

to those of the other. It was, however, evident to me at a glance that my fears were true, as expressed in my report of 31st March last—viz., that they had actually undermined the pillars of the upper levels. In order to ascertain the extent, I asked Mr. Dalton to plot the one level in connection with the other, which he agreed to do and forward to me.

Having experienced Mr. Foote's previous disobedience in regard to instructions given for the safety of the mine, and wishing, if possible, to avoid the extreme measure of a Court case, which he had no means of paying for, I got introduced to some friends who had influence with him, pointing out to them the danger he incurred, and the strong measures I must take if immediate attention was not paid to my instructions. I am now glad I did so, as this course seems to have had the desired effect, without my having recourse to stronger proceedings.

*Miranda Mine.*—Having received a letter from Mr. Phillips, enclosing tracing of the workings, with the report of Mr. Dalton, Civil Engineer, thereon (copies attached), I visited the mine on the 18th August, and found that they had evidently got alarmed, and were busily engaged erecting timbers in the lower levels; but, having no knowledge of where the pillars had been undermined, were doing so without judgment. I immediately laid off the ground in the lower levels according to Mr. Dalton's plan, shewing the manager where the pillars were undermined, giving instructions in writing that these be immediately secured by strong timbers, and also that an accurate plan be made. The manager informed me he had no power to order timber, or get a plan made, or do anything incurring expense without the authority of his father, the proprietor. I returned to Auckland next day, and placed a similar notice in his hands, informing him plainly of the terrible danger that his own sons and relations were incurring, and the dangerous position in which he was placing himself should anything happen; also, that it was better to give up working the mine if he could not make it pay sufficiently to enable him to secure it. He promised he would endeavour to do everything required by me, or that his son, the manager, considered necessary to secure the ground. Since then he has written me a letter (copy attached) informing me he is having the mine surveyed. I intend shortly revisiting the mine to see that my instructions are carried out.

*Waikato Mine, Huntly.*—On the 21st August I visited this mine, and found matters proceeding very satisfactorily there. The principal thing I was anxious about was the ventilation, but found that they had broken through into some old workings to the southward, the presence of which was unknown. It was found that the entrance of the tunnel to these had been covered up by a slip on the surface; this was cleared away, giving a double opening to the mine, and a means of good ventilation. I examined all these old workings, and though it must be some seventeen years since they were opened, yet everything now remains exactly as it was left. Though the roof was wholly unsupported with timber, no falls had taken place either from the roof or sides, showing good standing coal and sound roof overhead. A plan of the new mine, including old workings to the northward, had been made at the time of my visit; but this did not include the old workings to the southward, the manager not being aware of their existence at the time the ground was surveyed.

*Taupiri Mine, Huntly.*—In my last report I mentioned that the pillars were being successfully drawn in this mine; however, this was stopped by the proprietors of the land soon after the date of that report. The principal work now being carried on is a continuation of the sinking of the incline into the coal in the new ground. This was down for a distance of 400 feet from the entrance, and well into a strong body of coal; but, before they open out, the incline will be continued till the bottom of the dip is found, where a good ventilation shaft will be sunk, and pumping machinery erected. Care was being taken to provide safety recesses, or "man-holes" in the incline, as required by clause 3, Part II. of Act. The ventilation of the mine was good, the manager having carried out my previous instructions to secure same.

*Kawakawa Mine.*—Visited this mine on the 25th August, and found a new survey of the workings had been made, and a plan prepared, copy of which was furnished to me by the manager, Mr. Moody. The ventilation of one of the lower levels was bad, being exceedingly hot and close; they were, however, pushing on work to make a second opening to cause a current of air, and by the sound they must have been within six feet or so of breaking through when I left. On the evening of the same day, at Russell, I received the following telegram from the manager: "The drive near sinking pit has just holed into lowest left level. Ventilation first-class."

*Kamo Mine, Whangarei.*—Visited this mine on the 2nd September, and found that for the last three months no work had been done in getting coal, as, on account of the road being impassable for loaded wagons, no coal could be conveyed from the mine to the place where vessels are loaded. I examined the workings, and found a number of small falls had taken place from the roof. The mine will require a general overhaul and timbering before work is recommenced; this the manager intends to do, and has a large quantity of timber on hand ready for this purpose. The ventilation to the head of the bords, towards the end of the main level, will require direction, as the air in the rises of these is exceedingly close and hot. The plan requires being brought up to date. The operations in sinking the new shaft have been suspended for the present, a question having arisen as to its being in the best position to work the mine from; it is probable that further borings will be made, in order to settle this point, before the work of sinking is resumed. The ballasting of the railway to Whangarei Wharf is now being proceeded with, and I think the line should be ready for traffic in about six weeks to two months from the date of my visit.

*Whau Whau Mine, Whangarei.*—The principal work done in this mine since my previous visit has been opening out a large block of coal, into which they have carried two levels, occasionally cross-cutting between them to carry forward the ventilation. One of these levels had reached within 40 or 50 feet of old workings, which are full of water. Borings will now be kept ahead of the drive in order to free the old workings from water before breaking through. When this is done the mine will have another opening to the surface, and a good means of thoroughly ventilating the portion of the mine now being opened out.

I have, &c.,

JAMES M McLAREN,  
Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.