

Prospecting still further ahead of the proposed opencast on the block known as Baynes is now being done, and in general the work is well ahead of schedule.

Denniston.—Work on the Escarpment area has been carried out with two drills. Twenty holes were drilled with a total of 3,525 ft.

Access on this area is very difficult and considerable track making has been necessary, obviously slowing up progress.

One hole (bore 549) was drilled to a depth of 114 ft., and is to be used for lowering electric cable into the present underground mine.

Burke's Creek State Colliery, Reefton.—Bore R. 101, which was 310 ft. deep at the close of the previous year, was completed at 1,244 ft. R. 102 was completed at 1,090 ft., and R. 103 was completed at 1,010 ft.

Bore R. 104 was started during the year and was abandoned at 61 ft. because of extraordinary large boulders, and R. 104A was commenced. This bore ran into an unconformity and it was necessary to case off the loose sand with coupled casing, but so many difficulties were encountered that the hole had to be abandoned also.

The total feet drilled for the year was 3,501 ft.

Liverpool Colliery.—A bore (No. 336) was drilled down from the Morgan Seam in the above colliery and struck the sub Morgan Seam. Further bores are now necessary to determine the extent of this seam. Bore 336 was completed at 165 ft.

Dobson Colliery.—Drilling started in the previous year was carried further by the completion of four bores, Nos. 321, 322, 323, 324, to a total depth of 750 ft. Bore 321 was standing at a depth of 110 ft. at the commencement, thus 640 ft. were drilled during the year. These bores were to determine the throw of a fault met in the mine.

Strongman Colliery.—Eleven bores totalling 987 ft. were drilled during the year to determine fault throws. This work is continuously necessary in this mine.

Tyneside.—Bore 337 was commenced near the end of the year and is now standing at 170 ft. It is anticipated that this bore will be drilled to 550 ft. to ascertain the thickness of coal near a natural boundary to which the old Tyneside Mine could be worked when dewatered. This project affects the life of the Wallsend Mine.

Mount Davy.—This most important drilling on the slopes of Mount Davy, near Rewanui, has been carried a year further with almost the completion of a bore record in depth for the district, and in which very encouraging results were obtained. The bore at the end of the year under review stands at a depth of 2,482 ft., and it is expected that basement could be reached with very little more drilling.

Although the Morgan Seam, the main one in the Rewanui measures, was not as good as was expected, the sub Morgan was 15 ft. thick.

Because of climatic conditions on the slopes of the mountain and at the camp-site, fast drilling is almost impossible. Some days the men are not able to reach the drill because of flooded creeks, and on other occasions the intense coldness is uncomfortable in the extreme. Every endeavour has been made to work the drill two shifts a day when possible with the object of speeding up the work. All the shifting of stores and equipment is done by aerial systems installed by the drill crews.

Daily radio communication is maintained with the base camp, and if at all possible when the drill is shifted to the next site living quarters will be installed right at the drill-site and they too will be connected to the office by radio.

There have been remarkably few accidents on this job, considering the conditions. Every precaution is being taken to minimize the accident possibility.

Northern District

Kimihia.—In January four bores totalling 211 ft. were drilled on the Kimihia Extended area to determine the hardness of the fireclay and its ability to carry the large 5-cubic-yard shovel.