

The Buller Coalfield of New Zealand

The unique exhibit is a combination of Postal History, Coal Mining and Industrial History blended to present a coherent study of the Buller Coalfield covering coal-mining areas - the settlements and townships, coal companies and coal transport activity. A wide range of materials have been used in the exhibit - postal markings, postal history items, picture postcards, postal stationery cards, maps, stamp booklets, telegram, invoices and receipts, newspaper cuttings, advertisements and photographs. Important items are highlighted.

The **Buller Coalfield** lies to the north of Westport on the West Coast of the South Island of New Zealand. It is part of the **Western Region of Coal Reserves**. The coal measures cover an area of about 140 square miles bounded in the East by the Glasgow and Mt William faults and in West by the Kongahu or Lower Buller Fault.

The **Buller or Rochfort Coalfield**, to give it its original name, was the first coalfield in New Zealand to be surveyed and estimated with reasonable accuracy.

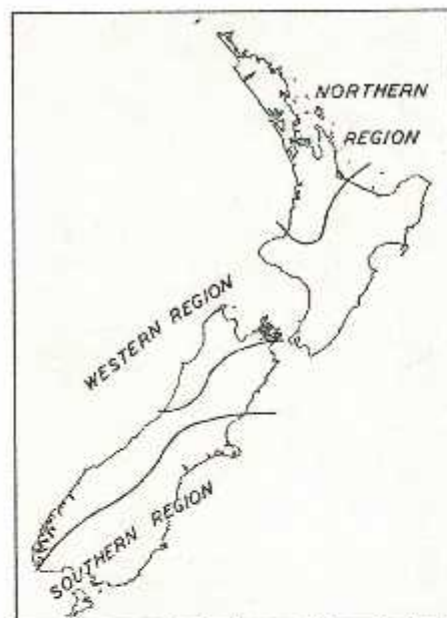
The **Surveys** were carried out by John Rochfort & Party in August 1859; Haast & Burnett in July 1860; Burnett and Rochfort in November 1862 and Hector in 1872. The most recent estimate from the Mines Statement is a reserve of **63,000,000 tons**.

The Buller Coalfield is the most important source of **bituminous coal** and was the largest coal producer in the Country until 1940 with a total of over **47,000,000 tons** being produced. The major mines were Denniston, Millerton and Stockton. The coal has been transported down from the Plateau, then by rail, with almost all of the production being shipped from the Port at Westport.

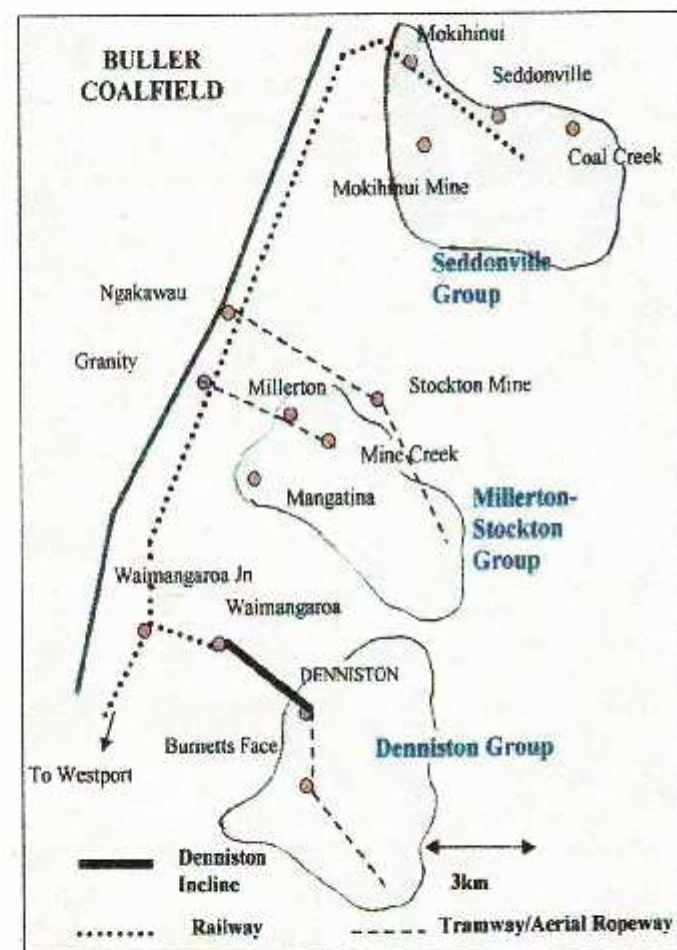
There are three Geographical Groups that have been commercially mined: Denniston; Millerton - Stockton; Mokihinui - Seddonville.

The Exhibit is presented in sections:

- Westport - Mokihinui Railway
- Westport Harbour
- Westport Coal Company
- The Denniston Group
- The Millerton - Stockton Group
- The Mokihinui - Seddonville Group
- Preserving the History



From Economic Geology of New Zealand, Chapter 18 Figure 1



General Coal-Related References [those for the 3 coal areas are listed there]

- "Appendices to Journals of House of Representatives" 1876-1947
- "Westport - Struggle for Survival" Bruce MacDonald, 1973
- "Economic Geology of New Zealand" G J Williams 1974
- "Ghost Towns of New Zealand" David McGill, 1980
- "Coal, Class & Community" Len Richardson, 1995
- "Great Expectations, The Colonisation of Buller" Carolyn Hawes, 2004

Philatelic and Related References

- "Postage Stamps of New Zealand, Volume III" 1955
- "New Zealand Post Offices" R M Startup, 1977
- "New Zealand Cancellations" A R Marshall, 1981
- "New Zealand Postal Stationery Catalogue" R D Samuel, 1983
- "New Zealand Post Offices Cancellation & Postmark Guide" R Wooders, 1998
- "Wish you were here" NZ Postcard Society, 2004

Westport - Mokihinui Railway - Mt Rochfort Railway

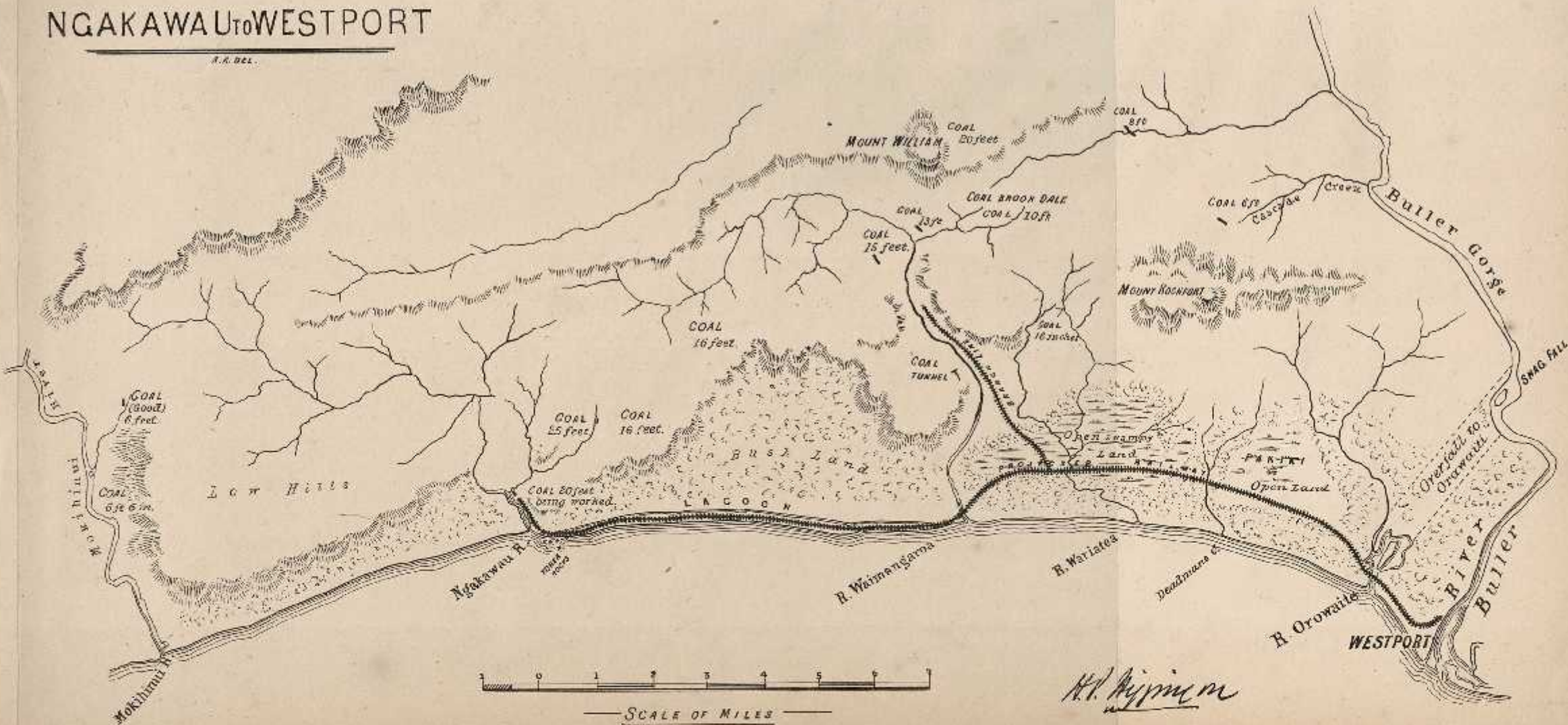
The development of the Buller Coalfield depended on three major infrastructure engineering challenges which had to be managed simultaneously and were inter-dependent. **One:** getting the coal from the Mines down from the plateau; **Two:** transporting the coal to Westport for shipping; **Three:** the development of wharves and coal handling facilities. **The development of the railway was the crucial link.**

During 1862, James Burnett and party had made detailed surveys of the coal measures at Burnetts face and Coalbrookdale. In his report, published in the *Nelson Examiner* 10 December 1862 he discussed ways and means of transporting the coal to ship's side at Westport. He advocated an easily built railway from Westport to the Whareatea River [South of Waimangaroa Rover] and suggested a self-acting incline as the best means of transporting the coal down from the mines.

In January 1872, James Hector and Arthur Dobson investigated the geology of the Mt Rochfort Coalfield. A few weeks later the Premier, William Fox, visited the same coalfield. The Public Works Statement for 1872 authorised **Mr H P Higginson**, Government engineer at Westport, to prepare a report on transport options for Ngakawau Coal. The **Higginson report** was presented as part of the Public Works statement for 1873 along with his drawings, dated **January 1, 1873.**

PLAN SHEWING
Proposed Railway
FROM
NGAKAWAU TO WESTPORT

No. 2.



On 19 March 1873 a **Buller Coal and Railway Committee** was formed. This led a delegation to Wellington for discussions on the Mount Rochfort Coal Mine Railway and the Buller River Protective Works. The Westport Times of August 8, 1873 calls for tender for the Westport to Ngakawau Railway.

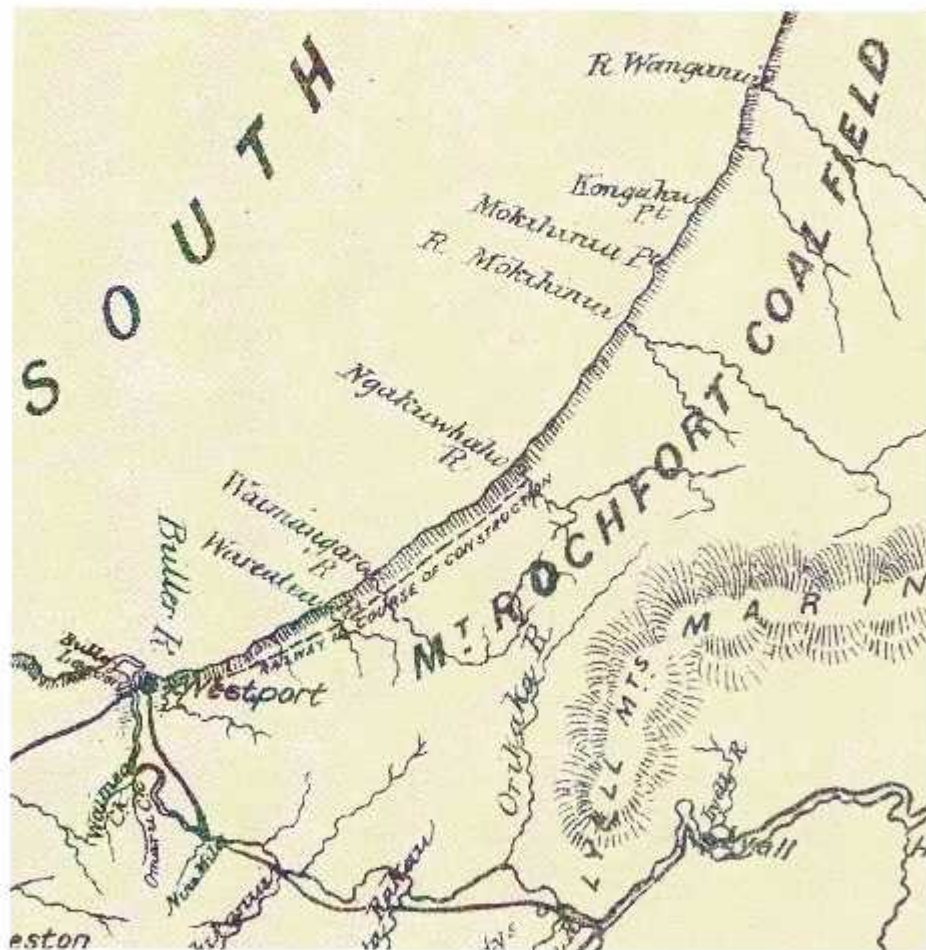
By January 10, 1874 equipment and materials were on order in England through the Colony's Agent-General, under the title of **Mount Rochfort Railway**. Further orders followed in September 1874. railway sleepers were ordered locally.

The Survey from the Port to the Fairdown quarries started March 3rd and from April this extended from Waimangaroa north to Ngakawau and south.

The tender for the **Westport-Fairdown** section was let. This section opened **December 1875**. The Fairdown - Waimangaroa section tender was let in February 1875 and completed **August 5, 1876**. The 1 mile line to the Wellington Company Mine was opened by **September 1877**. This allowed coal from both the **Koranui** and **Wellington** Mines to be sent by rail to the Port.

The extension to Conn's Creek by the Westport Colliery Company in **1879** and the completion of the Incline allowed coal from the Denniston mines **Banbury**, **Coalbrookdale**, **Ironbridge**, **Whareatea** etc to be delivered to Westport from mid-April 1880.

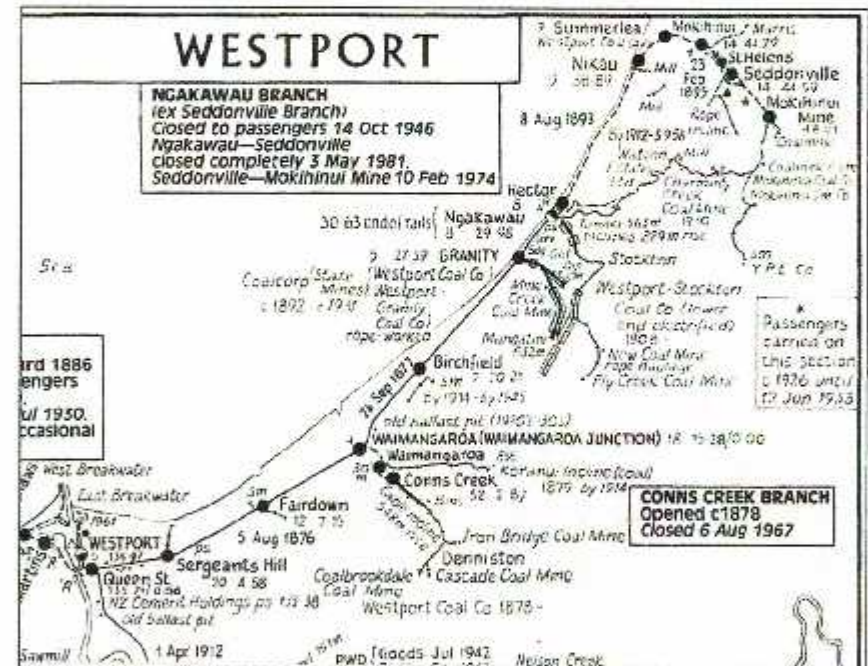
The line was opened to **Ngakawau** September 26, 1877 and to **Mokihinui** August 8, 1893, to **Seddonville** February 2, 1895 and **Mokihinui Mine** July 3, 1903.



Scan of part of Wise's **Map of the Province of Nelson**, one of 39 maps and plans that accompanied Wise's New Zealand Directory published April 1875.

This shows the **Mt Rochfort Coal Field** and "**Railway in Course of Construction**" - Construction had just started when the map was printed. [Exhibitor has the original]

The Abolition of Provinces Act of 1875 took effect November 1876.



Part Scan from the NZ Railway Observer article "**The West Coast Coal Route**" by Graeme Carter
[Exhibitor has the original]

The Mokihinui - Westport Railway is estimated to have transported over 40,000,000 tons of coal to the wharves at Westport.

The line closed beyond Ngakawau in 1981 and is now Coal trains only from the bins at Ngakawau.

Westport Harbour - Coal Shipping

James Burnett, in his 1862 Report on the Buller Coalfields, stated that a railway line and port were required for the coalfield to be exploited. The mouth of the Buller River where the settlement of Westport was developing was the best option but some coal had been shipped out of the Mokihinui and Ngakawau Rivers in the 1860s.

