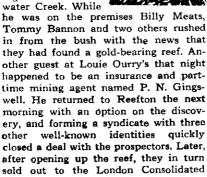
Horsepower on the Coast

[N July, 1951, as miners worked on for the drop into Boatman's Creek," he Blackwater quartz mine at Waiutu, one

expensive, and the mine closed. Of the once numerous quartz mines in the Reefton district in was the last to go.

Looking back 50 or so years R. H. Henderson, now living at Inglewood. can remember stopping at Louie Ourry's Blackwater Hotel after having brought up a wagon-load of gear for a dredge working the Black

Goldmining Company.



The job of transporting equipment along the six-mile track was placed in the hands of Jim Billet, for whom, at the time, Bob Henderson was working. In a series of four talks under the general title Westland Teamster Mr Henderson gives a vivid step-by-step description of the ensuing struggle. The greatest difficulties and the most serious dangers centred around two very heavy items: a donkey engine weighing about a ton, which had come from an abandoned mine at Merrijiga and was then sitting in a paddock behind the Blackwater Hotel, and a six-ton boiler needed to provide steam for a saw-mill, that had to be brought from another abandoned mine, the Welcome, just under 50 miles away. These two monsters were dragged up to the new mine by ten horses and three men.

The down-hill parts of the journey may have been less exhausting but they were by far the more dangerous. One quotation from Mr Henderson's first talk, shows why. "We were now round the corner and heading straight down

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the last gold-bearing reef in the said. "Kicking desperately but vainly at the brake, I did my best to steer the of the shafts used for ventilation col- team over to the water table on the lapsed. Reopening it was thought too offside where the ground was softer and

sloped curb fashion. Rolling and pitchdangerously, ing downward we clattered, narrowly escaping a capsize into the backyard of one resident, I had to use my whip in order to save the team from being over-run by the wagon."

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Fiddlesticks..." I said

Whenever I suggested travelling anywhere, some one would say, "But it's so far" or "At your age?" or "Can you stand up to it?" Then finally I said, "Fiddlesticks . . . I'm going to fly and see Alice and the grandchildren." And now, of course, I know that flying is simply tailor-made for old people like me. It's all so swift and clean and comfortable. The young N.A.C. people fuss over me and I arrive fresh and fit for anything. I may have been brought up in the horse and buggy days, but when it comes to travel I go the modern way . . . by air.







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