

The old road to the former mine was reconditioned and extended 10 chains and metalled where necessary, and a small bin and screen erected.

After driving in good coal for upwards of 2 chains with a crosscut towards the outcrop, operations ceased, and I understand some arrangements have been entered into with the Department to delay further development until adjoining blocks have been tested as likely opencast areas.

The reconditioning of a tunnel on the opposite side of the gully is being undertaken with the intention of further driving to locate the seam. This tunnel was abandoned some years ago owing to lack of finance.

Sunnydale Mine (J. G. Barclay (Underviewer), Manager). The remaining pillars in the upper seam were extracted by the middle of the year, and from a small opencast face adjacent to the portal underground development in the bottom seam commenced.

A pair of headings has been driven 3 chains in a north-westerly direction, the coal being of good quality, with the seam thickness approximately 20 ft.

Wangaloa State Mine (Opencast) (G. Auld (Quarry Certificate), Manager). Operations have continued on a large scale with the stripping of the overburden, and with the multifarious earthwork machines in use good progress has been made and large reserves established, with a second face to the north-west now available.

An almost continuous boring programme has been in operation on this and adjoining areas and the field well proven.

A regular output (200 tons daily) has been won, and from the 25 ft. face clean coal, under ideal conditions and drainage, is being mined mechanically, while reserves for eighteen months are stripped of the overburden.

This is a good example of an opencast mine worked to advantage and well prospected in advance. *East Coast Coalmining Co. (Cross' Opencast)* (R. Staniford (Deputy), Manager). Operations on a more extensive scale have been introduced at this opencast pit, and while the seam is at present split, involving two operations to work it to advantage, boring operations and two old drives have proved good coal and a thick seam ahead and on the right flank. The present cut is on the low-lying ground and adjacent to the outcrop, but should improve as the face advances, while the second cut, on higher ground, will be under better conditions for removal of overburden and drainage.

A portable shaker-screen combination, with belt loader and small slack-bin, has been installed, and although the output is small the Diesel shovel and stripping-machine is capable of greatly increased production.

Kaitangata Mine (W. E. Hill (First Class), Manager).—The whole of the output from No. 2 Mine has been obtained from pillar-extraction, in the Electric Dip and Rogers' Heading Sections, the final stages in the latter having been reached and the section sealed.

All places are worked double shift, and with the seam 30 ft. thick and a good roof, from the three pillar places, approximately 8 chains down the Electric Dip, good extraction is obtained.

A pair of levels is being developed off this dip in a small block of coal about half-way down the dip and on the opposite side to the lower pillar places, and this should add to the life of the mine.

Development in a small seam near the north end of the main haulage tunnel was stopped, most of the levels meeting stony coal, but pillaring cannot be undertaken until the No. 2 Mine is completed owing to the risk of damaging the rope-road tunnel. The seal at the portal of No. 1 tunnel (closed in 1936) was removed, and later drilling at a point 600 ft. down the tunnel adjacent to the main seam intersection by this drive boring in the floor proved two seams of coal, 11 ft. of coal at 77 ft. and 9 ft. of coal at 149 ft. In conjunction with this boring prospecting, a dip drive has been undertaken in a small seam a few chains from the entrance to the tunnel, the coal being of good quality, but highly inclined.

Boring was continued by a No. 3 bore in Castle Hill property and proved various seams, the last being 17 ft. thick at a depth of 607 ft. Difficulty at various stages was experienced with the drilling of this hole.

Sumner Hill Mine (W. E. Hill (First Class), Manager).—Development on an increasing scale has been undertaken, with the seam in places proved to be 40 ft. in thickness. The seam is, however, subject to lensing bands of clay and mudstone within it in sections, while it is also irregular in strike and dip, and although at an easy grade, the pillars are very irregular in shape.

The quality of this seam is inferior to the Kaitangata coal.

Improvements in surface arrangements have been made by the erection of a bin and extending the lorry road to within a few chains of the portal, the surface tram-line, operated by horse haulage, being eliminated.

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT

Costers, Raby, Starlight, Midway, Argyle, Ota Creek, Diamond Lignite, Waituna, and Taungapu Pits.—Opencast operations were continued with varying degrees of activity, based on local requirements at these small pits.

Terrace Road, Waimumu, Newvale, Hedgehope.—These comprise the larger opencast pits and are all in the Gore-Mataura district.

Terrace Road Pit (A. W. Coster (Permit), Manager).—Operated by the New Zealand Paper Mills, this pit ceased production in January, 1949, for, although the face was 25 ft., the rapidly thickening and harder overburden increased operating-costs.