted 50 free assays over three months at the Waihi School of Mines, and to be allowed to export ore to Japan.²⁹⁷

Scoble believed Hardy was 'never likely to be in a position to treat anything more than small parcels of ore for testing purposes'. Should he ever build a larger plant, 'he should have enough to erect a dam for impounding the tailings', and therefore his request to discharge these into the stream should be declined.²⁹⁸ It was,²⁹⁹ although he was granted his free assays at the Waihi School of Mines.³⁰⁰ His choice of this school rather than the one at Thames no doubt reflected his view that Crawford was unable or unwilling to find the valuable ore that he claimed, or pretended, it contained. During 1938, he bored six holes where Moore had found good ore, to check his results.³⁰¹ He employed one man during that year to help take out samples.³⁰²

EXPORTS TO JAPAN?

As for exporting to Japan, Hardy had sent samples of his sulphide ore in May 1938 to the Sumitomo Mining Company of Osaka, which was especially interested in extracting copper.³⁰³ The Customs Department was

²⁹⁶ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, 22 July 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁹⁷ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 20 August 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

²⁹⁸ E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 1 September 1938, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

²⁹⁹ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 15 September 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁰⁰ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 20 October 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁰¹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 21 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁰² *AJHR*, 1939, C-2, p. 18.

³⁰³ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 20 May 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

concerned because of the ban on exporting scrap metal to Japan and its reluctance to permit the export of copper ore to this aggressive nation. It considered that he had made no real endeavour to have his ore treated in Australia or Britain, despite Hardy's figures revealing that this would be profitable despite the cost of treatment being lower in Japan.³⁰⁴ Yet to prevent him exporting ore might create 'undesirable publicity' and an 'awkward situation' for the government.³⁰⁵ Advice was sought from Webb, who did not believe Hardy would produce enough ore to worry about, a view confirmed by Crawford, who advised that 'his supply will be that small it will not make much difference'. After being permitted to export to Japan,³⁰⁶ he did not, on the grounds, he claimed, that although the company was 'well satisfied' with his samples, credit difficulties prevented it from buying his ore. Anticipating this, he had been in prior contact with the American Smelting and Refining Corporation of Tacoma, Washington, USA, and expected to send the first shipment in January 1939, telling Webb that 'the work of extraction goes on but not as it should on account of lack of capital'; nevertheless, the success of his mine had been 'definitely proved'.³⁰⁷

MORE REQUESTS, MORE TESTS

Hardy also informed Webb that 'the unfortunate aspect of the situation is that I am dumping ore carrying over an ounce of gold as being too poor to export'. He repeated his earlier request for the provision of a local plant, which would avoid such waste, and offered to send copies of the assays made of the bore samples because these illustrated 'most vividly the results which may be obtained through scientific and thorough sampling of a

³⁰⁴ Minister of Customs to Minister of Mines, 16 June 1938, 1 August 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/97; Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 2 July 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54; Comptroller of Customs to Minister of Customs, 28 July 1938, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

³⁰⁵ Comptroller of Customs to Minister of Customs, 10 June 1938, 28 July 1938, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

³⁰⁶ Minister of Mines to Minister of Customs, 15 August 1938; Comptroller of Customs to Minister of Customs, 18 August 1938; Minister of Mines to Minister of Customs, 2 November 1938, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

³⁰⁷ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 3 December 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/97, ANZ-W; see also *AJHR*, 1939, C-2, p. 31.

particular reef.³⁰⁸ Webb showed no sign of taking Hardy's claims seriously, on several occasions accepting the recommendations of his officials to refuse a subsidy. Scoble considered that Hardy would not find anything of importance unless he moved 'from the old mine where he is now working and opens up new or adjacent reef-bearing country, if such exists'.³⁰⁹ Hardy had not found anything significant since 1932, and he had only a 'slight' chance of doing so. Nevertheless, Scoble recommended that access to the mines be retained when most of Waiorongomai township was exempted from mining.³¹⁰

From 5 tons 7cwt 3qrs sent to Tacoma early in 1939, 43.711oz of gold, 36.35oz silver, and 348lb of copper were produced. A second shipment of two and a quarter long tons was sent in March, but when Hardy reported this in May he had neither heard the result nor the cost of smelting the first parcel.³¹¹ Scoble considered that, even if he received the whole cost of the bullion, possibly £300, he would have obtained about £308 from his leases since being granted a subsidy five years before, a return of £1 a week. He also noted that Hardy had sent picked stone, of which there was only a small quantity. 'I am of the opinion that Mr Hardy is more likely to starve than to make a profit out of his claim, and feel that the subsidy should be regarded as irrecoverable'.³¹² His superiors accepted his arguments.³¹³

Hardy continued to expect that he would make his fortune from mining, in June 1939 sending Webb a seven page letter accompanied by five pages detailing ore values and his costs. He claimed that the two shipments to America were 'mostly in bulk from a vein revealed directly as a result of systematic and practical sampling', and, except for a small portion, were not hand picked. The second parcel, of undisclosed weight, had produced 12.465oz of gold, 14.07oz of silver, and 102lb of copper. He was about to

³⁰⁸ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 3 December 1938, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/97, ANZ-W.

³⁰⁹ E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 1 September 1938, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM113, ANZ-A.

³¹⁰ E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 23 December 1938, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM206, ANZ-A.

³¹¹ Malcolm Hardy to E.J. Scoble, 26 May 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³¹² E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 8 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³¹³ Memorandum by Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Minister of Mines, 14 June 1939; note by P.C. Webb, 15 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

send 3 tons to the Electrolytic Smelting Company at Port Kembla, New South Wales; his sampling of it suggested a return of £87 per ton, with a return from the copper to be added. He gave lengthy details of the bores and assays made by Moore and himself, and explained that he was unable to ship any but 'the very highest grade ore' overseas for treatment because of the cost. 'Want of funds' also prevented him thoroughly sampling other promising reefs, which did not prevent him claiming to have located 'highly payable ore in large quantities'. The reason he was sending these details was to permit Webb to compare his results with those of Crawford, whom he criticized for arriving just before lunch and announcing that an hour or two was all that was needed to take samples. Over Hardy's protests, only small chip samples were taken, 'no further attempts being made to verify our previous work, and no attempt being made to take samples in the main low level', meaning McLean's level, 'where so much boring and trenching had been done'. Crawford did not appear interested in the copy of the sampling plan Hardy provided. 'That the result of Mr Crawford's report was a foregone conclusion before he ever made his so called inspection appears to me abundantly clear'. This sampling was a repetition of Crawford's visit in 1936, which he then recounted in detail, as cited. Although he had not protested at the time, he now complained about 'the second so called inspection coming as it did upon our carefully conducted and highly practical sampling campaign, which was sought to be rendered null and futile by the Official concerned'. He claimed other Hauraki miners had been treated similarly, leading to 'much comment and indignation displayed by those concerned', and called for the matter to be investigated. Mining was languishing because of discouragement by such official reports: 'one may scarcely expect to obtain financial backing for a likely mining project when it is known that the property in question has been definitely declared valueless by that authoritative body - the Mines Department. This happened in my case on several occasions as I am able to show'. He objected to the 'Star Chamber methods' whereby official reports, being secret, could not be challenged, and to 'two other contributions towards retarding mining interest are in the form of the antiquated "Geological Survey of 1913" and Mr Downey's jeremiad upon the same topic published under Government auspices not long ago', a reference to Downey's *Gold Mines of the Hauraki District*, published in 1935.³¹⁴ 'These two publications unfortunately are looked upon as official opinion of this region wherever mining matters are

³¹⁴ J.F. Downey, *Gold Mines of the Hauraki District, New Zealand* (Wellington, 1935).

discussed, and I submit that their effect has been disastrous and that they should be either rewritten or withdrawn', for they ignored the 'immense national wealth' in the base metals. After claiming that large quantities of sulphur could be extracted from the sulphide ore, he called on the government to encourage mining.³¹⁵

Scoble and Crawford jointly replied to these accusations against Crawford, stating that when they had asked Hardy where the highest values had been found by Moore and himself they were 'shown a section approximately 15ft in length in the south end of the Hero intermediate level', meaning the 1400-foot level.

Two samples were taken by us from this region, one on the southern end of the block which assayed 9/- per ton and the other about 20ft back in a small excavation.... This sample assayed £2:10:0 per ton. The values are reasonable accurate as the average of 5 drill holes put in by R.F. Moore on each side of our sample was £2 10s 4d. These were the only two places where we could get a cross section of the Hero reef over a total distance of 480ft as mentioned by Mr Hardy, unless we sampled sections which had previously been done by us.

They agreed that there was 'most likely a rich rib' in this 15 feet, 'but there is no other ore known to us worth developing in any part of the mine'. As for their May 1936 visit, they did 'exhaustive sampling of all the workings shown us by Mr Hardy and did not locate any payable blocks of ore. This property has within the last few years, to our knowledge been visited by at least three Mining Engineers of repute', presumably Heywood, Noble, and Jamieson, 'apart from Government officials and in every case has been turned down'. They did not record the sample taken from the dump in their 1938 report, and had included Hardy's plan of his assay values in it. 'We do not wish to amend or alter our previous reports'.³¹⁶

In July, Hardy provided Webb with details of the results of the treatment in America and the costs of shipping and treating his ore, which he calculated at £26 5s 2d per ton, a sum that omitted his own living costs, mining rents, and other expenses. The cost was high because he only sent the highest-grade ore.³¹⁷ The Mines Department estimated that, after all

³¹⁵ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 21 June 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³¹⁶ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 17 July 1939, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³¹⁷ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 1 July 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

costs had been deducted, he had received about £273 5s, reduced to £241 15s once gold tax was paid.³¹⁸ Hardy requested that this tax be reduced or that some of his expenses be subsidised.³¹⁹ Scoble and Crawford pointed out that in 16 months he had shipped five tons seven hundredweight and that it had cost £10 a ton to mine from the 'rich rib', which had to be sorted from the country rock. If their superiors wished to provide a grant to assist in transporting the ore down from the mine, they recommended £2 a ton, 'but we are not enthusiastic about this'.³²⁰ The under-secretary considered that as gold had risen in value to 168s per ounce, a subsidy was both unjustified and unnecessary. 'Hardy is fully convinced in his own mind that his mine is an exceptional proposition and it would be difficult to persuade him otherwise', and he recommended that little further attention should be given to his complaints.³²¹ Webb agreed, and told Hardy that there would be no subsidy or remission of the gold tax and that he had confidence in Crawford and all his officials.³²²

Hardy also complained to Webb in late July about residence sites at Waiorongomai being removed from the provisions of the Mining Act,

thus sweeping away one more mining privilege in this unfortunate district. This appears to have been done upon the old plea that "the possibility of the resumption of mining being so remote in the district" etc which has a familiar ring.

Before taking such steps would it not have been possible to have made some sort of inquiry on the spot....

Is this a forerunner in closing down the entire field for the benefit of a water scheme which is now being mooted, and upon what claims are based the statement which I have partially quoted...? Also why are mining activities at Waiorongomai persistently ignored by the Mines Dept? Also does the progressive deletion of mining privileges apply equally to other mining areas other than to Waiorongomai?

³¹⁸ Memorandum, n.d. [July 1939], Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³¹⁹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 1 July 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³²⁰ E.J. Scoble and Hugh Crawford to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 10 August 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³²¹ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Minister of Mines, 14 September 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³²² P.C. Webb to Malcolm Hardy, 20 September 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

I should be very grateful to receive some information upon these points as they are of vital interest to me.³²³

Asked to comment, Scoble noted that several reports on his mine had been made by himself, Crawford, and other ‘mining men’, and that these ‘have been of an adverse character in every case, and nothing would be gained by repeating what has been said’.³²⁴ After a prompt from Hardy requesting a reply and complaining that he had not been warned about the transfer of sections out of the goldfield, as well as asking to be told who had thought up this idea, Webb simply assured him that he had no knowledge of any water scheme and was simply carrying out a decision reached in 1932.³²⁵

In August, Hardy complained to Webb that the Customs Department wanted 15s per ounce in gold tax, with no rebate on his loss during smelting of three and a quarter per cent of the gross contents of the ore. He considered that Customs was being unfair, and reminded Webb that the Labour Party had promised to abolish this tax, which was ‘thoroughly disheartening and crushing out the small mining man’.³²⁶ An official in the Customs Department explained that, while Hardy’s level of extraction appeared to be ‘exceptionally good’, as his parcel was so small it would have been treated with others ‘and he would be credited with such percentage of the gold disclosed by the assay as was known to be recoverable, in this case 96.75%’.³²⁷ As the Comptroller of Customs considered Hardy’s claim was ‘quite reasonable and I do not think that export duty should be claimed on

³²³ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 25 July 1939, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W.

³²⁴ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to E.J. Scoble, 14 August 1939, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM206, ANZ-A; E.J. Scoble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 18 August 1939, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W.

³²⁵ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 7 September 1939, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W; P.C. Webb to Malcolm Hardy, 20 September 1939, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, MM206, ANZ-A.

³²⁶ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 16 August 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/97, ANZ-W.

³²⁷ A.J. Johnson to Comptroller of Customs, 18 September 1939, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

gold which is irrecoverable', he would be required to pay gold duty only on this percentage.³²⁸

EXTRACTING GOLD

According to the information he gave to Scoble, Hardy made a profit, in American dollars, of \$200.92 on the first batch treated at Tacoma. From the 71 bags of ore sent to Port Kembla in July, he made £120 18s 5d.³²⁹ In neither case were his living costs included in his calculations. When he published these 'very fine results' in 1940, he said they gave a return of approximately £65 per long ton for the first Tacoma shipment, £42 for the second (of 2 tons 4cwt 3qrs), and £88 from the Port Kembla trial of 2.6759 tons.³³⁰ Scoble reported that Hardy had employed another man during 1939, working only in the 1400-foot level, and that the 10 1/2 tons extracted had produced 71oz 1dwt of gold, worth £663 16s 3d, and 64oz 15dwt of silver, worth £4 17s 6d.³³¹

According to the annual Mines Statement, Hardy worked alone during 1940,³³² although Scoble had reported in April that two men were working when Hardy stoped overhead and underfoot in the payable portion of the 1400-level. This was the only level worked, and only in a block 20 feet long, 10 feet high, and four feet wide, apart from a small amount of work in the winze.³³³ The Mines Statement recorded that 3 tons 6cwt had produced, through the use of cyanide, 37oz 4dwt, worth £185 6s 4d.³³⁴ Scoble noted that values were 'difficult to determine as the stone is picked (selected), reduced to a size suitable for bagging, and shipped to the Electrolytic Smelting and Refining Co'.³³⁵ For Hardy, there was no difficulty in

³²⁸ Comptroller of Customs to Minister of Customs, 18 September 1939, Customs Department, C 1, 32/2/17; Minister of Customs to Minister of Mines, 23 September 1939, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/97, ANZ-W.

³²⁹ Statements from Tacoma Smelter, 18 May 1939, and Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Company, 19 July 1939, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

³³⁰ Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited, April 1940, pp. 7-8, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³³¹ Report by E.J. Scoble, n.d., *AJHR*, 1940, C-2, p. 26.

³³² *AJHR*, 1941, C-2, p. 26.

³³³ E.J. Scoble, Report dated 4 April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³³⁴ *AJHR*, 1941, C-2, p. 48.

³³⁵ Report by E.J. Scoble, n.d., *AJHR*, 1941, C-2, p. 36.

determining the values. Another shipment of 2.5018 tons had gone to Port Kembla in January 1940, giving a net value of £89 6s 7d, which to Hardy worked out at an average value of £48 per long ton.³³⁶ His method of working his mine was to take ore to the surface, discard the mullock, stack the low-grade ore for possible later treatment, and break down the higher-grade stone to the size of small walnuts and bag it for shipping.³³⁷ Hardy told Scoble the results of two assays in June and one in November 1940 made at the Waihi School of Mines, the values per ton being £69 18s 6d, £25 1s, and £76 13s 9d.³³⁸ The *Te Aroha News*, which since the early 1930s had ignored his work, was impressed by his output, an editorial in August stating that he had made almost £700 by extracting less than one ton a month during the past year. ‘The question might reasonably be asked: If hundreds of tons had been treated, might not the return have been many thousands of pounds. It would appear that one of Te Aroha’s very best assets is not being taken full advantage of by the Government’.³³⁹

HARDY’S MINES

Hardy’s large-scale plans for development were revealed on a map he produced sometime in 1940.³⁴⁰ He intended to extend McLean’s level as originally surveyed to the Premier reef and also along the Colonist reef to Canadian Gully. ‘Hardy’s Level’, meaning the 1400-foot level, would be extended to Premier Creek and beyond, and the Colonist reef in the higher level would be driven in that direction. Once McLean’s level reached the Premier reef, he would diamond drill from the face. ‘Alteration likely due to Prospecting Discoveries’.³⁴¹ As such developments required more capital, in April 1940 an attempt was made to float Hardy’s Mines Limited.

