

## ANNEXURE A.

## SUMMARY OF REPORTS BY INSPECTORS OF MINES.

## NORTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (WILLIAM BARCLAY, Inspector of Mines).

## OUTPUT OF COAL.

The total output of coal from the Northern District mines for the year ended 31st December, 1931, was 834,899 tons, as against 766,312 tons in 1930. Of this return 677,419 tons were raised from the Waikato field (610,160 tons, 1930); 129,725 tons, North of Auckland (140,911 tons, 1930); and 27,755 tons, Taranaki (15,241 tons, 1930).

The total number of persons employed below and above ground was 2,061, as against 1,814 employed during 1930. The yearly output per man employed was 405 tons, as compared with 422 tons for the year 1930. The increased number of persons (247) employed in and about the mines for the year 1931 can be accounted for by the resumption of mining operations at McDonald Colliery by the Glen Afton Collieries, Ltd., and the decrease in the output per man employed can be ascribed to the fact that the miners generally suffered much idle time due to overproduction in each mining district.

The cessation of operations at the hydro-electrical works at Arapuni was responsible for the increased output from the Waikato field, and its rehabilitation will in effect cause a diminution in the demand for slack coal required for generating electric power. The low-temperature carbonization plant established at Rotowaro for the production of smokeless briquettes from waste small coal has reached the output stage, and steps are being taken to organize markets for their distribution to domestic and industrial consumers. No strikes of any importance occurred during the year. The principal mines were inspected monthly, and the circumstances of all serious accidents and complaints were duly investigated. Many inspections were made at the invitation of the mine-managers and representatives of the miners, with the result that many additional safety measures were adopted and effected for the well-being of the industry and workmen.

*North Auckland District.*

*Hikurangi Coal Co. Ltd. (Shaft Colliery).*—An average daily output of 300 tons has been maintained from No. 2 and No. 4 pillar sections. Exploratory headings driven through the main west fault resulted in the seam being recovered along a wide front. No serious flooding of the workings occurred during the year, due to the subvention of the Mines Department, and the beneficial results of the remedial works so far carried out in prevention of a recurrence of floodings. Total output to 31st December, 1931, was 449,156 tons.

*Wilson's Collieries, Ltd. (Waro Colliery).*—Development to the dip in the direction of the Hikurangi swamp area was stopped during the year, consequently future operations will be confined to two separate areas of solid coal lying to the east and west respectively of the main dip. A noteworthy change in the management and control of the mine was made during the year following a dispute pertaining to payment of the minimum wage to certain miners. Pending the negotiations advanced for a settlement of the dispute, the plant and pumps were withdrawn from the dip workings, and as the directors of the company had definitely decided to abandon the mine owing to the cost of winning coal being higher than the cost of obtaining outside supplies for the cement works at Portland, the mine workings and plant were handed over to the employees for operation under co-operative conditions. A company incorporating the whole of the employees of Wilson's Collieries Co., Ltd. (187 men) and registered as "The Waro Co-operative Co., Ltd." was subsequently formed to take over and work the mine. A satisfactory output has been obtained since the inauguration of the scheme, and the venture should ultimately result in lower production cost and improved working-conditions throughout this heavily watered mine. Total output to 31st December, 1931, was 592,999 tons.

The following small coal-mines operating on Crown leases situated east and west of the Maru Road, Hikurangi District, were worked continuously with due regard to the safety of men employed in extracting the remaining isolated blocks of thin coal left by earlier mining operations over the fields: Silverdale Colliery, (Foot's), Glen Nell Colliery (sublease from McIntyre and party to S. Foot), Phoenix Colliery (McKinlay and party), McInness's Colliery (sublease to Reyburn and party), Cherrie's Colliery, Northern Co-operative Colliery (E. A. Cunningham).

*Ruatangata Coal-mine.*—An output of 4,863 tons was obtained from pillars standing in the Old Kamo Mine. At the end of the year the mine was subleased to the Whangarei Coal Co., Ltd., comprising the officials of Wilson's Colliery, and the company is preparing to install pumping machinery to reach pillars remaining at greater depth. Total output to 31st December, 1931, was 24,560 tons.

*Tauranga Block Area* (Owner, Wilson's Collieries, Ltd.).—Three parties of miners—namely, Muir and party, Orr and party, and Windress and party—extracted several thousand tons of coal from the above area from faulted thin areas left by a former working. The output was conveyed by motor-lorry to Hikurangi, a distance of four miles.

*The Rocks' Area* (Owner, Hikurangi Coal Co., Ltd.).—The undermentioned mines were subleased from the company and worked by co-operative parties of miners with satisfactory results as regards output obtained from the available thin seams: Coutts and party, Laird and party, Cook and party, Wilson and party, Fearnley and party, Reynell and party.

*Dunn and Steers Coal-mine (Crown Lease, Scenic Reserve).*—The party extracted several pillars of soft coal standing near the outcrop in close proximity to the access road to the Waro Scenic Reserve. The available coal was exhausted in a few months and the drives abandoned. During the year and a half this mine was worked, 810 tons were produced.

*Kiripaka Road.*—Webber and party and J. Doel and party produced outputs from the New Kiripaka and Glenberrie Coal-mines from seams 4 ft. and 6 ft. respectively. The outputs were carted to Mair Station on the main railway.

*Harrison's Waro Colliery* (Owner, British Standard Portland Cement Co., Ltd.).—The mine worked intermittently during the year; as working-costs were exceeding the revenue from sales, the plant was withdrawn and the mine abandoned. A shaft 100 ft. deep equipped with winding-appliances, has been in use for a number of years, and following the withdrawal of the pumps, the water will gradually fill up the workings to the top of the shaft. The working-seam was stony and interspersed with volcanic ash which rendered the coal unmarketable. This mine has been worked for twenty-one years, and produced 63,641 tons.

*Avoca Coal-mine.*—Operations were resumed by a party of miners at this mine, situated six miles from Tangowahine. The seam varies in structure both in faulting and dislocation, and no compact coal has yet been located. The coal could be distinguished as "brown" by its high water content and friable appearance. The output is carted to Dargaville and surrounding districts. Total output to the 31st December, 1931, was 1,090 tons.

*Whareora Coal-mine.*—Indications of an improvement in the seam were not apparent during the year, and the stone band continues to be a troublesome factor in keeping the broken coal clean. The output (1,592 tons) was carted to Whangarei, a distance of eight miles.