

The fire in No. 17 section was drawing air from breaks to the surface, and men were continually employed during the year in filling in these breaks. Another underground fire occurred in No. 5 bank, No. 9 section, on the 19th August, and clay stoppings were built around the heated area. On the 24th November a fire broke out at 6.30 p.m. between the intake and return airways inbye No. 4 heading off the main haulage-road. This fire gained such headway that it was impossible to control it with the water available, and the whole of the workings inbye No. 3 heading had to be sealed off. The Sirocco double inlet fan was put into use a few weeks prior to the fire, and gave every satisfaction. The small area of pillar workings in the No. 1 section has been worked on three shifts since the No. 9 section was sealed off, and six pairs of miners are employed on each shift.

Co-operative Parties, near Dunollie.—A party of co-operative miners obtained a sublease over some outcrop coal, 14 ft. thick, near Blackball Township, and have commenced to produce coal therefrom. The output is conveyed from their mine to the railway-siding by drays.

Clark and party's old mine was exhausted in August, and they commenced to prospect a few chains to the westward of these workings. They proved about 6 ft. of coal, and have commenced to put in a level to work it.

Hunter and party's mine: Down the dip only one place going north is being worked. A downthrow fault has been met about 2 chains in from the dip. Unless the party decides to extend the dip and cross this fault little more work can be done in this portion. A crosscut, going westward, has been driven from the main haulage-road (old No. 3 tunnel), and the bottom seam met after driving about a chain. The seam is hard and clean, and about 2½ ft. in thickness. Only safety-lamps are allowed to be used in this mine.

Baddeley and party's mine: In this mine, across the Seven-mile Creek, a large upthrow fault was met in the main level. Before meeting the fault the coal thinned to about 18 in., but it again thickened to about 6 ft. after crossing the fault.

Another mine was opened during the year to the dip of Baddeley's and worked by McIvor and party. The coal is about 4 ft. in thickness. Three men are employed, and the dip is now down about 150 ft. at a grade of 1 in 2.

The coal in Boote and party's mine contains thin streaks and bands of stone, and this party has in consequence much difficulty in finding a market. They commenced to put a borehole down from the surface about 6 chains to the dip of the main level, and expected to pierce the bottom seam at 230 ft. After boring 100 ft. the bit broke in the hole and attempts to withdraw it proved unsuccessful. They intend to work this seam from a lower level.

Smith and party's mine: The upper 4½ ft. of coal from this mine is very clean, and finds a ready sale. Work continued uninterrupted during the year. Safety-lamps only used.

Manderson and party's mine: This party has acquired a lease over an area of the old No. 1 section workings. They commenced a dip drive from the inbye end of the No. 1 tunnel, but owing to water had to suspend operations until suitable plant was obtained. They intend delivering the coal along the haulage-road used by Messrs Smith and party.

Armstrong and party opened a small mine about 10 chains east of the Hillside Mine. They have about 13 ft. of clean coal, which is conveyed by surface jigs and horse-haulage to a bin at the Dunollie backshunt.

Simpson and party have constructed a bin and surface tramway from the Dunollie backshunt to the Moody Creek seam, which outcrops about a mile up the Seven-mile Creek. They should be producing coal early in the present year.

Near Rewanui two parties have obtained coal leases.

Duggan and party have been producing coal since early in 1922, and are working a clean seam about 2½ ft. in thickness.

Hilton and party are producing a little coal from their mine on the east side of the Seven-mile Creek, about a quarter of a mile north of the Rewanui Railway-station.

Buller District.