³³⁶ M.Y. Hardy, Hardy’s Mines, Te Aroha, in account with the Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Company, 18 January 1940, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A; Prospectus of Hardy’s Mines Ltd., April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³³⁷ E.J. Scoble, Report dated 4 April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³³⁸ Waihi School of Mines Assay Certificates, 19 June 1940, 12 November 1940, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

³³⁹ Editorial, *Te Aroha News*, 5 August 1940, p. 4.

³⁴⁰ See Appendix for copy of this map.

³⁴¹ New Zealand Mineral Club, ‘Hardy’s Waiorongomai-Area: Tentative Distribution of Development Work’, Wellington, n.d. [1940?].

The draft agreement of 9 February 1938 whereby Hardy would sell his three claims to John Broad Mitchell and Thomas Archibald Felton had not been carried out.³⁴² Instead, Hardy sold a fifth of his interest to Mitchell and 12 1/2 per cent to Felton in return for the latter advancing £500 for machinery.³⁴³ On 25 January 1940 Hardy's Mines was registered as a private limited company, with Mitchell and Hardy as directors.³⁴⁴ On the following day, Hardy, Mitchell, and Felton, plus his wife Hilda Ellen, agreed to sell their interests in the licenses to Hardy's Mines,³⁴⁵ and James Fairfield Wills Dickson, a solicitor of Remuera who had been a director of at least one non-mining company,³⁴⁶ became another director. He and Reginald Cairns Norris, another solicitor of the same suburb, did all the legal work for the company.³⁴⁷ For whatever reasons, in the 1970s these solicitors would leave valueless estates.³⁴⁸ The £15,000 capital, in 5s shares, was distributed amongst the vendors: Mitchell had 7,500 shares, Felton and his wife, 6,000 each, and Hardy 40,500.³⁴⁹ They were all fully paid-up, and were in the proportions agreed to in 1938.³⁵⁰ On 8 March all the properties were transferred to the company,³⁵¹ the same date that it was decided to increase the capital to £20,000 by seeking £5,000 from the public. Dickson was by then the chairman of directors.³⁵²

Hardy sent a copy of the prospectus, dated 11 April and compiled almost entirely by him, to Webb in June, explaining that the company's formation was because of his 'marked success'. Not only did he need more

³⁴² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Registrations 1940, no. 4625, BCDG 11288/12a, ANZ-A.

³⁴³ Memorandum dated 24 May 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁴⁴ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Registrations 1940, no. 4625, BCDG 11288/12a, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁶ See *Auckland Star*, advertisement, 24 December 1920, p. 7, 15 February 1944, p. 4, 29 February 1944, p. 6; advertisement, *Truth*, 1 November 1924, p. 13;

³⁴⁷ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁸ Probates, BBAE 1570 2276/70, 3483/76, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁹ Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Ltd, April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁵⁰ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

³⁵¹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Registrations 1940, no. 4625, BCDG 11288/12a, ANZ-A.

³⁵² Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

capital but 'I find that I am physically incapable of continuing as I was',³⁵³ a reference to his age, 56. One shilling per share was to be paid on application and another on allotment. Calls of the same amount would be made at intervals of not less than one month. At the front of the prospectus an aerial photograph showed the mountain and the location of his mines, with Waihi and Karangahake in the distance, the implication being that these reefs were linked. The information was, understandably, very positive, claiming, for instance, that within the last year, 'as a result of careful and practical investigation, most satisfactory monetary returns have been obtained from that limited area of the property which has actually been mined'. No new development was needed to trace the reef that was already being worked 'with most satisfactory results'. Operations to date had been guided by a 'policy of cautious progress', which was continued by the 'moderate share capital issue with the objects both of avoiding over capitalisation and of maintaining the company's financial position, so that those who may now purchase any of the 20,000 shares offered should reap a higher benefit at a later stage of development'. Shares already issued were not 'granted by way of bonus or by way of gratuity' but represented 'definite concrete assets consisting of the mine leases, together with plant and machinery, and also valuable actual tangible data and results'. All the capital raised would be used to further develop the reef already being worked 'and the practical and economical development of other reefs of an already proven gold-mining undertaking'.

After explaining the geography of the area, the prospectus quoted the success of Hardy's father (without explaining why he had ceased mining) and claimed that 'many thousands of tons' of ore remained, implying these were of the quality extracted by Hardy senior. The latter for the purposes of this prospectus had been a 'successful gold mining pioneer', thus stretching the normal meaning of the word 'pioneer'. His photograph was reproduced along with his output and the statement that he 'worked only a very small area of this wonderful gold bearing country'. A few pages later, the caption under a photograph of Malcolm Hardy stated that he 'took up the claim after the death of his father', implying the latter had mined until this occurred. Malcolm Hardy '(together with others) has spent a considerable amount of money in proving the value of the holdings and has met with outstanding success', the mines being 'very thoroughly prospected and tested at the most likely points. Access was improved, timbering renovated,

³⁵³ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 11 June 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

rails laid and mining in a very modest way carried out until, in 1938, a small syndicate was formed which expended considerable capital in boring and trenching the Hero Reef at the 1400- and 1100-foot levels, 'which Mr Hardy's investigations had shown possessed considerable possibilities'. The assay plan of this work, included, revealed 'some very high values in the Hero 1400ft level. Further borings of confirmatory nature verified these values, whereupon breaking down of ore at the points concerned was immediately commenced'. (The small amounts broken down were not indicated, nor that they were merely test samples.) Results of the treatment of ore sent to Tacoma and Port Kembla were given, with the qualification that this was 'extremely high grade and could not be counted upon as continuing indefinitely'. Instead, the 'average ore' found elsewhere 'should pay well to treat under present conditions'. An air compressor and rock-drilling apparatus were on site, along with other equipment needed for mining, but no mention was made of a treatment plant, apart from a rock-breaker.

It is in the 1400ft level of the Hero section that the present company's rich ore deposits were found and it is at this level where it is proposed to carry out further exploration work as the result of such encouraging returns. It will be seen that a block of undeveloped ore some 300ft in depth exists between this level and McLean's low level below, and this block may carry great possibilities judging from the results already obtained from recent boring trenching and sampling in the low level.

Moore was cited as estimating 90,000 tons of ore existed in this block and another 30,000 tons between the 1400 and 1500 levels; both would be developed, and McLean's level would be extended to below the Premier workings.³⁵⁴

After this tendentious account of the extent and values of the ore reserves, Hardy provided favourable extracts from only two of the mining engineers who had inspected his mine, Heywood and Moore. Neither Noble, who had tested it for the 1933 syndicate but had not found any payable ore,³⁵⁵ nor Jamieson, who had allegedly found encouraging signs,³⁵⁶ were

³⁵⁴ Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited, April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁵⁵ J.F. Downey to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 16 May 1934, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

mentioned. Details of Moore's assay results from the Hero level were given, where 'work on a small scale' was being carried out and it was 'proposed to further develop the reef'. The public were tempted to subscribe the extra £5,000 capital sought by being assured that 'if only 25 tons of ore be crushed weekly at an average price of £5/15/- per ton ... this should result in a net profit of approximately £3,570 per annum, which, after providing for the payment of 7% on the capital, would leave a balance of £2,000 for development work or reserve'. No mention was made of the nature of his plant, apart from the suggestion that

at a later date the plant could be again increased at a relatively small cost to crush 50 tons per week, when the cost of production would be likely to show a reduction. On the other hand, should present projected development and extraction work prove successful it may possibly be advisable to thereupon set about the flotation of a very much larger concern with the object of working the property on the extensive scale to which it so advantageously lends itself.

The latter development might come 'within an appreciably short time'.³⁵⁷ Hardy was believed to be considering acquiring the former Bendigo battery, but had not and would not be able to do so because of lack of capital.³⁵⁸

What officials thought of this flotation was not recorded, apart from one anonymous note: 'If Hardy unloads the shares now held by him in trust the purchaser will have very little chance of getting any return for his money'.³⁵⁹

After his company was formed and in the light of 'recent mining developments in this locality' that could be 'very adversely affected', Hardy wrote to Webb arguing against 'locking up' the township, for he wanted residence sites for his company's employees. Increased gold production

³⁵⁶ Minutes of Meeting between P.C. Webb and Malcolm Hardy, 9 March 1936, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁵⁷ Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited, April 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁵⁸ F.C. Carr to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 26 May 1943, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/7/23, ANZ-W.

³⁵⁹ Memorandum of 24 May 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

should be encouraged because of the war, and before sections were handed over to farmers he wanted Scoble to visit

and make a thorough inspection and inquiry into the whole matter. I should like the opportunity of meeting him and going into the matter with him as I am the chief one interested in mining matters here, and have much at stake upon the future success of my enterprise here.

I may state that in spite of official adverse reports and criticism, the operations at my property during the last twelve months have been highly satisfactory. Further development work being deemed justifiable, a public company has now been formed with this end principally in view, and it is in prospect of this company developing in the near future to much greater activities that I am most anxious for the retention of a very important privilege which my information indicates may be gravely endangered unless action is taken without delay.

He wanted township sections leased by farmers made subject to immediate resumption for mining purposes, and that part of the eastern portion of the township, 'which lends itself admirably for the purpose by its position and its worthlessness for agricultural purposes, should be reserved as a dumping ground for battery tailings'. In addition, an adjacent area should be made available for a machine site.

I may also state that since this township has been leased for farming during the last several years no improvements of any importance have been carried out by successive tenants and except for about an acre of blackberries being mown last year, a quarter of an acre more or less ploughed and then neglected, and some patching to already dilapidated fences, the land lies as it did when the alteration in control was introduced some years ago. Noxious weeds and neglect have almost taken charge, so that if mining on a large scale or on a moderate one is established, many of these sections will eventually be cleared and put into good order.

He wanted to be informed when Scoble would visit so that he could meet him; 'The Inspector knows my usual movements and how to get in touch with me'.³⁶⁰ No doubt he did, and dreaded the suggestion that the value of the mine be re-litigated, but a visit was not required; Webb was

³⁶⁰ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 3 May 1940, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W.

able to reassure Hardy that suitable sections for erecting miners' houses would be made available, if required.³⁶¹ Hardy expressed gratitude that 'future activities in mining' would not be hampered.³⁶²

In early July, Hardy claimed to have raised sufficient capital since the flotation to entirely cover the share issue. He had heard a rumour that the government would disallow the formation of new companies and the selling of any more shares, and asked Webb whether the rumour was true, for, if so, it would destroy his company.³⁶³ It was true, for the Finance Emergency Regulations 1940 No. 2 did apply to Hardy's Mines.³⁶⁴ These regulations, gazetted on 18 June, made it unlawful to issue a prospectus seeking capital except with the consent of the Minister of Finance.³⁶⁵ To stop wasting investment money on companies with poor prospects, no new ones were to be floated unless they were in the public interest.³⁶⁶ And any gold sold could only be purchased by the Reserve Bank.³⁶⁷ In 1959, Hardy wrote that, immediately after he had formed the company 'to take advantage of my discoveries', the government banned the issue of capital, causing its collapse;³⁶⁸ he failed to mention that he had not applied for permission to raise capital, presumably because he had realized the likely response. According to a nephew, he withdrew from forming a public company despite some local residents having sufficient capital to make it financially viable.³⁶⁹

Hardy's Mines continued to exist, as a private company, with a slightly increased number of shareholders. Mitchell gave 500 of his shares to Evelyn Agnes Marshall, who later became his wife, and by 26 January 1940 the

³⁶¹ P.C. Webb to Malcolm Hardy, 5 July 1940, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W.

³⁶² Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 July 1940, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W.

³⁶³ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 11 June 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁶⁴ Secretary to the Treasury to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 20 June 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁶⁵ *New Zealand Gazette*, 18 June 1940, p. 1514.

³⁶⁶ Registrar of Companies to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 8 July 1940, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W.

³⁶⁷ Treasury Department, T 1, 43/92, ANZ-W.

³⁶⁸ Malcolm Hardy, 'Report for South Pacific Mines', n.d. [1959], p. 9, Eric Coppard Papers, Waihi.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Frank McAdam, Rotorua, 21 July 2007.

additional shareholders included her along with Dickson, with 400 shares, and Norris, with 25. By May 1941, Felton's partner Wilfred James Allingham, an Auckland chartered accountant,³⁷⁰ had acquired 25; Felton and his wife both sold their shares on 13 July 1945, and Allingham succeeded him as the company's secretary in 1950.³⁷¹ Felton had not profited from this or other ventures: when he died in 1975 his estate was valueless.³⁷²

Hardy continued to do some work on his mine, in 1941 extracting two tons seven hundredweight of 'selected ore' from the Hero level.³⁷³ To the end of January 1941, the yield reported to the shareholders of Hardy's Mines was £108 16s 7d, and to the end of January 1942 £150 13s 7d.³⁷⁴

MORE ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN AID FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Hardy continued to seek assistance from the government, writing to Webb in August 1941 in response to the latter's statement that, as the export of gold was important for providing overseas funds for the war effort, the government wanted increased production and would assist all genuine mining operations.³⁷⁵

Do you not agree with me that the time has now definitely arrived when the Government should formulate and publish a definite gold mining policy of a strong, practical and vigorous nature.... If your reported statement is sincere, and I take this to be the case, you must surely have long ago realized that the greatest and strongest bar to gold mining operations is the present gold tax, which your own Government itself previously condemned and promised solemnly to entirely remove, but has since gone back upon its pledge and added insult to injury by more than doubling it in its severity. In the light of this then, and still assuming the sincerity of your asservation, I maintain that it is your duty as Minister of Mines to publicly insist that the Government should remove this tax as a definite forward step in the war effort.

³⁷⁰ See Probates, BAZZ 1570, 253/1996, ANZ-A.

³⁷¹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028; Probates, BAZZ 1570, 253/1996, ANZ-A.

³⁷² Probates, BBAE 1570, 1605/75, ANZ-A.

³⁷³ *AJHR*, 1942, C-2, p. 12.

³⁷⁴ Annual Statements of Accounts, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

³⁷⁵ Mines Statement, *AJHR*, 1941, C-2, p. 2.

Certainly the tax should not apply to small producers of sulphide ore such as him, for he had to send his ore abroad for treatment. Indeed, the government should offer a bonus for gold production 'rather than the continued pursuit of a policy taxing out of existence a highly essential industry in peace or war'. He then turned to the real point of his letter. 'Just now I am one of the few exporters of raw unconcentrated gold-bearing ore, consequently the gold tax bears much more heavily upon me than upon others engaged in the industry and extracting their bullion on the spot'. As the tax was approximately double the cost of shipping his ore to Port Kembla he feared he would not even recoup his costs, making 'all one's labour and enterprise gone for nothing'. To avoid this 'financial catastrophe, it becomes necessary to exercise extreme caution in ore selection, and include in an overseas shipment only what is the very highest grade ore', dumping the rest. Once 'the picked value of the ore drops below a very high level, ore shipments must cease'.

It is quite impossible as far as I can see to obtain capital for mining purposes under present conditions, so that in my case the handling of the high quantities of free melting ore available and the lower grade sulphides as they should be handled is quite out of the question, so that everything depends upon the very rich ore being available, and this cannot be expected to proceed indefinitely in any mine.

After claiming that the government was ignoring Hauraki's base minerals, he concluded by wondering 'whether Hitler would have ignored such resources?'³⁷⁶ The government could indeed, through its Mining Controller, approve or prevent mining, and because of the war effort had imposed extra taxes, but not on gold.³⁷⁷

Not having received a reply by mid-September, Hardy briefly asked Webb, 'May I have the pleasure of receiving a reply to my letter ... and an answer to the various queries contained therein'.³⁷⁸ With no reply received by October, he again requested one. Although acknowledging that Webb

³⁷⁶ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 28 August 1941, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

³⁷⁷ J.V.T. Baker, *War Economy* (Wellington, 1965), pp. 130, 131; Nancy M. Taylor, *The Home Front* (Wellington, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 147-148.

