

Black Lion Mine.—The drive 17 chains north of the No. 1 mine workings, called "Ross Drive," was stopped in March in coal 8 ft. thick, but full of dirty backs. In the No. 1 mine a few pillars were split on the west side, and out of one of the east levels a dip was driven in fairly clean coal. Production from this mine ceased in July. Near the Morley Stream a new drive was put down, dipping 1 in 3½ to the north. Two seams were met, both from 6 ft. to 10 ft. in thickness. The upper seam proved disappointing, as a washout was met on the east, north, and west sides. Above the lower seam is a stratum of 2 ft. of claystone, which in most places has to be taken down with the coal. The main heading, after dipping for 5 chains, was continued in the rising seam which at the face is 10 ft. thick and fairly clean. West of the main heading two places are being driven, and two others on the east side; but the seam is dipping in both directions, so the main heading is on an anticline. A 15 in. Sirocco ventilating-fan driven by a 10 h.p. three-phase motor is now in use, but if the prospects warrant it a larger fan will later replace this one.

Beaumont Coal Syndicate's Mine.—This syndicate has been prospecting on freehold land three-quarters of a mile north-east of the Linton Mine. In a small triangular area of coal-bearing country, and cut off from the remainder of the field by a large igneous dyke, a short dip was put down to the west in coal 11 ft. thick. West of the face of this dip a borehole was recently drilled, but no coal was met. At a grade of 1 in 4 another dip was driven to the west in the flat land south of the porphyritic dyke. Fifty feet down from surface the coal was rather dirty, and it appeared as though a roll or fault had been passed through. A party of three miners are now going to work this mine and convey the output by motor-lorries to the railway at Ohai, one mile and a half away.

New Brighton Extended Mine.—In April four miners commenced to drive a small level near the south-west corner of an area formerly held under a lignite license, and only a few chains north of New Brighton Coal Lease No. 39. After driving about a chain a large fault was met and the mine was abandoned, only 30 tons of coal having been won.

Tussock Creek Mine.—During the first half of the year two miners drove a short dip at a grade of 1 in 6 on a seam of low-grade lignite 12 ft. thick and containing many clay backs. There is only about 9 ft. of clay overburden over the seam. This mine is only 3 chains west of another small area, formerly worked by a Mr. McDonald, who has recommenced work in the new dip. He has stripped off the few feet of clay above the coal and is now extending the work as an opencast pit.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Birchwood Mine.—On the 14th January a miner named James Burns was struck on the head by a falling prop in his working-place, sustained a fracture of the base of the skull, from which he died on the 20th April. This prop had been supporting the roof on the goaf side of his working-place. A large piece of sandstone slid from the goaf into the lift and pushed out the prop. James Henwood, who was working with Burns, saw the prop falling and sang out, but the top of the prop struck Burns.

Birchwood Mine.—On the 4th April a roadsman named William Reid was struck on the left leg by a lump of stone, breaking both tibia and fibula. A centre prop which was too near one of the rails was being replaced by the miners in McLeod and Robb's heading. McLeod had put in another prop on the high side, and when he was carrying away the prop which had been knocked out Reid stepped forward to where it had been, and a large piece of the sandstone roof then fell, striking him. Reid died in the Riverton Hospital on the 7th April of gangrene as the result of the serious injuries.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—14th June: John Dempster, miner, fractured skull, caused by being struck by a piece of coal from a shot in his working-place.

Wairaki No. 2 Mine.—21st June: James Hunter, set-rider, was caught between a rake of full tubs and the engine-house at the surface, and his right iliac bone was fractured. He had difficulty in unhooking the set and continued too long in trying to do so.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—14th September: Archibald Dixon, fireman deputy, in going over the surface to examine an area where pillars had been worked below he tripped and fell headlong on to a lump of stone in a depression about 10 ft. deep, thus fracturing his skull.

Linton Mine.—19th September: A. Pennack, horse-driver, fracture of the right wrist. He was holding back on the first tub of a rake of full tubs on the surface tramway, and when they struck others ahead his arm, being between the first and second tubs, received the full weight of the other full ones behind on his elbow, consequently receiving an impacted fracture of the wrist.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—15th November: John McGill, shot-firer, in helping to push over a large lump of coal from the upper to the lower workings was struck by another large lump from the roof above, which completely severed three fingers from his right hand.

DAINGEROUS OCCURRENCES NOTIFIED UNDER REGULATION 82.

Waronui Mine.—28th March: A fire was discovered near the top of the pillar section in No. 1 mine. It was effectually sealed off by the 4th April. Afterwards the main stoppings were strengthened by other stoppings being built outside the main ones.

Linton Mine.—25th July: The goaf fire in the No. 1 mine burnt through the barrier, and this was discovered at 2 a.m. It was sealed off by 8.30 a.m., when the miners then commenced work for the day. The place to the dip was also sealed off that day as a precautionary measure against another outbreak.

Wairaki Mine.—25th July: Signs of heating were noticed at the lowest pillar-working in the west side of No. 2 mine. Preparations had already been made, so it only took about two hours to seal off the incipient fire.

Waronui Mine.—14th August: Another fire was discovered in the No. 1 mine on the Sunday afternoon. This occurred outside one of the stoppings put in to seal off the fire of the 28th March, and had apparently come through breaks caused by the heaving floor. It was quickly sealed off that day.

Albury Mine.—14th September: The fire again broke out in the opencast section and endangered the traffic-road near by. A petrol engine and pump were purchased, and water from a creek, 70 ft. lower level, was pumped into the pit. Fortunately heavy rains assisted the pumping and the fire was extinguished by flooding the area.

Birchwood Mine.—28th November: Active spontaneous combustion was found above No. 1 level on the east side, and, as very little workable coal was available above that level, stone stoppings were put in the main intake and return airways about 2 chains down from the surface. The manager states that black-damp was up to these stoppings before they were completed, yet an explosion occurred on the 3rd January, 1928. Falls then occurred, closing the drives, and other timbers were withdrawn, allowing further falls to take place, effectively sealing both drives.

PROSECUTIONS.

On the 11th July a fireman-deputy, who was also the authorized shot-firer, was convicted and fined £3 and costs for failing to see that a miner had taken proper shelter. This miner suffered a fractured skull through being struck by a piece of coal flying from a shot in his working-place.

On the 21st November a mine-manager was fined £3 and costs and a fireman deputy was fined £1 and costs for failing to provide stop-blocks at the brow of a dip haulage-road.