

Blocks E and F: Reconnaissance has been made and camps erected for the investigation of the area on the Waitahu side of the dividing ridge and also the area of coal measures in the Montgomery River watershed.

Owing to shortage of survey staff, the mapping of structure and the location of seams and estimates of quantity have fallen into arrears.

Smoko Area, Blackball.—An area at the head of Iron Creek, Blackball, was prospected for opencast coal by shallow drilling and surface prospecting. This work proved the quantity of coal in the area to be insufficient to warrant development.

Coal Island, Roa.—A small block of shallow coal in the vicinity of Roa was prospected with a view to opencasting. The quantity of coal proved in this block was insufficient to justify the cost of making access.

Stony Batter and Peerless Creeks, Reefton.—Surface investigations were carried out in these areas relative to reports on behalf of the Crown in the Burke's Creek arbitration.

Flat Creek Area, Maruia.—Reconnaissance work in conjunction with the staff of the Geological Survey, Greymouth, was carried out in the coal measures, Flat Creek area. The coal-seam in this locality is thick and of high rank. The workable area is not great—the structure is complex and access is difficult.

Newton River.—Following reports of workable coal-seams in this district, extensive reconnaissances in collaboration with the Geological Survey were carried out in the coal measures between the Buller River and the headwaters of the Newton River.

Outcrops of coal occur over a very large area, but generally the seam is thin and/or contains dirt and stone bands. In a tributary of the Newton River a high-sulphur coal of excellent quality and of a workable thickness was located, but the area of thick coal is comparatively small. It is remote and difficult of access.

Kaitangata.—Shallow drilling was carried out in the Kaitangata district to prove the extent of the area available for opencasting at the Department's opencast mine at Wangaloa.

Prospecting, followed by shallow drilling, located and proved an additional area for opencasting in the Pivot Creek and Harvey Creek watersheds, Wangaloa Block.

The quantity of opencastable coal proved in this area is in excess of 500,000 tons.

Westport Coal Field.—The detailed investigation of the coalfield on the northern end of the Westport Stockton Plateau was continued. The prospecting of areas adjacent to the Stockton State Mine was completed, and examinations were made and areas mapped on the main escarpment from Mount Augustus to Mount Frederick.

Detailed examinations were made and reports prepared on the Mangatina area, Millerton Mine, and on the Plateau area, Denniston.

The following table shows the output of coal from the various coalfields and the comparative increases and decreases for the years 1947 and 1946, together with the approximate total production to date:—

Coalfield.	Output.		Increase.	Decrease.	Approximate Total Output up to 31st December, 1947.
	1947.	1946.			
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
North Auckland	64,368	77,773	..	13,405	6,606,320
Waikato (including Taranaki)	915,652	962,876	12,776	..	24,819,243
Nelson	7,387	6,891	496	..	765,801
Buller	549,151	535,174	13,977	..	30,046,794
Reefton	130,759	128,574	2,185	..	1,951,451
Grey	468,282	486,517	..	18,235	22,488,975
Canterbury	34,780	34,037	743	..	1,408,011
Otago	203,889	209,647	..	5,758	15,541,310
Southland	377,457	412,381	..	34,924	11,000,820
Totals	2,751,725	2,793,870	30,177	72,322	114,628,725