³⁷⁸ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 19 September 1941, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

was busy, 'there is a case for reasonably immediate attention to the inquiries of one such as myself who has only the welfare and progress of the gold industry to heart and incidentally that of the country'. Making a pointed political jibe, he wrote that he expected that Webb found his questions 'disturbing and awkward to answer ... and equally doubtless I am looked upon through my letters and through other matters as being, from your Department's point of view, an unmitigated nuisance'. His justification was that he was merely 'executing one of your own party's precepts of "agitate, agitate and again agitate"'.³⁷⁹

Once again, the Customs Department decided that the time was 'not now opportune for the removal or reduction of the export duty', although ministers assured him that his views would be kept in mind.³⁸⁰ In response, another long letter pointed out that it had taken three months to get a reply and that he was 'heartily in agreement' with the argument that the time was not opportune for removing the tax. 'The appropriate period for such action was immediately after your Party attained power, partly upon the strength of having definitely promised to bring about such a reform'. To have done so would have created 'the rapid growth of the mining industry' and the granting of 'every reasonable assistance as has been enjoyed by other branches of primary industry'. Gold production was 'generally treated as a sort of Ugly Duckling or the bad boy of the family, preferably to be stamped out, buried and comfortably forgotten'. Trying to score another political point, he noted that Walter Nash, the Minister of Finance, 'in axiomatic mood, & from the depth of his wisdom, stated that it was quite possible to totally exterminate an industry by overt action'. He forecast that the mining industry would soon provide Nash

with a shining example of the veracity & infallibility of his own platitude.

The stated determination to retain this unjust and crushing tax in the face of all the dictates of common sense and in the face of all that has recently passed, may be good Socialism but it is

³⁷⁹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 4 October 1941, Customs Department, C 1, 34/2/17, ANZ-W.

³⁸⁰ Comptroller of Customs to Secretary to the Treasury, 29 November 1941, Customs Department, C 1, 32/2/17; P.C. Webb to Malcolm Hardy, 8 November 1941; Walter Nash to P.C. Webb, 4 December 1941; P.C. Webb to Malcolm Hardy, 18 December 1941, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

extremely bad economics – a fact to be more fully illustrated as time passes.

He challenged Webb to impose a similar tax on every wage and salary earner and all members of parliament. ‘I ask this question in all seriousness for the obvious reason that what is fair and equitable to one must be thus to another’. Gold mining was rapidly declining ‘due almost entirely to this tax’:

Capital for expansion & development is out of the question, and all that the small miner can do is to work out his rich patches (when he is lucky enough to find them), live frugally upon what is left after the State levy and his working expenses are met, and hope for the best at some future time.

I am one who belongs to this category, and I consider it nothing less than a national scandal that the present state of affairs regarding gold production has been allowed to exist for so many years. Not only gold is concerned but the development of the extraction and treatment of the more vital base metals is also concerned, and the truth of my long sustained contention in this respect is becoming publicly recognised with the shrinkage of staple supplies from overseas.

The question of the rehabilitation of the mining industry is a very vital one, not so much from an individual point of view but from a national one, and I intend to leave no stone unturned or point ignored if I consider that it will further this intention.³⁸¹

Webb referred this diatribe to his department, where it was minuted, ‘No action necessary’, and did not reply.³⁸² Seven months later, Hardy approached the Leader of the Opposition, Sidney Holland:

Conditions surrounding gold mining have degenerated from bad to worse, especially in the case of the small miner such as myself, who is producing a class of ore which must be sent overseas for treatment, lacking the necessary facilities in this country. The crushing weight of the Gold Tax, coupled with greatly increased ordinary taxation, increased cost of shipping, insurance, handling charges, cartage, bags and general living and mining expenses, have now reached a point when it is becoming impossible to meet such crushing costs and still exist.

³⁸¹ Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 January 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

³⁸² Notes dated 19 and 26 January 1942, on Malcolm Hardy to P.C. Webb, 14 January 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

He expanded on the state of mining generally, comparing it unfavourably with the practice in Australia and America. 'Our own metal resources are allowed to remain untouched for want of a strong and efficient official lead, and partly to the adhesion to an outworn political dogma'. He then turned to his own situation:

I am exporting an ore containing, with the gold and silver, a varying percentage of copper, lead and zinc, all of which metals are being saved and utilized by the smelter concerned.

Hundreds of pounds worth of this ore has been dumped during the war period and before, because overhead costs are too high to export. Also for the same reason – the burden of the Gold Tax – it is impossible to acquire fresh capital for expansion and thus erect a modern plant and turn out a concentrated form of ore at less cost of transit, etc.

He proposed a new solution: if the tax could not be removed, could not the exporter of ore be granted 'a liberal subsidy on each ton of ore shipped to cover shipping charges, insurance and handling charges. He could then face more easily the other incidental costs and carry on, which, under present conditions, is becoming impossible'. For 11 years he had advocated the encouragement of all mining, 'but entirely without success, except to obtain one or two minor concessions which assisted a little', and called for 'strong and definite action'.³⁸³

The following month, Hardy wrote to Holland again, attaching the ore purchase notes he had received from Port Kembla dated 23 July 1941 and 22 May 1942. The first showed that the tax on the first shipment equalled all the cost of transport plus the cost of the bags, and the second that it almost equalled the shipping cost between Auckland and Sydney.³⁸⁴ Holland was given details of the complex nature of the ore and all his costs. 'All the work done at the mine in extracting the ore, sledging, road repairs, etc, is now done by myself and has been for some time, entirely due to circumstances'. He explained how he used 'extreme care' in selecting only the most valuable ore:

³⁸³ Malcolm Hardy to S.G. Holland, 15 August 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

³⁸⁴ Pro Forma Purchase Notes nos. 7622, 23 July 1941, 8365, 22 May 1942, appended to Malcolm Hardy to S.G. Holland, 23 September 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

This entails the following through intensely hard country of the main gold-carrying vein, and holding to it, no matter whether it narrows to a mere knife edge or decreases in value below economic level. Such a type of mining involves much loss of time and unproductive work in extracting and discarding lower grade ore; very carefully planned and placed explosive charges to obviate shattering and loss of valuable ore, and altogether constitutes a very expensive and laborious undertaking. The richer ore is then brought to the surface, selected and carefully knapped to free all rock, etc, granulated through a small rock breaker, weighed, bagged in 82lb single bags; hauled to the road level up an elevated wire rope; loaded into a sledge of either nine or ten bags at a time, and carted by horse to a depot at Waiorongomai four miles distant. Here the ore is transferred to double bags, marked, and carefully sewn; all these operations involving considerable time and labour.

From 23 July 1941 to the time of writing he had sent four separate shipments to Australia, receiving £111 after costs were deducted.

The time involved in obtaining this ore and doing other necessary work is thus almost fifteen months, allowing me approximately £7:10:0 per month to meet other expenses, so that actually to obtain this small gross income I must pay a capital tax of almost £40, added to which I must pay social security and war tax on my back profits. I pay two war taxes – one on the gold as a first charge, and again on my back profit.³⁸⁵

Holland passed these communications on to Webb with the comment that there was ‘a case for some action’.³⁸⁶ The Treasury, in contrast, could see no valid reason to change the policy. ‘Mr Hardy’s output of metals other than gold appears small, and it will be appreciated that since the advent of Lend/Lease arrangements with the United States of America, gold has become of less importance, especially from the point of view of the war effort’.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁵ Malcolm Hardy to S.G. Holland, 23 September 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

³⁸⁶ S.G. Holland to P.C. Webb, 9 October 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

³⁸⁷ Secretary to the Treasury to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 10 November 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

THE DECLINE OF HARDY'S MINES

The argument was academic, for the amount of ore he had and would export was minimal, and his sampling did not discover the wealth he assured the politicians his mines possessed. In October 1941 four assays at the Waihi School of Mines of 'coarse concentrates, discards, pickings, and general ore' produced values per ton of from £8 5s 3d ('discards') to £33 14s 5d ('general ore').³⁸⁸ In February 1942, two samples, described as 'quartz with a little mineral', produced £46 4s 9d and £16 13s 10d.³⁸⁹ No samples were sent to Crawford. In July 1941 he had sent one and a third tons to Port Kembla, which, after deducting costs, produced a net return of £73 3s 9d.³⁹⁰ During 1942, 5 tons 3cwt 2qr of 'complex' ore were sent there from the Hero level, picked and reduced in bulk: its value was £152 7s 1d.³⁹¹

This was the last parcel he exported. He continued to hope for better days ahead, in August 1941 writing to the high school board about their plans to reforest the hillside above Waiorongomai;³⁹² his letter has been lost, but presumably opposed planting trees because it might interfere with mining. In June 1942, Dickson, the chairman of directors, informed shareholders that 'owing to the restricted nature of our mining operations there is little change to report in the Company's position'. The directors had arranged for Hardy to work the mine 'on a Tribute basis and thus preserve its future until after the war.... We are indebted to Mr Hardy for his offer to carry on and engage the necessary men to enable him to do this'. They were neither able to raise capital nor obtain labour during the war, but once it was over they 'should have no difficulty' in obtaining capital.³⁹³

³⁸⁸ Waihi School of Mines, Assay Certificate, 2 October 1941, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

³⁸⁹ Waihi School of Mines, Assay Certificate, 20 February 1942, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁰ Pro Forma Ore Purchase Note No. 7622, 23 July 1941, appended to Malcolm Hardy to S.G. Holland, 23 September 1942, Mines Department, MD 1, 5/5/1, Part 4, ANZ-W.

³⁹¹ *AJHR*, 1943, C-2, p. 13; Statement of Accounts for year to 31 January 1943, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

³⁹² Thames High School Board of Governors, Minutes of Meeting of 26 August 1941, High School Archives, Thames.

³⁹³ J.F.W. Dickson to Shareholders, 9 June 1942, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

On 3 September, Hardy asked the department to consult him about the possible sale of the tramway rails, for he believed it would be needed again:

The Inspector is reported to have stated that there appeared to be no possibility of the tramway again being brought into use. Under present conditions and under the present policy of non-encouragement of gold or base metal mining in this region, this statement is unfortunately only too true. However a time may soon come when by force of circumstances this policy may be reversed, and when this eventuates this gold field will without doubt play a very important part.

I would submit that it cannot be held back very much longer.³⁹⁴

Later that month, the *Te Aroha News* wrote its first article for several years about Hardy's mining, under the headline: 'Take a Tram into History: Waiorongomai's Link with the Past'.

High up in this labyrinth of bush gullies and splashing waterfalls, anyone who follows persistently enough the winding track may locate the sole mine now being worked.

Every now and then "Hardy's Mine" becomes a matter of lively conjecture and then the discussion lapses again in favour of the seemingly more solid basis of golden butterfat supplied by Her Majesty the Dairy Cow....

"A dreadful business," comments the present occupant of the mines in the whare which was built in those at least comparatively "roaring" eighties as he obligingly displays various items of interest around his workings, lamenting the while on general conditions in the industry.

Decidedly English in timbre, Mr Hardy's lustrous voice contrasts strangely with a setting reminiscent of "Roaring Camp" or "Poker Flat" but anyway, his comments on successive Governments, especially in relation to their impositions of the Gold Tax, could only be made in New Zealand, so therefore the borrowed terms of a perfect stage setting must be discarded.

Hampered by having to use rather elementary gear and the fact that this ore is now to be sent to Australia for the final processes of extracting the precious metals, Mr Hardy can only handle the richest of the ore he so laboriously accumulates from the flinty heart of the mountain. The ore contains, besides gold, zinc, sulphate of silver, copper and sheelite and he claims that these are in workable percentages and could be very useful in war

³⁹⁴ Malcolm Hardy to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 3 September 1942, MD 1, 21/2/4, ANZ-W.

industries. “Anywhere else it would be used to the last grain,” he declares....

With Government encouragement - which in Mr Hardy’s view would mean the removal of the Gold Tax - the mountain could be worked in a scientific way which would provide great prosperity for the district.

It Could Be.-

“And what about the old tramway, could it be used again?” he was asked.

The reply had all the forceful bitterness of a man who depends on the old, old way of packhorse and sledge to get ore out and supplies in.

“It would need repairing and bridges replacing but that could be done,” he declared. “But that isn’t likely to happen anyway. They’ll expend more money in wages and time tearing it up than the old lines are worth, they’ll probably spend more still in straightening the rails for use elsewhere. When they want to re-open the industry - which they probably won’t have the sense to do - they’ll be faced with all that work over again.”

And the last representative of the industry which cradled an infant settlement shook a pessimistic head.³⁹⁵

By 1942 Hardy rarely lived on the hillside. He abandoned the hut at Butler’s Spur (the former stables?), and although he retained the hut near his mine, his normal residence was the ‘Bungalow’, Brick Street, Te Aroha.³⁹⁶ During the 1930s and 1940s he ‘built up a very good clientele in Te Aroha, his painting was very very thorough and he used to do the Te Aroha Jockey Club’s grandstand and buildings and so forth and work for the local solicitors’.³⁹⁷ In April 1943, when Scoble asked for his production figures, he added that ‘judging from what you told me yesterday, I feel there is not likely to be any yield from the mine for the remainder of the year’.³⁹⁸ Hardy replied that there had been no returns since the end of 1942, and ‘until conditions considerably alter there will probably be a considerable lapse of time before the mine is reopened. A considerable quantity of fine

³⁹⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 21 September 1942, p. 7.

³⁹⁶ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 21 September 1942, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; Malcolm Hardy to E.J. Scoble, 2 May 1942, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A; Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1942, 2/1942, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁷ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 3 of transcript.

³⁹⁸ E.J. Scoble to Malcolm Hardy, 20 April 1943, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

ore was obtained during the last few months of working but as this fell just short of the requisite 6oz per ton same was jettisoned'. He intended 'to keep the rent paid and to return to the property as soon as conditions are favourable'.³⁹⁹ In 1944 Scoble reported his mining more accurately: 'A small amount of work was carried out during the first three months of the year, but has since been given up, and is not likely to be resumed until the end of the war'.⁴⁰⁰ Shareholders were informed that, because of war restrictions and shortage of equipment, on Hardy's advice 'operations on any scale have been held over to the cessation of hostilities'.⁴⁰¹ The man attempting to sell the former Bendigo battery negotiated with Hardy, who might have purchased it 'had not the war situation made it difficult for him'.⁴⁰²

The report sent to shareholders in July 1944 was brief: 'Very little activity at the Mine. Mr Hardy has made every endeavour to keep the Mine going, but circumstances have been against him'.⁴⁰³ Hardy stated that a 'small quantity of good-grade ore was won' during the year, but was yet to be sent to Australia;⁴⁰⁴ there was no record of it ever being sent. The Magic claim was surrendered in June 1945.⁴⁰⁵ In November, Dickson informed shareholders that Hardy had told him he was 'in touch with an English Mining Engineer', with whom he was negotiating,⁴⁰⁶ presumably for the sale of the property. Nothing further was heard of this or of his mine until February 1946, when Hardy renewed his complaints about taxes:

"Mining in the Te Aroha district and indeed throughout New Zealand has been choked, not for lack of prospects of good ore, but because of the impossible taxes levied on it," said Mr M.Y. Hardy, a Te Aroha mine operator, recently. "On every ounce of gold

³⁹⁹ Malcolm Hardy to E.J. Scoble, 27 April 1943, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6A, ANZ-A.

⁴⁰⁰ *AJHR*, 1944, C-2, p. 15.

⁴⁰¹ J.F.W. Dickson to shareholders, 30 April 1943, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴⁰² F.C. Carr to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 26 May 1943, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/7/23, ANZ-W.

⁴⁰³ J.F.W. Dickson to shareholders, 17 July 1944, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴⁰⁴ *AJHR*, 1945, C-2, p. 15.

