

the workings. The air is split at the bottom of the downcast shaft, and is taken respectively through the two sides of the workings, and was very good when I visited the mine on the 28th April. The current is produced by a small furnace placed in the air-shaft, but not closed in. This is only a small pit, and the coal varies a great deal in quality—some parts being so inferior as not to be worth working, while others are very good coal; but the worst feature of the mine is the occurrence of a good number of soapy backs or clay partings in the coal, which render timber necessary. This timber is rather sparingly used, and I have written to the manager that he should keep a good supply on hand, and use it as occasion requires. He has lately put narrow work through, wherever these have been met with, which appears to answer. The cover of the cage is simply a piece of galvanized iron, hung loose; and this I have requested the manager to alter, and provide a “substantial cover to the cage.”

*Fernhill Mine.*—The coal here is working up in the roof, in the same way as at Walton Park, and the air is not very good. It is worked by a natural current, and this sometimes baffles; besides which, when I visited the mine on the 28th April, I found one of the doors open, and the air, which should have been going round the workings, was taking a straight run to the air-shaft. It is only right to state that, in the workings which were affected by this door being opened only one man was employed, and that he had propped back the door himself as he found it inconvenient in trucking. I requested Mr. Shaw to keep a careful watch on the men in this particular, and he promised to do so. The workings to the dip have now been drained by an adit, but the water which was in the mine has seriously affected these workings, and falls have been numerous, at times running up to the roof, which has then fallen. They are now deserted, and, in a few days, Mr. Shaw hoped to be able to do without them at all as roads.

*Kaitangata Railway and Coal Mining Company's Mine.*—I visited this mine, with which is now incorporated the No. 1 Kaitangata Colliery, on the 29th April, and found everything satisfactory. The current registered in the pit on the morning of my visit was 13,428 cubic feet per minute, and, generally speaking, the air was very good. The mine and pit are now connected by an incline drive, which is being gradually completed to the dip, and will be carried as far as it can be got. Off this dip drive levels are opened, and from these, on the dip side, bords which run as far as the roof. A little gas is occasionally seen in these bords, and when I visited the mine safety-lamps were being used in one of them. They are examined every morning before the men go to their work. In the mine the air was very good, and we were unable to find any gas, although the chambers exist here just as in the old workings; but I understand that gas has never been seen on that side of the mine. The old workings are closed off, the door between them being kept locked. No one enters these old workings except Mr. Samson, who examines them twice a week for gas; he had been through the morning I arrived. The system of working the coal has been to open up low, and then draw the tops from the bords, standing on the coal as it falls, and by this means the high chambers which are seen in the mine are formed. The Act generally appears to be carefully observed in every particular, and every care taken to insure safety to the workings, the mine being subject to a fortnightly inspection by Mr. C. E. Twining, Mining Engineer, at the expense of the company.

*Green Island Colliery.*—This mine, which I visited on the 30th April, has been on fire, but is now filled with water in the old workings, and these have been bratticed off. A small air-shaft has been sunk, in which there are no ladders fixed, and the air was not very good. The tunnel wants re-timbering badly; and a second outlet should be provided, which is proposed to be done by driving a heading out to day. Man-holes are wanted in the main incline; and I have written to Mr. Richardson, requesting him to re-timber this incline, and at the same time to make the requisite man-holes—a piece of work which he tells me he intends undertaking at once. I decided that it was not necessary to fix ladders in the air-shaft, in order to comply with the Act, as it is not a working shaft, and, as the present workings must be considered as a new mine, the necessity for a second outlet would not come into force for some time yet, long after one will be provided by the heading which I mentioned. I suggested to Mr. Richardson that it would be as well to fix a windlass, which is on the ground, at the head of the air-shaft, in order to provide a means of exit for the men in event of the tunnel falling in before the repairs were completed, and this he promised to attend to.

*Freeman's Abbotsroyd Colliery* was in good order on the 30th April, and the ventilation was satisfactory. The old workings are now all bratticed off, and the air is taken through the new ones to a small up-cast shaft, being split at the entrance of the mine. There was a certain amount of leakage of black-damp from the old workings, through rat-holes below the bratticing, but Mr. Walker stopped these up while I was there. He examines the workings every morning, and keeps the requisite book for reports.

*The Allandale Mine*, which I also visited on the 30th April, is only a small concern, being worked by two brothers; one sells and carts the coal, and the other mines it. The workings consist of a drive, and a few bords right and left. The area of coal in the lease is only small, and they propose to get as much out as they can in working back. An air-shaft exists, but it is next to useless as it is situated at present, and the air is not guided at all. The works generally are standing well. I have mentioned this mine in the early part of my report.

*Canterbury Mine.*—This mine, which is now in the hands of Messrs. Austin and Kirk, I visited on the 4th May. I find that the ventilation is very bad—indeed, that there is practically no air passing through the mine. This, Mr. Austin explains to me, is due to the fact that the in-take air has a free run through Jebson's old workings to the air-shaft, and he is at present engaged in stopping these off. No plan exists of the new workings, nor has a manager's book been kept; but, as Mr. Binns had a few days previously given instructions for these to be used in future, I took no further action in the matter. The roof appears to stand well generally, and pack walls are built all along the levels, which, with a few props and cap-pieces, form an efficient support for the roof. In the main level the roof, though standing well at present, gives one the impression that falls might occur, and I have enjoined caution in this respect, and Mr. Austin has promised to attend to it. He is anxious to keep the mine in good order, and does not stint timber where necessary.

*Springfield Mine* was closed down for repairs to the hauling-gear when I visited it on the 4th May, so I did not go below. Mr. Moody has recently taken charge of the mine, and in his hands it will