

The gross total output won from this colliery since its inception amounts to 485,638 tons 5 cwt.

The colliery worked during the year on 197½ days, and the average daily output was 649 tons 2 cwt. Comparing the days worked with the possible time which could have been worked (not including union holidays and pay Saturdays) shows a loss of 72½ working-days, which are accounted as follow: Conscription strike, 14 days; railway ticket strike, 2 days; destruction of bins, 23 days; levy strike, 16 days; search for highway robber, 1 day; slips on railway, 4½ days; cavil (quarterly), 1 day; want of shipping, 9 days; bar unworkable, 2 days: total, 72½ days. The loss of 72½ days, with an average daily output of 649 tons, represents a loss in output for the year from this colliery of 47,053 tons.

Employees.

The average number of men and boys employed in and about the mine in connection with coal-winning was 255 men and 19 boys, made up as follow: Underground—Coal-hewers, 113; deputies, shiftmen and truckers, 96. On the surface, 46 men and 19 boys. In addition to those employed in connection with coal-winning, there were 26 men and 2 boys employed on property and development work, making a total of 281 men and 21 boys.

The total payments made on wages account in connection with coal-winning, exclusive of stores, mine-timber, and compensation, amounted to £48,887 16s. 4d.

The coal-hewers' average daily earning (gross) for the year was 21s. 9·78d., and the net return to each man was 19s. 9·54d., a net increase of 2s. 4·88d. over last year.

Underground Development.

During the year the output was obtained from the same mines as last year—namely, Nos. 1–3, and 3A—the former producing the largest output, and with the exception of an average of four pairs of miners engaged in pillar-extraction the output from this mine was obtained from solid workings.

Owing to the limited area development-work in this mine is confined to the workings advancing in a northerly direction, the width of the block now worked being not more than 11 chains, and from surface examinations of the locality, and the course of the pinching-out line from east to west, there is every indication that the workings advancing now in a northerly direction will in another 12 chains be reduced in width to such an extent that it would be unprofitable to continue them farther.

Development-work in the Morgan seam has been confined to the driving of winning levels in an easterly and westerly direction. The seam in the east level maintains an average thickness of 20 ft., whereas the seam in the west level will not average more than 7 ft.

In driving the main level west an upthrow fault (Sweeney's) of 14 ft. was encountered. After crossing over the fault the seam pinched to 6 ft., but as the level advanced the seam gradually increased in thickness, and for the last chain driven averaged a thickness of 10 ft.

It is pleasing to report that as the workings advance from the vicinity of the fault the quality of the coal, so far as hardness is concerned, is much improved.

During the early part of the year work was carried out on day wages. A working agreement was, however, arrived at in June last, and since then the day-wages system was abolished.

From the No. 3 mine the output was obtained from solid and pillar workings, sixteen pairs of miners being employed in the solid workings and eight pairs in pillar-extraction.

The area comprising solid workings in this mine is now getting very limited, being confined to workings shown on the accompanying tracing advancing towards the downthrow fault (marked "Duggan's fault"), which is a branch from the main downthrow fault, marked on the tracing as "Denston's fault." The branch fault was crossed over during the year in the main heading, also in the companion heading, but the headings were only driven a few yards in the seam when the Denston's fault was struck, thus leaving only a narrow strip of coal between them. One good feature, however, is that the faults do not run parallel, and as the workings advance in an easterly course the distance between the faults gradually increases.

In the No. 3A mine driving in the solid is now completed, and the coal won therefrom in future will be obtained from pillar-extraction. The area of this mine is very small, and never has there been more than six pairs of miners employed therein at one time.

Reviewing the report on the underground workings of this colliery it will be seen that, with the exception of the Morgan seam, of which a moderate area has been proved, the mines from which the output is being maintained at the present time will be exhausted in a few years.

Destruction due to Landslips.

Early on New Year's morning a landslip containing approximately 5,000 cubic yards of debris occurred on the north side of the storage-bin, completely destroying the fan engine-house, blacksmith shop, deputies' office, electric-lamp room, and the coal-storage bin. The first four named buildings, which were in the line of the slip, were carried down and, together with the weight of the debris, struck the storage-bin, finally pushing this large structure down to the ground, and destroying it to such an extent that the whole building will have to be taken to pieces before the work of rebuilding can be commenced.

In order to get the mine working again as early as possible the work of removing the slip was carried out on three shifts, and during this time a temporary storage-bin was also in the course of erection. Within five weeks of the slip occurring work was resumed again at the mines,