⁴⁰⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1945, 17/1945, BCDG 11289/4a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁰⁶ J.F.W. Dickson to shareholders, 17 November 1945, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

mined we pay six taxes,” he continued. “The ordinary gold tax, the local body tax, the miners’ phthisis tax, ordinary income tax and social security [making five taxes, not six]. Apart from the taxes there are transports. As there is no plant in the Dominion willing or able to process my ore it has to be sent to Port Kembla, South Australia [really New South Wales]. The cost of sending ore from my mine to Waiorongomai and Auckland, a distance of roughly 100 miles, is as great as from Auckland to Port Kembla, a distance of 1,500 miles.”

Whereas the government was wasting money ‘boosting uneconomic secondary industries’, miners received ‘no subsidy and are taxed to the hilt’. The Minister of Mines was ‘primarily concerned with coalmining and is apparently content to import the base metal needs of this country from overseas while we have ore that assays higher than that which is worked very profitably in other countries’. His informing the newspaper that ‘he had found no indications’ of radioactive metals on the mountain suggested that he had searched for them.⁴⁰⁷

Hardy’s Mines was moribund, no annual meetings being held after the war concluded. Allington, the acting secretary in 1950, assumed that ‘the few shareholders have completely forgotten about the Company since following the start of the war it was apparent that the Company would have to mark time for some years’.⁴⁰⁸

LAST ATTEMPTS AT MINING

In mid-1947, Hardy sampled the Ruakaka reef on the former Plutus claim, in the Tui district, for testing by the Waihi School of Mines.⁴⁰⁹ As well, he returned to do more mining at Waiorongomai, assisted by his 17-year-old nephew, Jason Hardy’s son David Calder Hardy, who was sufficiently interested in mining to do some prospecting in the Tui portion of the field.⁴¹⁰ David Hardy later recalled his experiences:

⁴⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1946, p. 4.

⁴⁰⁸ W.J. Allington to Assistant Registrar of Companies, 12 December 1950, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴⁰⁹ Malcolm Hardy to Directors, Auckland Smelting Company, 27 October 1955, Eric Coppard Papers, Waihi.

⁴¹⁰ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 20 July 2016, email.

[By then his mining] was more of a hobby. I joined him in 1947 on the basis that we would share anything that we got out of it ... and I was extremely enthusiastic and I *thought* from what he'd said that there was a whole parcel or a whole heap of ore that could be got out and that had already been taken out of the face of the Hero mine and that we were going to ship that across to Australia, and my first job on getting there was to clean up Hardy's track ... right up to the whare [as Jason called his hut]⁴¹¹.... It was one hell of a job, that's about over three miles of track. Cleared all the gorse off it and everything. And built bridges and all sorts....

He hoped that we would get a Bren gun carrier and make the track wide enough to get that up and down there. He also had the idea of also getting an ... ex-army Indian motor cycle, which you could get quite cheaply in those days, and popping up and down on that, which would have been good.⁴¹²

He later recalled having to clear the track from half-way up Fern Spur, where a pine tree had fallen across the track 'almost where the tramway crossed it, all the way up to Army and Navy Creek, which was mostly large gorse. Butler's Spur wasn't so bad except for the odd slip',⁴¹³ but from the state of the access it was clear it had been a long time since Hardy had been to his mine.

When I got to the hut the floor was broken through in places and I repaired that.... There was a smithy's up there and I dismantled that and I took the iron up and timber up for repair work on Hardy's hut.... I cut up some of the beech sleepers, the Southland beech sleepers on the tramway, and used them for studs underneath the hut and that sort of thing.⁴¹⁴

Malcolm made me build a porch on the front, using material I reclaimed from dismantling the workshop at the top of Butler's and another building that stood on the lower side of the tramway between Butler's and Diamond Gully crossing.⁴¹⁵

He'd just sort of sent me into the wild as a 17-year-old boy, go and clear the thing up for him, and we got on all right for a while. He was terribly deaf and very difficult to communicate with....

⁴¹¹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 6 November 1986.

⁴¹² Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, pp. 3-4 of transcript.

⁴¹³ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hardy, 5 June 2007, email.

⁴¹⁴ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, pp. 3-4 of transcript; David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email.

⁴¹⁵ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email.

I got very ill up there and I came down and I was in a really bad way, and when he got home from painting he found me back at the “Bungalow,” which was in Brick Street where we lived. He wouldn’t believe that I was ill. We fell out very promptly. That was the end of that....

I did help to take some of this ore out of this face on the surface.... Had to carry it down [to the track]... I was used to carry sixty to seventy pounds on my back, even from the bottom up to the top. I had lugged a heck of a lot of stuff up there.... It was a pretty formidable task climbing that mountain with sixty pounds on your back.... You’d take the nails and all sorts of building stuff, you know, tools and things like that. There was always a helluva lot to take up, plus ... after a while I was going up there, staying for a whole week and working up there, so therefore I had to take my week’s supplies of groceries and food as well.... He stayed down in Brick Street and I was up there on my own. Mind you, it was very enjoyable up there. It was fantastic.... I lived up there [by] myself for some months.

[Ore taken from the Premier outcrop] was at the latter stages of my staying there and I don’t think it ever went away for treatment.... I think that was his last effort. I think he was having a lot of trouble with his leg. That probably had lots to do with his temper, plus the fact that he couldn’t hear you properly.⁴¹⁶

The only time Hardy accompanied his nephew ‘to the hut was when I first went to work for him’.

He showed me the Hero portal and the remains of his crushing plant by the Premier Creek. He also showed me what was supposed to have been the rich reef at the Premier that his father was going to show him, that he’s picked away at and driven about 5ft. There was a narrow vein of mineralized quartz about 9 inches wide. But it showed mostly white quartz with splotches of mineral that Malcolm said was silver sulphide and some free flour gold. Even with a good magnifying glass I was not assured. However, this was the ore we were to work when he had finished his painting contract at the Te Aroha Racecourse.

One day I decided to go and collect some of the ore and pound it up and pan it. While there I climbed up the steep bank above his workings and almost fell down a shaft that would have cut right through Malcolm’s vein. Quite clearly this was no secret, since a few feet below was a caved in drive where a piece of flume was sticking out through the rubble.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, pp. 4-6 of transcript.

This and the shaft would have created a triangular [shape] of isolated ground that probably had been worked underground, or where a more profitable reef had been worked many years before.⁴¹⁷

Hardy believed the face in the Premier that he showed his nephew 'was the place his father was going to show him. A site where to drive another 6 feet in you'd fall down a shaft and if you went below you'd drop into a drive. There was nothing to indicate that this site was going to be any good'.⁴¹⁸ David Hardy wondered why his grandfather did not 'just tell Malcolm where' to find the ore, 'instead of where Malcolm thought which was impossible. Thank goodness I found out why and survived. Fall down a shaft or a winze with no escape route and one would never be found'.⁴¹⁹

Hardy expected his nephew to do all the work clearing the track, his justification being that as he had to earn money he had to spend all his time painting the racecourse.⁴²⁰ 'Malcolm helped me on the odd Saturday with the clearing of the track, but he never came up to the hut in the 10 months I was there. His excuse (or reason) was that his leg was too painful'. All David's work was done 'for nothing but for board and lodging'.⁴²¹ He was annoyed that his uncle expected him to do all the mining but would not treat him as a partner, even though 'I was meant to be' one.⁴²² And he found Hardy was 'just knocking on the side of' the Premier outcrop, which I'm afraid didn't impress me at all. It rather discouraged me. I was quite happy to pull out. I felt I wasn't going to get anywhere staying there'.⁴²³

Despite failing to find the ore his father was believed to have left behind, Hardy continued to claim he had valuable ore, and refused to give up his mining rights, thereby frustrating the borough engineer's desire to

⁴¹⁷ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email.

⁴¹⁸ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 10 August 2015, email.

⁴¹⁹ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 17 July 2015, email.

⁴²⁰ Interview with David Calder Hardy, Rotorua, 21 July 2007.

⁴²¹ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email.

⁴²² David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email; interview with David Calder Hardy, Rotorua, 21 July 2007.

⁴²³ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 18 of transcript.

use the Waiorongomai Stream for a domestic water supply.⁴²⁴ At the end of 1948, Hardy informed the warden that his claims were

now being worked in a small way very successfully as is shown by specimen and high grade ore recently obtained, and it is intended if possible to carry on with this work and to expand into a larger proposition with a view to the ultimate exploitation of extensive base metal and gold and silver deposits present on our area and upon the remainder of this gold field.⁴²⁵

However, although during the 1940s Hardy recorded his occupation in the annual returns of Hardy's Mines as a miner, in 1950 he described himself as a house painter.⁴²⁶ In the electoral rolls, he remained a miner until 1957, when he became a painter.⁴²⁷

RETAINING HOPES FOR A MINING REVIVAL

Early in 1949, when the council proposed to provide water for Te Aroha by constructing a water race from the Pohomihi Stream, to the east of Waiorongomai, the minister received 'a lengthy letter' from Hardy 'written in his usual strain and protesting that the granting of a license would interfere with mining'. He was informed that he could still use this stream as a sludge channel, the under-secretary commenting that it was 'difficult to see how mining operations (if there ever are any) could be hampered'.⁴²⁸

In November 1950, Hardy heard a rumour that the hillside might become a forestry reserve. 'As a director and shareholder in Hardy's Mines Ltd' he asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Hamilton whether mining would be banned and whether such action was to be taken 'without consulting existing mining interests or considering the future of the field as

⁴²⁴ Norman Annabell to F.J.T. Grigg, 11 November 1948, Te Aroha Borough Council, A/26/6/1, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

⁴²⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1948, 9/1948, BCDG 11289/4a, ANZ-A.

⁴²⁶ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴²⁷ *Thames Electoral Roll, 1943*, p. 90; *Piako Electoral Rolls, 1946*, p. 90; *1949 and 1951*, p. 100; *Hauraki Electoral Roll, 1954*, p. 108; *Piako Electoral Rolls, 1957*, p. 99; *1960*, p. 102.

⁴²⁸ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Inspector of Mines, 3 February 1949, Ministry of Commerce, AATJ 6090, 6/61, Part 2, ANZ-W [Hardy's letter has not been traced].

a mining area'.⁴²⁹ He was assured that his rights would not be prejudiced.⁴³⁰ The state of his company, and the amount of mining he did, were revealed in another letter written in that month: 'The Company has no liabilities, I being responsible for the claim rent'. He still claimed to have a valuable property, especially because of the rise in gold and base metal prices 'and the abolition of the gold tax which, with the return to sterling, about knocked out gold mining'. Apart from paying the rents, 'my job is to keep an eye on the property, and to keep the tracks etc open and generally when circumstances permit carry out prospecting and other works'. He worked for wages.⁴³¹ In the following month, he admitted that

the company has never been in operation, has no bank account and no cash funds, the original shares being allotted to the original syndicate who did good work in testing out the mine which exhausted its capital which was small.... Having no funds (all outgoings being paid by me) and thus being unable to make progress, the company is a complete anachronism, and it is my intention as soon as practicable to institute either a reconstruction or a dissolution as the position is most unsatisfactory.⁴³²

THE AUCKLAND SMELTING COMPANY

At the very end of 1950, Hardy wrote that, as lack of funds meant no mining, he was attempting to interest 'substantial capital'.⁴³³ He was negotiating with Benjamin John Dunsheath,⁴³⁴ managing director of the Auckland Smelting Company, which had a mine at Tui and was contemplating mining at Waiorongomai. In the following year Dunsheath described negotiations with Hardy as 'very protracted owing to certain

⁴²⁹ Malcolm Hardy to Commissioner of Crown Lands, Hamilton, 6 November 1950, Lands and Survey Department, 8/857, vol. 1, DOSLI, Hamilton.

⁴³⁰ Commissioner of Crown Lands, Hamilton, to Malcolm Hardy, 15 November 1951, Lands and Survey Department, 8/857, vol. 2, DOSLI, Hamilton.

⁴³¹ Malcolm Hardy to Assistant Registrar of Companies, 8 November 1950, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴³² Malcolm Hardy to Assistant Registrar of Companies, 4 December 1950, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴³³ Malcolm Hardy to Assistant Registrar of Companies, 28 December 1950, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴³⁴ See paper on the Auckland Smelting Company.

interested Parties in Auckland', clearly the other shareholders, but that at 'about Christmas time a definite Agreement was signed by Hardy transferring his entire interest to us for a consideration, and immediately following we bought out the other large Shareholder. Since the beginning of this year we have had Hardy working for us'.⁴³⁵ Because of other delays, not until 17 May 1951 did he sell his 40,275 shares to Dunsheath. The other large shareholder was Industrial Assets Ltd, of which Mitchell was still a director; it had acquired 11,575 shares in 1945.⁴³⁶ Later in May, Dunsheath informed the department that he would employ Hardy, who had provided him with the assay books, maps, and details of ore treated.⁴³⁷ Hardy's Mines continued to exist, the Auckland Smelting Company holding 86 per cent of its shares.⁴³⁸ In August, Hardy resigned as a director; four months later Mitchell and Dickson were replaced by the Auckland Smelting Company's directors.⁴³⁹ The balance sheet produced for the year ending 31 January 1952 revealed a capital loss on the disposal of their plant of £1,975.⁴⁴⁰

When seeking protection for Hardy's Mines Nos. 1 and 2 in 1951, the Auckland Smelting Company informed the warden that they would work them in conjunction with their Tui properties,⁴⁴¹ but this was not to be, protection being renewed each year until 1957.⁴⁴² Under an arrangement with the new owners, Hardy paid the rents on these claims.⁴⁴³ At the time of the last application for protection, the owners were trying to sell them to

⁴³⁵ B.J. Dunsheath to Under Secretary, Mines Department, 1 August 1951, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, ANZ-W.

⁴³⁶ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴³⁷ B.J. Dunsheath to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 28 May 1951, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, ANZ-W.

⁴³⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1957, 2/1957, BCDG 11289/5a, ANZ-A.

⁴³⁹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴⁰ Balance Sheet, 31 January 1952, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 165 no. 1028, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴¹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1951, 18/1951, BCDG 11289/4a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1934-1961, 13/9152, 2, 19/1953, 12/54, 6/1955, 15/1956, BBAV 11505/2a; Mining Applications 1957, 2/1957, BCDG 11289/5a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴³ Malcolm Hardy to Receiver of Gold Revenue, Te Aroha, 9 October 1962, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Mining Privileges 1933-1972, folio 70, BBAV 11500/5a, ANZ-A.

an overseas company.⁴⁴⁴ This attempt failed, and in 1958 the Auckland Smelting Company decided that the leases and Hardy's Mines' shares were valueless. As Hardy considered 'that they have a good potential value', the secretary asked him whether he might take up these shares.⁴⁴⁵ His optimism did not extend that far, and on 6 January 1960 Hardy's Mines was struck off the register of companies.⁴⁴⁶ Ten years later, the outstanding rents were written off, and the following year his two claims were struck off the register.⁴⁴⁷

SOUTH PACIFIC MINES

In 1955 the Auckland Smelting Company tried to sell their claims to overseas companies, and the directors' report for November expressed gratitude to Hardy 'for his many helpful suggestions. Your Directors were ... handicapped by lack of essential information, but again Mr Hardy came to their assistance and prepared a comprehensive report which has been sent overseas'.⁴⁴⁸ This 11-page report gave details of the Tui lodes in particular, summarizing the history of mining there and including some of the assays made by others during the past decade.⁴⁴⁹ He later produced a 38-page report accompanied by 20 pages of assay results from 1904 onwards, which he provided to South Pacific Mines when this company became interested in the area in 1959.⁴⁵⁰ He also provided this company with the mining plans and maps he had acquired. Most of the report was found to be accurate;⁴⁵¹ but when the 1400-foot level was reopened in the 1960s at least one place

⁴⁴⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1957, 2/1957, BCDG 11289/5a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴⁵ Secretary, Auckland Smelting Company, to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 7 February 1958, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, ANZ-W.

⁴⁴⁶ Inspector of Mines, Correspondence: Mining, BBDO 18634, box 57, file 2, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴⁷ Piako County Council, 'Administration: Historical Records: Mining – General', Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; *New Zealand Gazette*, 17 September 1970, p. 1688, 21 January 1971, p. 96.

⁴⁴⁸ Directors' Report, 15 November 1955, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 949 no. 6489, ANZ-A.

⁴⁴⁹ Malcolm Hardy to Directors, Auckland Smelting Company, 27 October 1955, Eric Coppard Papers, Waihi.

