

*Progress Colliery (Gully Pit), Roxburgh* (James Bailey, agent for licensee).—(11/9/1903): Stripping, 10 ft.; pumping appliances are required to deal effectively with the water.

*Perseverance Colliery, Alexandra* (R. W. Findlay, lessee; Andrew Hunter, manager).—(13/5/1903): Old main dip lost and now abandoned; a crosscut is being driven through the pillars to solid coal on the left hand. Pillars being left 20 yards square all work narrow. (18/9/1903): Explosive gas having been found in the McQueenville Colliery adjoining, as a precaution daily examinations with safety lamp are now made before the men are passed into the mine. No firedamp has as yet been reported. However, the practice will be kept up as the floor is broken where "weight" occurred, and roof fallen in bad places to the gravels above the clays overlying coal-seam. Mine-workings and return airway in good order; old workings stopped off. (16/12/1903): To increase ventilation a small furnace has been built at the bottom of upcast shaft; the furnace is well lined with sheet iron and brickwork as a precaution against setting coal-seam on fire. Rules posted; report-books to date.

*McQueenville Colliery, Alexandra* (R. Lett, lessee; J. Howie, manager).—(13/5/1903): An ignition of explosive gas of a slight nature occurred in this mine on the 7th May. A concrete dam 4 ft. in thickness had been built in to retain an outburst of water with sand from the floor of the rise beyond the trough in dip drive. The face of the dam was being examined frequently by Mr. Howie with his deputy, John Duncan, and the place had been examined with a safety lamp a short time previously and no gas found; but when Duncan went in again the naked light on his head accidentally ignited a small quantity of gas in a cavity between the timbers at the roof of the place a few yards back from the dam-face. Although previously undetected the occurrence of small quantities of firedamp had previously been suspected in this mine, and I had directed the mine-manager's attention to certain indications of gas when examining the mine in the year 1900. Every precaution is being taken by Mr. Howie; mine regularly examined with locked safety lamps, followed by reports duly entered in report-book before the miners are allowed to enter. (8/6/1903): Examined carefully but could not find any trace of gas in the mine, the dip where outburst occurred being perfectly clear. The concrete dam is standing well, being now no doubt well backed with sand from the "blower." (18/9/1903): Mine generally in good order; ventilation good; no trace of firedamp has been detected during past three months. (16/12/1903): A new steam-pump (a Duplex Tangye, capacity 8,000 gallons per hour) now placed at bottom of upcast shaft; steam-pipes are laid from surface steam-boiler down the haulage-dip, discharge-pipes delivering up the shaft. A fall of roof to surface recently occurred in the old upper workings, very little damage being done. Attention is paid regularly to the deposits of dross left on the road sides of bords, but no signs of heating have been discovered so far. However, as a precaution the mine-manager promises to have the thicker heaps turned and split.

*Drummey's Coal-pit, Alexandra* (J. Drummey, lessee).—(8/6/1903): No one about. Nothing done here since my visit in November last. I have been informed that the coal-seam is stony and inferior, rendering sales difficult.

*Alexandra Coal-mine, Alexandra* (M. O'Connell, permit; W. A. Thomson, lessee).—(21/2/1903): Mine-workings partially unwatered, dip drive and roadways being cleaned up and put in order; air good. (8/6/1903): Bottom heaving and roof fallen to the parting in places where water was up, and roof of main dip requires constant attention. (18/9/1903): Mine idle. Safety lamp now used for examination of workings. (16/12/1903): Output very much decreased, and not in proportion to the capabilities of the mine. New copies of the general and special rules required.

*Alexandra Coal Company, Alexandra* (W. Carson, mine-manager; L. Ryan, secretary).—(18/2/1903): Workings all in good order. (14/5/1903): Recent improvements and additions to working plant are a pair of self-contained engines, having two drums, each 4 ft. diameter, fitted with clutch-gear for shaft-winding and rope-haulage down the dips to replace horses formerly in use below. The cage is also fitted with safety detaching-hook and proper covers. Ventilation fair. (17/8/1903—James Pollock, mine-manager): The whole of the workings thoroughly examined: pit in good order, ventilation satisfactory. No perceptible increase of water-inflow which might have been expected as the workings extended, an average of 50,000 gallons per working-day being discharged. Workings duly examined with safety lamps prior to each shift commencing work. (22/9/1903): Ventilation improved by renewal of air-stoppings, brattice-cloth being replaced with wood in stentons on permanent airways. Boreholes 7 ft. in roof at regular intervals of 20 ft. have not so far determined any weakness in the roof or thinning of the coal-seam. The body of the seam appears to have been formed with unvarying regularity, indicating extensiveness of deposit. From twenty to twenty-five men are employed, but there being no second outlet-shaft not more than ten men are allowed down the pit at any one time, as provided by section 40 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891." As a precaution examinations with safety lamps are duly carried out, but explosive gas has never been seen in the pit. Plan and report-books to date. Rules posted.

*Undaunted Coal-pit, Alexandra* (D. H. Mathias (permit), lessee).—(14/5/1903): Workings in fair order, dip being extended and bords broken away. (18/9/1903): A wet break from the roof had caused flooding of the dip, but the water-inflow is now pining. (16/12/1903): Working top bords on east side of dip. Negotiations are in hand to equip the pit with steam pumping and winding plant.

*Theyer's Coal-pit, Alexandra South*.—(8/6/1903): Lease recently determined at owner's request. As in Drummey's pit, a band of stone in the coal-seam rendered work profitless. Bruce's old shaft has been filled up to the surface.

*Cambrian's Coal-pit, Cambrian's* (C. Dungey, lessee).—Not visited. Opencast pit; output moderate.

*Welshman's Gully Pit, Cambrian's* (J. McGuckin, lessee).—Opencast pit. Two men usually employed.