

## CANTERBURY.

*Springfield Colliery, Springfield* (Christchurch Brick Company, owners; T. N. Horsley, secretary; James Taylor, permit, mine-manager).—(29/7/10): Thin coal-seam, 18 in., and fireclay, 5 ft., worked together. A level is being driven through old workings to the pumping-shaft for drainage and extra ventilation. Workings in good order, and timber systematically used for support of roof. Substantial ladderway provided for travelling-way in upcast air-shaft. Hugh Patterson, sixty, certificated winding-engine driver, fell down the winding-shaft, 70 ft., on the 20th July, and sustained dislocation of neck and other injuries, dying almost immediately. The horizontal bar provided for use across the entrance of the shaft had presumably been removed and not replaced by deceased, who also acted as banksman and onsetter at this small pit, the shaft being used for winding material only. During the year 1,842 tons of fireclay were mined.

*Springfield Fireclay-mine, Springfield* (Christchurch Gas, Coal, and Coke Company, owners; R. English, general manager; W. Wilson, permit, mine-manager).—(10/5/10): This clay-mine is worked almost entirely for fireclay used at the company's pottery-works, Christchurch, and 1,086 tons were mined during the year. The new dip is being driven to the boundary. Timber used regularly, and drives in good order. Ladderway complete in upcast air-shaft. Report-book kept, and rules posted.

*Sheffield (Austin's) Fireclay-mine, Sheffield* (John Austin, owner).—(10/5/10): Seam of clay, 8 ft., all worked. Timber used as required, and workings in good order. The clay is railed to Christchurch for manufacture at the pottery-works there. Fireclay to the amount of 1,220 tons was mined during the year.

*Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel* (John Dean's trustees, owners; J. C. Campbell, mine-manager).—(21/12/10): Old main level pillars now almost exhausted. No. 1 mine—Dip section: Coming homeward with pillars on both sides of the d.p. On north side pillars are drawn to outby No. 1 heading up to the fault. Floor heaving badly, and consequent difficulty in maintenance of air-courses. South side: Pillaring backward, first taking strip off low side. Ventilation in the lower working-place was not quite up to the mark owing to brattice being too far back; this the manager rectified. Approved magazine in order for storage of explosives. The new prospecting dip drive is at 180 ft. to the face, and passing through what seemed to be troubled measures. Fireclay and pipeclay: 6,101 tons were obtained, chiefly on the surface works, for manufacture of ware on the premises.

*St. Helens Colliery, Whitecliffs* (Crown lands; Levick and Thin, lessees; W. Thin, permit, mine-manager).—(21/12/10): As indicated in last year's report, the heating in "gob" to north side of dip haulage-way gradually developed until the clay and wood stoppings became incapable of altogether withholding the foul gases. Thereupon work in the lower level south was suspended, and water allowed to rise with the object of diminishing the "fire." Meanwhile a level is being driven in the rise coal pillar for production of output, which is not large. In any case, in this mine there only remains a proportion of pillar coal for extraction which the energetic lessees hopefully expect. Care is taken in mining, and timber is well used.

*Mount Somers Colliery, Mount Somers* (Mount Somers Coal Company, owners; George Nell, secretary; J. S. Hamilton, mine-manager).—(6/5/10): No. 1 or Woolshed Creek Mine (freehold): Mine reopened for withdrawal of pillar coal at one place for sample purposes. Plenty of timber in use for security of roadway. The new prospecting-drive has proved unsuccessful at angle driven, being on the upper part of coal-seam. It is quite evident that the payable coal-seam, if existent, lies in the dip, as to proving which the proprietors do not seem prepared to go to the expense.

No. 2 Mine (Crown lands): Main levels to the rise met with soft coal, apparently the marginal incrop of the seam, which, with "washout" on northern boundary, indicates limitation of the coal-seam in those directions. Rise pillars are being drawn homeward, a good roof-break having been obtained by the overlying gravel having subsided; a minimum quantity of timber is therefore necessary. Ventilation fair, rules posted, report-book and plan kept. Blasting-powder apparently carefully handled.

Subsequently (about November) a heating was noticed in the waste, and, giving off black damp, necessitated a line of stoppings, which the manager reported favourably upon towards the end of the year.

*Albury Coal-mine, Albury* (Crown lease, Chamberlain Settlement; Robert Riddle, lessee; Hugh Gray, permit, mine-manager).—(21/9/10): The drive is turned away to the d.p. and a fresh level is being won in coal above the average in thickness (8 ft.). Stoppings between the new and the old workings are in good order and condition, and there is now no evidence of the incipient fire which occurred in February last and which is no doubt extinguished by accumulation of black damp in the waste of pillar-workings.

Charles E. Riddle, lessee and permit-holder, was suffocated by black damp in the mine on the morning of the 5th February last. A spontaneous fire of small moment had been getting up, and Riddle, contrary to advice, had evidently entered the mine alone. His body was found 70 ft. in, almost within sight of daylight. I reported this occurrence to you fully under date 14th February.

*G. C. Kidd's Prospecting Area, Rosewill Settlement, Albury*.—(21/9/10): Prospecting-drive, put in to test the ground for a seam of coal which is said to have been worked in the early days, tapped old workings, which gave off water and black damp, and the drive was discontinued. After putting in other drives (equal to 200 ft. of driving) without success, the license-holder has given up the attempt to reopen this mine, and the area is now abandoned.

*Stony Creek Coal-mine, Waihao Forks* (Alexander Allan, owner; D. L. Watson, lessee and permit, mine-manager).—(20/9/10): A new drive has been put in 50 yards from the face of the terrace, 40 yards in "black coal" (inferior and unsaleable), when the brown coal was struck, and this is said to be of fair quality and saleable. Drive 6 ft. square, no timber required, cover being shallow and roof of lignite. Like other small mines which have been put in on this property during past years, there are indications of the areas of workable lignite being limited.