

won with the exception of a narrow strip on the north side of the level and adjacent to the main stone-drive and the goaf in this area. There are a few pillars remaining to be won to the south of the main level, and it can be anticipated that the end of the current year will see the amount of coal remaining to be won from this mine very small indeed. The end of operations may be earlier than is expected, owing to heavy rainfalls, as a considerable portion of surface water now finds its way into this mine.

Mossbank No. 3 Mine.—The position at this mine is similar to that of the No. 1 Mine. All pillars have been extracted to the east of the main drive, and the process of extraction in the area to the west has now extended to within 7 chains of the main drive. The pillars to the south have also been extracted to within 3 chains of the main west level. It should also be mentioned that no further avenue of underground development is apparent. The company is carrying out boring operations in the area to the south of the present mines and on the opposite side of the Nightcaps-Ohai Road. So far one borehole is in course of drilling, but no workable seam has been intercepted up to a depth of 380 ft. In any case, it would appear that the prospecting referred to has been delayed to such an extent that even if coal is now found it will probably be found to be incapable of being developed in time to absorb the miners who must be displaced as a result of the completion of the present mines.

Linton No. 2 Mine.—The operation of pillar-extraction has been continued throughout the year. The percentage of coal extracted has been reasonable under the prevailing circumstances. During the initial stages of development of this mine the working-places were driven at various relationships to the floor of the seam, and this condition has made the work of pillar-extraction much more difficult. (I should mention that the coal-seam is at least 40 ft. thick in this mine.) The mine was fortunately not troubled with spontaneous combustion during the year and, as mentioned previously, this will probably be the deciding factor in regard to the probable life of the mine.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—In the No. 6 section pillar-extraction has been continued in the No. 3 panel, the roof coal being more than usually stony in this area. No. 1 panel, Manderson's Dip: This section again heated and was again sealed off. In the No. 3 section pillar-extraction was continued and, under reasonably good conditions, a portion of what was the No. 5 section will be won from here. The main development headings in No. 7 section were continued and ultimately connected to the No. 5 level. It is proposed to further develop the No. 5 area from the No. 7 headings. A further area was developed in the No. 8 section, and a panel is now formed ready for pillar-extraction. A portion of the Birchwood Coal Co.'s lease to the west of the Linton boundary and adjacent to the No. 8 section was transferred to the Linton Co., and the No. 8 main development headings will be continued into this area for development. The main dip development has also been continued, and so far the thickness and quality of the coal has been maintained. All development places continue to give off methane. However, the ventilation arrangements have proved reasonably adequate. Development of the mine generally has been kept ahead in a reasonable manner. The thickness of the coal seam being worked at this mine—i.e., up to 40 ft. thick—makes the operation of pillar-extraction one constantly fraught with an unusual element of danger and it would appear that the time has arrived when some more definite system of pillar-extraction work should be laid down and followed. Boring operations have also been carried out continuously throughout the year. Several extensions of the fire in the old mine, known as the horse level area, have taken place during the year. All previous methods of dealing with this serious position have proved to be mere palliatives. However, steps were taken during the latter portion of the year to carry out a system of extracting a continuous strip of coal and hydraulically stowing the void with surface clay.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 9th January, 1936, John McLeod, miner, was fatally injured by a runaway box on a jig incline. The full truck which struck McLeod was set in motion following the firing of a shot adjacent to the jig-head. Evidence submitted at the inquiry indicated that the stop block was not in position and had not been used for some time previous to the accident. A prosecution was instigated later, and this fatality can be stated to be one which would not have occurred had Regulation 94 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, been complied with.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 10th September James Rogers, miner, sustained fatal injuries as a result of being struck by a fall of coal. The deceased was engaged in pillar-extraction and was working just inbye of the lip of the place. A fall of side and top coal occurred, caused probably by a bump in the section, and struck the deceased.

SERIOUS ACCIDENTS.

Birchwood Mine.—On 9th January William Bell, miner, sustained serious injuries to his eyes, resulting in the almost destruction of the sight of both eyes. The alleged circumstances were as follows: A sumping shot had been fired in the main dip-heading. The charge consisted of two 4 oz. cartridges of Samsonite No. 3, and the shot was fired at 8.15 a.m. Four boxes of coal were filled after the shot was fired, and Bell then commenced to pick away the residue of the shaken coal. An explosion occurred, following the impact of Bell's pick, and thereby caused his injuries. Assuming all the evidence obtained was correct, then this accident could only have occurred as the result of portion of the charge exploding, and the remaining unexploded portion being later struck by the pick.

Birchwood Mine.—On 4th May Robert Rutherford, miner, whilst engaged in pillar-extraction, sustained a fracture of the right femur as a result of being struck by a fall of roof.

Black Lion Mine.—On 28th August John Donaldson, miner, sustained a compound fracture of the right leg, just above the ankle. Whilst engaged in pillar-extraction Donaldson was struck by a fall of top coal.

Kaitangata Mine.—On 23rd December A. Hunter, shiftman-miner and shot-firer, sustained a slight fracture of the skull as a result of being struck by a piece of coal flying along the roadway from a shot which he had fired.

LIST OF DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES.

Wairaki Mine.—On 20th January heating occurred in the goaf in the No. 2 west section. The area was effectively sealed off.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 4th February, 15th May, 25th November, and 5th December, respectively, the fire area adjacent to the horse level in the old No. 1 mine showed signs of extending to the outbye side of various stoppings. Additional stoppings were erected and water laid on, and the progress of the fire checked, meantime.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 26th May heating occurred in the No. 1 panel, No. 6 section. The area was effectively sealed off.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 28th August heating occurred in the No. 3 section. The area was effectively sealed off.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On 5th September heating occurred in the north-east corner of No. 6 section. The area was effectively sealed off.

PROSECUTIONS.

During the year the following prosecutions took place:—

On 6th March a mine-manager was convicted and fined £10 and costs for a breach of section 140 (1) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925.

On 11th March a mine-owner was convicted and fined £1 and costs for a breach of section 72 (1) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925.

On 20th March a miner was convicted and fined £2 and costs for a breach of Regulation 224 (1) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925.

On 7th April a fireman-deputy was convicted and fined 10s. and costs for a breach of Regulation 94 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925.

On 7th July a shot-firer was convicted and fined £5 and costs for a breach of Regulation 228 (5) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925.

On 14th September a case brought against a mine-owner for a breach of section 133 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, was dismissed.