⁴⁵⁰ Malcolm Hardy, Report for South Pacific Mines, n.d. [1959], Eric Coppard Papers, Waihi.

⁴⁵¹ Interview with Eric Coppard, Waihi, 4 August 1985, pp. 13-14 of transcript.

where rich ore was marked on his plan did not.⁴⁵² Eric Coppard, who assisted to open up and inspect this level, recalled that

on the plans that we have been given by Hardy he had put little black spots on the maps and these referred to high-grade ore located by Hardy.... In his report he refers to the fact of finding little kaolin pockets ... in the walls of the mine and he'd carefully scratched these out and claimed that he'd found some very nice specimen stone, gold-bearing quartz.... There was nothing in them.

He wondered whether this was because Hardy was not the expert he claimed to be or was 'deliberately giving us a bum steer.... We certainly didn't find anything of value in any of these holes'.⁴⁵³ Coppard recalled meeting Hardy on one occasion, when he was very upset because he believed South Pacific Mines had not paid him adequately for his information.⁴⁵⁴ To talk to him was 'very very difficult. He was so deaf you almost had to shout. He probably didn't ever bother learning to lip-read and so forth and of course the only way to get anything through was either to talk loud or to write it down'.⁴⁵⁵ 'I have seen arguments there where he disputed the fact of how much he got paid for, or he should have been paid for some information and it hadn't been coming'. Although he received a consultant's fee, being paid 'whenever he was needed', he did not think it was enough.⁴⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Hardy continued to assist the new company, writing to the minister in December 1962 criticizing the Te Aroha Borough Water Supply Empowering Act of that year as a 'hurried piece of legislation which failed to recognize the value of the mineral resources in the district, and which will cause these resources to be lost to the nation'. He accused the government of being unaware of the work of South Pacific Mines, and attacked the government geologist's opinion of the district.⁴⁵⁷

DEATH, AND ASSESSMENTS

⁴⁵² Interview with Eric Coppard, 18 March 1985.

⁴⁵³ Interview with Eric Coppard, 4 August 1985, pp. 29-30 of transcript.

⁴⁵⁴ Interview with Eric Coppard, 18 March 1985.

⁴⁵⁵ Interview with Eric Coppard, 4 August 1985, p. 46 of transcript.

⁴⁵⁶ Interview with Eric Coppard, 8 December 1985, p. 68 of transcript.

⁴⁵⁷ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 14 January 1963, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, box 58, file 4, ANZ-A

By this time Hardy had become, in the words of a great niece who visited him when a young child, ‘rather a recluse’.⁴⁵⁸ He had never married. On 15 August 1963, at the age of 67, he died of cancer of the stomach, from which he had suffered for several years.⁴⁵⁹ His will, made exactly a month previously, instructed that his grave was to have a metal plaque with his full name, dates of birth and death, ‘and below this the word Kismet’. He recorded his occupation as painter. His sister was the only family member to receive a legacy, of £400, from an estate of £6,500. The Mineral Club of Wellington received his assay balance, prospecting dish, ‘all mine plans, assay and crushing records, together with any other mining records in my possession’, along with assay equipment, ore samples, and his books on mining. He left £100 to the Lepers Mission and Trust Board and bequeathed to the Auckland War Memorial Museum a ‘wooden Chinese joss depicting Buddah expounding the evils of money. The history of this is obscure but it was stated that this idol was removed from China many years ago during the Boxer rising’.⁴⁶⁰

Charles Kingsley-Smith, a journalist who worked for *Te Aroha News* from 1926 to 1936 and became its editor,⁴⁶¹ recalled him as ‘living the life of a hermit in an abandoned whare on the field’ in those years. ‘He was also a well-known figure in Te Aroha, where he made many friends and was continually welcome. Always happy to meet visitors and escort them over the old field, Mr Hardy’s old “bach” ... was frequently the scene of homely entertainment and yarning over a friendly cup of tea’.⁴⁶² He described him as ‘a particularly fine chap’ who became his ‘particular friend’. Because he ‘just refused to leave the old gold-field’,⁴⁶³ he stayed with Kingsley-Smith in Te Aroha ‘as a guest when he got tired of being on his own. It was then we had our longest yarns of the early days’.⁴⁶⁴ But for Hardy’s tales Kingsley-Smith, who was fascinated with early Waiorongomai mining, would have

⁴⁵⁸ Elizabeth Hardy (daughter of David Calder Hardy) to Philip Hart, 18 January 1985.

⁴⁵⁹ Death Certificate of Malcolm Hardy, 15 August 1963, 1963/26982, BDM.

⁴⁶⁰ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4421 556/63, ANZ-A.

⁴⁶¹ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 18 September 1984.

⁴⁶² Charles Kingsley-Smith, *This is Te Aroha* (Te Aroha, 1980), p. 27; see photographs of Hardy on pp. 22, 27.

⁴⁶³ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 18 September 1984.

⁴⁶⁴ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 3 October 1984.

been unable ‘to glean anything about the old exciting days’.⁴⁶⁵ All the miners abandoned the field ‘but for one dauntless spirit Malcolm Hardy, who had to finally be transferred to Te Aroha’.⁴⁶⁶ He ‘just refused to give up hope and continued living there until old age asserted itself’.⁴⁶⁷

Hardy’s nephew David believed he would have preferred to be a full-time miner, but to earn money he was forced to be a painter. Mining was ‘more of a hobby’, and all he got out of it was ‘pocket money’.⁴⁶⁸ Whether he really believed that his mines were as valuable as he claimed is not known, but less than a year before he died he was repeating that this was the case, despite all the evidence to the contrary.⁴⁶⁹ His self-deception was remarkable, and had he taken the trouble to research the history of Waiorongomai mining properly he might not have wasted so many years of his life pottering around, writing long letters to the authorities, and wasted the time of so many officials. Even his understanding of his father’s mining was ‘very suspect’, as David Hardy came to realize. ‘I can remember asking Malcolm about the Big Blow, or Buck, and with his gruff huff, let me know that it was useless. The only part of the field that had promise was the Premier. Well, that was obviously just his supposition, as were other things that he told me’.⁴⁷⁰ He believed he had traced where his father had indicated a rich seam existed, and

thought that he had found this shoot, but the shoot that he showed *me* in the 1940s was on the surface, it was not inside at all. And this is what my father said, “Malcolm didn’t know what the hell he was talking about.” As he said, he knew very well that it was in the main Premier section ... and that it couldn’t possibly be on the outside. The ore that Malcolm did find I helped him with that, taking some of it out, it was on the surface and was a very, very steep part of the Premier, and with a good magnifying glass you could see fine gold in it but it was only a very small vein.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁵ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 27 August 1985.

⁴⁶⁶ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 3 October 1884.

⁴⁶⁷ Charles Kingsley-Smith to Philip Hart, 15 May 1985.

⁴⁶⁸ Interviews with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, p. 3 of transcript, and 6 November 1986.

⁴⁶⁹ Minister of Mines to Malcolm Hardy, 14 January 1963, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, box 58, file 4, ANZ-A.

⁴⁷⁰ David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 1 June 2007, email.

⁴⁷¹ Interview with David Calder Hardy, 19 April 1986, pp. 1- 2 of transcript.

‘As for Malcolm’s sampling the Vulcan and other reefs, underground or otherwise, I found no sign of that work’, partly because of a collapsed portal. He ‘was deluding himself’ about his discoveries, for although ‘he may have found that little ore shoot’ on the outside of the Premier outcrop, ‘he didn’t really check it out’. Although his father had been unwilling to show him his mines, Malcolm’s ‘blind and stubborn determination won out’, and he finally agreed; but because his father died and many of the portals had caved in ‘Malcolm had no idea where to look’. As ‘he had no money’, he ‘had to survive by painting and decorating which he was good at’, and he also ‘made extra money from illustration work’. His mine could ‘not be a one man operation since the ore values were low and many tons of ore had to be broken out, transported down the valley, and shipped to a smelter, etc, to make it pay’. David’s assessment was that his uncle was ‘a dreamer, irrational and a liar and philibuster’.⁴⁷²

Hardy’s family, unimpressed with his illusions, had ceased providing any practical assistance in 1931. His nephew Frank recalled that when Hardy started draining water out of the Hero level he saw glistening rocks and sent ‘a telegram to his Mother from Te Aroha saying, “This is not a gold mine it’s an Eldorado.” My Father was highly amused, and repeated it on many occasions’.⁴⁷³

CONCLUSION

Was Malcolm Hardy deliberately obtuse, or was he a typical ‘hatter’, pottering away largely by himself and imagining that great wealth was waiting to be found when the next shot was fired? If the latter, he was remarkable for his self-deception, giving no indication that he had learnt anything from the earlier history of the field. His life at Waiorongomai was wasted in a futile search for what did not exist, and all attempts by those who did understand the prospects to convince him that his efforts were futile were angrily dismissed.

Appendix

⁴⁷² David Calder Hardy to Philip Hart, 5 June 2007, email.

⁴⁷³ Frank McAdam to Philip Hart, n.d. [December 2007].

Figure 1: Malcolm Hardy, c. 1940, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission. [This photograph was printed in April 1940 in the *Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited*, p. 13 [Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W], with a tendentious caption: 'Mr Malcolm Y. Hardy, who took up the claim after the death of his father, and who (together with others) has spent a considerable amount of money in proving the value of the holdings and has met with outstanding success'.]

Figure 2: Malcolm Hardy in the doorway of his hut, with visiting trampers, n.d. (1930s), David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 3: 'Hardy's hut', 1971, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 4: Malcolm Hardy outside portal to Hero tunnel (otherwise known as the 1400 foot level), 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 5: Malcolm Hardy in upper level of the Hero reef, 1930s; on left is old open stope to the reef with a new nine-foot reef in the foreground, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 6: Malcolm Hardy, sketch plan of elevation of his workings, attached to Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 23 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 7: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for prospecting license over the former Premier, 22 August 1931, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 21/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 8: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Peter Ferguson's former tramway, 10 May 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 9: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Peter Ferguson's former machine site, 10 May 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 20/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 10: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for renewal of Prospecting License 4058, 18 August 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 11: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for the former Hardy's Mines dam, 24 January 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 3/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 12: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for water race, 24 January 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 2/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 13: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Prospecting License 4137 (the former Colonist ground), 12 October 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 46/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 14: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Prospecting License 4156 (the former Hero ground), 8 December 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 61/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 15: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached for Prospecting License 4279 (includes the former Canadian ground), submitted to hearing of 6 March 1934, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1934, 10/1934, BCDG

11289/3a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

Figure 16: Malcolm Hardy, 'Plan showing the stopings and revealing the amount of work done in opening up the mines', *Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited* (April 1940), p. 10, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W [Archives New Zealand The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua]; used with permission.

Figure 17: South Pacific Mines, 'Hardy's Mines No. 1 & No. 2 S.Q.C.: Colonist-Hero Section', noting 'high grade ore located by M.Y. Hardy', 1959, with annotations made by prospectors working on behalf of Norpac, January 1978, Eric Coppard Papers; used with permission.

Figure 18: 'Hardy's Waiorongomai Area. Tentative Distribution of Development Work (Alteration likely due to Prospecting Discoveries)', Traced from plans of unknown origin but approximately correct', 1940, University of Waikato Map Library.

Figure 19: Malcolm Hardy and an assistant working machinery adjacent to portal of Hero tunnel, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 20: Malcolm Hardy and an assistant grinding ore, 1930s [two photos], David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 21: Malcolm Hardy's furnace, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

Figure 22: Riffler in Malcolm Hardy's plant, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission,

Figures 23-26 are four photographs of Hardy's plant (from a set of six) sent by Hardy to Mines Department, 6 October 1934, with his notes, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W; used with permission:

Figure 23: 'Side view showing spring & actuation of stamper by pin & rod from heavy balance wheel above'.

Figure 24: 'Stamper showing plates in foreground'.

Figure 25: 'View showing plate & riffles. Water line passes down hill at back – 75ft fall'.

Figure 26: 'Side view showing pelton and belt drive. Smithy to left'.

Figure 27: Remains of 'Hardy's workshop', 1960, Eric Hill Collection.

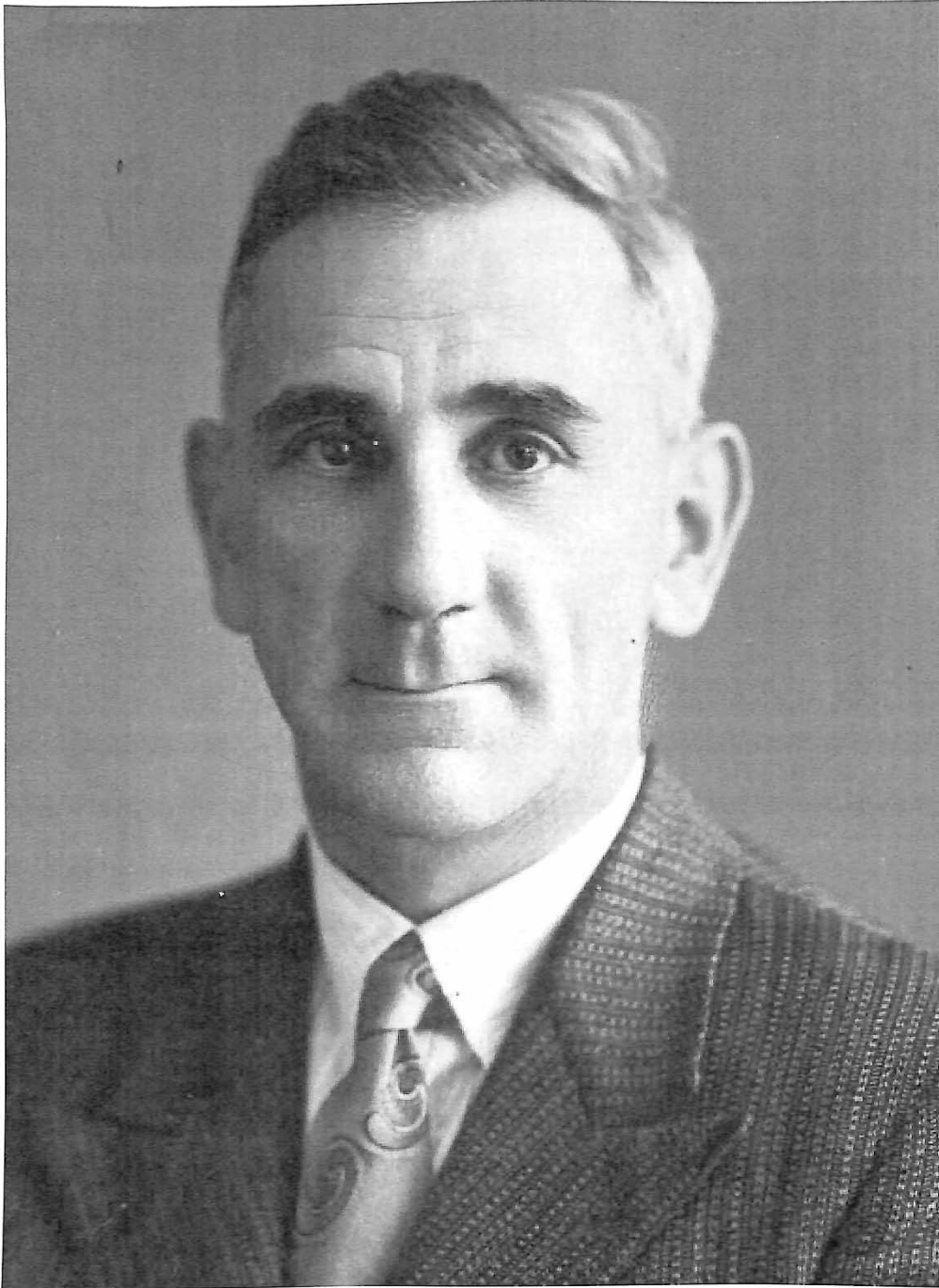


Figure 1: Malcolm Hardy, c. 1940, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission. [This photograph was printed in April 1940 in the *Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited*, p. 13 [Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W], with a tendentious caption: 'Mr Malcolm Y. Hardy, who took up the claim after the death of his father, and who (together with others) has spent a considerable amount of money in proving the value of the holdings and has met with outstanding success'.]



Figure 2: Malcolm Hardy in the doorway of his hut, with visiting trampers, n.d. (1930s), David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.



