

This shows an increase of 14s. per ton, or 39 per cent., in the case of the standard household coal. This increase is made up of 9s. 6d. in the wholesale price to the coal-dealer, which rose from £1 5s. 6d. to £1 15s.—a rise of 38 per cent.—and 4s. 6d. in the increased cost of retailing, excluding prime cost. Of the increase in the wholesale price, 4s. has been due to the rise in shipping freight, the remainder to railway increases (about 7d.) and to the rise in the general cost of production at the mine. The quoted wholesale price includes 1s. wharfage, which has remained unchanged over the period. The increase is, therefore, roughly equally divided between the rise in the mine-cost and the rise in the cost of transport. These rises in the wholesale price occurred on the following dates :—

Date.	Rise. s. d.	Cause.
14th February, 1916 ..	2 0	Increase in steamer freight, wages, railway carriage, and general cost of production.
3rd July, 1916..	2 0	
10th April, 1917 ..	2 0	Increase in general cost of production.
18th July, 1917 ..	3 6	Increase in freight, wages, and other costs.

In the case of another coal supplied from the same field to the Wellington market the wholesale price has increased by the same amount (9s. 6d.), the rises taking place as follows :—

Date.	Rise. s. d.	Cause.
November, 1915 ..	0 4	Increased railage.
July, 1916 ..	2 8	Steamer freights, and increases in mine wages.
January, 1917 ..	1 0	Further increase in the mine-cost of production.
April, 1917 ..	2 0	
July, 1917 ..	3 6	Advance in steamer freights, and in mine-labour cost.

The increased cost of retailing the coal is roughly equal to the separate increased cost in mining or in transport, each accounting for about a third of the total increase. The extra retail cost has been due mainly to higher wages to the yardmen and drivers, increased cost of forage and of maintenance of plant, with a rise in the per ton cost of delivery owing to the shortage of supplies.

The retail price of State house coal was increased once only—viz., in July, 1916, by 4s. a ton, or 12·1 per cent., made up of increased charges—freight, 1s. 6d.; rail, mineto Grey mouth, 6d. (approximate); 2s. increased wages, cartage, and other costs. The increase in freight of 2s. 6d. per ton in December, 1917, has not been passed on to the public; other charges have also increased, and the State depot appears to have been losing at least 3s. 3d. per ton on the house coal it retailed at Wellington in March, 1918; the estimate of present loss is about 4s. 6d. Any profit it makes is made out of the ex ship wholesale trade.

TABLE 45.—INCREASE IN THE PRICES EX SHIP, WHOLESALE, OF STATE COALS AT WELLINGTON, 1915–18.

State Coal.	Increase in Price per Ton, 1913–18.	Increase per Cent., 1913–18.	Rate of Profit	
			Per Cent., 1913.	Per Ton, 1918.
	s. d.			
Screened* .. .. .	..	..	6·66	..
Unscreened—				
Point Elizabeth .. ..	9 0	43·9	7·89	20
Liverpool .. .. .	9 0	43·9	7·89	5·05
Point Elizabeth (small)..	9 0	64·29	3·7	6·56
Liverpool (small) .. ..	7 0	43·75	18·52	6·56

\* No sale in 1918.

(c.) Costs.—The following estimate of the present cost (January, 1919) of retailing household coal in Wellington may be accepted as accurate. This estimate differentiates between the city and the suburban trade, and refers to a turnover handled by one man with two horses and a dray, working 275 days in the year, and handling 1,100 tons in the town, or 825 in the suburbs.

TABLE 46.

					City. s. d.	Suburbs. s. d.
Cartage to yard .. ..	..	..	..	..	3 6*	3 6
Yard expenses.. .. .	..	..	..	..	4 3	4 3
Sacks.. .. .	..	..	..	..	1 6	1 6
Cartage to customer ..	..	..	..	..	6 5	8 7
Total distributing-costs ..	..	..	..	..	15 8	17 10
Coal ex ship .. .. .	..	..	..	..	35 0	35 0
Total retail costs .. ..	..	..	..	..	50 8	52 10
Average retail price .. ..	..	..	..	..	53 0	56 0
Profit .. .. .	..	..	..	..	2 4	3 2

\* Average of railway and wharf.