Westport was declared as a **Port of Entry** in **January 1867** by Governor George Grey under the Custom Regulation Act of 1858 and the first wharf was under construction but was swept away in sever flood in November. It was replaced in **1870** but when the township was moved because of regular flooding of the Buller River, a new wharf was built in **1874**. The private wharves were sufficient for local businesses and importing cargo and cattle but for the export of coal a more substantial network of wharves was required, along with more sophisticated loading and storage methods. The discovery of good seams of Coal prompted the Provincial Government to start on the Mt Rochfort Railway and the necessary infrastructure at Westport wharves with a new wharf being completed in **1877**.

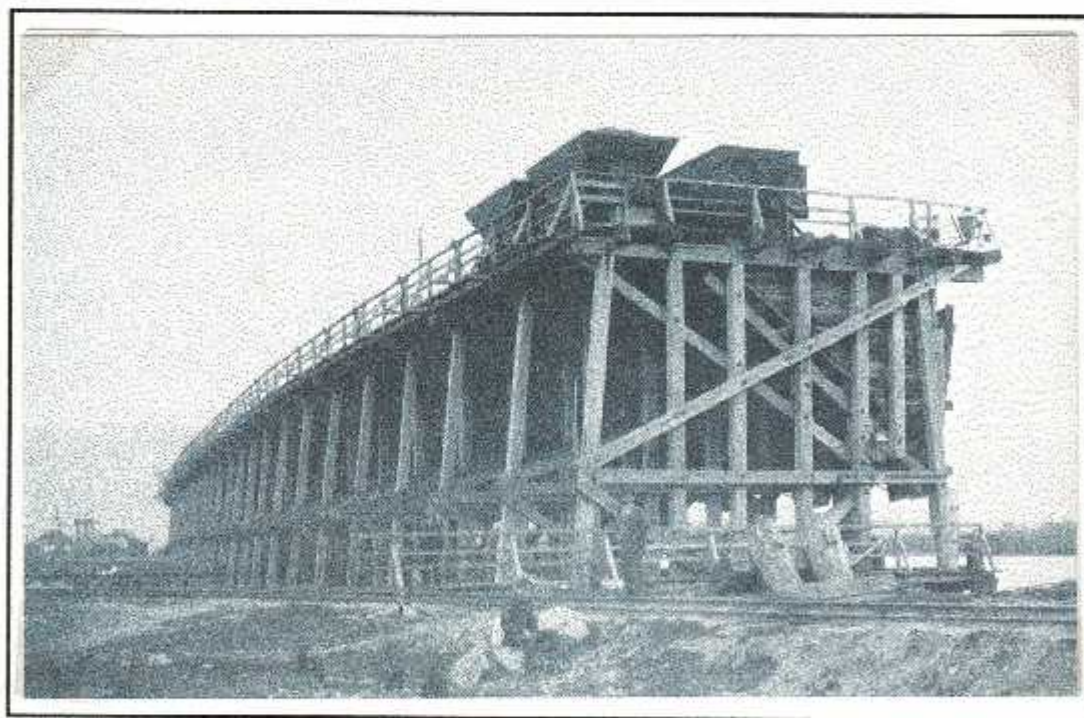
The first recorded shipment of coal from Westport was **April, 19, 1873**. The newspaper of the time did not identify the sailing vessel. Coal was from the **Wellington Mine** at Waimangaroa and was brought down by pack horse and dray. It would have loaded by hand. The first wagons of coal down the Mt Rochfort Railway was in **May 1877** from the **Koranui Mine** and would have been loaded by hand and shovel as the Coal Staiths were not completed.

Coal Staiths:

These were part of the Westport Railway Station Contract that was let **June 15, 1876** "... station works including a viaduct, coal staiths, wharves .." The work was to be completed by **March 13, 1878** but a reference states that the first 1150 feet were constructed by 1880. They were extended in 1893 and their use ceased in 1902.

Saturday last was a Red Letter day in the annals of Westport. The first coal laden sailing craft left the port, and the Town of Westport was Gazetted a Municipality. Two small events perhaps in the estimation of some, but presaging events of greater moment in the not distant future.

Westport Times April 22, 1873



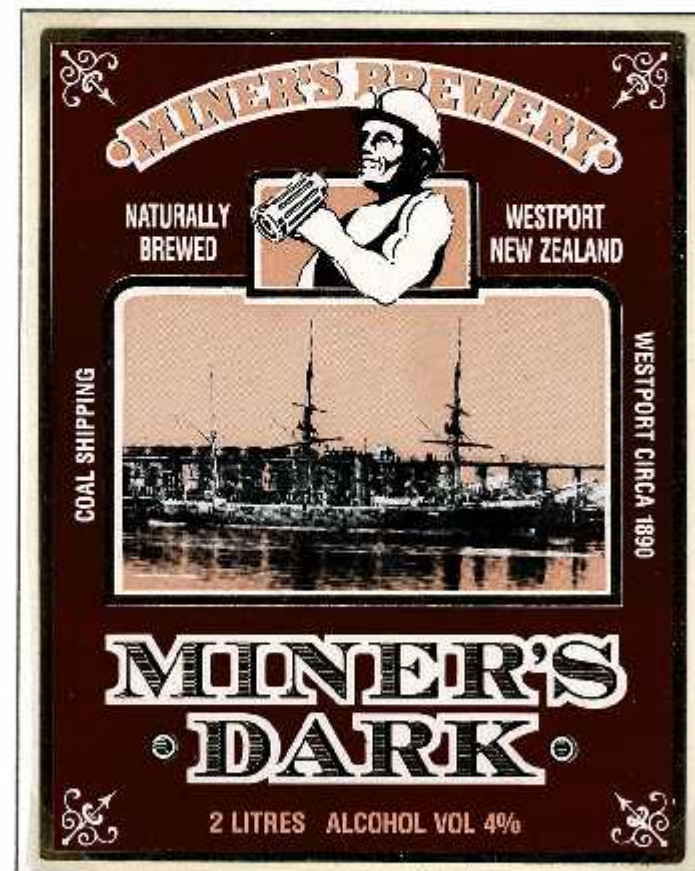
Tyree photo print c 1895 [Turnbull Library]

The staiths consisted of a high trestlework along the waterfront containing bins with two sets of railway tracks on the top. The coal wagons were discharged through the bottom and the coal would go down steel chutes which were lowered into the ship's hold. Coal could be stored in the bins for later loading.

In 1893, the staiths were extended and were capable of storing 2000 tons of coal in 36 bins and capable of loading 250-300 tons per hour.

The problem with this method of loading was that the coal, coming from a height, often broke up and was compressed in the hold making unloading difficult.

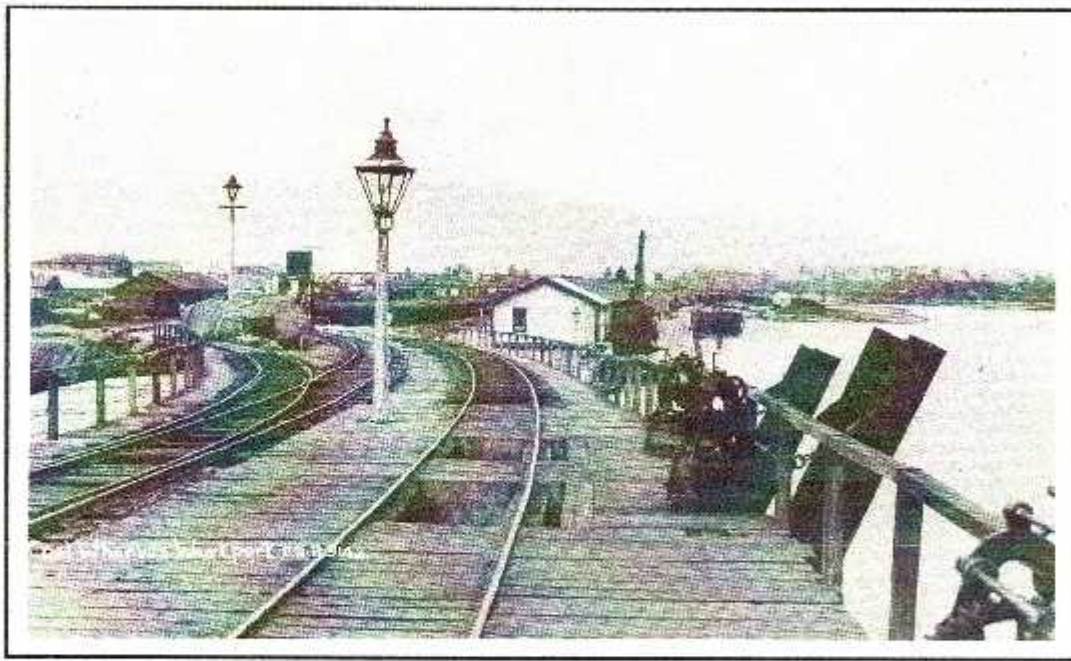
Replaced by steam cranes and use discontinued in 1902. They were dismantled from 1916 for final part of the crane wharf.



Miner's Dark" beer label with
"Coal Shipping Westport circa 1890"

Shows the staiths with coal wagons lined up.

This photograph is featured in Cyclopedia of New Zealand and reproduced in "Coaling from the Clouds" P18.



"Coal Wharves Westport" F.G.Radcliffe postcard
[image Turnbull Library].

Image is from a photograph taken from the coal staiths. It shows the "hopper holes" and the winches for lowering the steel chutes to the ship's hold for loading coal.

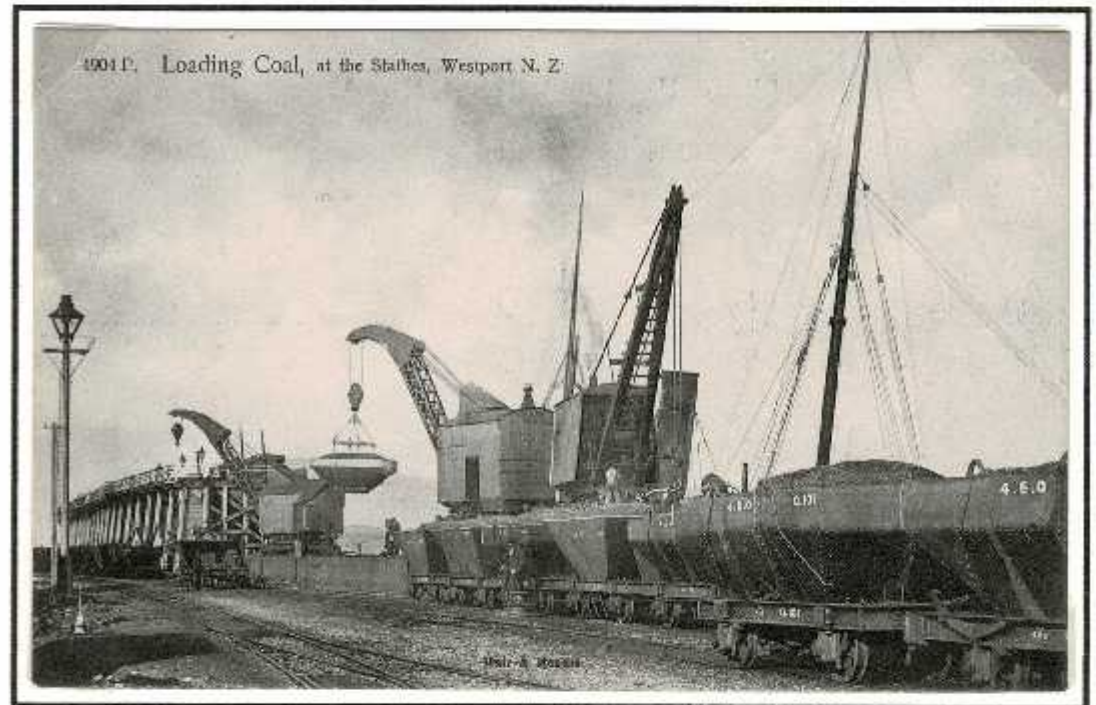
"Loading Coal, at the Staiths, Westport N.Z.

Issued by **Muir & Moodie**, Dunedin N.Z. from their Copyright Series of Views. "Made in Germany" Divided back after 1907].

View shows the **Coal Staiths** at left without coal wagons and first part of the **Crane Wharf** with 3 steam cranes, one of which is lifting a "Q" hopper while the bogies remain on the railway track.

The first steam crane [1902] is at right [Photo after 1909 when 3rd crane added.]

The Coal Staiths ceased being used from 1902 following the installation of the steam cranes



A tender was called for the construction of a **Crane Wharf** by the Westport Harbor Board, **September 3, 1896.**

During 1897-98, this Crane Wharf, 1000 feet long, was constructed it was extended in 1899 and again in 1916.

The First **steam crane** was installed in **1902** and use of Staiths discontinued. In **1907** a Second steam 20-ton crane installed [ordered from England August 17, 1907]. The Third steam 20-ton crane arrived in Wellington in May **1909** and was installed and operational in June. These were replaced by 2 electric 15-ton cranes in 1930 which were in use until 1971



WESTPORT HARBOR BOARD.

WRITTEN TENDERS addressed to the Chairman will be received until **NOON of MONDAY, 12th OCTOBER, 1896,** for the **CONSTRUCTION of a CRANE WHARF.**

Plans and Specifications are on view at this Office, and at the Offices of the Harbor Boards' Wellington and Greymouth.

The lowest or any tender may not necessarily be accepted.

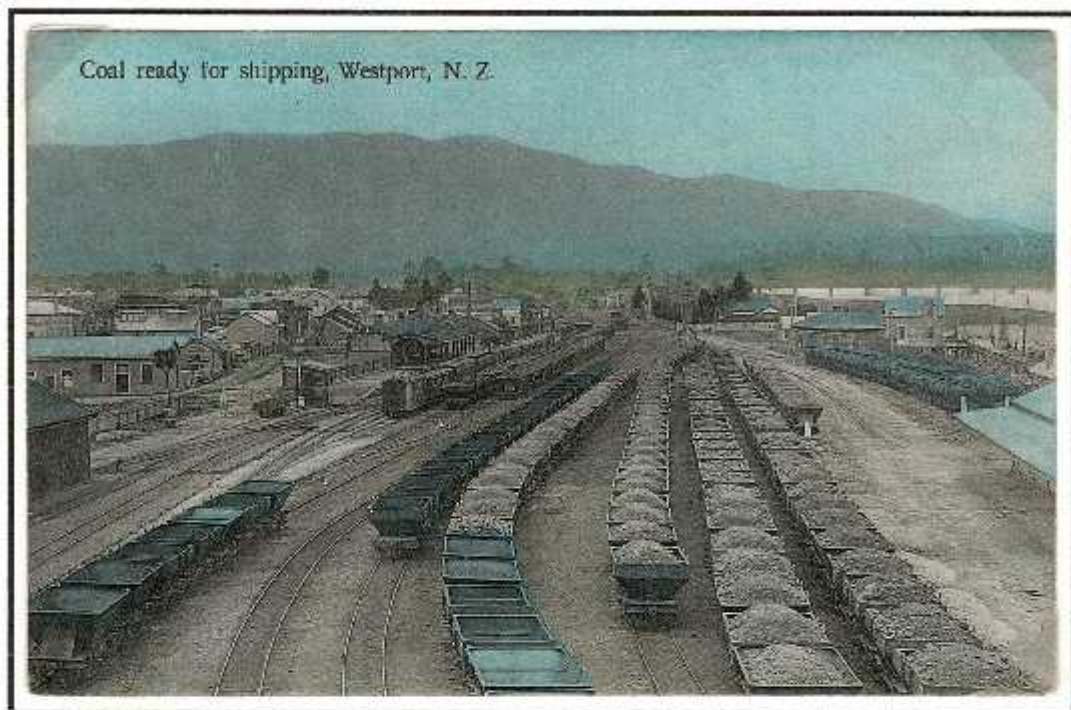
CHAS. N. GREENLAND,
Secretary.

Harbor Board Office,
Westport, 3rd Sept., 1896.

The new 20-ton crane for the Westport Harbour Board for use on the crane wharf, arrived at Wellington last week by the Tainui. It is a duplicate of the last big crane. With the new crane mounted on the wharf, there should be no difficulty in coping with the present coal-loading demands.

West Coast Times May 31, 1909

Virtually the total production from the Buller Coalfield - over 30,000,000 tons to 1925 - was exported through the Westport Coal Port. This represented about one-third of the New Zealand production. Coal was sent down the Government railway from the Mines at Seddonville, Millerton, Denniston etc to the wharves where it was loaded on the colliers of the Union Steamship Company. The railway could handle 30,000 tons a week. In 1885, the total shipped was 85,000 tons, in 1897 298,000 tons, **1908 [peak year] 718,000 tons**, 1926 637,000 tons, 1941 487,000 tons. The marshalling yards at Westport were large.



"Coal ready for shipping, Westport N.Z."

No photographer or printer, divided back,
Phototyped in Saxony.

View is from the **Crane Wharf** back towards the
Buller Bridge. Railway station at left.

The rakes of loaded **"Q" Class hopper wagons** await
shipping while the empty Q wagons are waiting to
head north for further load of coal.

This is reproduced in the June-July Railway Observer
but wrongly described as "in the early 1920's" as I
record a usage in 1910 from Westport.

1890 Maritime Strike "Great Coal Strike"

Between **August and November 1890**, the workers in coal mines and on the wharves on the Coast were on strike. This was called by the Maritime Council in a dispute over labour with the Union Steamship Company which had a virtual monopoly on coal shipping as well as ownership in some of the mines. The outcome was a Government victory with the Union being humiliated by the use of 'free labour' and 'special constables' to replaced the striking workers.