Figure 3: 'Hardy's hut', 1971, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

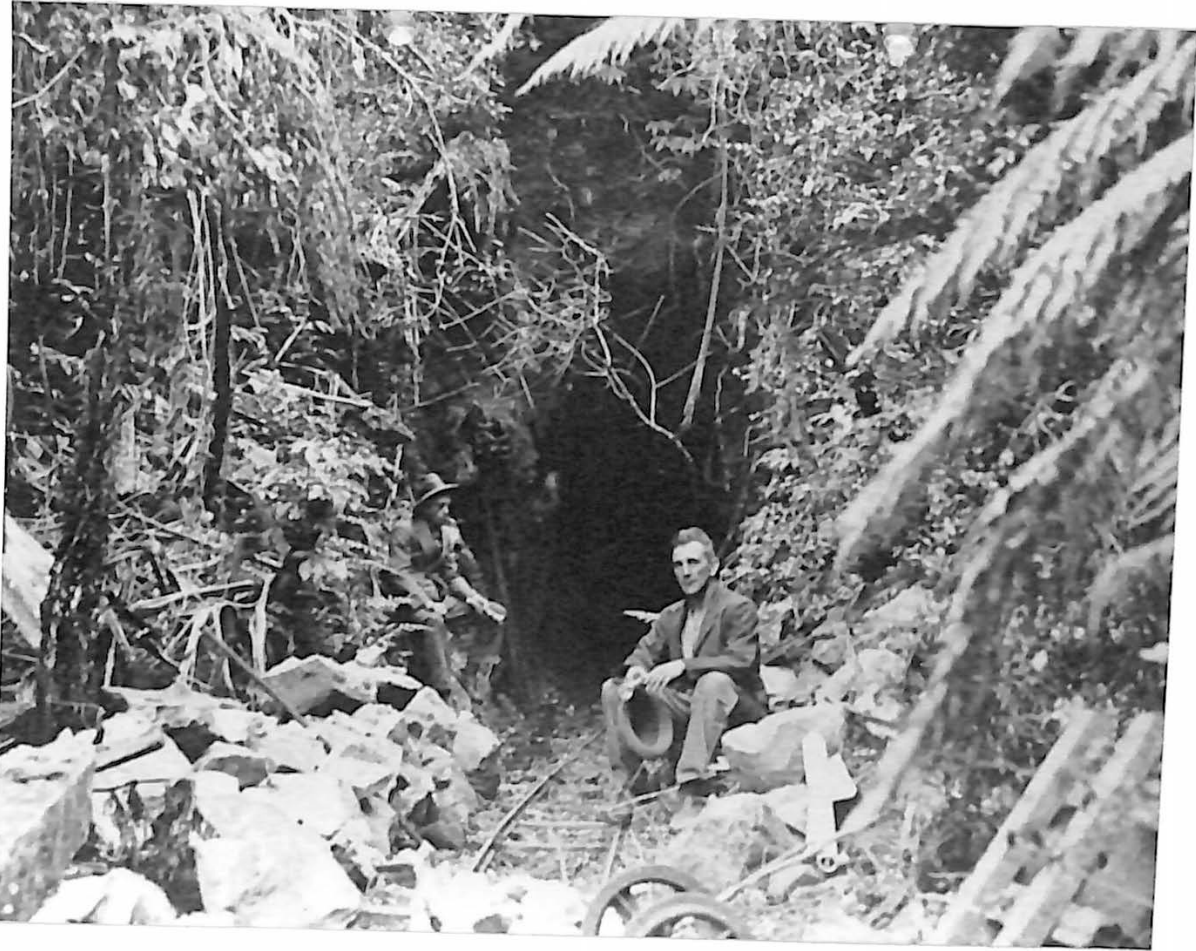


Figure 4: Malcolm Hardy outside portal to Hero tunnel (otherwise known as the 1400 foot level), 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

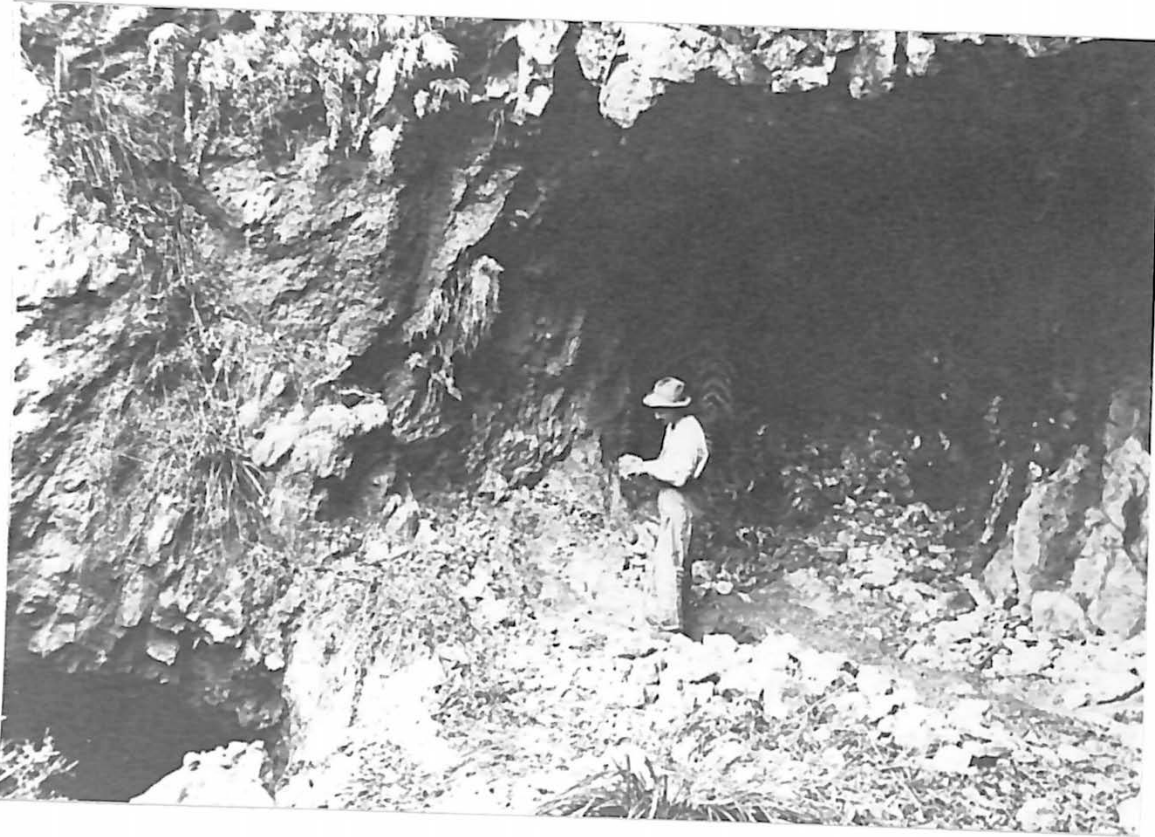


Figure 5: Malcolm Hardy in upper level of the Hero reef, 1930s; on left is old open stope to the reef with a new nine-foot reef in the foreground, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.

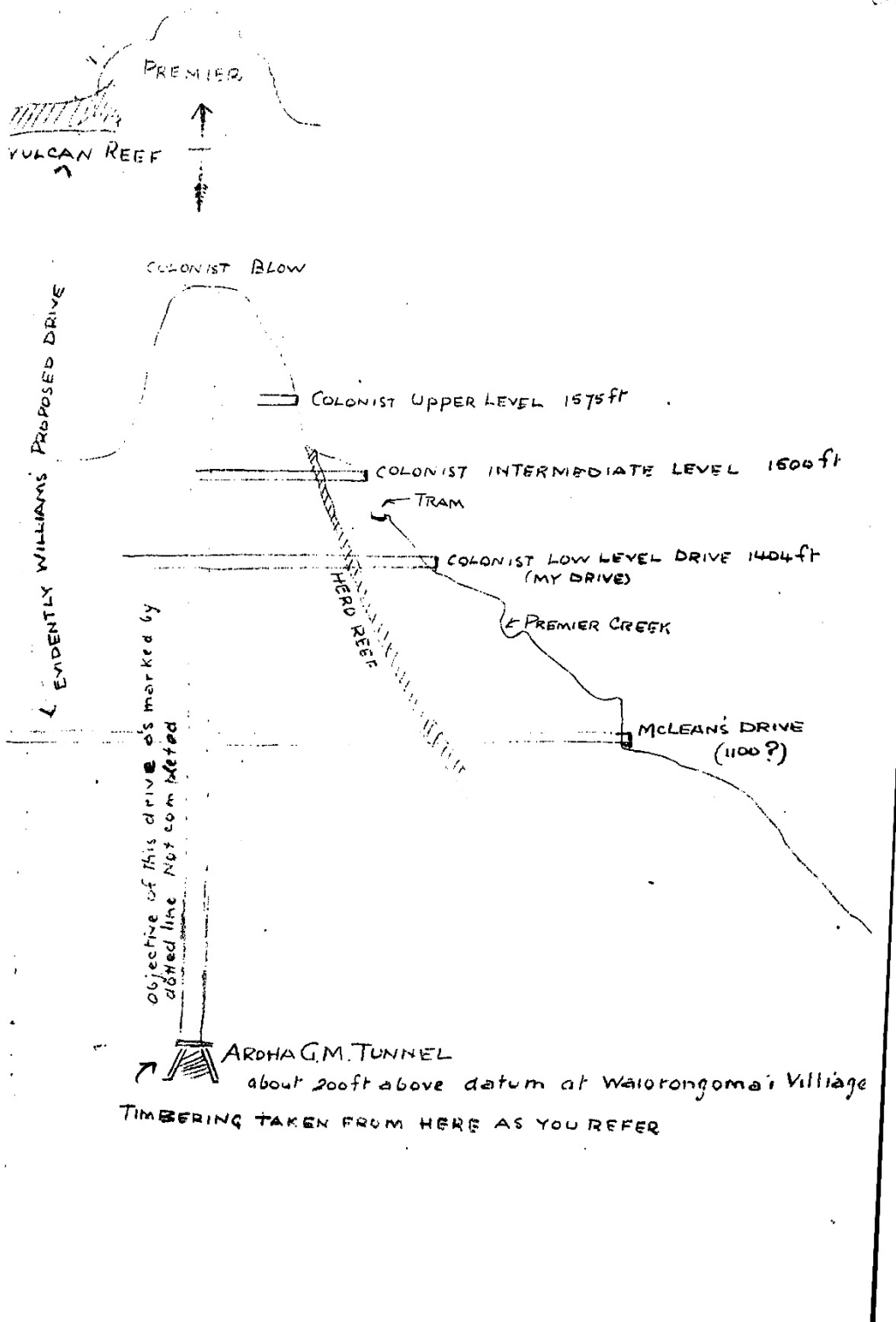


Figure 6: Malcolm Hardy, sketch plan of elevation of his workings, attached to Malcolm Hardy to J.F. Downey, 23 September 1931, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634,

M6, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

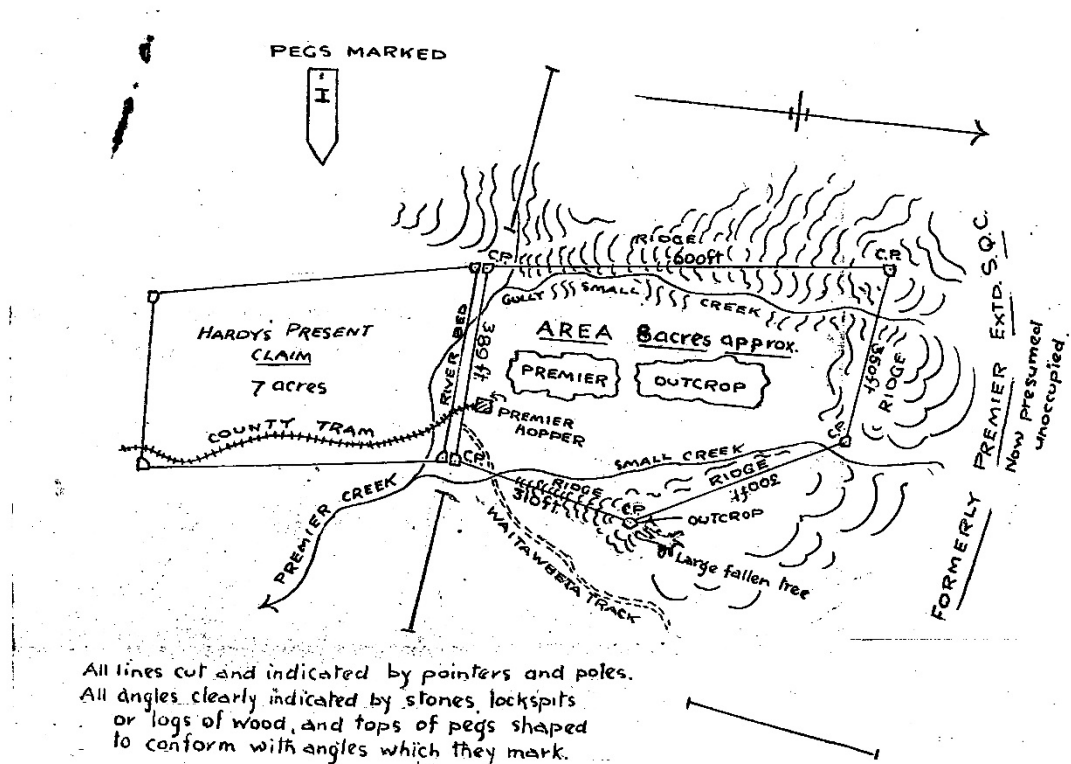


Figure 7: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for prospecting license over the former Premier, 22 August 1931, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1931, 21/1931, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

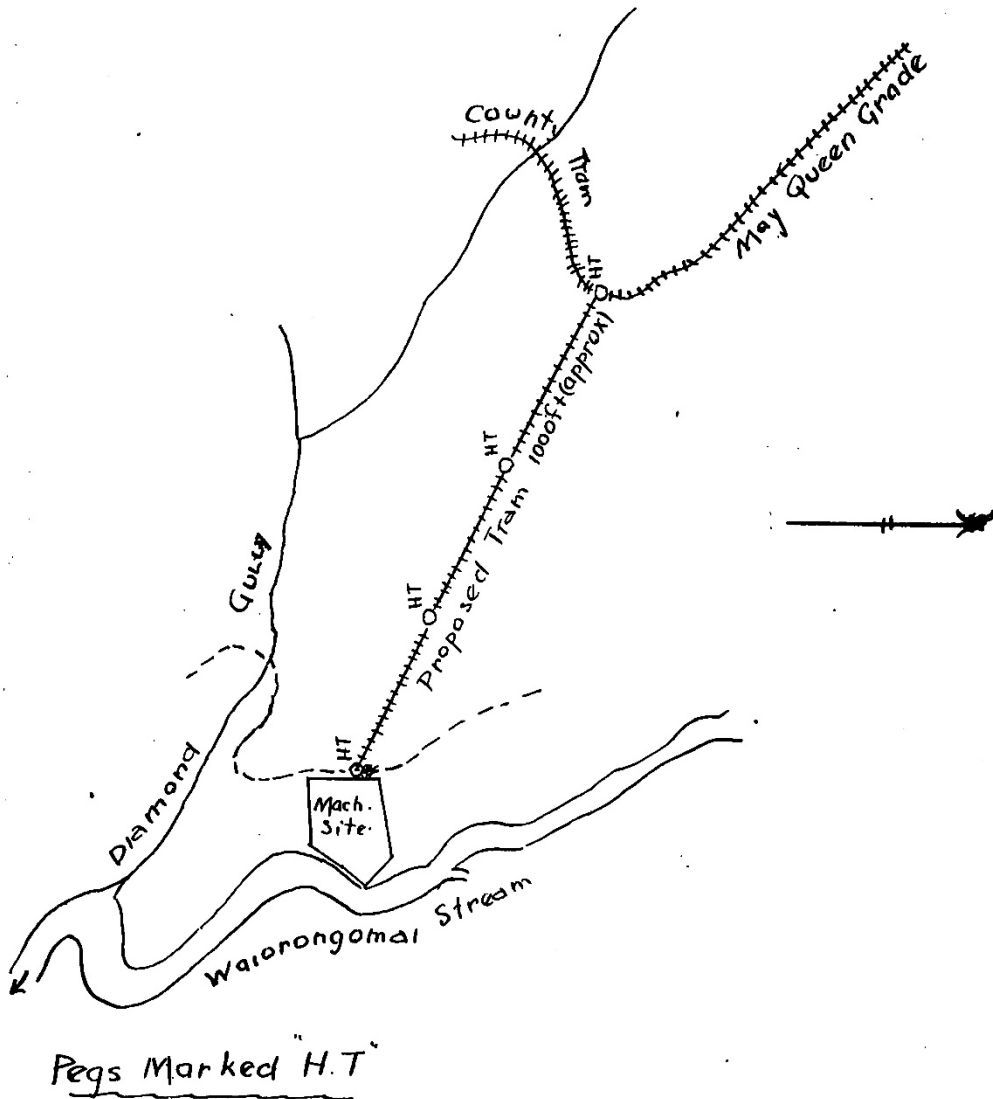


Figure 8: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Peter Ferguson's former tramway, 10 May 1932, Inspector of Mines, BBDO 18634, M6, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

