

ANNEXURE A.

SUMMARY OF REPORTS BY INSPECTORS OF COAL-MINES.

NORTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (R. H. SCHOEN, INSPECTOR OF COAL-MINES).

The following is my report on the working of coal-mines in the Northern Inspection District for the year ended 31st December, 1941 :—

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS OF EACH COLLIERY FOR THE YEAR 1941.

North Auckland District.

Kamo Colliery.—No. 3 Mine : No further extension of the main drive was undertaken during the year.

Intermediate North-east Section : A pair of drives were set away from the main haulage intermediate between Nos. 1 and 2 north-east sections. These opened up good coal 11 ft. thick which had already been prospected by a surface bore. It was decided, in order to improve the haulage to the surface, to connect this section to the main dip by a slant road leaving the main dip at a point 21 chains from the mine entrance and at a favourable angle. This slant dip which runs slightly north of east from the main dip, is now connected, and has been driven some 18 chains. The coal at the face is of good quality, and as the main field lies in this direction the development looks promising. A small panel is being developed to the north of these drives. Some faulting has been met, but development is proceeding.

To the south-west of the main dip panel development on both sides of the Railway Reserve was completed during the year, and with the exception of a prospecting drive which is being extended to the south-east from No. 1 section, no further work is being done in this locality. The drive is in coal of good quality 6 ft. thick and is dipping 1 in 4 with the floor of the seam.

No. 4 Mine : A few men have been employed in this mine section, where a small area of good coal has been worked in the company's holdings.

Waro Colliery.—During the year the main No. 1 drive and workings to the east of it were extended some 9 chains to a distance of 49 chains from the mine entrance. The coal-seam in this direction has proved disappointing both in thickness and quality, while to the east of the main drive the seam has thinned to 4 ft. with a good deal of disturbance from faulting, causing great difficulty in haulage and ventilation and largely increasing the cost of getting the coal.

Two slant dips, driven to the west at distances of 31 and 39 chains from the mine entrance, were in coal up to 6 ft. thick and of varying quality.

At a point 8 chains from the main drive, No. 1 slant dip reached a fault where broken roof caused a heavy inrush of water and slurry on 7th May. This water is now held at No. 6 level in the dip, but no extension of the dip heading has been possible, though a small panel has been developed towards No. 2 slant dip. The coal averages about 6 ft. and is of fair quality.

No. 2 slant dip has been driven 6½ chains in coal of fair quality 6 ft. thick. At this point the face is on a fault thinning the coal to 18 in.

Orr and Party (Tauranga Block).—Work continued throughout the year on pillars left in the upper seam in old Northern Co.'s workings. Coal for about three months work was left at the end of December.

Ruatangata Colliery.—Pillar-extraction was commenced in July in the eastern part of the area worked from a fault which runs parallel to the main dip and about 3 chains from it. Further development of the area to the east of the section being pillared may be undertaken by extending an existing road in a north-easterly direction from the main dip. Development to the west of the dip has proved unprofitable owing to faulty conditions and thinning of the seam.

Whareora Colliery.—During the year the section being worked in the old mine was worked out, pillars being drawn owing to the seam dipping to the east below water-level. A further drive has now been put into a 3 ft. seam, and boring is proceeding to test the coal before further development is undertaken.

Avoca Opencast Coal-mine.—One man has been employed in opencasting pillars left behind during the original working.

Waikato District.

Rotowaro Collieries.—No. 1 Mine (Top Seam) : In the New Haulage section pillar-extraction was continued throughout the year, a barrier being left at the northern end to support the surface where a small creek has been straightened.

No. 4 East Section : The haulage-road pillars are still being withdrawn towards No. 1 Haulage. A dip has been driven through pillars to the south to recover pillars and barriers left in the old sump at Ollis' Dip section.

Hill 60 Right : Pillar-extraction has continued throughout the year in this part of Hill 60 section, which is outside the portion sealed after the explosion in August, 1940.

Callaghan's Dip Section (Bottom Seam) : The main headings were advanced 14 chains in a seam which dipped for 3 chains and is now rising 1 in 20. Panels are being developed on both sides of a pair of headings which have been advanced 5 chains to the north-east.

Two other headings have been set away to the south-west.

No. 3 Mine (Bottom Seam) : The main headings were stopped early in the year owing to bands of stone in the seam. In Brown's and Moodie's Jig sections pillar-extraction has continued, while in Taylor's Jig section all pillars have been extracted and the section is sealed off.

Extraction of pillars from the creek boundary to the north-west was commenced following completion of development, while pillar-extraction to the south-west has continued throughout the year in good quality coal 18 ft. thick.

Alison Mine.—The main headings have been extended 17 chains during the year and endless haulage advanced.

No. 1 panel has been developed in good coal 16 ft. to 20 ft. thick and pillar-extraction will start shortly, while Nos. 2 and 3 panels have been partly developed. A fault of 60 ft. upthrow has hindered development to some extent, but the coal on the rise side will be won by means of a pair of roads driven from No. 2 panel.

The north-west headings are being restarted, having been stopped for awhile owing to an inrush of surface water and clay in October.

Extensive boring has proved an area of good coal averaging 16 ft. thick between Rotowaro Township and the company's present Nos. 1 and 2 collieries, and a stone drive from the surface near the Alison screens has been started to reach the new seam. The estimated distance is 8 chains at a grade of 1 in 4.

Renown Colliery.—No. 3 south headings have been extended to 51 chains south of No. 3 east level, at which point a large downthrow fault was encountered. As the coal on the other side of the fault will be won from the new drive, pillar-extraction in this area is now proceeding.

Pillars in Nos. 4 and 6 west panels and in the panel between Nos. 2 and 3 south headings are also being extracted. No. 6 north headings have advanced to a point 11 chains north of the main west level. The coal has thinned to less than 5 ft. and the roof is soft and friable.

No. 4 south headings have been driven 11½ chains from the main west level. The coal is 9 ft. 6 in. thick and of good quality.

Development of one panel has been completed in this area and two others are being opened up.

Pillar-extraction is proceeding successfully in the No. 2 north section in spite of considerable difficulty caused by the floor heaving.

The new mine entrance in Tapp's area has now reached the coal-seam at a distance of 4 chains from the surface, and has been driven another chain in the coal, which is here 10 ft. thick. The grade to the seam is 1 in 6.

Wilton Colliery.—No. 1 Mine : Pillar-extraction through this mine section proceeded steadily during the year.

No. 2 Mine : The main headings have now been extended a distance of 22 chains from the surface.

Nos. 1 and 2 left panels have been developed to within a chain of the boundary.

The small sections to the right of the main haulage have each in turn encountered splitting of the seam by dirt bands, rendering the coal unworkable at only a short distance from the main headings. The coal-seam in this area averages 7 ft. in height and is very irregular in grade.

No. 3 Mine : A surface endless-rope haulage to this mine was completed in April.

Pukemiro Colliery.—North Mine : Pillar-extraction in this mine was continued throughout the year, the greater part of the output being obtained from areas at the top of the stone drive and in the straight heading section. A small area of solid coal recently developed to the south of the straight heading and adjacent to the fault on that side was also pillared.