Coal Advice Post Cards - these were used by Coal Companies and shipping agents

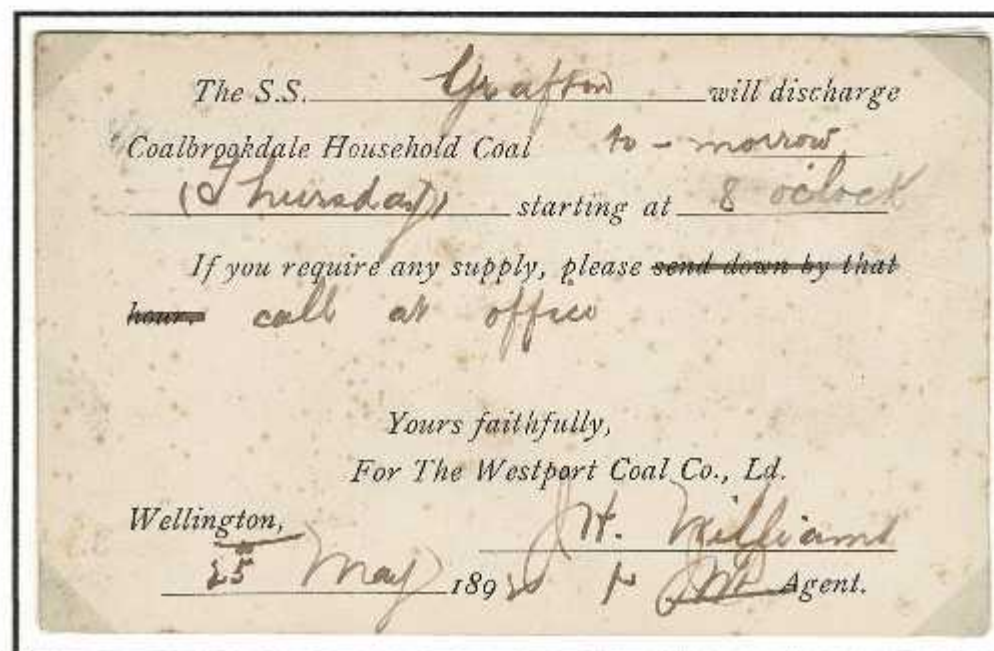


Westport
"A" Class
1 AU 90



1d Blue Post Card [1890] cancelled Wellington 25 MY 92

Coalbrookdale Household Coal from **Westport Coal Company** mines above **Denniston**, down the **Denniston Incline**, then by rail to **Westport Wharf** and loaded on the Union Steam Ship Company's **SS Grafton**, a 548 ton collier, to Wellington Wharves for discharge **"to-morrow [Thursday]"** starting at **"8 o'clock"**.



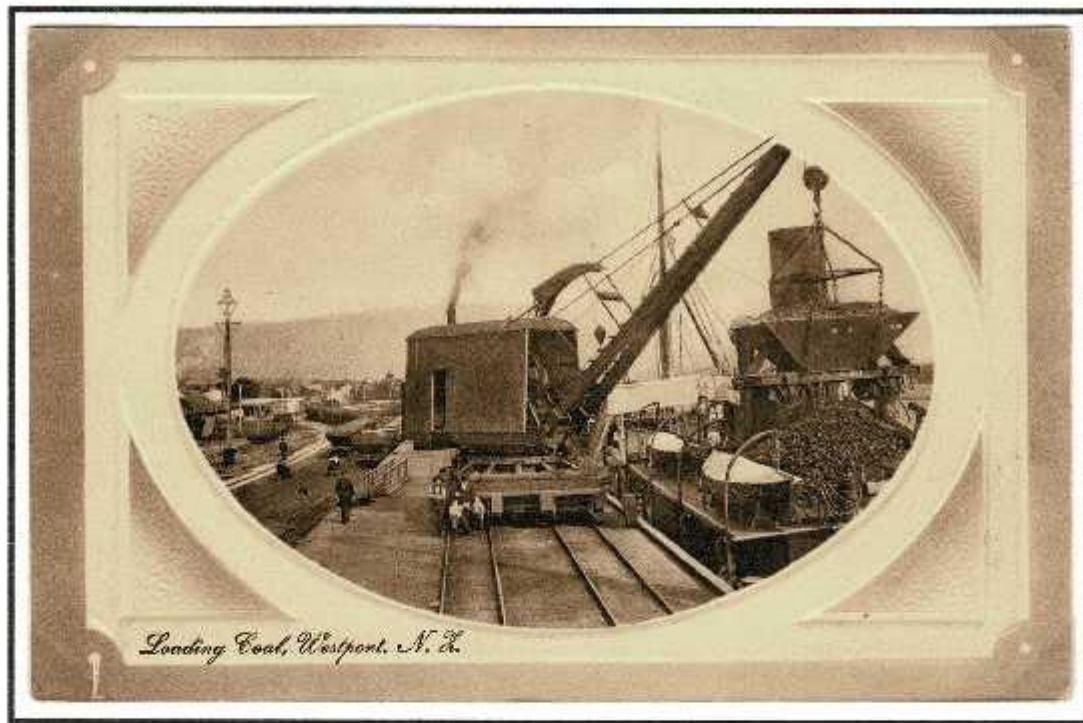
"Loading Coal, Westport. N.Z."

Divided back "M. H. Palmer Series. Printed in Saxony"

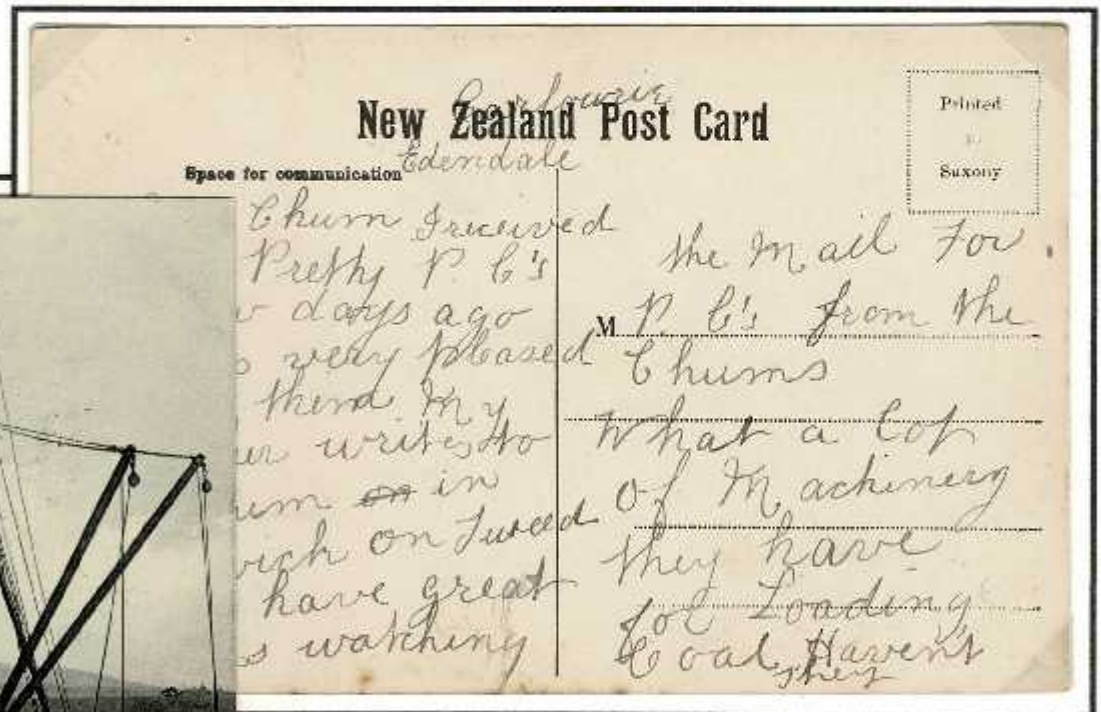
View shows the **first steam crane** hoisting an **"L" Class wagon** of coal ready to dump it on the moored steamer. The top of the second or third steam crane can be seen above the cab.

"L" Class wagons are 4-wheeled high sided railway wagons introduced in 1890 - the hoppers were attached to the bogies and the whole was hoisted then the bottom was released and coal dropped. Largely replaced by "Q" Wagons by 1900.

Mrs M H Palmer was a store keeper in **Reefton** adjacent to **William Sherlock** a "well-known photographer" and advertised postcards in 1908 for sale. It is probable these are Sherlock's work. He died in September 1910.



Loading Coal, Westport. N.Z.



New Zealand Post Card

Space for communication

Printed

in

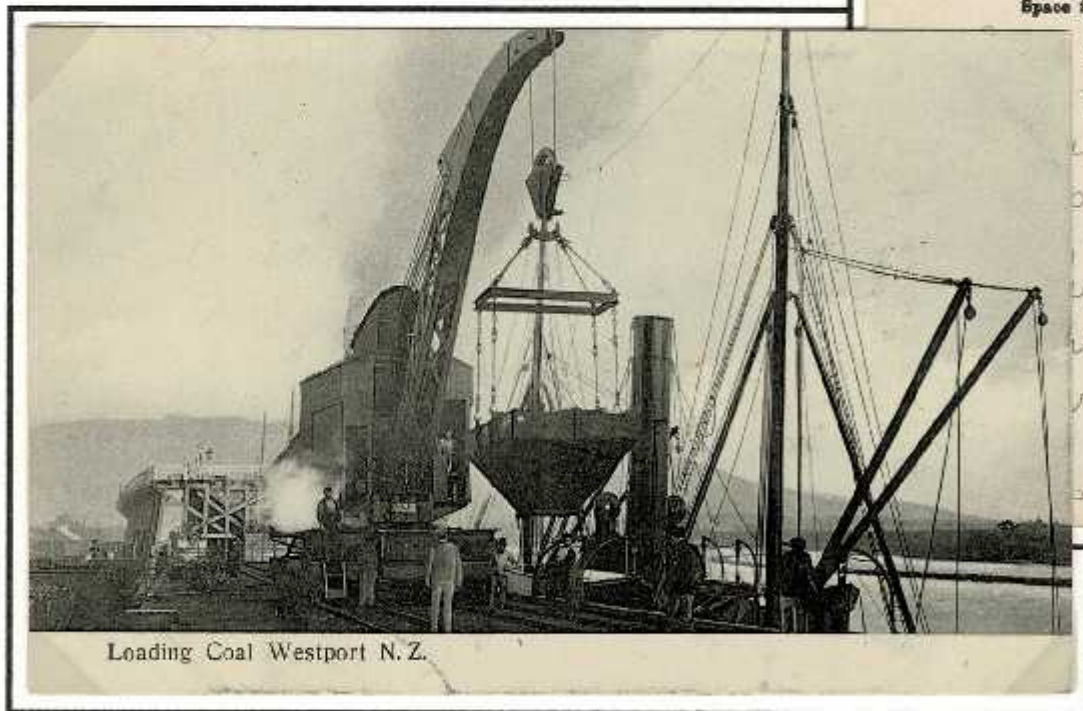
Saxony

*Churn received
Pretty P. G's
5 days ago
so very pleased
third. My
our writes to
um in
rich on Tweed
have great
s watching*

*the mail for
M. P. G's from the
Churns
what a lot
of machinery
they have
for loading
coal haven't they*

Written to Edendale, message in part..

"What a lot of machinery they have for loading coal haven't they"



Loading Coal Westport N.Z.

"Loading Coal, Westport N.Z." - Divided back postcard, "Printed in Saxony, Issued by G Parkhouse"

View is of the Crane Wharf with one of the 20-ton steam cranes hoisting a "Q" Class hopper ready to discharge its 8 tons of coal onto the collier alongside. The Coal Stairths are seen at left and an empty rake of wagons at extreme left

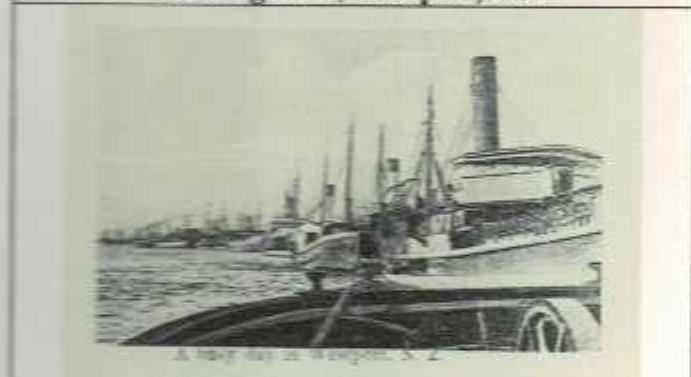
"Q" Class railway wagons were introduced in the 1890's and were an improvement over the "L" class for loading coal because the hopper was able to be detached from the bogies making less weight for the cranes to lift. The bottom section was released by a bolt mechanism by workers on the ship.

Greetings from WESTPORT Pictorial Post Card Album of Westport. Phototyped in Saxony, undivided back
 Pullout of 12 views. No photographer or publisher detailed but views identical to postcards issued by G. Parkhouse, Westport

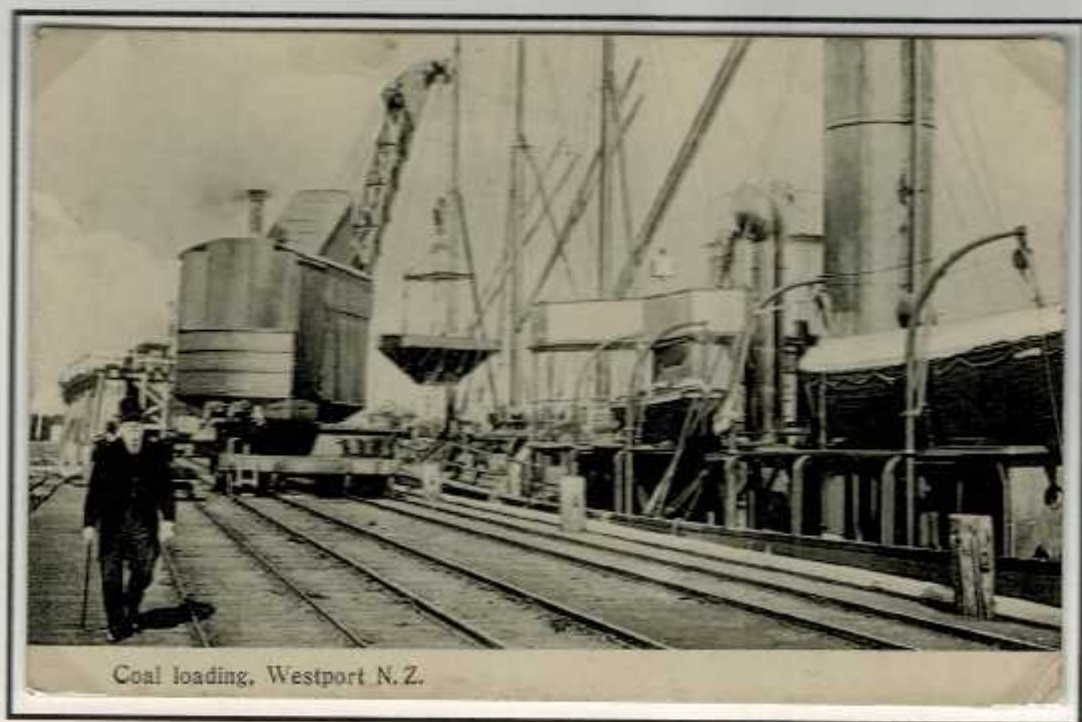
Photograph dated October 1907 taken from the stern of tug "Mana" [bought in 1895] with Westport Harbour Board's suction dredge "Rubi Seddon" [bought in February 1904] in the foreground



Loading Coal, Westport, N.Z.

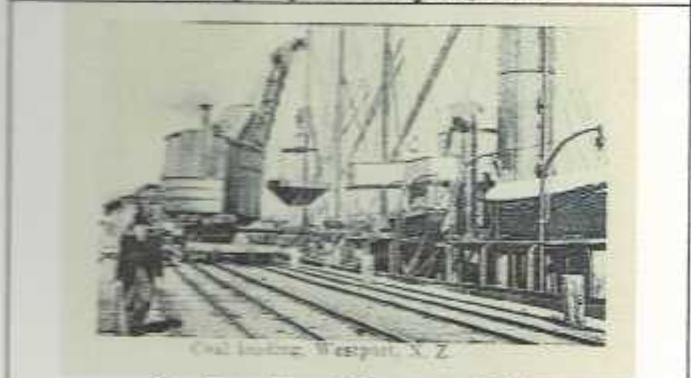


A Busy day in Westport, N.Z.



Coal loading, Westport N.Z.

"Coal loading, Westport, N.Z." "Issued by G Parkhouse"
 Divided back, Printed in Saxony
 The ship is the "Mercedes" loading coal for the British Admiralty



Coal loading, Westport, N.Z.

Other Views:

- Fern Arch Buller Road
- Incline Denniston Colliery
- Buller Gorge, Westport N.Z.
- Lighthouse Cape Foulwind N.Z.
- Punts, Buller Road, Westport N.Z.
- Buller Road, Westport N.Z.
- Inangahua Bridge, Buller Gorge N.Z.
- Tramline - Millerton Colliery, N.Z.
- Hawks Crag, Buller River

¹The "*SS Mercedes*" loading coal for China - for the **British Admiralty Coaling Station in Hong Kong**. She departed **July 17, 1902** with **3866 tons of coal plus 500 tons of bunkers**. The **Westport Coal Company** has a contract with the British Admiralty to supply **Denniston Coalbrookdale Coal**.

WESTPORT, July 13

The Westport Coal Co's output last week was 12,838 tons 4 cwt.

The Admiralty collier *Mercedes* arrived this afternoon to load coal for Hong Kong. With a good bar and favourable weather the prospects for dispatch of a record cargo are good.

Westport Times July 13, 1902



"Loading Coal for China"

Divided back

J H Greenwood, Westport N.Z.

