

## CENTRAL OTAGO.

*Coal Creek Collieries, Coal Creek Flat, Roxburgh* (Barber and Shaw, lessees; J. Barber, mine-manager).—(4/12/1908): The freehold portion of the mine is not now being worked. Underground mining is conducted from the opencast face on the leasehold property. Places are well-driven, and standing safely in this abnormally thick seam of coal. Natural ventilation good. The mine is unwatered by siphon.

*McPherson's Coal-pit, Coal Creek Flat, Roxburgh* (A. J. McPherson, permit, manager).—(4/12/1908): Opencast. In good working-order; stripping generally kept well in advance of the working-face. A tendency to work under an overhanging face of coal was observed, and permit-holder's attention drawn to the dangers attendant upon the risky method of working, however strong the coal might appear to be. The condition of the heated part of the mine referred to in last year's report is now normal.

*Craig's Preseverance Coal-mine, Coal Creek Flat, Roxburgh* (James Craig, lessee; W. S. Craig, permit).—(4/12/1908): Seam, 75 ft.; dip, 1 in 3 north. Opencast now discontinued, and driving resumed. In upper layers seam soft and coal pyritous, facilitating spontaneous ignitions, of which there are several where falls of roof have occurred. These are carefully stopped off. Clay from hanging-wall, where fallen, is found liable to cause heating of dross and fallen roof or crushed pillars where they occur. Pumping and hauling done by water under hydraulic pressure. Six men employed. No explosives used.

*McQueenville Colliery, Alexandra* (S. T. Lett, lessee).—(4/11/1908): Pits have now been filled in, and edges of plumps to surface trimmed so far as may reasonably be expected. Damage to surface is practically confined to that part of the area within the influence of percolation from the Alexandra Borough water-race, about 1 acre in area. The coal is practically worked out, and the area may now be considered as settled and abandoned. The Warden has been recommended to consent to the application for cancellation of the coal lease.

*Alexandra Coal-mine, Alexandra* (including Undaunted Coal-mine, being adjoining section under same ownership), (Messrs. Mathias Bros. and Co., lessees; D. McNeill, mine-manager).—(3/12/1908): Connection made with Thomson's old workings to rise and south-west proved satisfactory, and closed again for future working. Attention now being successfully paid to extraction of coal in dip area, which had formerly been abandoned as unworkable on account of the unstable nature of roof and floor. Restoration of a disused shaft provides further convenience for second outlet and return air-shaft. Rules posted and plan forwarded.

*Alexandra Coal Company, Alexandra* (L. Ryan, secretary; J. Pollock, mine-manager).—(3/12/1908): A number of improvements have been effected during the year, among which may be mentioned the enlargement of sump at pit-bottom, thereby enabling Sunday pumping to be dispensed with; and the placing of dip-pump steam-pipes in return airway, and turning of exhaust steam from pumping-engines into upcast air-shaft; but the chief matter for congratulation was the completion of the new second outlet and air-shaft, thereby enabling working by small numbers of men on shift to be dispensed with, and workmen are now on day-shift, with consequent reduction in cost of production. Substantial ladders are placed in the new shaft. The working-places are kept in good order, boreholes in roof regularly continued, and, in addition, flank boreholes are put in nearing the riverward area. A few wet backs were encountered, which invariably pined off through time. Traversed the old workings, which were found standing in good order; no gases. Report-books kept, rules posted, and plan to date. Ventilation generally fair, and other requirements of the Act well observed.

*Dummeys Coal Lease, Alexandra*.—(11/6/1908): Owing to a band of stone in the seam, and the poor quality of the coal, it became practically unsaleable. After suspending operations for some time the shaft has been filled up, and cancellation of lease is now applied for.

*Cambrian Coal-pit, Cambrian* (Caleb Dungey, lessee).—(1/12/1908): Fair area stripped ahead. Lignite and shale seams associated.

*Welshman's Gully Coal-pit, Cambrian* (Sarah McGuckin, lessee; James McGuckin, manager).—(1/12/1908): Stripping and pumping by hydraulic water-pressure. Fair area stripped in advance of working-face.

*Jones's Coal-pit, Cambrian* (Robert Jones, Lessee).—(1/12/1908): The lessee has been engaged stripping and opening the pit, which it is proposed to work underground in future.

*Price's Coal-pit, Blackstone Hill* (D. McKnight, owner).—Coal for private use only raised during the year.

*St. Bathans's Coal-pit, St. Bathans's* (James Enright, lessee).—(2/12/08): Only about 15 ft. of the seam is worked, owing to inadequate appliances for unwatering the pit, which I found in a bad working-state, face undermined, and no stripping ahead, as should be done for safety and economical working. Clay overburden fallen in—was attributed to heavy snow in winter. I instructed Mr. Enright that the pit where he was working was in a dangerous state, and that he was liable to sustain serious accident by continuing his slipshod manner of working.

*Rough Ridge Coal-pit, Idaburn* (including McLean's coal-pit, which is under same ownership), (Mrs. M. Beck, lessee; William Beck, manager).—(2/12/08): A reasonable area of overburden stripped in advance of working-face. Pit in fair working-order. Hydraulic lift-pump used for unwatering the pit. Small quantity of explosive used, and kept in an approved magazine.

*Idaburn Coal-pit, Idaburn* (J. White, lessee).—(2/12/08): Now working final block of coal to rise on boundary of adjoining lease. Attention will require to be turned to coal to dip, which, however, lies below the country water-level, and further expense will have to be incurred in plant for pumping purposes if work is to be continued.