

Mataura Collieries, Mataura.—Places and stentons bratticed, but some powder-smoke hanging.

Mataura Lignite-pit, Mataura.—Machine-stripping in advance of opencast working. Underground mining recently begun; parallel drives are in a short distance.

Nightcaps Coal-mine, Nightcaps.—Atmospheric depression prevailing; four men have been withdrawn from No. 2 dip lower seam on account of black-damp in air. In another place air dull on account of workmen having left air-door open, causing short circuit. Mine-manager said, to complain would mean the men leaving their work, which he could not afford, as they were short-handed, also short of output. As it was, one trucker, having given the underviewer "cheek," had been made to apologize, with fear and trembling on the boss's side in case he would not do it. Laying tram, 40 chains, to "Coolgardie," and extension, 40 chains, to new lease, area 200 acres, on School Commissioners' land. Miss-fire shots reported more than usually frequent; Viking used; plugs varied in substance, being hard or soft, or viscous and irregular. Ventilating-fans (two) started at 6 a.m., two hours before workmen enter the mine.

New Brighton Coal-mine, Wairio.—Subleased by S. McMillan. Prospecting now.

Thistle Coal-mine, Nightcaps.—Working backward on pillar and head coal.

Wairio Coal-mine, Wairio.—Workings in good order. Roof, which is bad in places, supported by timber, and care of workmen attended to.

Wairio Railway and Coal Company's Mine, Wairio.—Prospecting with more or less success—chiefly less.

Beaumont Coal-mine, Nightcaps.—Opencast stripping becoming too heavy, and will soon have to resort to underground mining.

Linton Coal-mine, Nightcaps.—Opencast; seam 20 ft. Coal superior brown in quality. Tram-line laid to main road for land-sale pending extension of Nightcaps Railway now being contemplated.

Beattie's Coal-pit, Nightcaps.—Small opencast pit, troubled with water-inflow.

A. A. Townsend, Morley Village, Nightcaps.—Lignite license. Operations newly begun.

Black Diamond Coal-mine, Nightcaps.—New pit, opencast. Loading-stage erected and small area stripped. Seam lying near the surface.

Waikaia Coal-mine, Waikaia.—Resumed recently. Driving for air-return.

Nightcaps Coal Company, Wairio.—New mine. No output yet

The following other small mines have also been visited during the year: Argyle Coal-mine, Waikaia; Waimea Coal-mine, Kingston Crossing (work suspended); Princhester Creek Mine, The Key; Waimumu Coal-mine, Mataura; Heatherlee Coal-mine, Waimumu; Ota Creek Mine, Wyndham; Clarke's Coal-mine, Wyndham; Glenham Mine, Wyndham; Wairaki Coal-mine, Nightcaps (work suspended pending railway-extension); Mossbank Coal-mine, Nightcaps (work suspended); Burrell's Opencast Pit, Nightcaps (closed); Mount Linton Coal-mine, Nightcaps (work suspended); Otto Voight's coal lease, Nightcaps; D. McKenzie's mine, Nightcaps (suspended); Muddy Terrace Shale-mine, Waikaia (work suspended).

Accidents.

The year 1916 was again clear of fatalities in the Southern District.

Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

Ranfurly Coal-mine, Bannockburn (7/2/16): George Crabbe, 36, miner, injury to back, caused by fall of coal. Still off work.

Springfield Colliery, Waikaka (14/4/16): John Duncan, miner, broken arm, fracture of upper arm and ribs (two). Right side struck by coal flying from a light shot ignited at the face, having returned too soon, as stated.

Wairio Coal-mine, Wairio (22/5/16): William Buchanan, miner, bruised back and legs. Struck by piece of coal which fell from face. Still off work.

Brighton Coal-mine, Brighton (9/5/16): Nelson McColl, 26, miner, injury to back. Struck by small piece of coal which fell from low roof. Still off work.

Nightcaps Coal-mine, Nightcaps (29/8/16): Morris Jones, 64, miner, injury to right hand, jammed between two boxes. Still off work.

Kaitangata No. 2 Mine, Kaitangata (19/9/16): John Devine, 31, miner, strain of back. While lifting a lump of coal into box, foot slipped. Still off work.

Castle Hill Mine, Kaitangata (24/11/16): Robert Burgess, miner, fractured rib and bruised back, caused by blow from empty box.

The number of accidents reported for 1916, mainly for the purpose of the Coal-miners' Relief Fund, totalled 117, as against 144 for 1915 and 143 for 1914. Of that number, three claims were disallowed on account of insufficient proof.