

Westport Coal Co., Ltd., Millerton Mine.—During the year the output was won from partial pillar-extraction in the third, fifth, and sixth west sections of Mine Creek Mine. Spontaneous combustion took place in panel B, third west, and panel H, fifth west, and evidence of heating in panels G, fifth west, and K, sixth west. The heatings in panels G and K were effectively dealt with by water. Panels B and H had both reached the final stages in their working-life and were sealed off. Panel B stoppings were strengthened to form a water-seal around the area. The water-seal stoppings are proving very effective in the areas where they can be used.

The 11,000 volt electric line from Denniston to Granity was put into operation on the 1st October, 1936, but was used only for lighting purposes. The steam-engine driving the ventilating-fan is being replaced by a 50 h.p. electric motor, which will be used early in 1937.

Westport-Stockton Coal Co., Ltd., Ngakawau.—Development was confined to the new east and west dip areas. The east dip, towards Mount William Range, has opened up a large area of excellent coal. No. 2 east panel continues to open up satisfactorily, although some difficulty may be experienced through the increasing grade. A new dip was put down in the west area, penetrating beyond the Webb fault. This should open up a large area of thick coal. In the old east, south, and old west areas operations were confined solely to pillar-extraction. Considerable expense was involved in reconditioning substations, transmission lines, tunnels, and locomotive track.

Watson's Mine, Karamea.—No coal was produced from this mine during the year.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Puponga Mine, Puponga.—Slant Dip Section: The dip which was stopped in good coal 12 chains from the surface was again continued, and after being driven a distance of approximately 2 chains the fault was struck which completely cut out the coal-seam. The working-places were all being driven in an easterly direction. The second-last level struck the same fault at a distance of 6 chains from the slant dip. In this particular place the fault was proved and the displacement was found to be a downthrow of 4 ft. 6 in. Development work in this area was completed by the end of the year and pillar-extraction was commenced.

Mount Burnett Mine, Collingwood.—All the coal from this mine was won by pillar-extraction. The coal-supply being exhausted, the mine ceased production on the 6th October. A prospecting-drive was commenced with the object of locating the coal on the south side of the fault.

Motupipi Mine (Winter's), Takaka.—Stripping operations were continued on the beach, and 101 tons of coal were produced.

Abbotsford Mine (Irvine's), Takaka.—There was no output from this mine during the year, but a little prospecting was done on the outcrops about half a mile from the Takaka Main Highway.

Owen Colliery, Owen River, Murchison.—The No. 2 dip was extended to 90 yards below the main level, and three stalls, 16 yards wide, were opened up on the west side of the dip, and one stall, 10 yards wide, on the east side. The places which were being worked from No. 1 dip, were cut off by No. 2 dip, consequently no work is now being done in No. 1 dip section. A section of the coal-seam is as follows: Roof-coal, 6 in.; fireclay, 2 ft. 4 in.; bottom-coal, 2 ft. 10 in.

O'Rourke's Mine, Murchison.—The main level is now in a distance of 9 chains and is being continued in coal 2 ft. in thickness.

Wynndale Mine, Murchison.—North Side Section: All coal was won by pillar-extraction. The area was brought back to 8 chains from the mine-entrance.

South Side Section: Two places are being developed to the south in coal 7 ft. thick, the quality of which is not very good.

Clarke Mine (S. Hartshorne's), Batou.—A new dip was started in September and picked up the coal in No. 4 level. It was continued for another 2 chains. No. 5 level was driven 4 chains, the coal-seam being 8 ft. in thickness.

SCHOOLS OF MINES.

During the year the interest in the Schools of Mines, the headquarters of which are in Westport, Runanga, and Reefton, was well maintained. The following is a brief summary of the work done:—

Westport School of Mines.—Mining classes were held at Denniston, Granity, Stockton, and Westport with a total number of twenty-six students. The results of the examinations were as follows:—

Gas-testing	..	..	..	..	..	..	Six certificates were issued.
First-class colliery-managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	One partial pass.
Second-class colliery-managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	One partial pass.
Second-class engine-drivers	..	..	..	..	..	..	One pass and one partial pass.

Nine candidates received passes at the annual Schools of Mines examinations.

Assay Laboratory: Two hundred and forty samples were assayed for gold, whilst the nature of forty-four mineral samples was determined. Seven samples of coal-dust and two of coal were analysed.

Runanga School of Mines.—There were twenty-one students on the school roll, the following number sitting for the examinations under the Coal Mines Act:—

First-class mine-managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	Three candidates.
Second-class mine-managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	Three candidates.
Underviewers	..	..	..	..	..	..	Two candidates.
Firemen-deputies	..	..	..	..	..	..	One candidate.

School Building: The additional lecture-room is now completed, and when equipped the classes can be regraded and teaching facilitated.

Reefton School of Mines.—During the year fifty students were enrolled as follows: Blackball, 7; Waiuta, 13; Reefton, 30: total, 50.

Included in this total were nine pupils from the Reefton District High School.

The results of the examinations were as follows:—

First-class Gold-mine Managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	One pass and one partial pass.
First-class Coal-mine Managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	One partial pass.
Second-class Coal-mine Managers	..	..	..	..	..	..	Two passes.
Firemen-deputies Certificates	..	..	..	..	..	..	Two passes.

In addition to the above examinations, fifteen students sat thirty-five papers in fourteen different subjects at the annual Schools of Mines examinations.

Laboratory Work: The following samples were treated:—

Gold and silver assays	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,323
Coal-dust analyses	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Bullion assays	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Screen analysis and assay	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Stibnite analysis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

1,369

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Two fatal accidents occurred during the year, as follows:—

On 19th October, 1936, James Wilson Douglas, screen-attendant, Blackball Coal Mines Pty., Ltd., was killed, his injuries consisting of a fractured skull and dislocated neck. Douglas was found dead in a trough under the electric circular revolving screen which is used for screening slack coal. There were no witnesses to the accident, and it is surmized that Douglas tripped over the shaft-housing and plunged into the screen, causing fatal injuries, and then rolled into the trough.

On 19th November, 1936, Reginald Blake, miner, Whareatea Extended section, Denniston Colliery, while in the act of trimming down his working-place after a shot had been fired, was killed by a fall of roof-coal, his injury being a fractured skull.