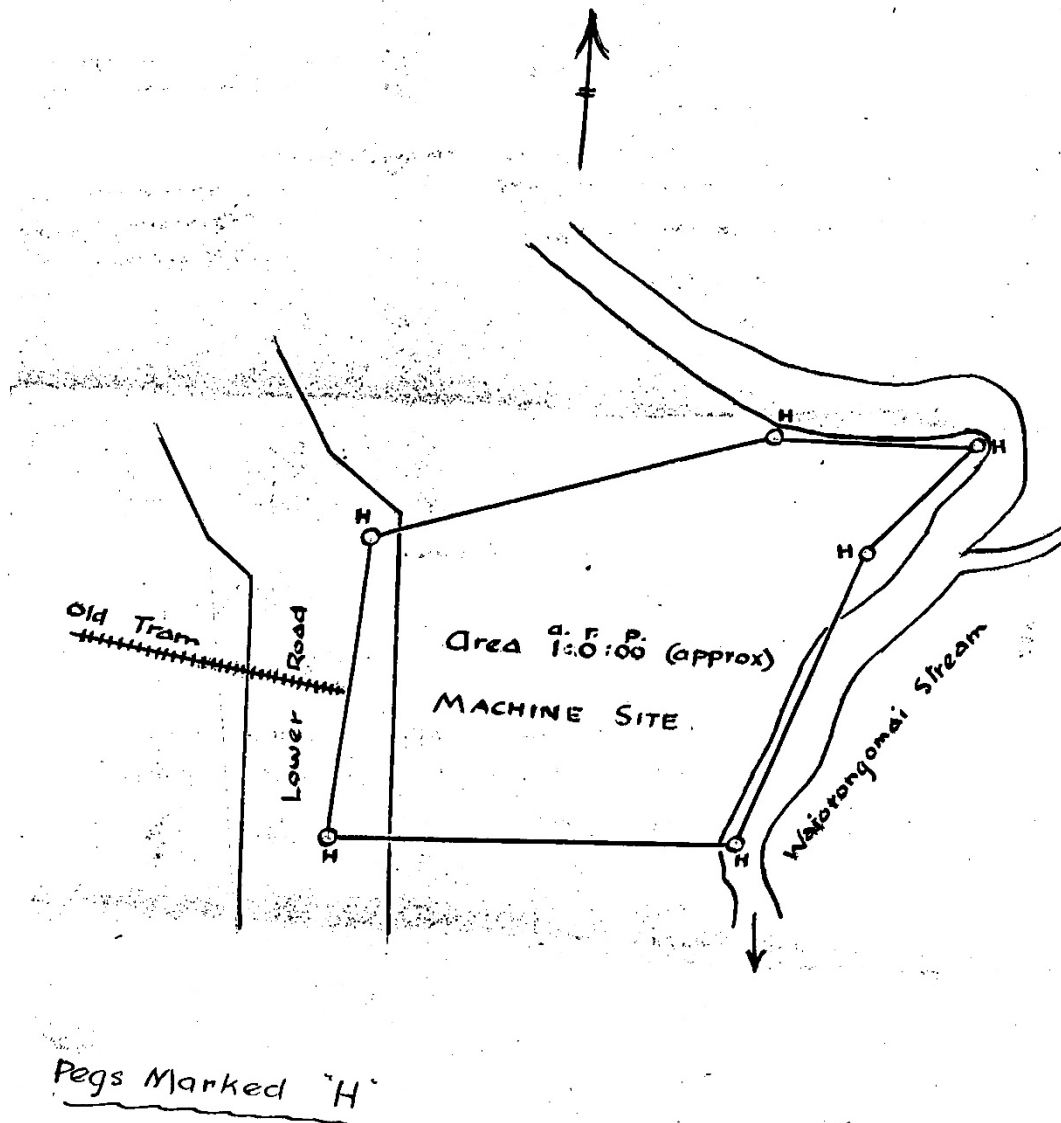


Figure 9: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Peter Ferguson's former machine site, 10 May 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 20/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

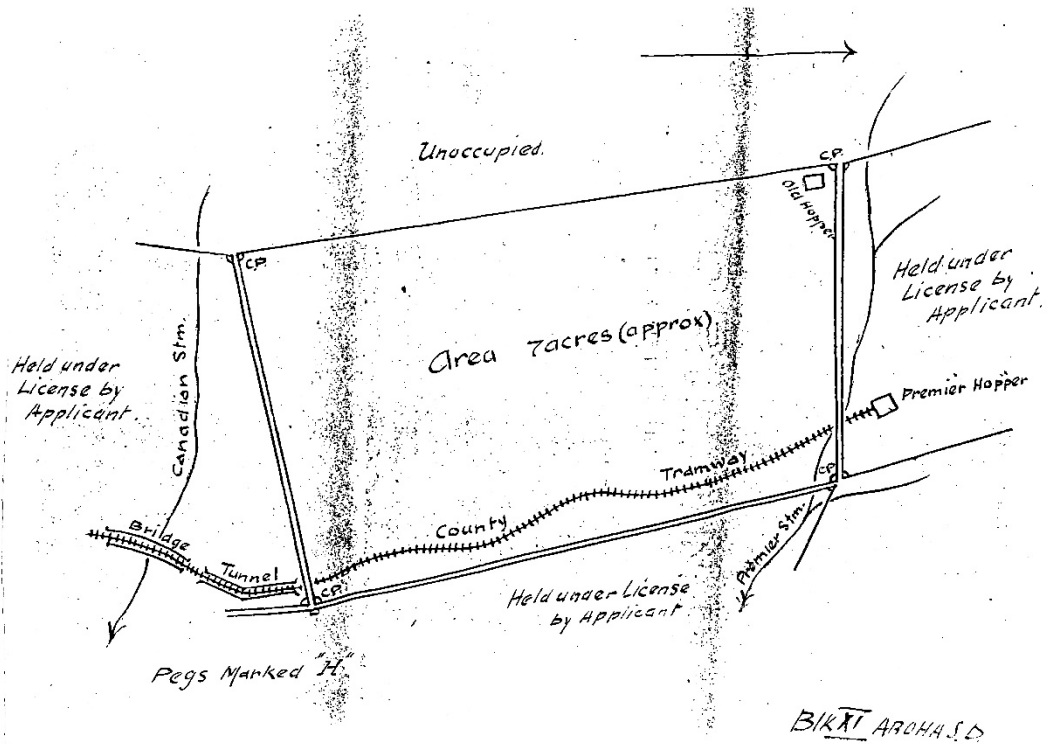


Figure 10: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for renewal of Prospecting License 4058, 18 August 1932, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1932, 26/1932, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

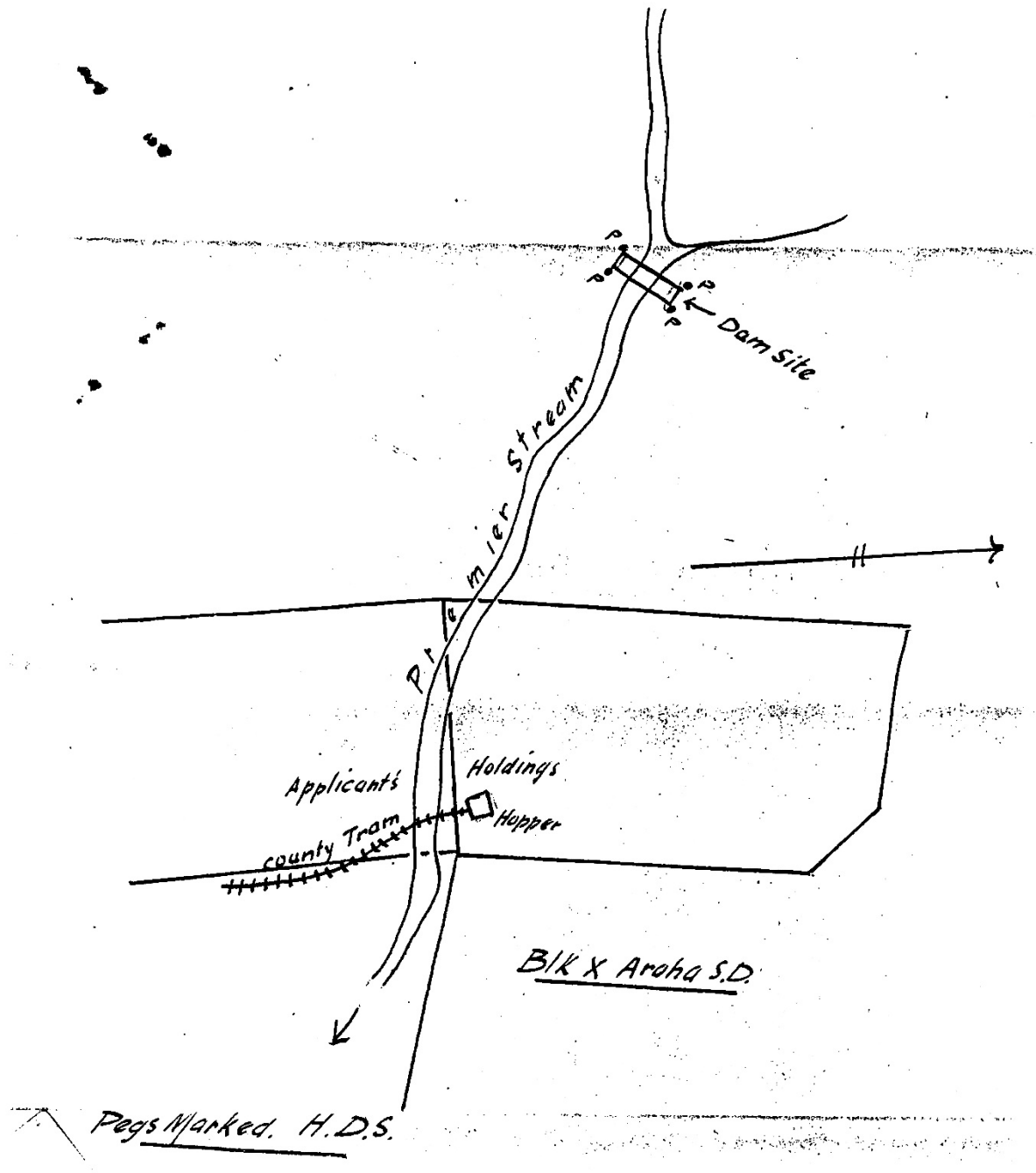
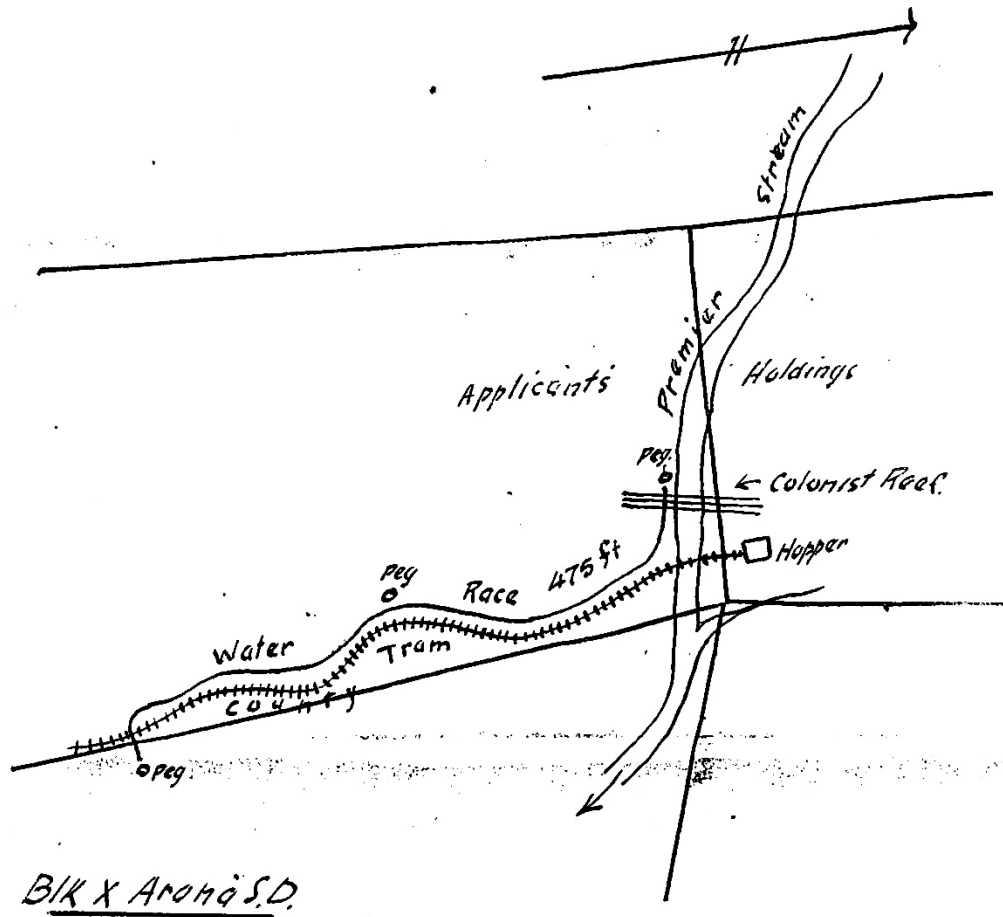


Figure 11: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for the former Hardy's Mines dam, 24 January 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 3/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.