Printed in Germany

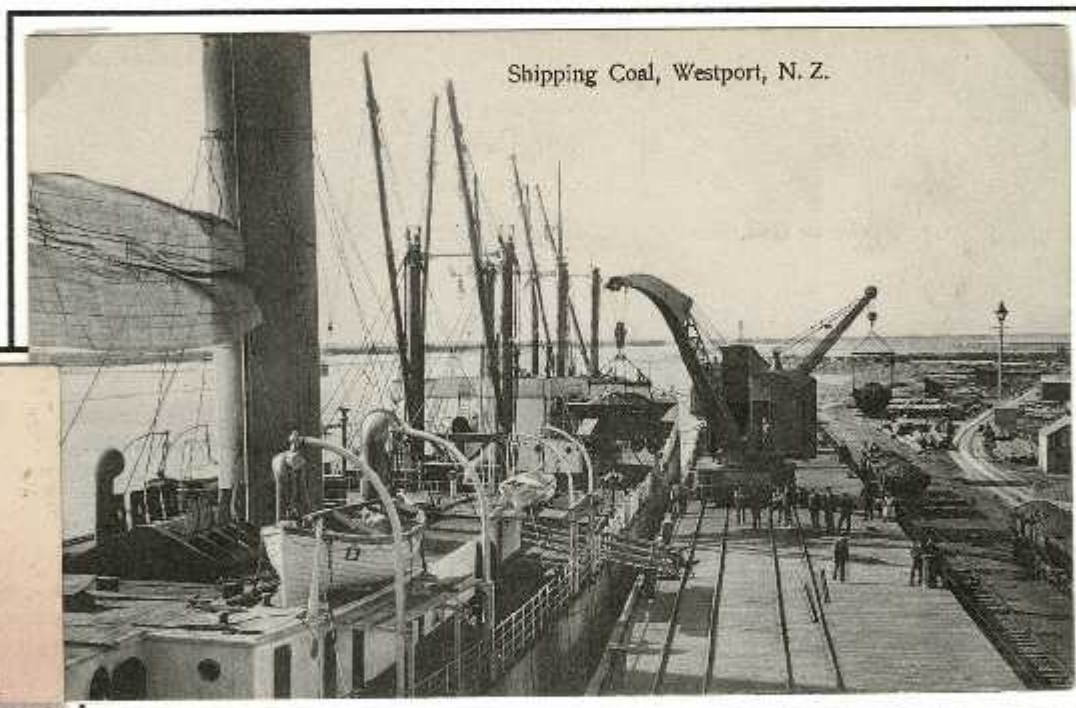
Message: "*Loading coal at Crane Wharf Westport.*"

Posted Westport "F" Class 3 MR 10
½ d postage [Correct 1907-1915]

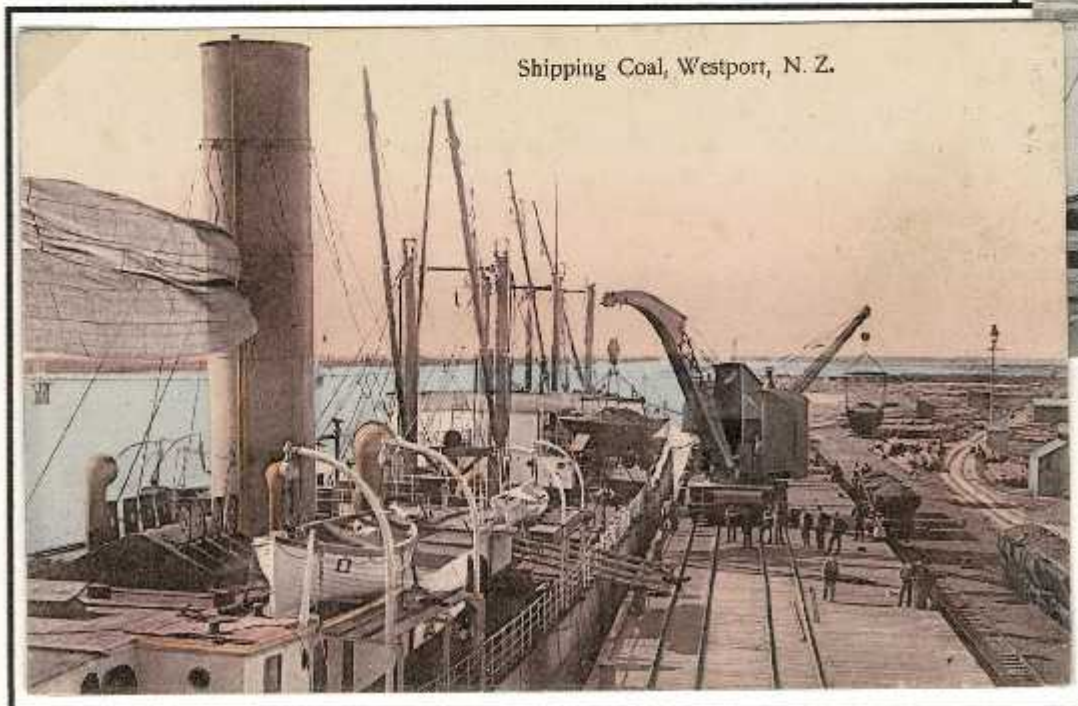
J H Greenwood was the Mayor of Westport, re-elected for a 5th time in 1911

The view shows the "*SS Mercedes*" at the Crane Wharf with a 20-ton steam crane [the second crane 1907] loading an "**L**" Class wagon [hopper and bogies] while the first steam crane [1902], behind, is hoisting the hopper from a "**Q**" Class wagon.

It shows the lower end of the Crane wharf still under construction with building materials beside the railway tracks.



Shipping Coal, Westport, N. Z.



"Shipping Coal, Westport, N.Z."

Divided back. Issued by **G Parkhouse, Westport**. Printed in Saxony.

Identical images with different titles, photographer unrecorded, on postcards issued by different stationers - **J H Greenwood** and **G Parkhouse** - in Westport

The **Union Steamship Company** and the **Westport Coal Company** had a virtual monopoly on coal exports from Westport through their ownership of the Denniston and Millerton Mines. The USSCo had a fleet of about 30 colliers each of which could carry a few hundred tons. The railway could manage 30,000 tons a week from these mines so the railway yards and Port was always very busy.

The view shows the first steam crane lifting a hopper from a "Q" Class wagon with a 20-ton crane behind ready to be attached.

The collier appears to have the flag of the Union Steamship Company.

Vessels tied up at the Crane wharf usually had the yards tilted down to allow the crane better access to the holds.



**Shipping at Wharves
Loading Coal,
Westport N.Z.
4886 P**

Divided back
Printed in Saxony

**Muir & Moodie New
West Coast Series**

**Issued by Muir &
Moodie Dunedin N Z
from their Copyright
Series of Views**



Details card centre left

This shows a **trolley** on tracks - this was used, by Mr Hale, the signalman for the Westport harbour Board [1894-1913] at the Eastern Tip Head who was towed by his dog late in each day to light the signal lamps



Details card centre right

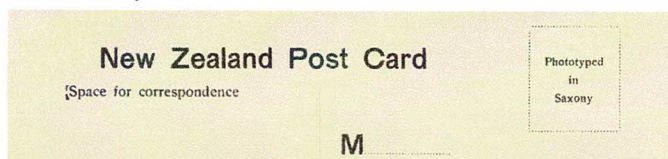
Collier flying the **flag** of the Union Steamship Company

"Westport. F.G.R 6510" Real Photograph postcard. Divided back with imprint of **Frank Duncan Auckland**
View is looking south along the tracks for the steam cranes with one on the centre. The cranes were moved by shunting engines.

Radcliffe started issuing postcards from 1909. His printed ones were contracted to Tanner Bros. From 1915 he issued small numbers of his photographs under the Frank Duncan stamp. This card is number 6510 - one of the highest number known.

Because coal-mining was of such importance to the West Coast, related views are included in postcard folders and postcard pullouts.

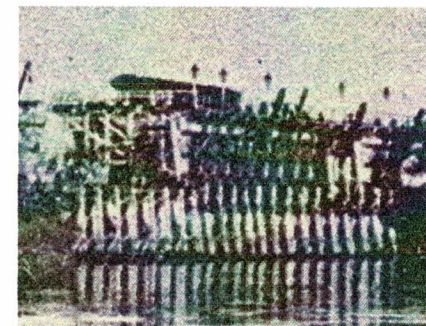
Westport Harbour [showing the 1902 Steam crane and colliers] from the postcard booklet "24 beautiful views of Westland" This has glassine interleaving but has no publisher or photographer attributions. Each card is divided back and has "Phototyped in Saxony" where the postage stamp would be placed. The views are very similar to other postcards issued by G Parkhouse and can be attributed with some confidence.



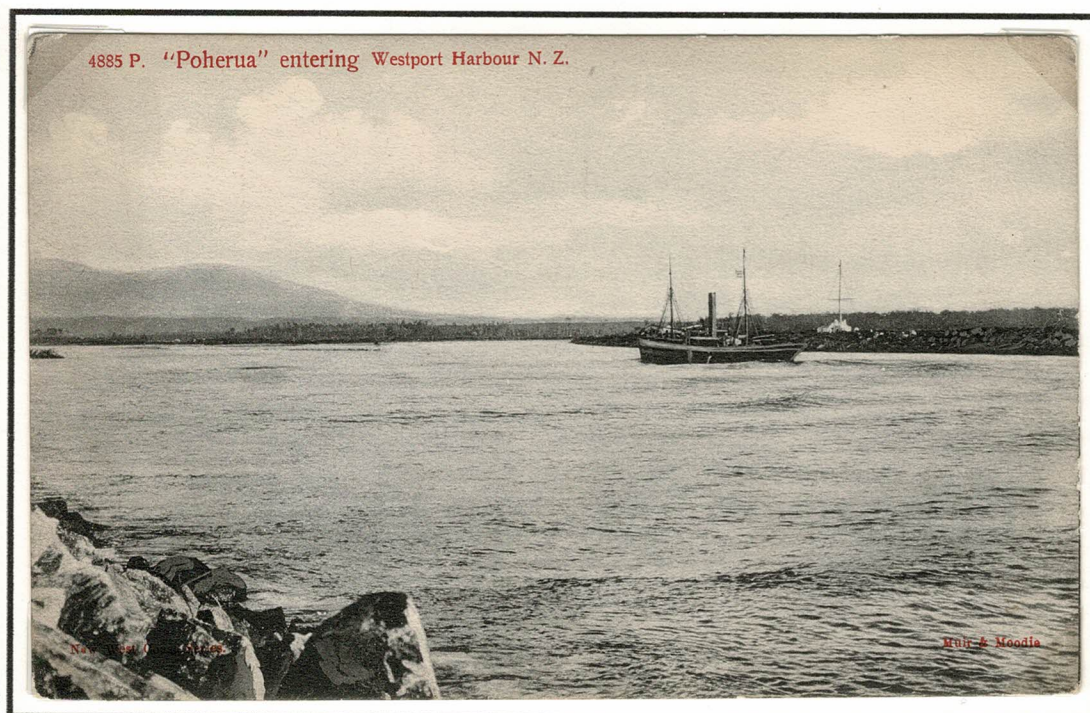
Postcard details
1902 steam crane



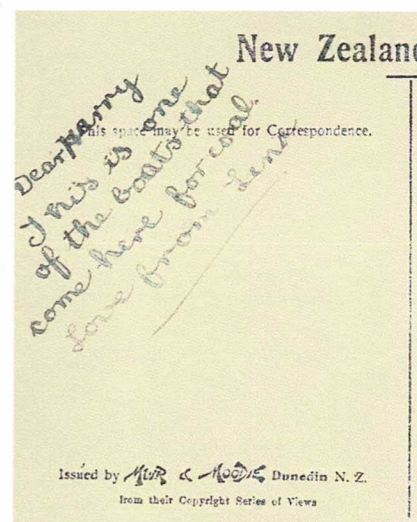
Westport Harbour.



Postcard detail
Coal Staiths



"Poherua" entering Westport Harbour N.Z." 4885 P
Issued by Muir & Moodie from their Copyright Series of Views.

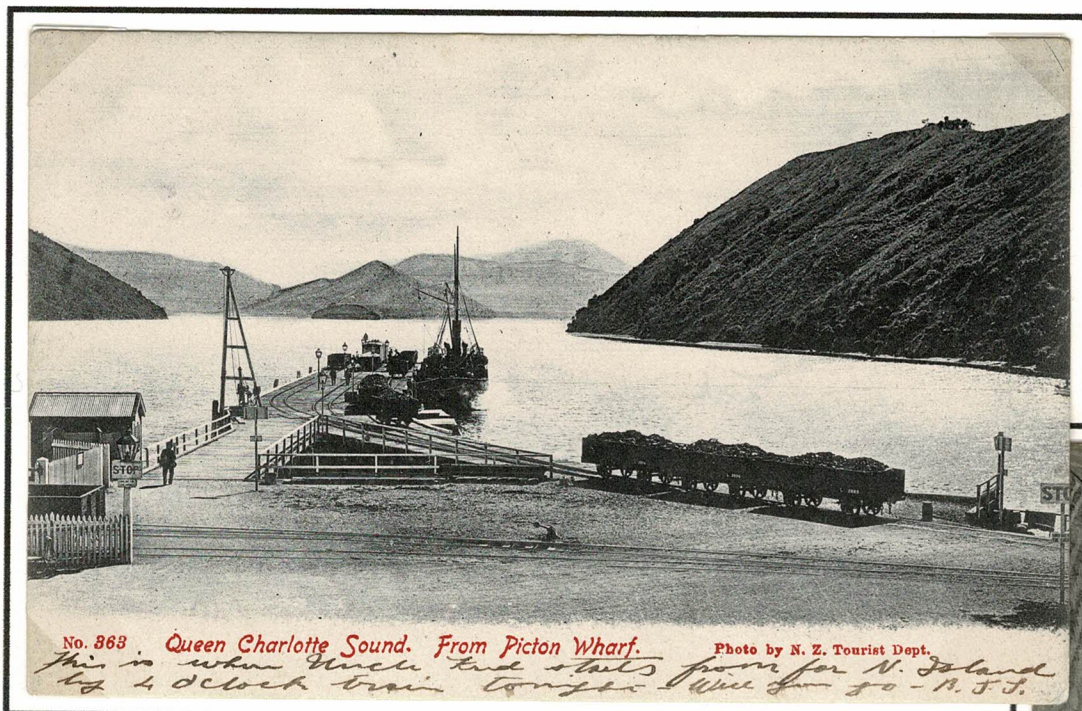


"This is one of the boats that
come here for coal."

The Union S.S. Company's new cargo-steamer Poherua, built for the coal trade, has just left Westport with her first load of coals for Port Pirie (S.A.). She arrived at Westport on the 2nd inst. from England, via Western Australia. She is a new vessel of 749 tons, having been launched about January last at Middlesborough. She is constructed entirely of iron and steel. Her engines are triple expansion, of 650-horse power. She was laid up for about six months, and purchased by the Union Company for the West Coast coal trade.
Auckland Star December 29, 1890

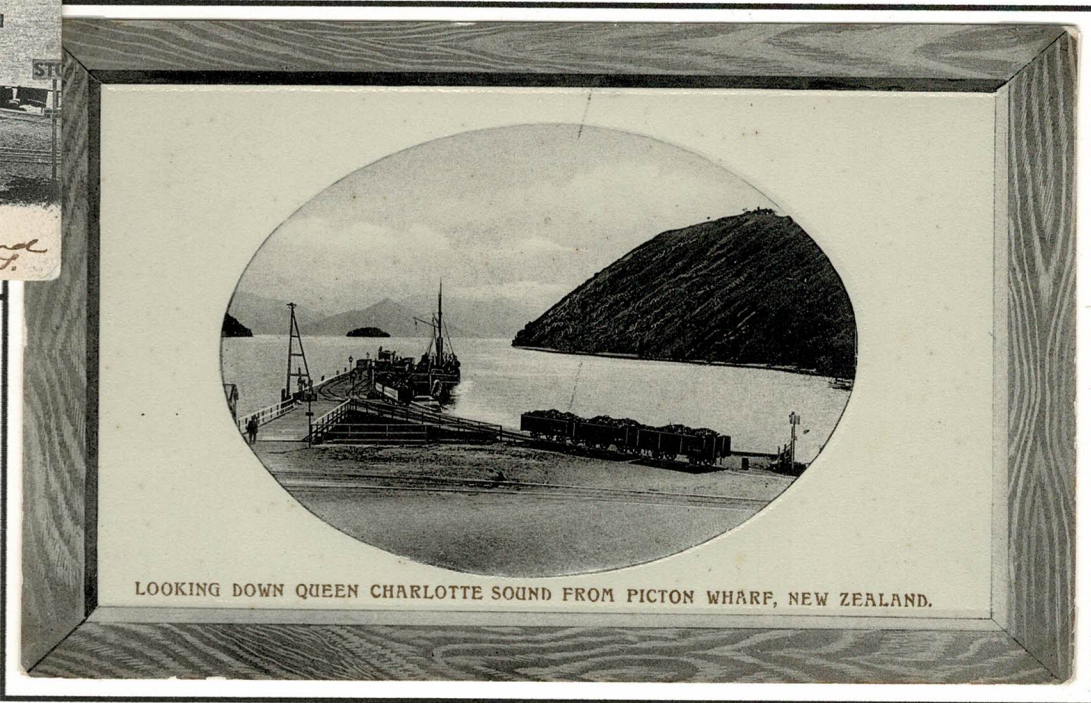
The first trip was Westport via Lyttelton to Port Chalmers with a load of coal. Later voyages were with Coal to Australia and raw sugar from Fiji for the Chelsea Refinery in Auckland. Scuttled in Cook Strain in 1924

Coal from **Westport Coal Company** mines at Denniston and Millerton was shipped in **Union Steamship Colliers** from Westport to Ports around New Zealand. Unloading the ships usually involved men with coal shovels in the hold filling wicker baskets that were then hoisted out by a winch and loaded railway wagons for distribution. At some ports, the coal companies used moored ships used as coal hulks for storage.



