

MINING AND QUARRY ACCIDENTS

Fatal and serious accidents in the mining industry during the year 1948 were :

	Men Killed.	Men Seriously Injured.	Men Ordinarily Employed.
Coal-mines	5	39	5,582
Metal mines	..	1	1,058
Quarries	..	2	2,215
Totals	5	42	8,855

MINING PRIVILEGES

The following table shows the numbers and descriptions of mining privileges granted through the Warden's Court during 1948, 1947, and 1946 :—

	1948.	1947.	1946.
Claims	33	30	23
Prospecting licences	134	62	83
Water rights	25	38	22
Residence sites	61	56	29
Mineral licences	12	7	8
Miscellaneous	7	13	10
Totals	272	206	175

LEGISLATION

The Coal Act, 1948, in addition to amending the Coal-mines Act, 1925, provides for the acquisition by the Crown of the property in all unworked coal. All privately-owned coal existing on or below the surface of any land is declared to be the property of the Crown. The Act makes provision for compensation to be paid for privately-owned coal and sets up a Coal Valuation Commission for this purpose.

In addition, Part III of the Act provides that certificates of title may be issued to His Majesty, that the Minister may generate and supply electrical energy, and that the Minister may acquire and dispose of shares or stock in companies.

The Mining Amendment Act, 1948, contains provisions fixing the royalty on mineral licences by weight or quantity, restricting the right of renewal of mining licences, determining hours of work underground not to exceed seven hours a day, and restricting employment of youths underground.

The Westport Coal Company Act, 1948, provides for the vesting in the Crown of the assets of the company and for the dissolution of the company.