Pegs Marked H.W.R

Figure 12: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for water race, 24 January 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 2/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

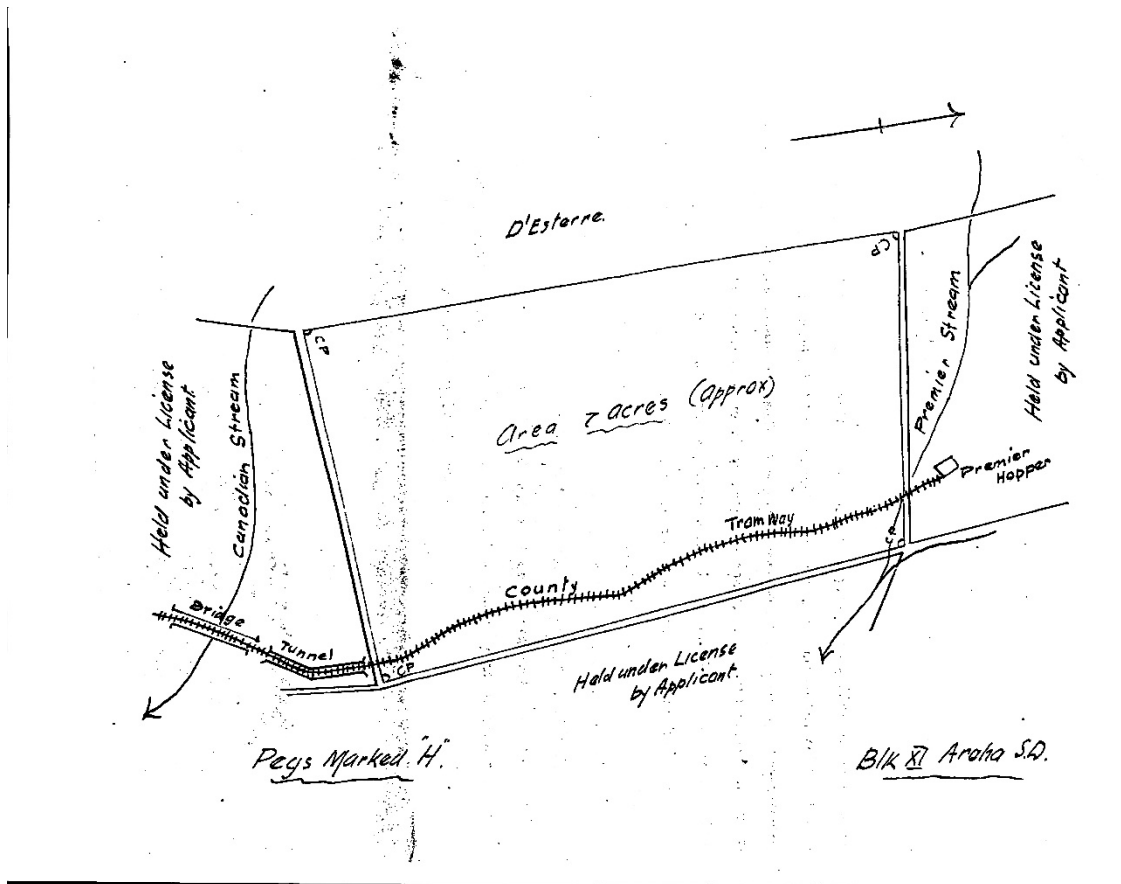


Figure 13: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Prospecting License 4137 (the former Colonist ground), 12 October 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 46/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

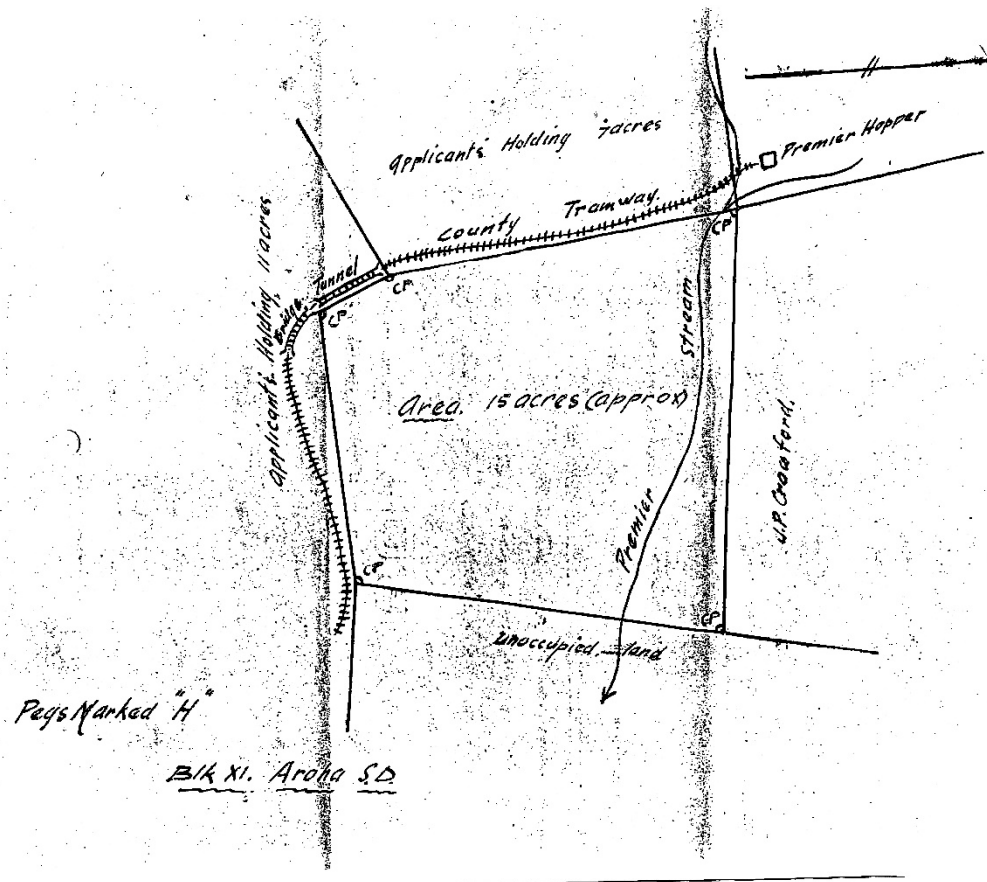


Figure 14: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached to application for Prospecting License 4156 (the former Hero ground), 8 December 1933, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1933, 61/1933, BCDG 11289/2a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.

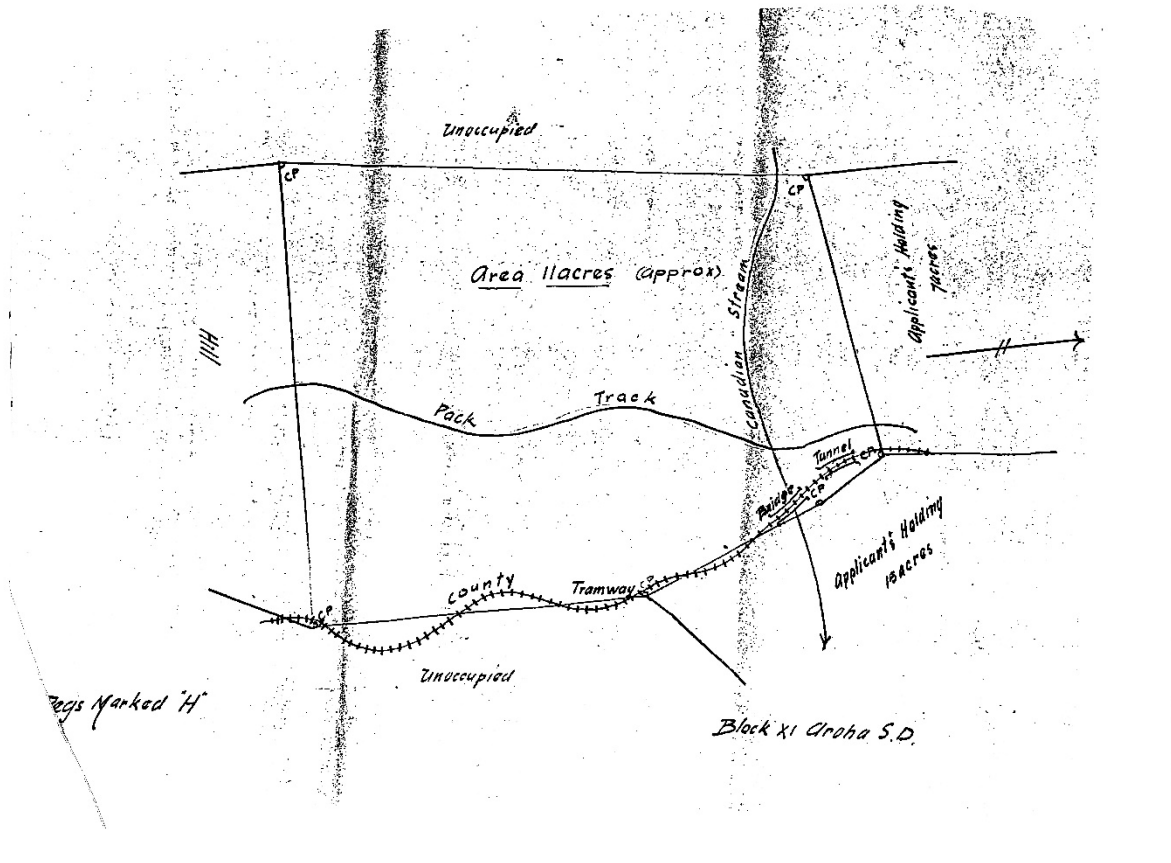
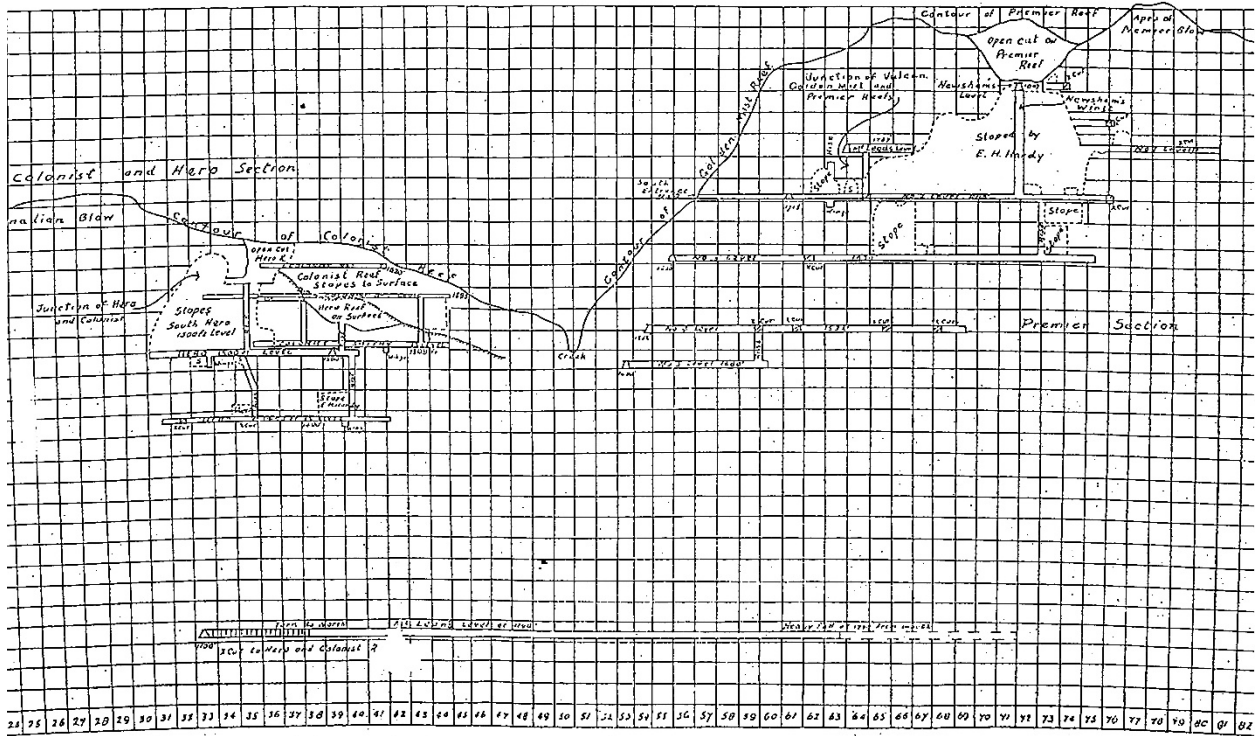


Figure 15: Malcolm Hardy, plan attached for Prospecting License 4279 (includes the former Canadian ground), submitted to hearing of 6 March 1934, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1934, 10/1934, BCDG 11289/3a, ANZ-A [Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kawanatanga, Auckland Regional Office]; used with permission.



PLAN SHOWING THE STOPINGS AND REVEALING THE AMOUNT OF WORK DONE IN OPENING UP THE MINES

NOTE: Each square represents vertical height of 30 ft. which gives an idea of the large quantity of ore reserves in this small section of property.

Figure 16: Malcolm Hardy, 'Plan showing the stopings and revealing the amount of work done in opening up the mines', *Prospectus of Hardy's Mines Limited* (April 1940), p. 10, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/4/54, ANZ-W [Archives New Zealand The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua]; used with permission.



Figure 19: Malcolm Hardy and an assistant working machinery adjacent to portal of Hero tunnel, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.



Figure 20: Malcolm Hardy and an assistant grinding ore, 1930s [two photos], David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.



Figure 21: Malcolm Hardy's furnace, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission.



Figure 22: Riffles in Malcolm Hardy's plant, 1930s, David Calder Hardy Collection; used with permission,

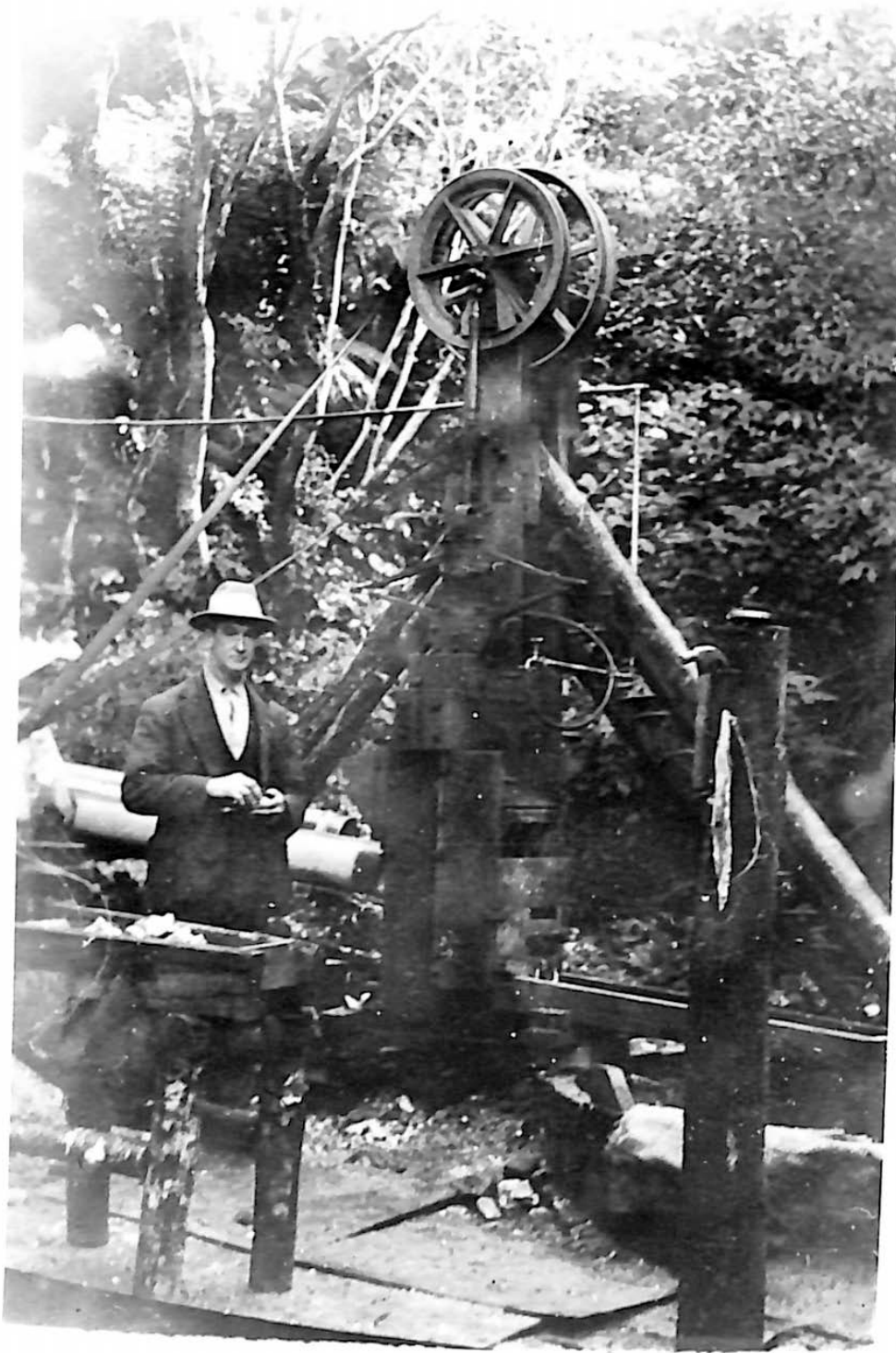


Figure 23: 'Side view showing spring & actuation of stamper by pin & rod from heavy balance wheel above'.



Figure 24: 'Stamper showing plates in foreground'.



Figure 25: View showing plate & riffles. Water line passes down hill at back – 75ft fall.



Figure 26: 'Side view showing pelton and belt drive. Smithy to left'.



Figure 27: Remains of 'Hardy's workshop', 1960, Eric Hill Collection.