"Queen Charlotte Sound. From Picton Wharf"
"Photo by NZ Tourist Dept."

"F.T. Series No 363" - Fergusson & Taylor one of their early black & white undivided back postcards. Used Ikamatua 1 OC 05 via Blenheim 2 OC 05 to Onamalutu 3 OC 05



"Looking down Queen Charlotte Sound from Picton Wharf New Zealand"
Divided back embossed postcard "The W & B Series" Printed in England.
View is the same one - Tourist Department Photograph]

The photo shows 3 coal laden "L" Class wagons in the foreground with 3 in the centre with a number of empty wagons. The winch hoist is at left. The ship is the Union Steamship "S S Pateena" a passenger vessel not a collier



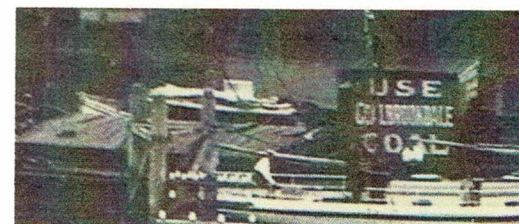
Wanganui A1799

Protected 20.4.11
Aldersley

Aldersley Series
[D J Aldersley
Wellington]

Real Photograph
[divided back]

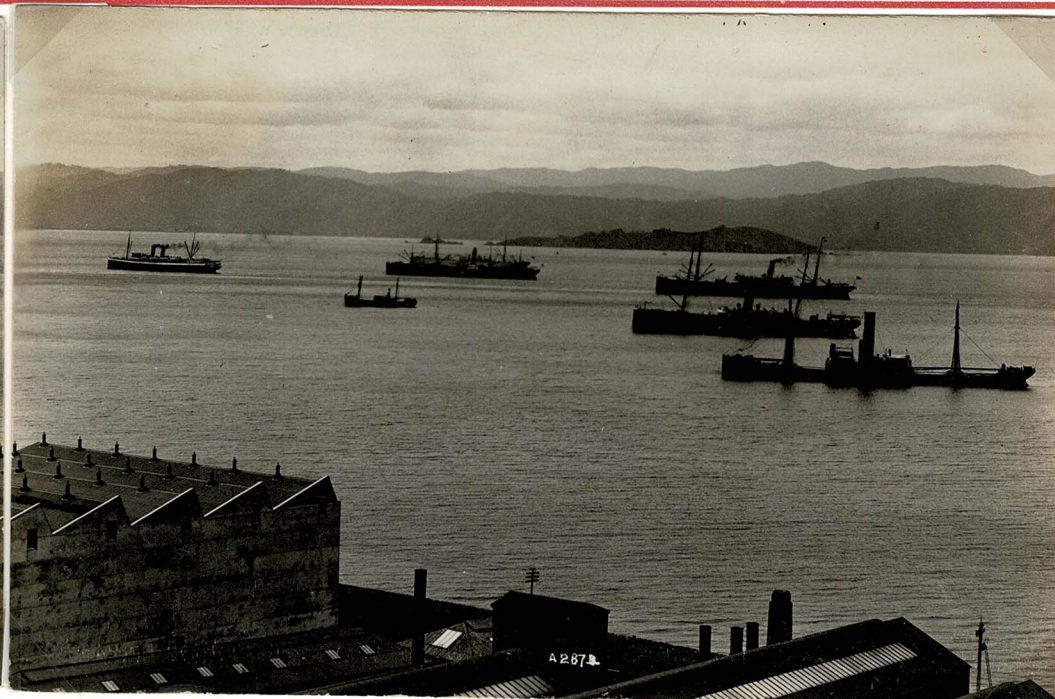
Detail shows a coal barge advertising
"Use Coalbrookdale
Coal"



Message in part: "... The town wharves commence in this Pcard, This bridge is over 200 yards in length... "

The Great Strike of 1913 - Union Steamship Colliers affected at Wellington

This was the result of several different disputes which eventually were passed to the United Federation of Labour to attempt to resolve. The Huntly coal miners went on strike on **October 20, 1913** after the Company dismissed 16 men including all the Union officials. In Wellington the small shipwrights union went on strike over wages. The watersiders met for a stop work meeting in working hours in breach of the 1912 Arbitration Act. The Harbour Board employed other to do their work but the watersiders regarded this as a "Lockout" and went on strike. The Government was prepared to break the power of the "Red Feds" and brought in **special constables** to protect the 'free labour' employed. The Prime Minister, Massey, knew that the strikers could meet and riot to their leader's hearts content so long as the main ports were open. The Federation was crushed, the various striking unions had to reorganise and re-register with the Arbitration Court. The General Strike was called off **December 20, 1913**. The Huntly miners capitulated a week after farmers started to work the mines on January 6, 1914.



"Wellington Harbour During the Strike" Protected 5.11.13 Aldersley"

6-Real Photograph Postcard Panorama

Annotated "Aldersley Series"

David J Aldersley was a photographer who lived in Lower Hutt, Wellington.

In "Wish You Were Here" - The Story of New Zealand postcards, P73 is "Possibly his most important series is a sequence of postcards showing shipping tied up during the 1913 strike."

Waterside Workers, when they broke their agreement, were being paid 1s. 5d. an hour ordinary time, 2s. 2d. an hour overtime up to 10 p.m.; 2s. 3d. per hour overtime 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. For special work special rates of pay were provided, coal carriers, the highest paid, receiving 2s. an hour ordinary time, 3s. an hour overtime.

Thursday, October 23.—Big mass meeting of strikers. Wharves picketed. Union S.S. Company pays crews off colliers. Free labourers commence work. Negotiations between strike delegates and employers fail. Report of intention of Waterside Workers' Union to register a second union under the Arbitration Act. Speeches in the Post Office Square.

Tuesday, October 28.—Conference between employers and employees, with Hon. W. F. Massey, Prime Minister, as chairman. More police arrive. S.S. Nikau rushed. All steamers move to an anchorage in the stream. Racehorses allowed to leave for south.

Friday, November 7.—S.S. Athenic, Willochra, and Moana worked by Arbitrationists. Moana's crew leaves ship, and Willochra's decide to follow. Union Company's permanent hands join strike. Wharves guarded by special constables.

Excerpts Dominion November 15, 1913

AN EYE-OPENER FOR STRIKERS.

It is common talk that the arrival of coal cargoes in Wellington this week has done more to open the eyes of the waterside workers on strike than any other event during the whole of the trouble. A member of the old watersiders' union told a reporter yesterday that since the general strike had failed, and the shearers had refused to come out, and several unions had rescinded resolutions, which had been passed to vote funds, the strike leaders had been finding some difficulty in keeping up the spirits of the men. Now that the drivers were rushing back to work, and coal boats were arriving in Wellington Harbour, there would probably be a rush for places on the wharf, for, if the coal problem was solved, what could the watersiders hope for?

Dominion December 10, 1913



WELLINGTON HARBOUR DURING THE STRIKE. A2874.

PROTECTED BY PATENT



A2874.



A2874.

PROTECTED BY PATENT



A2874.

NEW ZEALAND

POST



CARD

(CARTE POSTALE)

12 d. Inland

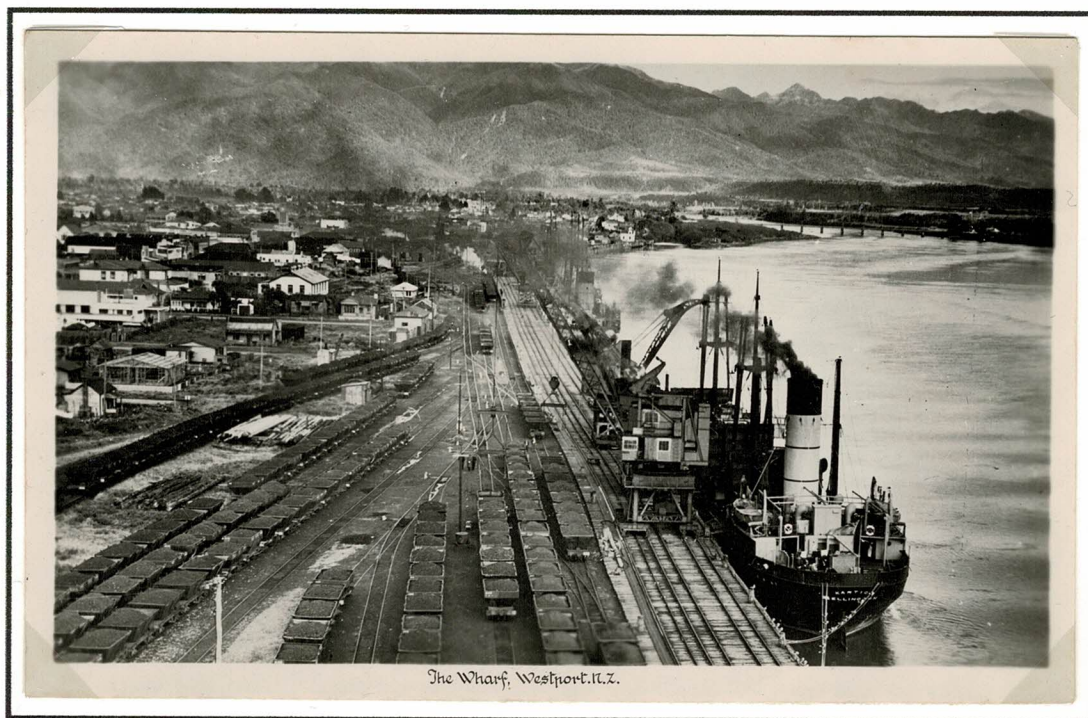
Penny stamp

Foreign

This space may be used for Correspondence, throughout British Dominions

The address only to be written here

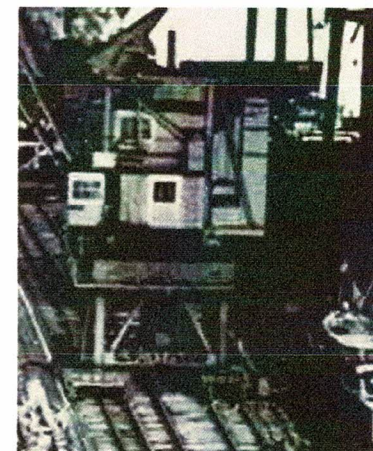
With the increased tonnage of coal being shipped, the Westport Harbour Board required with extensions to the breakwaters and increased dredging to maintain the depth at the Buller bar to allow the larger colliers. At the crane wharf, the cranes were built up on platforms to accommodate the larger ships. In 1920, the harbour Board was near bankruptcy and required a Westport Harbour Act of parliament with control being passed to the Marine Department from **April 1, 1921**. The **cranes and railway yards** came under the control of the Railways Department. The record shipment over the bar was in 1921 when the "Biloeia" carried 5764 tons of Buller coal.



"The Wharf, Westport, N.Z."

Real photo postcard no details c 1920

View shows a collier registered at Wellington being loaded by two steam cranes - the 1902 crane in foreground is on a **platform** as the ship side is above the level of the wharf. Over 150 "Q" coal wagons are waiting for shipping.



The completion of the **Otira Tunnel in 1923** completed the railway link to the East Coast from Westport and enabled coal from the Buller Coalfields to be railed direct to the deep water port of Lyttelton where it was stockpiled for distribution around NZ. This reduced the tonnage of coal shipped across the wharves by about 80,000 tons but it is estimated that even in the 1950s some 60% of Buller coal was still moved by colliers. From the 1980s, coal from Ngakawau [Stockton Opencast] was being railed by **special coal liner trains** capable of moving 500,000 tons a year to Lyttelton for export.

Construction commenced in **1907** and a "breakthrough" celebration was held on **21 August 1918** by the Minister of Public Works Sir William Fraser. When the tunnel opened on **4 August 1923**, it was the seventh longest tunnel in the world and the longest in the British Empire.

The government considered halting construction in World War I, but the Imperial Government requested that work should continue in case the German navy blockaded the West Coast ports used for coal shipment.

Because of its 8.56km length and gradient, gases such as carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide could easily build up, potentially making the tunnel both unhealthy for the train's occupants and unworkable with steam engines. Thus, the tunnel was electrified with a 1500 V DC overhead system. A **small coal-fired power station was built near Otira** to provide electricity until 1941 when it was replaced by a connection to the national grid



Real Photograph Postcard [untitled] Kodak Austral
The South Portal of the Otira Tunnel 1923

Buller Coalfield - Mine Ownership

The State was concerned about several aspects of the coal-mining industry; safety conditions highlighted after the Brunner Mine Disaster in 1896; declining production in the important Grey River coalfield; the virtual monopoly held by the Union Steamship Company and its control of the Westport Coal Company. In 1901, the Richard Seddon Government passed the **Coal-Mines Act 1901** and gave the State the authority to take over existing coal mines. State Coal Mines was established. The first State Mine was at Seddonville.

An attempt to nationalize the coal industry through the **Nationalization of Coal-Mines Act 1924** failed to make it through Parliament. The outbreak of war in 1939 gave a new value to coal. From 1942, coal mining became an essential industry and miners were prohibited from changing jobs. The Labour government began taking over pits, especially if they looked like failing. By 1942 all the mines in the Grey River valley and Waikato had been **nationalised**. By the late 1940s state-owned mines were producing over half of New Zealand's coal, and in 1948 coal deposits were nationalised – a decision reversed by the new National government two years later.

The Westport-Stockton Mine was taken over in 1944 and the Westport Coal Company Mines at Millerton and Denniston were bought by the State in 1948. State Coal took over the Company Mine offices at Denniston, and Granity and established a regional office in Westport. The Mines Department in Wellington, kept cut-outs of correspondence. Of the 2000 examples in my possession 1962-1964, OHMS mail from the Buller Coalfield [Denniston and Westport] comprise 14%

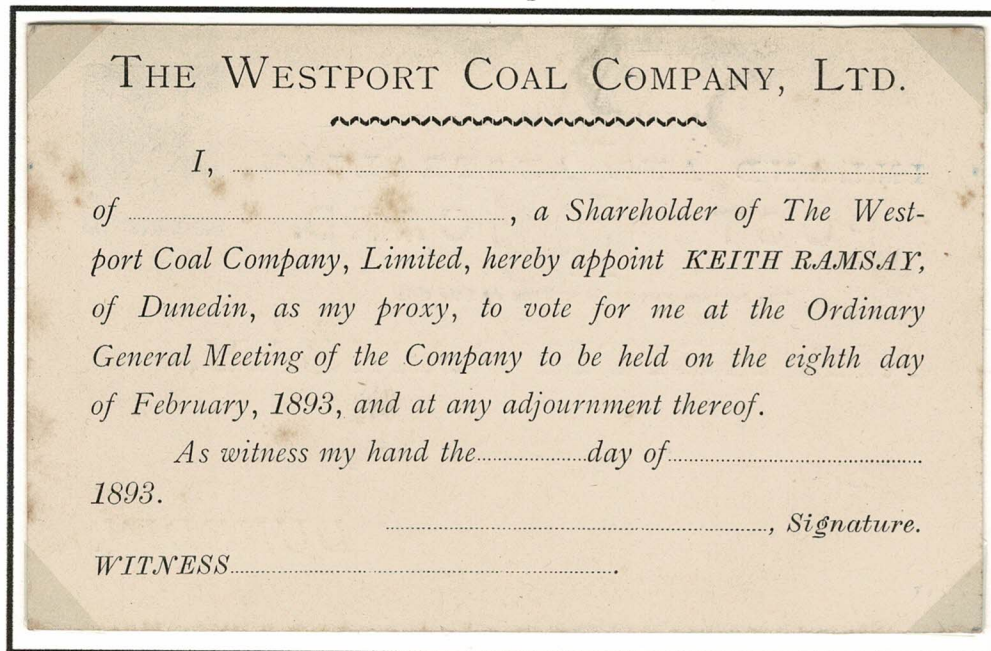


State Coal Mines became a State-Owned Enterprise under 1986 Legislation becoming **CoalCorp** in 1987. It was rebranded as **Solid Energy** in 1997 but went into voluntary liquidation and was defunct in March 2018 and the assets were sold off. That ended State involvement in the Buller that had started with the Seddonville State Mine in 1901. The only Buller coal mine in operation was at Stockton and was bought by **Bathurst Resources** [includes BT Mining & Buller Coal] and these companies continue in operation with the coal railed to Lyttelton for export.

