

Heatherlea Mine.—A small lignite-mine, worked opencast for local supplies.

Ota Creek Mine.—An opencast working; stripping 6 ft. One man employed. Produced 814 tons during the year.

Clarke's Mine.—A lignite-pit worked opencast. 1,066 tons was produced by the workman for the year.

Diamond Lignite-mine.—An opencast pit, from which 1,702 tons of lignite was obtained by the two workmen employed.

Nisbet's Mine.—A small opening from which 12 tons of lignite had been obtained when the place was closed down and abandoned.

Nightcaps No. 1 Mine.—With the closing of Lloyd's dip section during the year coal-mining became suspended on the Nightcaps Coal Company's original freehold property at Nightcaps, available coal being practically worked out after operating forty-one years, during which 1,377,196 tons of coal was produced.

Nightcaps No. 2 Mine (Educational Reserve, Nightcaps).—Owing to the coal-seam to dip becoming troubled and faulted with the heavily saturated nature of the ground and the spontaneous fire in the upper levels on the comparatively small section of the remaining part of the seam rendering mining difficult, work became suspended; plant was withdrawn and the mine abandoned during the year.

Sterling Mine.—After production of 132 tone of coal during the early part of the year, work became suspended and the mine abandoned, the lignite being unsaleable.

Coaldale Mine.—The claystone fault intrusion met with in the workings to dip of the seam had seriously interrupted progress, and the seam thinning, the quantity of available coal became diminished to such an extent that coal-getting proved unremunerative. Prospecting by boring from surface, driving and boring underground having proved unsuccessful, mining was practically suspended at the end of the year. Subsequently the plant was removed and the mine abandoned.

Black Diamond Mine.—Coal-seam 25 ft. in thickness, of which 8 ft. was being worked. Pumps in mine (two) and ventilating-fan on surface driven by compressed air, a plant having been installed for the purpose. Air well conducted by brattice to working-faces. Falls from roof had not occurred, but timber was being regularly used in working-places.

New Brighton Mine.—An upthrow fault struck in the dip drive was being prospected. Mine-floor naturally wet throughout the workings, roof and sides damp; no spontaneous heating had yet occurred, all dross being filled away. Roadways and working-places well timbered; fan ventilation excellent.

Wairio Mine.—Work at the Resin seam had been suspended owing to the mineral being practically unsaleable. A small output was being obtained from the prospecting-drive to dip of former workings, where an area of thin seam (6 ft.) was expected to occur between the faults known to exist as proved by previous working.

Mossbank Mine.—A new dip had been driven 6 chains to the face, and levels broken away on either side from which working-places were won. Ventilation and other conditions were satisfactory. The area to rise, which had been closed on account of spontaneous fire, remained sealed meanwhile. Adequate ambulance equipment kept at the mine.

Wells and Party's Mine.—Working had not been resumed during the year owing to coal of this quality not being readily saleable.

Wairaki No. 1 Mine.—Conditions generally were satisfactory. Ventilation was sufficient, and an improvement was being effected by building close stoppings between the intake and return airways. Firedamp had not been reported by the mine officials, but a quantity, estimated at 20 cubic feet, was discovered on the 22nd June, 1922, which was found in a vacant place where the brattice erected was 10 ft. back from the face. The brattice was immediately extended and the gas cleared by ventilation. Firedamp had not been reported as found in the mine since. Fan ventilation was sufficient. The fault between Nos. 1 and 2 Wairaki Mines had not yet been tested by driving through the claystone dyke which occurred near the boundary between the mines. Adequate appliances for rendering first aid kept at the mine, also at the mine office on the property.

Wairaki No. 2 Mine.—The systematic timbering regulations posted at the mine were being fairly well complied with by workmen. A plentiful supply of props was being kept in the mine for use as required. Fan ventilation adequate. Ambulance equipment in good order.

Linton Mine.—The steam-driven ventilating-fan provided good air throughout the workings. Mine-floor naturally wet throughout. Water was dripping from roof and sides of working-places. Return airway to second outlet was wire-fenced and in good order for travelling. Coal-workings to rise on eastern side of the seam were interrupted by a deposit of ashes, the result of a prehistoric fire in the coal-seam. The north levels were standing on a downthrow fault, the dimensions of which had not been demonstrated, but indicated a considerable throw northerly. Ambulance requirements kept. Report-books in order.

Ohai Mine.—Very little coal-getting had been done during the year. Prospecting by boring and driving had been conducted with a view to opening and developing the seams of coal expected to be found on the property.

Birchwood Mine.—A pair of lower levels had been driven narrow to the fault, from which pillars were being drawn outward. Timber used and working safely conducted. The ventilating-fan at the end of the year was giving satisfactory results. Ambulance requirements were in good order.

Orepuki Mine.—The coal-seam in the dip extension north and drives on the western side of the dip proved to be troubled and faulted and productive of a low percentage of marketable coal. Somewhat similar conditions prevailed on the lower level on the eastern side when a fault or want was struck. It was then decided to suspend mining operations, and I was notified by the mine-manager that mining was suspended on the 7th September, 1922; that openings to underground workings were fenced, and that the plant was being transferred to Kaitangata Collieries at Kaitangata.

Dangerous Occurrences notified under Regulation 81.

Taratu Mine, Kaitangata.—19th January: A fire which had broken out to surface from the old waste was subdued by filling with clay and gravel, and turning the water on.

Wairaki No. 1 Mine, Ohai.—22nd June: A pocket of firedamp, estimated at 20 cubic feet, was found by the Inspector of Mines at the roof of a vacant place when the brattice was extended and the gas cleared away by ventilation.

Nightcaps No. 2 Mine, Nightcaps.—22nd August: Owing to a spontaneous fire which broke out in the upper levels, combined with other disabilities, the workmen were withdrawn and mining became abandoned.

Kaitangata No. 2 Mine, Kaitangata.—28th October: A slight outbreak of smoke at the tubing at the bottom of the haulage incline was quickly suppressed and no damage occurred.

Fernhill Mine, Abbotsford.—21st November: A small quantity of smoke and blackdamp had been found leaking from a stopping, which was repaired, and another stopping placed in front for security.

Fatal Accident.

Linton Mine, Ohai.—11th December: Owen Lynch, 44, Miner—killed by a fall of coal from roof while working at the face of the pillar which he was extracting. A shot had been fired in the face, and Lynch was preparing for another shot when the coal fell from a drossy back, having evidently been shaken by the preceding shot. Dr. Leeper considered that Lynch had died from shock caused by a blow on the heart or full stomach from such a fall of coal as described. The Coroner and jury brought in a verdict that Lynch was accidentally killed. I reported on this accident fully to you under date 19th December, 1922.

Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

Christie Bros. No. 2 Mine, Saddle Hill.—11th January: William McNeill, 69, deputy—fracture on left clavicle, caused while putting up props: one swung round and fell on him.

Springfield Mine, Waikaka Valley.—18th February: Robert L. Reid, 40, opencast labourer—burns of right thigh, caused by ignition of blasting-powder while firing a shot.

Princhester Creek Mine, The Key.—10th March: Edward Sands, 15, helper—ruptured kidney; fell over side of waterway, rope for hauling sacks having broken.

Nightcaps Mine, Nightcaps.—24th March: Thomas Duncan, 24, miner—burns, result of blasting-powder explosion caused by naked light on head having fallen into canister containing half a plug of blasting-powder.