

Whareatea Mine, Denniston.—On 3rd May, 1948, the assistant district manager reported on a fire that occurred on 23rd April due to a roof fall taking place in the vicinity of No. 10 Stopping. All precautions were taken and material recovered, and sealing off was completed by the erection of concrete stoppings.

Terrace Mine, Reefton.—On 7th June, 1948, the mine-manager reported that on the morning of 31st May when arriving at the mine considerable smoke was issuing from the return. After some time it was found that a large fall had taken place on the main roadway due to timber burning out and letting in the roof. The rescue brigade worked for two days and nights trying to extinguish the fire, and it was then decided to seal the area temporarily. Final seals were erected on 5th June, and on the following Monday there were no signs of leakage.

Liverpool State Mine.—On 11th June, 1948, the mine-manager reported that a heating had been discovered by the underviewer and himself on 8th June, 1948, on the outbye side of No. 2 Bank, Morgan East Section. All men were withdrawn from the mine, and then a start was made to seal off the area temporarily, and at a later date the area was sealed off with permanent concrete stoppings.

Hillcrest Mine.—On 18th June, 1948, the mine-manager reported by telephone that a fire had developed in the mine. Stoppings were erected.

Dobson State Mine.—On 29th June, 1948, the examining deputies reported at 8 a.m. that, due to a heavy gas feeder in Longley's Level, No. 5 West Section, 7,000 cubic feet of gas had accumulated in this level and the next heading. The places were fenced off and men withdrawn from the mine. The accumulation was eventually cleared.

Cascade Creek Mine.—On 6th July, 1948, a heating was reported in gob of Durkin's South Section. The fire area was successfully sealed by a brigade from the Buller Rescue Station.

Ciffside Mine.—On 9th July, 1948, the mine-manager discovered signs of heating in a heading. The workmen were directed to work night and day to dig out completely the heated area, which was trucked to the outcrop and disposed of down a gully.

Webb Mine, Stockton.—On 17th August, 1948, a small blower of CO_2 or nitrogen was met in Shepherd's and Jack's working-place, Sixth Panel. The gas was coming from a crack in the floor.

Webb Mine, Stockton.—On 25th August, 1948, a small ignition of gas was reported in Shepherd's place, No. 6 Panel. The miners had bored and fired a shot along the rib side and 1 ft. 6 in. from the floor. Whilst the miners were filling out the coal, Shepherd suspected a strange smell and put the flame of his carbide lamp near the back end of the shot-hole, causing an ignition. Samples of air were submitted to Dominion Laboratory, and the results showed the samples were free of inflammable and noxious gases. Apparently coal-dust dried through a shot being fired and was ignited.

Liverpool State Mine.—On 24th September, 1948, the mine-manager reported signs of heating in No. 2 Bank, Morgan West Section. The goaf was sealed temporarily whilst a permanent seal was prepared farther back in a more satisfactory position.

PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE COAL-MINES ACT, 1925

On 7th April, 1948, a mine-manager was charged under Regulation 226 (h) (i) of Coal-mines Regulations 1939 in relation to the proper and safe firing of shots in a coal-mine. He was convicted and fined £2 with 10s. Court costs.

On 7th April, 1948, a miner was charged under Regulation 226 (l), Coal-mines Regulations 1939, in that, not being an authorized person, he did fire a shot, in contravention of this regulation. He was convicted and fined £2 with 10s. costs.

On 5th July, 1948, a trucker was charged under section 144, Coal-mines Act, 1925, with negligently omitting to place properly in position a safety-block on the incline haulage line. The case was adjourned to a later date. In the meantime a charge against the trucker was laid by the police under the Crimes Act for manslaughter, but the case was dismissed. The charge under the Coal-mines Act was withdrawn.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (G. SMITH, Inspector of Coal-mines)

CANTERBURY DISTRICT

With the exception of Klondyke Mine, all of the Canterbury district mines are operating in a small way, with from 2 to 8 men employed.

Acheron Mine No. 1 (Anthracite) (J. T. Todd (Deputy), Manager).—Development to the dip a further 80 ft. has given a pair of levels to the south in good coal varying from 6 ft. to 9 ft. in thickness.

The dip face is still in good coal, but further extension is questionable for, immediately to the north, levels met a split and intrusion of stony bands, and finally a dolerite face, and this is cutting across the dip face at an angle of 20 degrees.

All of the upper levels to the south at approximately 7 chains have struck barren ground, but as coal has been worked to the south of the present portal it is intended to prospect through this gravel band or barren area. Should this be unsuccessful, further dip development will have to be by stepping to the south, and by cross-cutting the rise pillars to furnish a suitable haulage road, for developing on the new bearing.

The new levels require an increase in the amount of timber previously used, and small gas (CH_4) feeders and accumulations are periodically met.