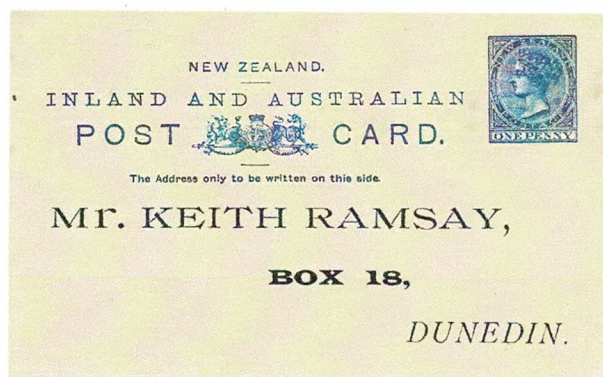
Westport Coal Company - Denniston Incline - Coalbrookdale Coal

The Westport Coal Company [WCC] is usually regarded as the originator of the Denniston Incline and of the development of the Coal Mines on the Rochfort Plateau at Denniston and Burnetts Face. The WCC trademarked the name "**Coalbrookdale**" in its coal promotion from 1884 but the coal was from the **Banbury Mine!**

- Julius von Haast, in July 1860, having discovered a seal of coal, named the locality **Coalbrook-dale** after a mining district in Shropshire, England.
- In 1862, James Burnett made surveys of the coal measures at Coalbrookdale and Burnetts face and suggested that a **self-acting incline** was the logical method of moving the coal from the plateau. His report was published in December 1862 in the Nelson Examiner.
- June 13, 1876, a survey by Cox was attached to the Public Works Statement to Parliament. In this he reports that the **Coalbrookdale Coal Company** was proposing a tramway on the Plateau with a self-acting incline down to the Waimangaroa Railway Station.
- September 19, 1876, The **Coalbrookdale Coal Company** advertised a tender for the carriage of coal from Coalbrookdale to Waimangaroa Railway Station
- March 14, 1878. The **Coalbrookdale Coal Company** called for tenders, closing 30 April 1878, for the construction of a self-acting incline on plans by Young Brothers of Westport.
- April 1878. The **Coalbrookdale Coal Company** and J B Fisher & Co, who had coal leases at Coalbrookdale merged and formed the **Westport Colliery Company** with a capital of £100,000.
- 30 April 1878, the **Westport Colliery Company** extended the tender closing date for the self-acting incline to 17 May 1878.
- 20 September 1881, the **Westport Coal Company** was formed, to take over the assets and liabilities of the **Westport Colliery Company** with a Capital of £400,000 in 80,000 £5 shares of which 30,000 were to be the purchase price.
- 1 November 1881, the **Westport Coal Company** prospectus was released and shares were fully subscribed and closed 30 November 1881.
- 15 April 1884, the tunnel to the Coalbrookdale seam was completed
- 21 July 1884, testimonials to the quality of Coalbrookdale coal appeared after the first shipments to Timaru and Christchurch.
- 1891 the **Coalbrookdale Mine** started production



1d Postcard [1890] prepared for proxy vote at WCC AGM February 1893. Ramsay [1844-1906] was a Director. He was a ship owner and agent and mayor Dunedin 1874-1875



Postcard, no details, **Brookdale Chambers**
The Westport Coal Company
Water Street Dunedin.

The sign in the windows reads:
Proprietors
COALBROOKDALE
COAL

COALBROOKDALE COAL.

Managing Director - **GEORGE JOACHIM.**

THE WESTPORT COAL CO., Ltd.

Capital Subscribed - £400,000.

Capital Paid Up - £400,000.

MINES NEAR WESTPORT.

Head Office - **Vogel Street, DUNEDIN.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DUNEDIN):

HON. SIR H. J. MILLER, M.L.C., *Chairman.*

G. L. DENNISTON, Esq.

P. C. NEILL, Esq.

C. W. CHAMBERLAIN, Esq.

HON. J. R. SINCLAIR.

HON. T. FERGUS.

DISTRICT MANAGER - - J. DIXON.

BRANCHES:

Westport	...	...	...	...	C. G. CURTIS, Manager
Auckland	...	...	...	...	F. W. BRABANT, Manager
Napier	...	...	...	...	D. MURDOCH, Manager
Wellington	...	...	...	...	W. A. FLAVELL, Manager
Wanganui	...	...	...	...	R. MATHISON, Manager
Gisborne	...	...	...	...	W. F. ILES, Manager
Christchurch	...	...	...	...	J. A. BOSWELL, Manager
Timaru	}	...	...	...	J. L. GILLIES, Manager
Oamaru		...	...	...
Invercargill	...	...	...	...	J. McMEEKIN, Manager
New Plymouth	...	...	...	...	O. N. FIRTH, Manager
Palmerston North	...	...	...	...	B. MARTIN, Manager

DEPOTS:

Gisborne	...	...	...	...	W. F. ILES, Manager
Wanganui	...	...	...	...	R. MATHISON, Manager
Christchurch	...	...	...	...	A. G. SANDERSON, Manager
Wellington	...	...	...	...	W. A. FLAVELL, Manager
New Plymouth	...	...	...	...	O. N. FIRTH, Manager
Palmerston North	...	...	...	...	B. MARTIN, Manager
Timaru	}	...	...	...	J. L. GILLIES, Manager
Oamaru		...	...	...
Dunedin	...	...	...	...	J. D. CAMERON, Manager
Invercargill	...	...	...	...	J. McMEEKIN, Manager

AGENCIES.

Blenheim	...	...	...	...	LEVIN & CO., LTD.
Nelson	...	...	...	...	ANCHOR SHIPPING & FOUNDRY CO., LTD.
Melbourne	...	...	...	...	JAMES BALFOUR & CO.

COALBROOKDALE COAL is recognised as the Best House, Steam, and Gas Coal south of the Line. It is used exclusively by H.M. Warships, the Union Steam Ship Co. of N.Z. Ltd., the Shaw, Savill and Albion Co., and the Tyser Line, and by Gas, Freezing, and Manufacturing Works throughout the Dominion.

Left: Copy Advertisement from John Stone's Otago & Southland Street Directory 1886 - **G L DENNISTON - Director**

Below: Copy Advertisement from John Stone's Wellington Directory 1891-92

98

WELLINGTON.

WESTPORT COAL CO.

LIMITED.

Head Office - **Vogel Street, Dunedin.**

MANAGER - **GEORGE JOACHIM.**

Mines at Westport - - - ADAM JAMIESON, AGENT.

AGENCIES.

WELLINGTON	- - -	J. H. WILLIAMS	CHRISTCHURCH	-	GEO. McCLATCHIE & CO.
TIMARU	- - -	JOHN JACKSON	NAPIER	- - -	P. BARRY
AMARU	- - -	J. AND T. MEEK	MELBOURNE	-	BALFOUR, ELLIOTT, AND CO., LTD.

THE COMPANY'S

COALBROOKDALE COAL

is the Best House and Steam Coal in the Southern Hemisphere.

HMS "Calliope" - Coalbrookdale Coal - Westport Coal Company Advertising & Promotion

The HMS "Calliope" was in Samoa Apia Harbour with a number of other vessels when a severe hurricane struck March 15, 1889. The Calliope was the only ship to make it out of the harbour into the teeth of the gale - the captain made a decision to try for the open sea and raised steam. With the engines at full power [usually 15 knots of speed] the ship was making barely ¾ of a knot when it cleared the harbour. There was some damage to the ship caused by the storm and the waves up to 40 foot high.

The first telegram about the escape mentioned that the Coal was supplied at Wellington and was "Westport" this was widely reported on the West Coast. Nothing in Papers Past can confirm that the coal that was being used on the Calliope was Coalbrookdale Coal but this was widely promoted by the Westport Coal Company.

The Westport Court at the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin 1889-1890 as reported in the Evening Star 21 December 1889.



This consists of three bays, mainly taken up with the Westport Coal Company's exhibits. The central space is pretty well occupied with a pyramid of coal from the Coalbrookdale colliery—a coal that has won commendation from housewives and other consumers ever since it has been on the market. As showing the value of Westport coal for steam-generating purposes, a high testimonial is to be found in the fact that H.M.S. Calliope was using it when she steamed out from Samoa in the teeth of the hurricane that prevailed there in April last.

"Birds View from Domain, Te Aroha N.Z postcard issued by H Jackson Te Aroha cancelled Te Aroha 31 DE 15 addressed to Calliope Road Devonport.

The **Calliope Dock** is a historical stone dry dock on the grounds of the Devonport Naval Base, in Devonport, Auckland, New Zealand. It was built in 1888 to service ships of the British Royal Navy, and is still in use today. It was named after its location at the foot of **Calliope Point**, named after the HMS **Calliope** which visited Auckland in 1846. The HMS **Calliope** was present at its 'launching'

"R.M.S Niagara. Calliope Dock Auckland NZ"

Real photograph postcard by **W T Wilson** Auckland
Wilson was producing real photograph postcards of Auckland scenes from 1910.

The "Niagara" was built 1913 by John Brown & Co. Clydebank for the Union Steamship Company. It was sunk June 19, 1940 while carrying 8 tons of gold bullion and an unknown quantity of silver in 400m of water North of New Zealand



ADVERTISEMENT.

v.

"COALBROOKDALE"

"The Finest Coal South of the Line."

Westport Coal Co.

(LIMITED)

HEAD OFFICE:

Corner Crawford & Water Sts., DUNEDIN

W. A. FLAVELL, General Manager.

MINES AT WESTPORT.

BRANCHES:

	Manager.
Auckland	F. W. BRABANT
Christchurch	J. A. BOSWELL
Oamaru	G. R. GREGORY
Timaru	C. G. CURTIS
Wanganui	V. R. COOKE
Wellington	A. HAMILTON
Westport	N. W. PARKER

RETAIL DEPOTS:

	Manager.
Dunedin	J. D. CAMERON
Oamaru	G. R. GREGORY
Timaru	C. G. CURTIS
Wanganui	V. R. COOKE
Christchurch	J. A. BOSWELL
Wellington	A. HAMILTON

AGENCIES:

Gisborne	W. F. ILES	New Plymouth	W. E. BENDALL & CO
Napier	BARRY BROS., LTD.		

This far-famed Coal, on account of its great heat-producing properties, is unrivalled for cooking and household use, while as a steam coal it is superior to North of England, Welsh or Newcastle. The latter fact was proved by practical tests at Woolwich Dockyard.

SOLD BY ALL COAL MERCHANTS
THROUGHOUT THE DOMINION.

Original advertisement from Stone's Dunedin & Southland Street Directory 1909.

Note Head Office is now at Water Street

Do Not Miss The MINERAL COURT.

You will find it very Interesting
and it will remind you of

New Zealand's Celebrated

Westport Coalbrookdale Coal

Which for 44 YEARS has been the Dominion's Leading Fuel for household, steam, and gas-making purposes. IT WAS COALBROOKDALE COAL which enabled H.M.S. "CALLIOPE" to steam out of Apia Harbour during the hurricane of March 16th, 1889, when the German and American ships were cast ashore.

"For a full hour we only made one knot with her engines doing their best. Fortunately, we had Westport (N.Z.) Coal on board, which burned splendidly, and reduced the labour of stoking to a minimum."

IT WAS COALBROOKDALE COAL which gave H.M.S. "SYDNEY" that extra power whereby she overtook and destroyed the enemy ship "Emden." Many other notable events could be cited testifying to the outstanding superiority of

NEW ZEALAND'S FAMOUS COALBROOKDALE COAL which adds to your comfort with warm, cosy fires and supplies light, heat and comfort throughout the land.

BEST FOUNDRY COKE.

THE WESTPORT COAL CO. Ltd.

Head Office: Water Street, Dunedin.

Branches, Retail Depots and Bunkering Facilities at all Main Ports.

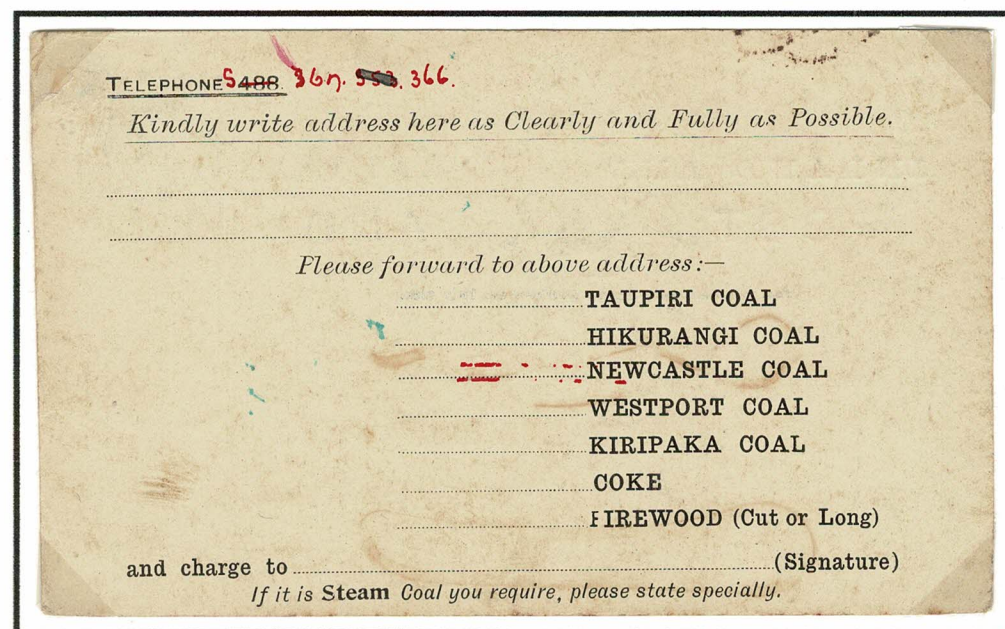
ALL CLASSES OF COAL KEPT.

Reduced advertising flyer for Westport Coal Company at Mineral Court 1926 British and South Seas Exhibition, Dunedin

[Exhibitor has original]

Promotion supported by Coalbrookdale Coal used by the HMS Calliope [1889] and HMS Sydney [1914]

Westport Coal Company Agencies



1d Queen Victoria postcard [1890] used by Coal merchant in **Auckland** as order form - **Westport Coal** was from Denniston Mines



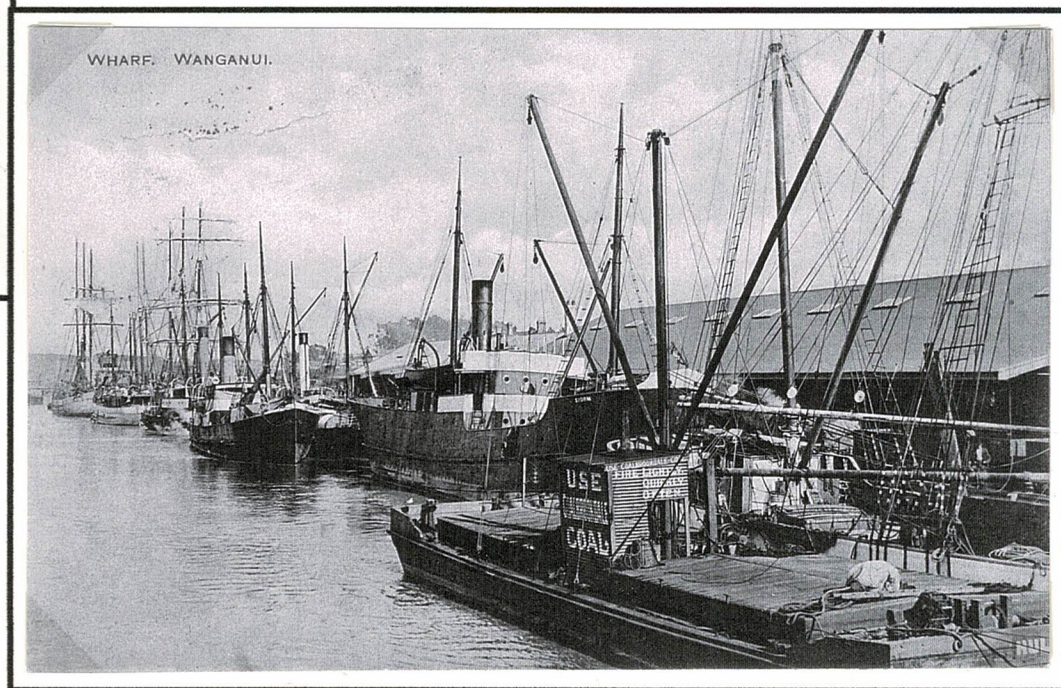
"Wanganui from Durie Hill. F.G.R 4155"

Divided back real Photo postcard by Frederick George Radcliffe

View shows the **Westport Coal Company barge** moored to left

"Wharf, Wanganui" view shows the Coal Hulk used by the Westport Coal Company advertising

"Use Coalbrookdale Coal Fire lightly Quickly Often."



Westport Coal Company Shares - Dividend & Bonus 1919

Mailed from General Manager WCC to shareholder in Scotland

The Westport Coal Company

Limited.

DUNEDIN, N.Z.

Mrs Agnes J. Common,
Gracelyfield, Dumfries,
Scotland.

Dear Sir, Madam,

As requested by M

I beg to hand you herewith *D/draft*
in *your* favour for the sum of £ *7* : *0* : *6*
being Dividend and Bonus on *your* *281* Shares
for the half-year ending *30/3/19*.

Kindly acknowledge receipt on the accompany-
ing form and oblige.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. FLAVELL,
General Manager.

1st Exchange.

The Westport Coal Company

Limited.

DUNEDIN, N.Z.

27 NOV 1919

Mrs Agnes J. Common,
Gracelyfield, Dumfries,
Scotland.

Dear Sir,

As requested by M

I beg to hand you herewith *D/draft*
in *your* favour for the sum of £ *21* : *1* : *6*
being Dividend and Bonus on *your* *281* Shares
for the half-year ending *30/9/19*.

Kindly acknowledge receipt on the accompany-
ing form and oblige.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. FLAVELL,
General Manager.

1st Exchg.

Advice on Dividends and Bonus on 281 shares for 1919. Shares were £5 each so initial investment was £1405. 1919 drafts from the Company £7/0/6d and £21/1/6d = £28/2/- in total. Return on Investment for 1919 was 2%.

Trade Mark:
"COALBROOKDALE"

Dr. to The Westport Coal Company, Limited.

Westport-Coalbrookdale, Pelaw Main, Aberdare, Black Diamond, Birchwood and all kinds of High Grade Lignite, Firewood and Coke in stock.

JOYCE & STEVENS, PRINT.

1923	Bags.						Rate.	Amount.		
	Newcastle.	Westport-Coalbrookdale.	Slack.	Lignite.	Wood.	Coke.		£	s.	D.
	To Account Rendered									
										16.3

Householders Supplied Direct ex Our Own Yards.

