

However, a survey is now being made of the area adjacent to Outcrop Creek with a view to reaching the seam beyond VJ fault by a new mine entrance from the surface, and this, if possible, will avoid the cost of crossing the fault underground and also the heavy cost of maintaining present roads in bad mining conditions. The advice of a geologist is also being obtained on the possibility of this proposed new development.

Electrification.—Further plant has been installed in the mine, including a second turbo pump, a modern haulage winch, and the necessary cables, junction boxes, and control gear, while control equipment has also been fitted to the aerial ropeway, giving a creeping speed for certain periods, to suit repairs and the handling of material along the route.

Township.—No building has been carried out during the year, but advances to workers to purchase cottages have been made in almost all cases on request. However, it has been difficult to get any building done in Ohura.

At Puketihi electric light has been supplied to the twenty-five cottages, and a water scheme has been completed, the labour for this having been mainly voluntary. A school has been erected at Puketihi for the younger children, the older ones travelling by bus to Ohura.

WAITEWHENA OPENCAST

Coal-winning.—The net output for the year was 23,198 tons 4 cwt. 1 qr.

The following statement shows details of coal disposed of during the year:—

1st April, 1945—				Tons cwt. qr.		
Stock on hand	..	..	..	Nil		
Add net output for year	..	..	..	23,198	4	1
				23,198	4	1
31st March, 1946—						
Less stock on hand	..	..	..	Nil		
Total disposed of	..	..	..	23,198	4	1

Disposals

Railed	..	..	..	..	23,198	4	1
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The net output from the colliery since inception amounts to 42,082 tons 11 cwt. 2 qr.

Workings.—Operations have continued in the Lee Creek area in the creek-bed, and also an area to the south, beyond a 30 ft. fault, with varying results, the wet weather being the governing factor in the successful operation of bulldozers and other machinery associated with the stripping of the overburden.

A varying output up to 200 tons, but averaging about 140 tons, daily has been obtained from the Lee Creek sections, on which the stripping machinery concentrated until November, when two bulldozers and two carryalls were transferred to the No. 2 area, and later further machines have been operating on the latter area, where at present 25,000 tons of coal has been stripped and a further area partly stripped.

It is intended to install an aerial ropeway (flying fox) to transport the coal from this area (117,000 tons) along the fringe of the escarpment to the roadside adjacent to the Waitewhena Stream, some 300 ft. below, the slope distance being approximately 1,000 ft.

The seam is approximately 12 ft. in thickness and of excellent quality, yields a high percentage of lump coal, and transports well, and the output is governed mainly by the overburden which can be shifted to furnish coal reserves, for the continual wet weather seriously interferes with the operating of bulldozers and carryalls.

Operations were also curtailed by creep of the hillside, which ultimately re-covered a large area of coal previously stripped, while over one period the machines operating almost continuously showed little gain on the slowly moving sodden mass.

The reserves at the commencement of the year were low, and beyond a few months of the dry season these conditions continued throughout the period.