

For using a defective safety-lamp, a miner was convicted and ordered to pay costs. (Section 97 (a).)

For failing to keep detonators in a separate magazine a miner was convicted with costs. (Regulation 223 (2).)

A company was charged with failure to erect a bathhouse in terms of section 150 of Coal-mines Act. The case was dismissed.

For employing an uncertificated mine-manager, a mine-owner was convicted and fined £1 and costs. (Section 59 (1).)

For failure to keep detonators in a separate magazine, a mine-manager was convicted and fined £1 with costs. (Regulation 223 (2).)

A mine-manager was charged with failure to post timbering notice as required by section 117 (3) of the Coal-mines Act. Dismissed.

For failure to keep a record of detonators issued under Regulation 224 (5) a mine-manager was fined £1 with costs.

For failing to make suitable provision for the storage of explosives a mine-manager was fined £1 with costs.

For failure to ensure that the total quantity of air distributed to each working-place was not less than the minimum amount required by section 92 (1) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, as amended by section 4 (1) (a) of the Coal-mines Amendment Act, 1927, a mine-manager was fined £2 and costs.

For failing to systematically clean the floor, roof, and sides of the mine, as required by section 126 (c) of the Coal-mines Act, a mine-manager was fined £2 and costs.

A mine-manager was charged for failing to keep a record of detonators issued and returned as required by amended Regulation 224 (5) (c). Fined £2 and costs.

A shot-firer was convicted and fined £2 and costs for firing an improperly prepared shot. (Regulation 234 (b) (i) (ii).)

A mine-manager was fined £2 and costs for storing explosives underground.

For firing an improperly prepared shot, a shot-firer was fined £2 and costs.

For failing to make a report on the conditions of the mine as provided for by section 128 (2) of the Coal-mines Act, a mine-manager, who also acted as fireman-deputy, was convicted and fined £1 and costs.

For failing to appoint in writing a sufficient number of competent officials, a mine-manager was convicted and ordered to pay costs. (Section 61.)

A charge against the deputy of the same mine for failure to make a report on the condition of the mine was withdrawn.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (GEORGE DUGGAN, Inspector of Mines).

There was a considerable decrease in the output from the mines in the Southern Inspection District. During 1931 57,346 tons less were produced than in 1930. In Canterbury and Central Otago there were small increases, but the Southland mines suffered severely through the trade depression, their output decreasing by 42,848 tons. The output from the Black Lion mine was less than one-third that of the previous year. From the Linton Mines the output decreased by 26,394 tons and the Kaitangata Coal Co.'s mines produced 8,899 tons less. Many mines were worked only two days per week, consequently earnings were very small. In order to retain all employees a system of rationing work was adopted at some mines. The use of electric cap lamps is extending. They are much favoured on the Ohai field and 100 alkaline cell cap lamps are in use in the Kaitangata No. 1 Mine.

Sheffield Mine.—The McQueen Bros. worked back the few pillars of thin coal alongside the short steep dip and this mine was exhausted in July. Prospecting between Sheffield and Bush Gully succeeded in locating an 8 ft. seam within a few yards of the traffic-road. To the south-west a level is being driven on the seam containing many clay backs and dipping 1 in 2 to the south-east. This mine is called the "Bonanza." Total output from Sheffield and Bonanza Mines to end of 1931 was 188 tons.

Springfield Mine.—From a short tunnel going south-east a level has been driven to the north-east right to the boundary on an 18 in. seam of clean coal. Off the level several short stentons were driven for a few yards to the south-east, 18 in. of roof-clay being brushed for height. All working-places are supported by sets of timber and a 15 ft. vertical shaft was put up to the surface for a return airway. Total output to the 31st December, 1931, was 93,033 tons.

Homebush Mine.—Pillaring was continued both to the rise and dip of the level which entered poor coal under the gully. Work is within 1½ chains of the mine-entrance and that section will be exhausted early. Near the bottom of the surface jig a short dip has been driven to a 2½ ft. coal-seam. This will be extended towards a section of the old workings in the 7 ft. seam, and it is anticipated that a small area of workable coal can be won there. Total output to end of 1931 was 358,548 tons. Lately the supply of clay for the pottery has been obtained from an opencast pit on the property. A little was won from the underground workings early in the year.

Bush Gully Mine.—In the new workings three levels are being worked to the south-west, the lowest being in about four chains. The seam continues clean with a uniform thickness of 4 ft. The width of pillars between the two lowest levels is 50 ft. and between the second and third levels 30 ft. The surface jig is now in use. To end of 1931 total output was 42,979 tons.

Klondyke Mine.—The main level, going north-east, is in over a quarter of a mile and the steep seam of coal has thickened to 24 ft. Owing to its inclination—about 75°—an incline at only half rise is being driven and will be used as a jig. The cover has increased so a third level is being driven. Five concrete stoppings have been put in between the lower levels. Total output to the 31st December, 1931, was 3,421 tons.

Steventon Valley Mine.—No work has been done during the year and, in view of the disappointing results of former attempts, I do not think any more work will be done.

Lucknow Clay-mine.—Two men continued working back pillars until September when work ceased. Work will be resumed when the demand for fireclay warrants it. The goaf was closing nicely behind them.

Clearview Mine.—The output was produced from pillar-extraction to the rise of the main adit. Pillars have been worked back beyond the airway to the rise so the old shallow shaft is again being used for a return. To avoid brattice on the cuddy roads two overcasts were made in the back level. Sale has been found in Christchurch for slack coal, and all roads have been cleaned of dross. Total production to end of 1931 was 23,210 tons.

Dennis' Coal Lease.—A coal lease was granted over an area about half a mile west of the Clearview mine. A level 8 ft. square was driven to the north-east from near the north bank of Washpen Creek. It was stopped when 12 yards in, being under a poor seam of coal about 3 ft. thick.

Mount Somers Coal Co.'s Mine.—Three men were employed producing about 100 tons per month. The main level, going north, was connected to an old dip drive, the water in which being led away through a borehole drilled prior to the places being connected. This dip drive makes a good return airway and two shallow shafts not needed have been covered over. Beyond where it connected to the dip the main level met a series of upthrow faults, the last being of 12 ft. displacement. The level was continued in coal only 3 ft. thick and 4 ft. of stone brushing is being done below the seam. There is a good parting above the seam and hopes are entertained of meeting a lower seam; the face of the level is about 40 ft. from old workings, but it will be 35 ft. below. Boreholes will be drilled into the roof of the drive as it advances. A short dip to the west off the main level was stopped when 30 ft. down; another dip, about a chain farther inbye, and driven 8 ft. high with 14 ft. of coal above is down 130 ft. in good clean coal. A place, driven to the north-west off this dip, met a muck "back" 4 ft. wide, beyond which good clean coal was met. To the east the