

WANGALOA OPENCAST

During the year ended 31st March, 1949, a total of 45,461 tons 10 cwt. of coal was produced and 141,178 cubic yards of overburden were removed. The total amount of stripping involved in the present workings is now 719,180 cubic yards, of which 418,118 cubic yards have been moved to date, plus 23,563 yards in drains, roads, &c. The estimated quantity of coal remaining is now 209,800 tons. The all-over ratio of estimated total stripping to estimated total extractable coal is 2.127 cubic yards to 1 ton, while 1.496 cubic yards of overburden covered each ton of coal won to date. The total production since October, 1945, is 128,376 tons 2 cwt.

The removal of overburden presented the most difficult part of the operations, as wet conditions immobilized the plant for approximately one-third of the available working-time. Owing to plant breakdowns the average plant available for stripping the top cut on the south-east side was two tractor-carryall units, one tractor-rooter, and one angledozer. On the swamp side one 1½-yard dragline was used in conjunction with an Athey wagon unit, and overtime was worked where possible with this unit, as a result of which this winter's coal-supply is assured from this area.

Coal-production was carried on successfully during the period, averaging over 1,000 tons per five-day week of actual working-time. Production was suspended from 10th to 27th February as the supply exceeded the demand. Opportunity was taken to improve the access road and repair the Castle Hill screens. The main coal-seam averages 24 ft. in thickness and a 10 in. to 18 in. seam of mudstone separates it from the top seam, which is up to 7 ft. thick. The top seam and mudstone are hand-sorted after pulling or shooting and up to 50 per cent. coal is obtained. A 3½-day stoppage at the screens was caused by the necessity for replacing the electric motor. The complete length of the railway siding from Kaitangata to the Castle Hill screens was lifted and repacked during the year.

The access road to the mine remained in fair condition and 108 cubic yards of gravel were used for maintenance, while 36 cubic yards of rock were used in the pit. A 4 in. pump operating periodically kept the main sump water in check.

The erection of the Quonset hut at the mine has since been completed and is now in use as a meal-room for the men.

Investigations are in hand for the extension of operations on to the leasehold property near the south corner of the present workings.

I have, &c.,

R. T. H. DALE, District Manager.

The SUPERINTENDENT, State Coal-mines, Greymouth, to the UNDER-SECRETARY,
Mines Department, Wellington

SIR,—

27th May, 1949.

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the workings of the Liverpool, Strongman, Blackball, Wallsend, Dobson, and Paparoa State Coal-mines for the year ended 31st March, 1949.

LIVERPOOL COLLIERY

Coal-winning.—The gross output for the year was 93,114 tons, an increase of 8,058 tons 11 cwt. when compared with the figures for the previous year. After allowing for waste (1,258 tons) and the quantity used on works (1,636 tons), there remained for disposal a net output of 90,220 tons.