

*The Rocks Area.*

*Fearnley's Coal-mine* (Rocks Area).—Work has been continued regularly at this small mine and a band of marketable fireclay (2 ft. thick) is mined in conjunction with the coal.

*Jones and Party* (Tauranga Block).—Development work has been continued in the bottom seam of the Old Tauranga Block mining area. The seam has not been extensively worked and the party has exposed an area suitable for future working.

*Silverdale Colliery* (Crown Lease: S. Foot).—Messrs. H. Tipton and party have opened a small mine on the southern end of the Crown Lease No. 258, and have advanced several headings northward in a coal-seam 3 ft. thick. A fault has been encountered on the western boundary of the workings, and the area of workable coal appears to be limited.

*McInnes' Coal-mine* (Crown Lease: Tunstall and Party).—The mine remained closed throughout the year. *McInnes' Coal-mine* (Crown Lease: Mackie and Party).—All attempts to open up a workable seam of coal at this mine resulted in failure, and the workings were abandoned.

*Glen Nell Coal-mine* (Crown Lease: H. Tipton and Party).—During the year operations on this lease were suspended.

*Phoenix Colliery* (Crown Lease: McKinlay and Party).—This mine did not operate during the year.

*Ruatangata Colliery*.—The pillars in the top seam at this coal-mine have been split and sufficient coal in pillars has been left for the permanent support of the surface. The bulk of the output was used by the adjacent brickworks, which is controlled by the same company that runs the mine.

*Whareora Coal-mine* (Foot and Fox: Owners).—This mine remained closed.

*Avoca Coal-mine*.—The mine has been worked intermittently during the year, and a small output was won from the new mine section which was commenced lower down the hill, on an area proved by boreholes.

*Turnbull and Party*.—Operations were suspended during the year due to the unpromising nature of the prospect.

*Whau Valley Mine* (R. Fox and Party).—The seam to the rise of the dip produced soft, unmarketable coal, and as no improvement was visible operations were suspended.

*Ngunguru Fireclay Opencast* (Ngunguru Fireclay and Coal Co., Ltd., Owners).—Opencast operations were carried out on a Native lease near Kiripaka, and there was a good demand from Auckland for the product.

*Waikato District.*

*Rotowaro Collieries* (Taupiri Coal-mines, Ltd., Owners).—No. 1 Mine: Pillar-extraction was proceeded with in the west haulage, No. 4E, Daylight, and Hill 60 sections, also in Hogg's Jig and Rope End sections. On the west side pillaring was commenced in the New Drive section on pillars formed in the first working nearly twenty years ago. No crushing was in evidence, and the pillars and most of the top coal are being recovered under good working conditions. The seam is 14 ft. to 16 ft. thick and the pillars 30 ft. to 40 ft. square.

Callaghan's Dip Section: Five pairs of miners were employed developing this section in the bottom seam. The section is being developed rapidly by the use of coal-cutting machines. The seam is 12 ft. to 14 ft. thick and rather stony, stone balls being frequently met with in the coal.

A 70 in. S.I. Sirocco fan has been installed on the surface to ventilate the bottom seam workings, a return airway having been driven 270 ft. from the bottom seam at a grade of 1 in 1, flattening towards the fan-drift.

No. 3 Mine (bottom seam): Pillar-extraction was continued in Hogg's dip and Moodie's sections, also in Taylor's section. Difficulty was experienced owing to bad roof conditions, necessitating an adequate amount of top coal being left to support the roof during the removal of pillars.

In Moodie's section, part of which lies under a surface stream, pillars were being split, sufficient coal being left to support the surface.

In Brown's section the first working was extended southward.

An accumulation of some 5,000 cubic feet of fire-damp was reported early in June from No. 1 south section, turned off the main east haulage road. The accumulation evidently resulted from falls of roof damaging air stoppings in crosscuts between bords, causing a short circuit in the ventilation and allowing the gas to gather in a rise dead-end bord. It was removed by attention to the stoppings, and the whole area sealed off by fourteen brick stoppings. The section had not been laid out in panels, hence the large number of stoppings now required.

Preparation of a haulage is in hand to connect present screening-plant to the site of a new drive on an outcrop to the north of the present workings and adjacent to the old north workings. Boring has proved an area of 11 ft. to 20 ft. of good coal in this direction.

In September four truckers, found in possession of cigarettes and a safety match during a search conducted in their working-places, were prosecuted and each fined £1 and costs, with a warning from the Magistrate of a much higher penalty should this offence recur. A fifth trucker, who refused to allow himself to be searched, was also fined a similar amount. Though this offence was probably due to inexperience and lack of appreciation of the possible extreme danger to their fellow-workers through their taking such a risk, it illustrates the continued need for extreme care in searches and warnings to prevent the possibility of prohibited articles being taken into mines where ignitions of fire-damp may occur.

The mine D.C. electrical system has been improved by the installation of a three-wire motor-balancer, output 150 amps. at 230 volts.

Oldham acid-type cap lamps have been in use for a number of years, but a change-over has now been made to Edison Model "K" 50 c.p. Alkaline lamps.

*Pukemiro Colliery* (Pukemiro Collieries, Ltd., Owners).—An output of 500 tons per day was maintained during the year, almost entirely from pillars. In the North Mine section pillar-extraction was continued in the No. 1 west pillars and main west pillar section situated near the Glen Afton boundary.

In the Straight Heading section the seam is 8 ft. to 10 ft. thick, and the remaining pillars are some 26 ft. square only. Some crushing of the pillars and consequent breaking of the roof occurred, necessitating constant attention to renewals of broken timber.

Early in the year the South Mine section was reroaded and reconditioned with a view to working the remaining pillars. Operations in this mine have been suspended for five years, and, owing to the friable nature of the coal in this section, particular care has to be taken to control any signs of heating. Electric safety-lamps are in use throughout this section, but no inflammable gas has been reported during the cleaning-up operations.

Horne's No. 2 Rise Section and Rope End Section on West Side: The coal here is soft and friable, and the seam is affected by numerous small faults which weaken the roof and cause sets to be required instead of props.

Brickyard Section (No. 3W), situated near Glen Afton Township and connected to North Mine section by 50 chains of endless-rope haulage: Pillar-extraction was continued to within a short distance of the main roadways. The seam is stony, and, owing to surface swamp which cannot be completely drained, the management is compelled to split the remaining pillars to dimensions ensuring support of the surface.

Development: Preparations are being made to work an area of coal, included in the Taupiri Mine Leases and lying near the eastern boundary of Pukemiro South Mine.

*Glen Afton No. 1 Colliery* (Glen Afton Collieries, Ltd., Owners).—Pillaring in K4 pillar section was completed early in the year, the miners being transferred to K1 section, which had been reroaded and reconditioned for extraction of the remaining pillars. Pillaring was continued under good conditions in K1, K2, and K3 pillar sections. The seam is 12 ft. thick, and 1-chain-square pillars are left, with bords and crosscuts 14 ft. wide.

In August the reroading of E section, midway along the main haulage road, was commenced for the extension of the first working through the freehold boundary into an adjacent portion of the MacDonald State Mine Reserve. This section has been sealed off since 1932.