

and placed Mr. J. C. Campbell as certificated manager in charge. Under Mr. Campbell's management the mine has been unwatered (a duplex steam-pump being used for the purpose) and work resumed.

*Excelsior Coal-mine, Bannockburn* (Parcell and Gibson).—(4/3/99): Like many other small coal-mines on Crown lands, this mine has been worked without a plan being kept. I therefore made a survey of the underground workings and surface boundaries. Very good ventilation is maintained, and the workings are generally in good order.

*Southland.*

*McKinnon's Pit, Gore (Whiterigg Mine)*.—(6/9/99): This is now let to and worked by Mr. H. Gray. All the workings are underground, and as no plan had been kept I made a survey of the mine. The lignite is 12 ft. to 15 ft. thick, about 4 ft. being left for support to roof. Ventilation very good. As Mr. Gray is an experienced coal-miner, it is expected the pit will be more systematically worked in the future than it has been in the past.

*Heffernan's Pit, Gore*.—(6/9/99): Very little has been done here for some time. There is a thick seam of lignite, which has been worked opencast.

*Sarginson's Pit, Waikaka Valley, Gore*.—(5/9/99): Very little appears to have been done since my last visit. The pit is on private land, and is worked opencast.

*Green's Pit, West Gore*.—(2/9/99): This pit is now worked by Mr. J. Smyth, who has closed his own mine adjoining. The requirements of the Act are fairly well attended to, and ventilation good. Plan up to date. I am of opinion that a good area of lignite exists here, and, in view of the requirements of the dredging industry (which is sure to develop in the locality), consider that steps should be taken at once to open out the mine on a much larger scale.

*Irvine's Pit, Knapdale, Chatton*.—(6/9/99): The seam lies at an angle of, say, 50°, and dips north-east. Thickness, 22 ft. One level is being driven about 20 ft. high, with lignite above and below. As there are some three outlets to the surface, ventilation is very good.

*Johnston's Pit, Waikaka Valley*.—(5/9/99): This pit has been practically idle for some time. At this date I noticed preparations were being made for stripping the surface off the lignite. In view of the number of dredges proposed to be built in the immediate locality, the pit will be very convenient as a source of fuel-supply.

*Harvey's (late Pemble's) Pit, Chatton*.—(6/9/99): Seam vertical, 30 ft. to 40 ft. wide, and broken at face into two divisions by a wedge-shaped bar of clay. The face is approaching the county road, and at the present working-level it is estimated that the pit will be worked out in two or three years. The limited demand and low selling-price will not admit of working at a lower level with the expense of pumping, &c., added to ordinary costs. Present face is kept well stripped.

*Perkins's Pit, Chatton*.—(6/9/99): This pit is very near Pacey's, and has only been commenced a short time. At present the face shows only 3 ft. of good lignite, with about 4 ft. of very inferior stuff above it. This is overlaid by 3 ft. to 6 ft. of clay. Very little work is being done, and only one man is employed.

*Pacey's Pit, Chatton*.—(6/9/99): Opencast working. At my previous visit the pit was being worked by Mr. A. Perkins, who kept a fair amount of ground stripped off. Mr. Pacey has again resumed the working, and at this date there is no advance stripping done. The seam has a dip of about 1 in 5. Hitherto some 15 ft. of lignite has been worked. Mr. Pacey states that a borehole proved a thickness of 30 ft. without bottoming. He promised to strip an area during the slack season, and also proposes to work the coal now underfoot.

*McGill's Pit, Wendon Valley, Waikaka*.—(5/9/99): Opencast working. Seam about 14 ft. thick at face. Stripping variable, maximum thickness exposed, say, 10 ft. Very little stripped in advance of lignite-face. Owner proposes to strip a good area during the slack season.

*McDonald's Pit, Wendon Valley, Waikaka*.—(5/9/99): Little or nothing has been done for some time, and the place is in a very rough state. A man named Henderson last worked it (opencast). He has left the place, and letters addressed to him have been returned through the Dead Letter Office.

*Evans's Pit, Wendon* (O. H. Evans).—(5/9/99): Hitherto this pit has been worked opencast. The stripping is too thick and hard to break down to allow of opencast working with profit. A start has been made to work by underground mining, but the entrance was not secured at my visit. Mr. Evans promised to attend to this, and to comply with the requirements of the Act as to the required distance between inlet and outlet.

*Pyramids Coal-pit, Mandeville*.—(7/9/99): Pit not working at present. Mr. Macalister, the owner, thinks of opening at a lower level. As no plan of working existed, I made a survey of the mine.

*Sleeman's Waimumu Mine, Mataura* (C. P. Sleeman).—(4/9/99): Mr. Sleeman is working his new pit exclusively, and has laid himself out to meet all reasonable demands. The lignite is 16 ft. thick, overlaid by 12 ft. of gravels and 4 ft. of clay and soil. This is stripped off, the face of the stripping being some 5 to 6 yards in advance of the lignite-face. This is as it should be, and agrees with what I have constantly urged on the various owners of lignite-pits worked opencast—viz., that the face of stripping should always be kept "foot for foot" ahead of the lignite-face—i.e., if stripping is 10 ft. thick, the top of the lignite should be kept bared for the same distance, and so on in similar proportions. If owners of opencast pits would only adopt this plan the risk of accident would be materially reduced.

*Bogside Coal-pit, Mataura* (H. Brown).—(4/9/99): Opencast working; not much ground stripped. Mr. Brown works the pit himself, employing casual labour as required.

*Beattie and Coster's Pit, Mataura*.—(4/9/99): The face shows about 16 ft. of lignite, overlaid by 12 ft. of stripping, most of the latter being gravel, which is auriferous, and would, I think, pay