

13 Oct.	Waihi Gold-mining Company's Mine, Waihi	John McIntosh (46), miner	<p>He and his mate, John Brown, experienced miners, working on contract, at about 1 p.m., carrying lighted candles, entered the cage at No. 5 shaft to descend to No. 12 level (1,350 ft.). The cage was provided at its ends with single bars as protective barriers 4 ft. 4 in. above the bottom of the cage. During the descent something struck the cage, causing a slight oscillation and extinguishing the candles. Brown immediately spoke to deceased, but received no reply. Nearing No. 12 level he felt for his companion, but found he was gone. On arrival at that level a bent piece of iron tramway-rail was found lying flat on the bottom of the cage; this had fallen into the cage during its descent. The body of deceased was found much mutilated in the sump of the shaft. At the subsequent inquest, which occupied several days, evidence was given that during the two days prior to this fatality several weighty articles had been put down the shafts from the upper levels in a mysterious manner, but the officials had failed to report these dangerous occurrences to the manager: a contravention of section 262 of the Mining Act by the shift boss. The verdict of the Coroner's jury was as follows: "The jury are unanimous that the deceased met his death at No. 5 shaft through being struck with an iron rail and dislodged from the cage while descending to No. 12 level. There is not sufficient evidence to show how the rail came into the shaft; we are of the opinion that it did not get into the shaft accidentally, and are thoroughly satisfied from the pitman's evidence and our inspection of No. 5 shaft that it was in good order prior to the accident. The rail and the ladder were put down into the shaft by some person or persons unknown; the evidence is insufficient to show by whom. We are also of the opinion that the articles falling down No. 2 shaft entered it in the same manner. We cannot lose sight of the fact that the missiles that came down No. 2 shaft previous to the fatal accident at No. 5 shaft should have been reported to the mine-manager immediately, thus probably preventing the unfortunate fatality." For the contravention of section 262 of the Mining Act, in not reporting previous cases of articles falling down the shafts, the Inspector of Mines, Mr. M. Paul, took legal proceedings against Mr. J. T. Hollis, shift boss at the Waihi Mine, who in consequence was fined. This fatality was undoubtedly due to the criminally mischievous act of a person who indiscriminately put heavy articles into the shaft, careless of the consequences; unfortunately, insufficient evidence existed to warrant a prosecution for manslaughter.</p> <p>He and his mate, both experienced miners, were working at a face in No. 4 level. At about 7 a.m. a fall of quartz from the roof occurred, instantly killing deceased. His mate considered the place safe, as did the shift boss, who visited the place about half an hour before the accident. He was engaged at the chamber of No. 4 level, which was well lighted by electricity. He inadvertently, and in an absent-minded manner, walked into the shaft in the presence of the chamberman and shift boss; he possibly thought the cage was there. He fell 600 ft., and was killed instantly. The shaft was properly protected by doors, which were open at the time, as stone was being raised.</p>
30 Oct.	Keep-it-Dark Mine, Reefton	Thomas John O'Connor (27), miner	..	quartz	
15 Dec.	Blackwater Mine, Waita	George Edgar (27), assistant chamberman..	