

loading-point in the vicinity of the E Hill Opencast, will also pick up the coal from the Webb and Fly Creek Mines at intermediate loading-points and discharge into the bins at Ngakawau. Provided no unforeseen difficulties arise, the aerial should be erected and in operation in January, 1951.

The coal-mining undertakings of the Westport Coal Co., Ltd., were acquired by the State, but were not formally operated as State coal-mines until the 1st April, 1948. However, from the date of the agreement between the company and the State the undertakings were carried on with the co-operation of the former directors of the company. I wish to accord my appreciation of the very fine measure of co-operation and assistance given to the Mines Department by the directors and staff of this company during this period.

At Denniston a vigorous drilling programme on the Plateau Area was carried out and a decision reached to open up a new mine at this site. Further exploration work is still required at the Cook's Lease Area. The existing mine at Whareatea continued pillar-extraction, and tenders are being called for a new stone drive to the coal-seam to enable coal-extraction to be carried out more economically and to attain the maximum recovery of the available coal. It is proposed to transport all coal won from this mine, and also from the projected new mine at the Plateau Area, by aerial ropeway to the Denniston bins.

The other mine operated by the company—namely, Millerton—continued normally on pillar-extraction.

In the Reefton field, the operations in the Burke's Creek Mine were mainly development and reconstruction. At Garvey Creek difficult mining conditions were encountered in the vertical seam workings, but steady progress has been maintained and an improvement in production of this good-quality bituminous coal may be expected from both underground and opencast operations.

All of the principal mines in the Grey district are now owned by the State.

The Liverpool Colliery continued with pillar-extraction and development, with a shortage of experienced miners for manning all possible coal places. Boring in neighbouring areas has just been completed, finally proving the existence of adequate coal reserves to warrant the opening-up of a new colliery, which will be proceeded with as rapidly as plant and man-power permit.

There is nothing outstanding to report in respect of the Strongman Mine, where good-quality coal is being won in very faulted country. The complex conditions underground make it difficult to plan ahead development and haulage systems.

At Dobson, output was maintained from development work in the West Side; whilst at Wallsend, work was confined solely to pillar-extraction.

There is nothing of special importance to report in respect of the Blackball Mine, where development proceeded with satisfactory results on the whole. Underground mining conditions were unchanged.

At Roa, the Paparoa Mine operations were continued mainly on pillar-extraction.

In the Ohai field, the Mossbank Mine completed development and commenced pillar-extraction, with good results. A new stone drive to the coal-seam, which is now completed, will improve the haulage system and make possible the recovery of an additional 150,000 tons of good coal.

The Black Diamond Mine ceased as an underground mining proposition and a contract for winning the coal by opencast methods was entered into.

In the Wairaki Block, pillar-extraction will be completed shortly in the old No. 1 Mine. Development and solid work was carried out in the No. 3 Mine, where mining is now being carried out below the Star Mine workings.

Pillar-extraction only was the source of coal production in the Star Mine, although drilling operations in unworked portions of the property proved large quantities of additional coal to be available.

Development was persisted with in the Birchwood Mine pending the outcome of drilling operations, which are essential before a future policy can be formulated.