

Enclosure No. 3 in Appendix M.
COAL EXPORTS.

Countries to which Exported.	Quantity.	Value.	Remarks.
	Tons.	£	
New South Wales	130	130	100 tons of this coal was obtained from Westport in December quarter; 137½ tons from Auckland; 2,421½ tons from Greymouth.
Victoria	2,521	1,930	
Norfolk Island	1¼	2	
Friendly Islands	6½	10	
Total Exports	2,658¼	£2,072	

30th May, 1878.

WILLIAM SEED,
Secretary and Inspector of Customs.

Enclosure No. 4 in Appendix M.

Mr. S. HERBERT COX to the DIRECTOR of GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

Report on the Coal Mines of New Zealand inspected during the past Year.

SIR,—

Geological Survey Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1878.

I have the honor to inform you that during the past year the whole of the coal mines of any importance in the South Island have been inspected, and that where no plans previously existed surveys have been made, and the plans are now in the possession of the Department.

In many cases the workings have not been found to be in a satisfactory state, the want of ventilation being, generally speaking, the greatest defect, although there are other points which require remedying at certain collieries, and these will be pointed out when each mine is reviewed in detail.

The following list of statistics has been compiled from notes furnished by Mr. Denniston, who has been engaged on the surveys of the various collieries; and it will be found to contain much valuable information in a form best suited for comparison.

[For Table of Statistics see p. 93.]

The Canterbury Colliery (Jebson's), Malvern, is the oldest working colliery in that district, and is situated close to the Sheffield Railway Station. It was visited 1st November, 1877.

The coal wrought here is as follows:—Coal, 2 feet; shale, 1 foot 6 inches; coal, 2 feet; the full thickness of which is worked out.

The workings are carried on upon no one system, but vary from post-and-stall to longwall. The coal has been entered upon by tunnels, and the one at present in use does not serve to drain the workings, the water finding vent through the old workings to dip, to an abandoned drive near water level.

The roadways are 6 feet by 6 feet, well driven, and supported by solid pillars 8 yards square on both sides, and are generally in fair working order. Where timbering is necessary it has been undertaken in a workmanlike manner, props 8 in. to 9 in. diameter being employed, with cap-pieces equally strong in proportion, the result being that in no case are these giving to the pressure upon them.

To the dip of the present workings all the coal has been stooped out from the boundary of the lease to near the present working tunnel.

The ventilation is satisfactory, the downcast air being taken by the tunnel along the working-faces in one body, and discharged by a small shaft placed to the rise of the workings.

A plan of the workings of this colliery exists, a tracing of which has been obtained.

This mine is not now in constant work, being only wrought to supply orders.

The Wallsend Colliery, Malvern, is situated about half a mile to the east of the South Malvern Township, and within two chains of the White Cliffs branch line of railway. When Mr. Denniston was engaged in examining the collieries in this district in October last, admission to this mine was refused him; but subsequently he received permission to inspect it, and in consequence paid another visit to the district, on the 3rd February, 1878.

This mine is worked by a shaft 6 feet by 4 feet, sunk through soft measures to a depth of 91 feet, where a seam of coal 6 feet thick has been struck. A bore hole has been carried down for a further depth of 41 feet without any other seams of coal being met with.

The workings are at present small, and are confined to the north side of the shaft, the system employed being ordinary pillar-work, or post-and-stall, with levels and headings each 9 feet by 6 feet, and pillars 8 yards by 6 yards. They at present consist of one level, driven 323 links, and 3 headings from 40 to 176 links in length, all of which are very irregularly driven.

The level, and likewise the furthest driven heading, extend about a chain under the railway, and at those points the timber has given to the superincumbent pressure, causing a slight settling of the measures, and, should further mining operations be continued, a settling of the railway would in all probability result, unless due precautions were taken to prevent this catastrophe.

The irregular method adopted of extending the drives, more especially the level, has necessitated a large amount of timbering, which, although strong enough in itself to meet all requirements, is yet so badly put in as to be quite inefficient. The props and cap-pieces have, in all instances, been put in without joggles, while no sole-plates have been used under foot, the result being that the props sink into the soft shale floor, thus rendering the workings insecure and dangerous.