Westport-Stockton Colliery.—Most of the output was produced from the E field. An exit has been driven to Fly Creek, and a stone drive is proceeding into the new southern section of the field. The coal has been proved by a borehole 27 chains ahead, to be 8½ ft. thick, and outcrops show up to 19 ft. The coal is clean and hard. In the No. 5 section, E field, the coal thins to the westward, but a borehole, 15 chains south-west of the No. 5 heading, proved 7½ ft. of coal. In C section five pairs of miners are employed on pillar-extraction. F dip section will last about another eighteen months. Arrangements are being made to substitute endless-rope haulage for the winch haulage, out of No. 5 dip. Wooden fluming, one mile in length, is being constructed to convey coal by water from south of D section to the motor haulage from the E field. An auxiliary haulage has been made from the C section haulage to the eastern portion (or L section) of the old mine area by three short drives, partly in stone and partly in coal. Substantial bridges spanning the gullies between these drives have been constructed, and at the end of the farthest bridge a small bin of about 50 tons capacity has been put up.

Millerton Mine.—A large proportion of the output is now derived from pillar-extraction, which is going on in the south pillars, No. 1 dip, third West dip, Mangatina, and old dip section. A small area of solid coal is being worked in the north-east section. The output from the No. 2 dip section (solid workings) was formerly hauled up a dip to the Mine Creek haulage-road, but it is now conveyed over a haulage-road connecting to the old dip haulage system. The stone drive through the hill in the third West dip section was completed in July, and preparations are being made to work an area farther to the west. A short stone drive is also being driven from near the old "Lonely" workings to command an area of coal across the Mangatina Creek. Safety-lamps have been in use in the No. 2 dip and old dip sections, but owing to the latter workings being driven to outcrops in numerous places, and the absence of inflammable gas for over a year, it was deemed advisable to permit the resumption of the use of naked lights in the old dip section on the 15th April. Owing to an ignition of inflammable gas on the 15th December, by which two men were burned, safety-lamps are to be used throughout the Millerton Mine.

Ironbridge Mine.—Pillars have been worked during the past year in the shaft, No. 1 and Kruger sections, and No. 4 section (to the left of the main haulage-road) has been reopened for pillar-extraction. Most of the miners are now employed in the Deep Creek section. The endless-rope haulage is complete to the top of the 2-acre block. Many surface jigs have been constructed during the year, including one going toward the 74-acre block. The haulage from the Ironbridge Mine is now controlled by a three-phase "Metrovick" induction motor of 150 b.h.p. fitted with a single reduction gear reducing from 485 to 220 revolutions per minute. Three huts and a residence for the examining deputy have been erected near the Deep Creek workings. On analysis, the coal of the Deep Creek section has proved to be of high calorific value, giving 15,412 B.Th.U. per pound and evaporating 15.98 lb. of water at 212° F. A large bathhouse has been completed near the entrance to the Ironbridge Mine, and is in daily use by the miners.

Coalbrookdale Mine.—Wareatea Extended section: A heading has been driven north-westward off the main heading, and has proved coal 20 ft. in thickness. Places have been driven off this heading, and they will prove if the coal exists west of where the main heading was stopped by the large fault. Places will also be driven northward toward the Jig section old workings, but owing to the "want" these places will not connect with the old workings. In Birchall's heading (driven south-west) Wareatea jig section, the seam has thinned to about 6 ft., and boreholes have proved that a lower seam exists 11 ft. thick. Only about 2 ft. of soft stone separates the seams. The main dip in the Waterloo district is stopped, being near a large downthrow fault, and a heavy fall has occurred in this dip. In the stone drive district of the Wareatea jig section two places only are being driven. The coal is only 2 ft. in thickness, and if it does not soon improve this district will be stopped. An extension of 20 ft. in length, containing 8 cubics, has been made to the bathhouse at the Coalbrookdale Mine.

Coal Creek Mine, Mokihinui.—Two places are being worked in the lower section workings—near the old Mokihinui workings—but they are approaching a very stony area. A stone tunnel is also being driven to connect with the old workings. In the upper section, all the places on the west side of the main heading are in troubled country, the coal thinning and becoming very stony.

O'Brien and Regan's Mine, Seddonville.—This party, having completed the solid work, have commenced to extract the pillars from the 10-acre lease.

Dove's Mine.—A party of competent miners has been engaged for some months reopening the Old Cardiff main drive. The drive, which had almost completely fallen in, has been retimbered with good substantial squared sets, and