

Underground Workings.—Development work was completed early in the year and the output has since been produced from pillar-extraction in the south-west part of the mine.

As a result of a reorganization of working methods, a line of pillar-extraction has been established which enables the pillars to be extracted from the dip upwards and the goaf filled with water as the workings retreat.

During the year two underground fires occurred, the areas affected in both cases being effectively sealed with stoppings and subsequently flooded.

A new access and haulage drive being driven from the workings to the surface on the line of the main coal dip advanced 504 ft. on an average gradient of 1 in $3\frac{1}{2}$. This drive when completed will release approximately 150,000 tons of coal which underlies the present drives. The recoverable coal made available by the new drive ensures an additional life of at least four years at the mine.

Further improvements were carried out in the new return airway and a stairway fitted with a handrail installed to provide an alternative means of travelling to and from the workings.

The coal was of good quality with an average thickness of 16 ft.

Plant.—All plant operated satisfactorily and repairs and maintenance were efficiently attended to by the engineering staff.

BLACK DIAMOND COLLIERY

The assets of the Black Diamond Coal Co., Ltd., Nightcaps, were purchased by the Crown early in April, 1947, the date of entering into possession being 9th April, 1947.

Underground mining was continued until 18th April, from which date preparations for opencasting were commenced.

The gross output for the remainder of the year from 9th April, 1947, was 15,054 tons 10 cwt. (underground, 488 tons 8 cwt.; opencast, 14,566 tons 2 cwt.). After allowing for waste and the quantity used on works (222 tons 13 cwt.), there remained for disposal a net output of 14,831 tons 17 cwt.

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

				Tons cwt. qr.	
9th April, 1947—					
Opening stocks	..	..	..	..	..
Add net output for year	..	..	..	14,831	17 0
31st March, 1948—					
Less stock in yard	..	..	..	..	..
Total disposed of				14,831	17 0

Disposals

				Tons cwt. qr.	
Railed	..	..	..	14,163	15 0
Local and mine sales	..	..	..	645	2 0
Workmen and free issues	..	..	..	23	0 0
				14,831	17 0

Employees.—The average number of men employed at the opencast was 20.

Days worked.—The underground workings were continued for only eight days after the purchase by the Department.