

Kerr and Wyatt (Crown Lease).—Mining operations confined to the extraction of remaining pillars. Surface water troublesome during heavy rains, and a syphon proved insufficient to drain the haulage drive. Preparations being made to win coal from a lower water-free level.

Christie's Colliery (Christie's Freehold).—Prospecting by boring north of the old workings disclosed a workable coal-seam 6 ft. in thickness lying on an easy grade. A dip was driven into the seam and a section developed. The plant was removed from the old mine and installed to operate the new workings.

Ferndale Colliery (Cherrie and Co.: Crown Lease).—Mining operations commenced in June to win out isolated blocks of coal left by the Northern Coal Company (Limited). Adit levels connected with former workings and pillars extracted towards the mine-mouth. Output conveyed by horse-wagons to Hikurangi railway-sidings, a distance of three miles.

Kawakawa Colliery.—A small party of miners mined 254 tons of outcrop coal from a portion of the abandoned workings. The results were unprofitable, and operations ceased, with little prospect of further development.

Rautangata Colliery, Kamo.—The Kamo Potteries Limited reopened the old mine-workings, but, owing to the abandoned pillars being submerged in water, together with roof falls, mining was discontinued after several unsuccessful attempts to drain the water and timber away through the fallen roadways.

Taupiri Extended Mine, Huntly.—At this colliery a serious crushing of the coal pillars in Nos. 3, 4, and 5 sections, west side, occurred during the past year. At the outset the point of maximum pressure was in the vicinity of the recent falls in No. 4 section, bottom seam. The movement spread over a large area, resulting in falls of roof, destruction of roadways and airways, and upheaval of the bottom. A serious underground fire, due to heating of the fallen coal, broke out in an inaccessible portion of the crushing-area. The fire was subsequently sealed off with thirty-four substantial sand stoppings. The endless rope was extended from No. 5 section to No. 7 section, north side, through a stone drive driven to grade an undulation of the coal-seam. No. 1 dip development headings progressing satisfactorily in the barrier between North and West sections. The headings are down 60 chains, and, with the exception of occasional cut-throughs for ventilation, no bords have been broken off. A problem confronting the management of this colliery is the receding of the coal-faces causing lessened output, higher transport costs, and an increasingly lengthening distance the miners have to walk underground.

Rotowaro Colliery (Taupiri Coal-mines Limited).—The main headings have advanced considerably during the past year, but a series of undefined faults proved troublesome in maintaining the grade. Endless-rope haulage was installed to the farthest inbye working-point, and is working satisfactorily. Jig section haulage-road extended into an area of thick workable coal. Safety-lamps installed and in use throughout the mine. First working sections are being sealed off with brick stoppings. Electric current is being conveyed underground in approved conduits for the transmission of power to operate pumps and winches. A commodious safety-lamp cabin is being erected, with appliances for operating the charging and maintenance of Oldham's electrical safety-lamps.

Pukemiro Collieries (Limited).—North mine, comprising the Straight Heading section and North section, has maintained the largest portion of the output. The north-east heading has been holed through to the surface, shortening the ventilating-system. A drainage level at this point is contemplated to drain surface water when pillars are being extracted, north heading being extended through a faulted zone. Straight Heading section workings confined to the western boundary of the section. South mine: During the past year this section of the colliery has been developed in a thick coal-seam. South jig-heading haulage has been supplanted by an extension of the main endless-rope system. The sides of the main haulage-road contiguous to the haulage levels have been reinforced with curved brick walls. An electric coal-cutting machine is installed and in operation in this mine.

Waikato Extended Coal-mine, Huntly.—Nos. 1 and 2 sections of this mine have been connected improving the ventilation and shortening the haulage. To minimize the risk of accidents all shots are fired by the deputy at the termination of the shift. Coal-seam 20 ft. in thickness with solid sandstone roof.

Waipa Colliery, Glenn Massey.—Pillar-extraction in Siberia section rapidly becoming exhausted. Broadway section has been divided into bords and pillars, and pillaring will be commenced shortly. Mary section bord workings advanced to the fringe of the gob in Siberia section, and preparations are being made to attack these pillars. Main Road Extension section is developing solid workings through the fault. Stone drive completed to grade the haulage road to Extension section, and endless rope extended inbye. Pillars are extracted in this colliery immediately the solid workings have reached sectional boundary, and new workings are set away in advance of the pillaring.

Glen Afton Collieries (formerly United Coalfields), Glen Afton.—Mining development during the year was continued by the advance of Nos. 1 and 2 headings. No. 1 heading reaching a point approximately 33 chains from the outcrop. An intermediate heading in an easterly direction was broken off No. 2 heading to open out a working section. Safety-lamps installed and in use in No. 1 heading. Electrical machinery being assembled to operate screens, fans, haulage, and drainage appliances. Fifteen workers' houses have been erected, and others are in course of erection. Railway communication will soon be completed to the company's siding and loading-screens.

Pukemiro Junction Colliery (Clare and Partner's Crown Lease).—Situated about 20 chains from Pukemiro Railway Junction. Mining operations confined to a narrow block of coal on the hilltop. Levels to the west struck a thinning of the coal-seam. Easterly the coal-seam has been followed to the dip into a clean thick coal area. Output delivered to railway-wagons by 12 chains of surface jig tramway.

Huntly Coal-mine.—During the year the outcrop has been followed, and a number of working-places have been opened out to produce 30 tons of coal daily. Pillar-extraction has been commenced along the eastern boundary. Falls to the surface provide openings for ventilation.

Taupiri East Coal-mine, Kimihia.—Situated three miles from Huntly. An old working-drive was repaired and advanced to a fault. Bords broken off struck faulted coal. Remaining pillars were extracted, and prospecting-drives are being driven in several directions to intersect the seam through the faults.

Macdonald State Mine, Waikokowai.—Development operations suspended early in the year and mine-entrance securely fenced off. The main drive had been driven a distance of 500 ft. through a marl formation, and indications of the coal-seam were discernible at the face. Twenty-three thousand *Pinus radiata* and 8,000 eucalyptus trees were planted on suitable parts of the property.

Huntly Brick and Fireclay Company.—Mining operations were conducted safely during the year. About 60 tons of fireclay are produced daily from the opencast faces. New endless-rope haulage completed, and the plant transferred from the disused drive.

Greencastle Coal-mine, Mokuau.—This small mine continues to supply the settlers and dairy factory with a superior grade of brown coal. Worked intermittently during the year according to trade demands.

Stockman's Mine, Mokuau.—A small mine on Chambers Bros.' estate, worked for household requirements only.

Dangerous Occurrences (Regulation 81).

Taupiri Extended Mine.—20th November, 1922: Manager W. Wood reported outbreak of fire in No. 4 old workings, west side. 5th December, 1922: Manager reported outbreak of fire at a fall in No. 4 section, west side.

Glen Afton Collieries.—10th December, 1922: Manager P. Hunter reported that a miner named Manderson ignited a small quantity of inflammable gas at the face of No. 1 heading.

Prosecutions.

On 16th March, 1922, a mine-manager was fined £20 and costs for failing, after notification, to install and use safety-lamps throughout his mine.

17th March, 1922: Mine-manager and deputies were charged with firing shots in dry and dusty places. The method of taking samples for analysis was challenged and informations dismissed.

7th August, 1922: An underviewer was charged on two informations for failing to use a safety-lamp when making examinations under Special Rules 8 and 10. Convicted and fined £1 and costs on each information.