Trade Mark: "COALBROOKDALE." Telephone No. 43.
OFFICES - CORNER CHURCH AND SOPHIA STREETS. P. O. Box No. 18.

Timaru, *June 30th* 1925

Mrs J.W. Glover
Parkehane

Dr. to The Westport Coal Company, Limited.

Westport-Coalbrookdale, Birchwood, Newcastle, Kaitangata, and all kinds of High Grade Lignite. Willow, Pine and Bluegum Firewood and Coke in stock.

JOYCE & STEVENS, PRINT.

1925	Bags.							Rate.	Amount.		
	Newcastle.	Westport-Coalbrookdale.	Slack.	Birchwood	Lignite.	Wood	Coke		£	s.	D.
				To Account Rendered							
<i>June 2</i>										<i>66</i>	
<i>11</i>										<i>163</i>	
<i>30</i>										<i>66</i>	
										<i>£ 1-9-3</i>	

No. D 49941

TIMARU, *30/6/25* 1925

Received from *M Mrs J.W. Glover*

the sum of *one* pounds

Seven shillings *—* pence

THE WESTPORT COAL COMPANY, LIMITED,

£ *1-9-0* Per *D. J. Furdan*

WITH THANKS. *W. J. Furdan*

NOTE. for Accounts Paid Monthly.

D 40972

6/3/25

1925

pounds

pence

ANY. LIMITED,

W. J. Furdan

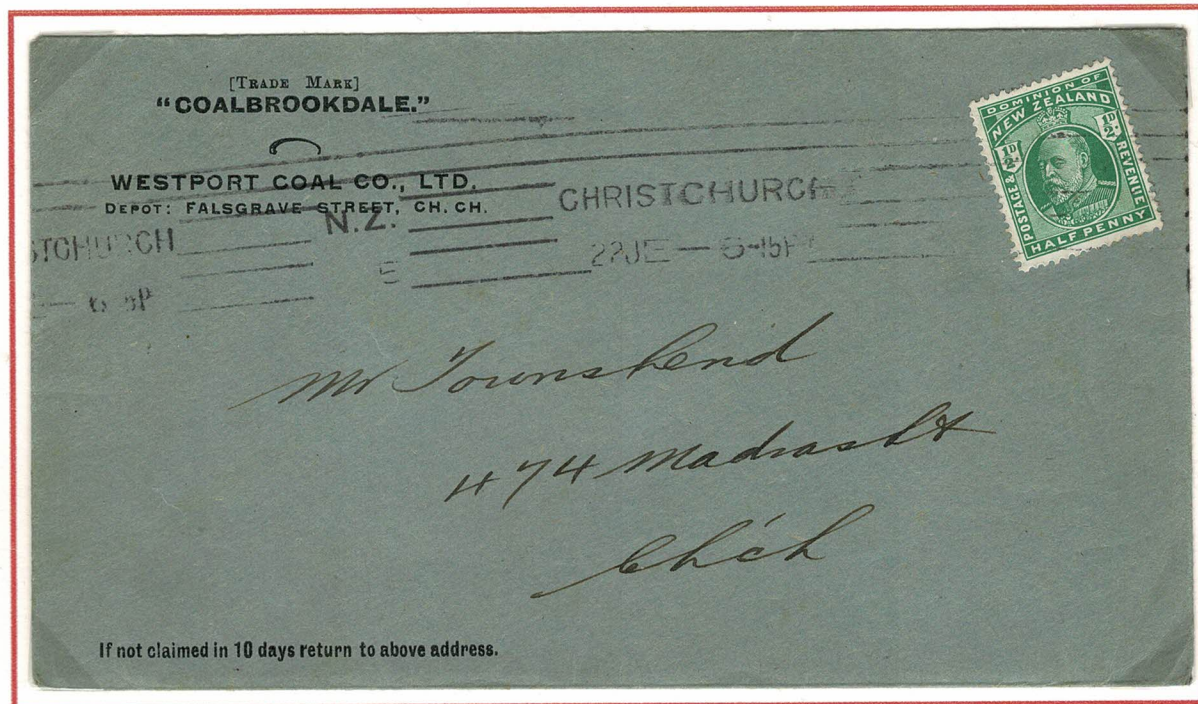
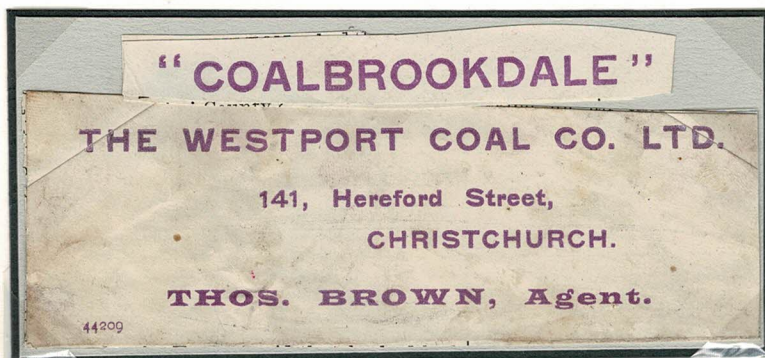
Orders and for Accounts Paid Monthly.

1923 Invoice/Receipt

Shows WCC were agents for:
2 imported coals [Pelaw Main & Aberdare] and
2 Ohai/Nightcaps Coal [Black Diamond & Birchwood.]

1925 Invoice/Receipt

Shows WCC were agents for **Birchwood** and **Kaitangata** and **Newcastle** Coal.



Westport Coal Co., Ltd. Depot Christchurch envelope with 1/2 d postage cancelled
 Christchurch 22 JE 1915 6-15PM [second class mail rate]

The Westport Coal Company, Limited

RECEIPT HOLDER

This form is not to be used as a Receipt, but merely as a holder to which Official Receipt should be attached when Invoice is not available.

No. 8493
 Dec 20th 1937
 FROM M. & G. Co.
 the sum of Five pounds
— shillings — pence
THE WESTPORT COAL COMPANY, LIMITED
 £ 5 : 1 : — Per J. M. Lewis
 DISCOUNT on a/c WITH THANKS

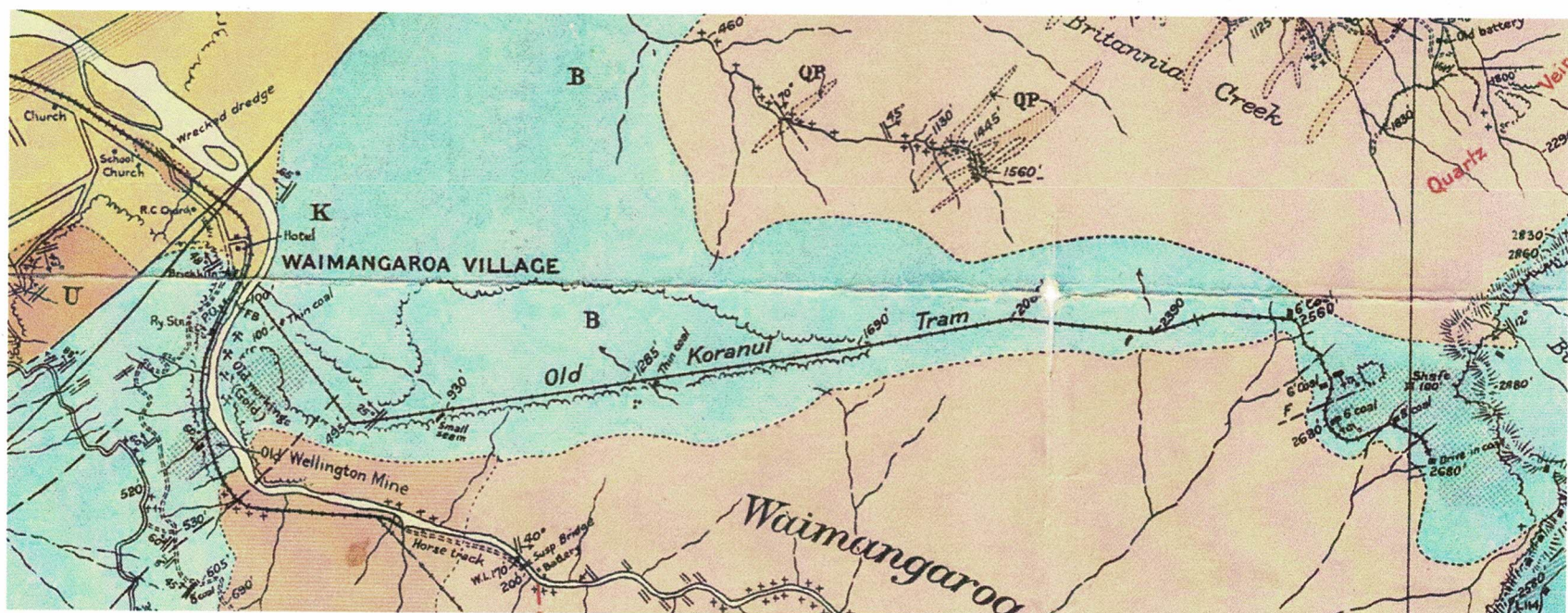


1/2 d KGV postcard cancelled **Huntly 10 MR 30** used as **advice** from Rotowaro Taupiri Coal Mines Ltd that a Railway truck L10578 with 7 tons of coal had been despatched to **Westport Coal Co** at Wanganui. Card has manuscript notation "**Rcvd 13/3/30**"

Buller Coalfield - Denniston Group

Early Exploration & Exploitation Timeline

- **August 1859:** John Rochfort and party, on a survey of the West Coast for the Nelson Provincial Council, on a cross country trek from Lyell found loose coal in a creek bed ["drift coal"] and reported this to the Provincial Council in Nelson.
- **July 1860:** Julius von Haast and James Burnett, on a survey reports of coal and gold as follow-up from the Provincial Council, found coal in a stream and discovered a seam of coal over 8 feet thick. He named this **Coalbrookdale** after a mining district in Shropshire and the cliff above it as **Burnett's Face**. This he reported in a letter from what was to become Westport dated 18 July 1860.
- **November 1862:** Burnett and Rochfort carried out extensive surveys of the Burnett's Face and Coalbrookdale. Reported in Nelson Examiner 10 December 1862 where he also discussed the option of a railway like the Dun Mountain horse-worked 11 mile line near Nelson opened in February 1862.
- **January 1872:** James Hector investigating the geology of the Mt Rochfort confirming huge coal reserves.
- **March 1873:** Westport Times recorded the discovery of a "big coal seam" by the North bank of the Waimangaroa River. This became the **Wellington Mine** and a branch railway was constructed
- **April 1873:** First shipment of coal from Westport - from the mine at Waimangaroa
- **July 1873:** Mineral survey by **Denniston** and Cooper. The Report interested a group of Dunedin men to become interested in coal production
- **October 1873:** Survey announced for 12 miles for the Mount Rochfort Railway.
- **August 1876:** Railway line opened Westport to Waimangaroa.
- **May 1877:** **Koranui** Coal Company formed and self-acting incline Tramway surveyed, tenders in October 1877.
- **March 1878:** Westport Colliery Company formed from Coalbrookdale Colliery Company and Fisher and Party with Coal Lease of 1150 Ha [2800 acres]
- **April 1878:** Tenders called for the construction of the Denniston Incline
- **October 1879:** Last spike driven on the Incline and public holiday declared in Westport
- **March 1880:** Wellington Coal Company liquidated and sold, later merged with Koranui
- **April 1880:** First coal sent down the Incline
- **September 1881:** Westport Coal Company took over Westport Colliery Company which had financial difficulties from the cost of construction.
- **April 1885:** Union Steamship Company took over Wellington Railway and Koranui mine
- **July 1887:** Westport Coal Company bought out the Union Steamship Companies interests and closed the Koranui Mine - **84,194 Tons**
- **July 1887:** Westport Coal Company owned the railway connection to the Government line at Waimangaroa Junction.



Scan of part Map 8 of **Geological Survey of Buller Coalfield** showing coal-bearing areas and general geology compiled from Lands & Survey Department and surveys by Morgan, Bartrum and Whitehorn of the Geological Survey Branch of the Mines Department. Maps drawn by G E Harris, 1914. [Exhibitor has original]

Showing site of the **Wellington Mine**, the **Koranui Tramway**

Waimangaroa

Alluvial gold miners were at Waimangaroa from 1862 but there was never a "Gold Rush" - later there was some quartz mining which continued in a minor scale until 1917. The Waimangaroa River Gold-Dredging Company's dredge "Whareatea" was used - its **wreck** remained visible - on 1914 map.

Coal was discovered, and reported 25th March 1873, on the north bank of the River where Sim & Party had a gold claim. [Map shows old gold workings but the Coal Mine on the South bank]. This later became Mulhollands, then **Wellington Mine**.

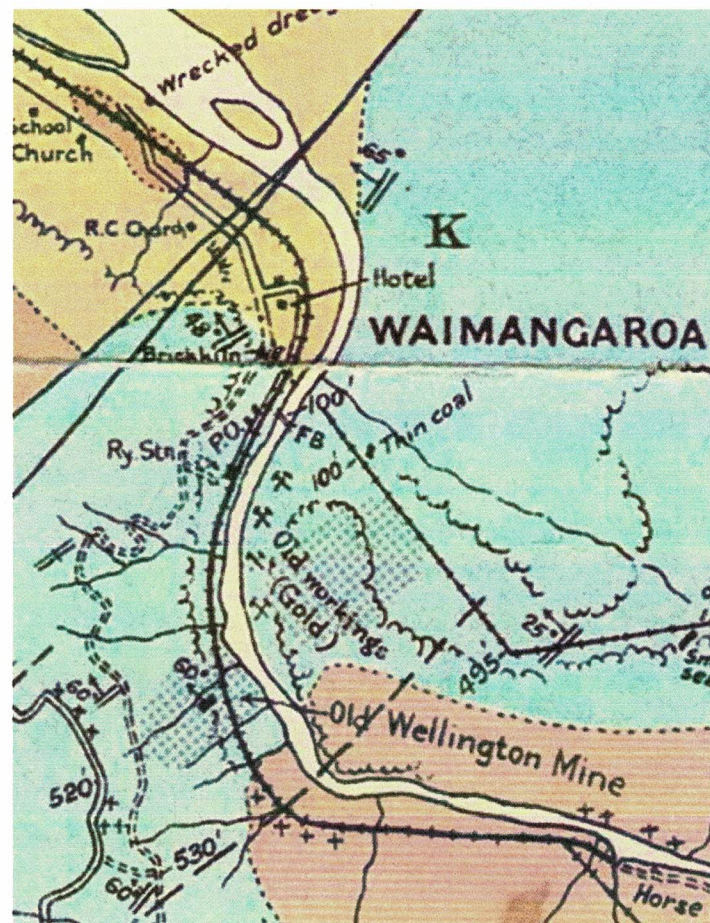
The Mt Rochfort Railway from Westport was officially opened to the Waimangaroa River 31 December 1875. The Wellington Coal Mining Company built a branch line from the Harben Station [to be renamed Waimangaroa Junction] to the mine with a bridge to bring the coal across the river.

In the 1880's there were 5 hotels and a boarding house for miners at the Koranui Incline. A brick factory [Neighbours Brick Co] was developed from 1893 - the site is shown on the map.

Postal Matters:

The **Waimangaroa Post Office** opened **1 June 1876** with Robert Mcfarlane as postmaster - he owned the Post Office Hotel. A separate building adjacent to Finch's store was used from about 1888 with MO&SB [added 6 August 1885] and telephone facilities. Finch operated a horse and cart delivery including mail to Denniston and Granity.

The office used an **"A" Class datestamp** [issued when the Money Order & Savings Bank facilities were added]. A **"J" Class 28mm** was proofed at Wellington 9 FE 23. The office closed **February 5, 1988** when the Post Office was restructured



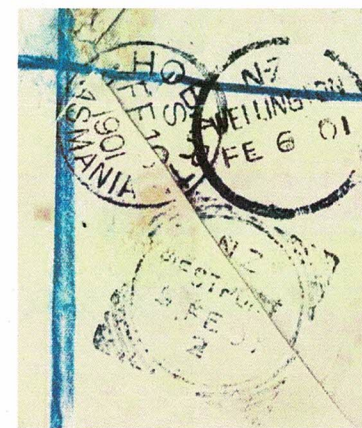
Waimangaroa detail from 1914 Map
Position of the Wellington Mine is incorrect

12 DE 96	17 NO 20	5 DE 22	9 FE 23	13 AU 24	8 De 38	11 MR 58	18 JE 71	
Waimangaroa "A" Class			Copy Proof	Waimangaroa "J" Class narrow date		Waimangaroa "J" Class wide date		



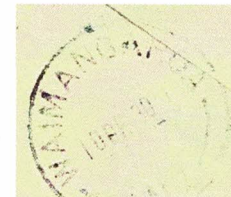
"Registered No. 7" with
Waimangaroa "A" Class 5 FE 01.

"R" in circle at Westport
Westport "F" Class 5 FE 01,
Wellington "A" Class FE 6 01.
Received Hobart FE 16 1901.





OHMS Envelope with 1d Admiral - no official stamp!
 Cancelled Westport 4-line continuous machine DE 9 1930
 The Telephone is the New Necessity slogan
 Received Waimangaroa 10 DE 30 [on back]



The letter carrier [Mrs B E Lunn] was unable to find addressee held at Post Office and "Gone Left no A/D" applied with Waimangaroa 3 FE 31 [narrow date line] Returned to Westport where boxed "Gone No Address" was applied and Westport Octagonal rubber stamp 10 FE 1931 Unclaimed.

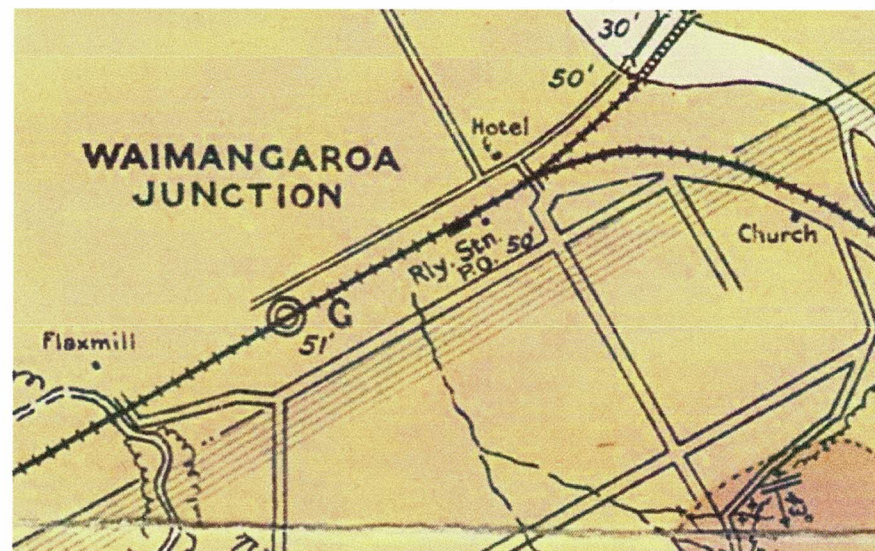
Harben - Waimangaroa Junction

Harben is the original name for Waimangaroa but was given to the railway station where the Wellington Coal Company railway joined the Government Mt Rochfort railway line. The Branch line was then owned by the Koranui Company, the the Union Steam Ship Company and finally in 1887 by the Westport Coal Company. This railway to Conn's Creek carried all the coal from the Wellington and Koranui mines and from the Denniston mines via the Incline.

It was renamed **Waimangaroa Junction** in December 1897.

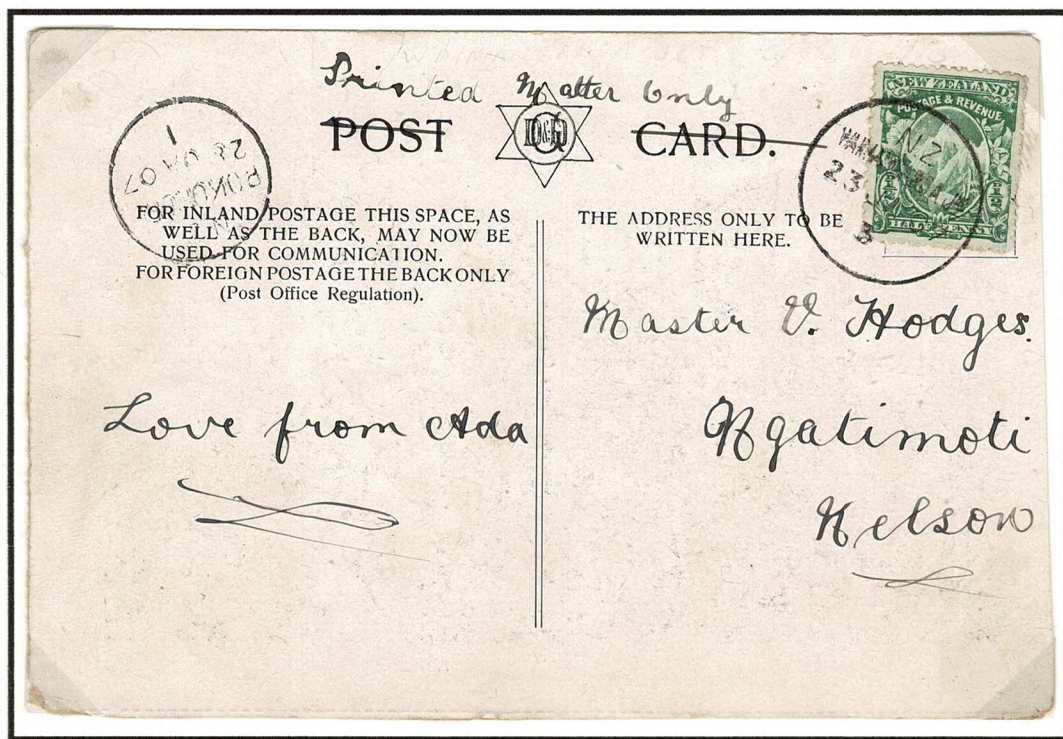
Harben Post Office was opened 15 July 1884 to 31 December 1885; 1 January 1887 to September 1887; 1 April 1890 changing to **Waimangaroa Junction** when the office facilities were moved to the railway station. The "A" Class Harben datestamp was probably issued in 1890.

Waimangaroa Junction Post Office opened 1 December 1897 and closed 1 April, 1913. It used an **Octagonal Rubber** stamp with name in full in 1898 before the "A" Class datestamp was issued in 1899.



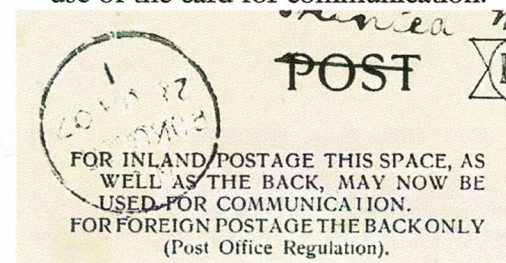
Detail from 1914 showing Waimangaroa Junction with "Rly Stn P.O." - The Post Office had closed by then



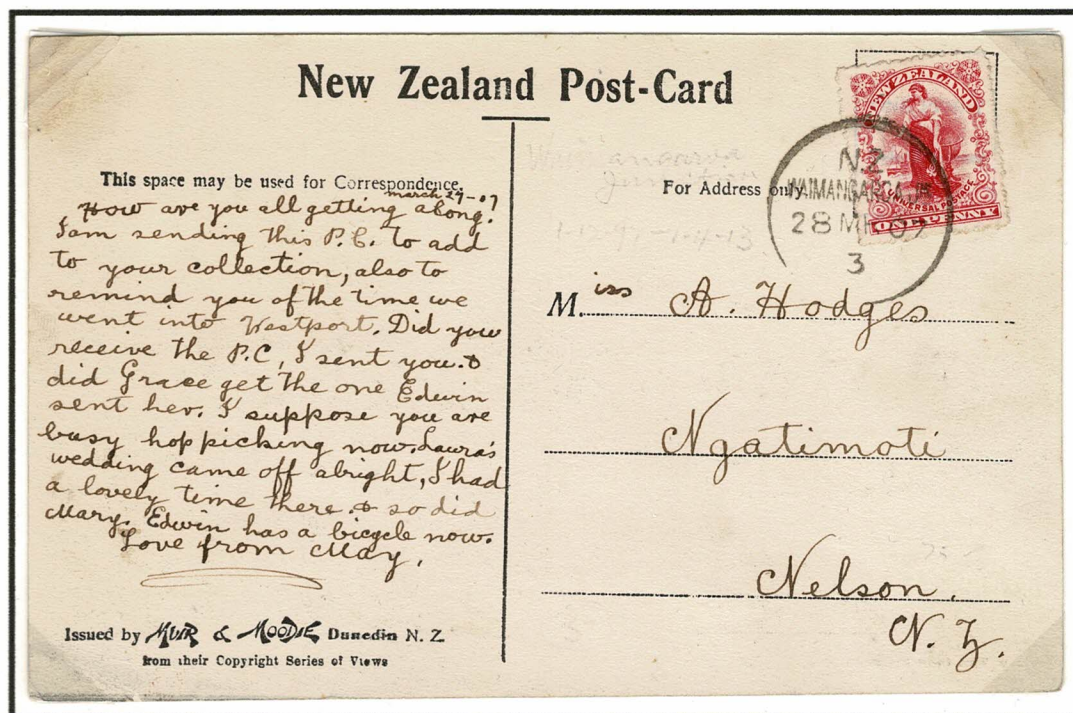
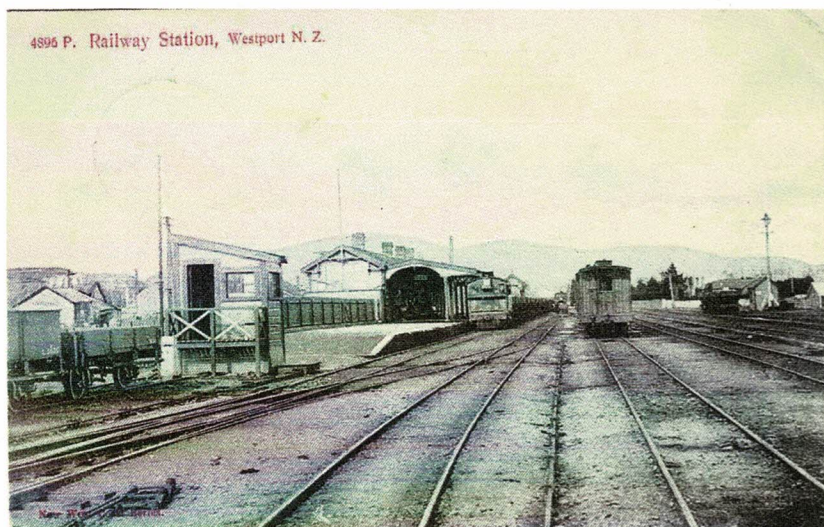


Waimangaroa Jn "A" Class 23 JA 07
 sent "Printed Matter Only" at 1/2 d rate.
 Addressed to "Ngatimoti" it was received at Pokororo "A" Class
 25 JA 07. -
 The settlements are a few Km apart South from Motueka, Nelson.
 Ngatimote Post Office [1874-1921 - became Ngatomoti]
 Pokororo Post Office [1895-1948]

Postcard is "London Imperial Institute" and has instructions [British] on
 use of the card for communication.



Divided back postcard 1d postage from Waimangaroa Jn 28 MR 07



Postcard "4895 P. Railway Station, Westport N.Z." with "New West Coast Series" at bottom left. Issued by Muir & Moodie, Duendin N.Z. from Copyright Series of Views.

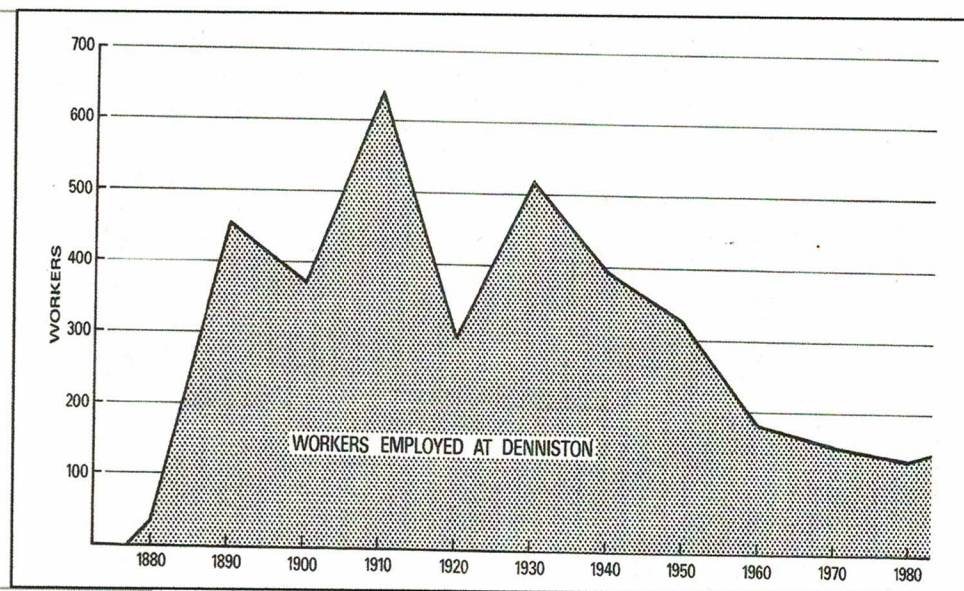
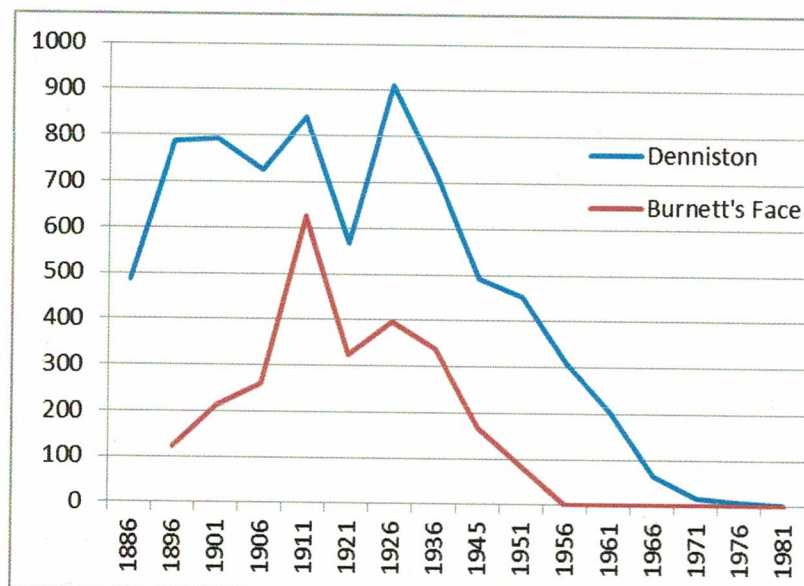
This postcard is illustrated in "Coaling From the Clouds" by R J Meyer on Page 23. where the caption reads:

"Westport Station, the base of the railway activity on the Westport Section of the NZR. Here a "Wb" tank locomotive running bunker first brings in a load of coal on the main line while an "Fa" tank pauses in its shunting activities one day in the early 1900s."

Townships on the Plateau - Denniston & Burnett's Face

The townships, Denniston and Burnett's Face, of the Denniston Plateau, and the Denniston Incline itself, existed solely to extract coal from the plateau. Living conditions at Denniston were harsh; the rocky, windswept plateau is often immersed in cloud, receives a high annual rainfall, and very low temperatures are common. Once good road access to the plateau was established and the demand for coal declined, the townships shrank – and disappeared altogether once the incline and mines closed.

The initial mine was the **Banbury** [1879-1890] - peak production in 1886 of 76,000 tons and 227 men employed. Mining shifted to Burnett's face with **Ironbridge** [1891-1945] and **Coalbrookdale** [1889-1944]. Mining moved further into the mountains with **Whareatea** [1920-1946], **Sullivan** [1953-1968] and **EscarPMENT** [1964-1982]. The **Denniston Incline** an engineering masterpiece closed in 1967 having transported over **13,000,000 tons**, all sent via railway to Westport. An **aerial ropeway** replaced the surface endless ropeway. the "**Skip Road**", in 1952. Opencast mining continues but is now trucked down after the closure of the Incline.



Left: Population Denniston & Burnett's Face in Census Years Right: Workers employed at Denniston [from Denniston Miners' Union A Centennial History]

Denniston

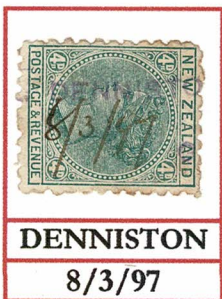
Denniston was named after Richard Blair Denniston, the Westport Coal Company's surveyor and first colliery manager. The first settlement, known as "The Camp", was located on a rock ledge above the Waimangaroa River. It was built below the level of the plateau between two escarpments for protection from relentless winds. The first workers developed the Banbury Mine, but many did not stay long owing to the inhospitable conditions. However, by 1883 there were about a hundred residents, a school, and a brass band. The company's offices were above The Camp and Brakehead, alongside the tramway from the mine to the top of the incline.

A bridle track was built between Waimangaroa and Denniston by 1885. Prior to this, the only access for people and goods had been to ride in coal wagons travelling at high speed up or down the incline. The dray road was developed in 1913 suitable for horse & trap and motor vehicles.

Settlement soon spread up onto the plateau itself, and by 1887, there were three hotels, a postal and telegraph office, four general stores, three butchers and three bakers in Denniston. Living conditions were squalid and visitors complained about the unsanitary and 'smelly' nature of the township. The cottages were utilitarian small wooden buildings with roofs and chimneys of corrugated iron. There was no running water, no baths in houses, and toilets were tin sheds with cans that were emptied by night cart men. Large families were often confined to two-room huts for long periods during bad weather. There were no shrubs, flowers or gardens. Even after 20 years, these poor living conditions still prevailed.

Denniston played a key role in the development of the union movement in New Zealand, and the country's first miner's union was formed at Denniston in 1884. A report to the coal industry in 1919 attributed much of the industrial unrest and dissatisfaction of the Denniston miners to their 'sordid' living conditions

The **Denniston Post Office** opened **1 October 1883** in a private house with mine manager Mr Elliot as postmaster. A daily service between Westport and Denniston was established in 1884. Until 1896 the mail was carried up and down the Incline in coal wagons, then by foot or horseback. When the "New Track" [road] opened in 1913 the mail carried by Horse and trap and from 1914 by motor vehicle. Money Order & Savings bank facilities were added 16 September 1888. Morse telegraphy 21 July 1906 and a telephone exchange 15 August 1913. Used an "A" Class and "J" Class datestamps. A Straight-line name stamp with manuscript date known 8/3/97. A relief datestamp I known March 1934. The office closed **30 September 1971**



DENNISTON

8/3/97



Denniston 30 JE 04 via Westport 30 JE 04, Auckland JUL 5 1904, Sydney JUL 11 1904 to Hobart JL 15 1904

Denniston 2 JE 05 via Westport 2 JL 05, Wellington 5 JL 05 to Hobart 10 JL 1905

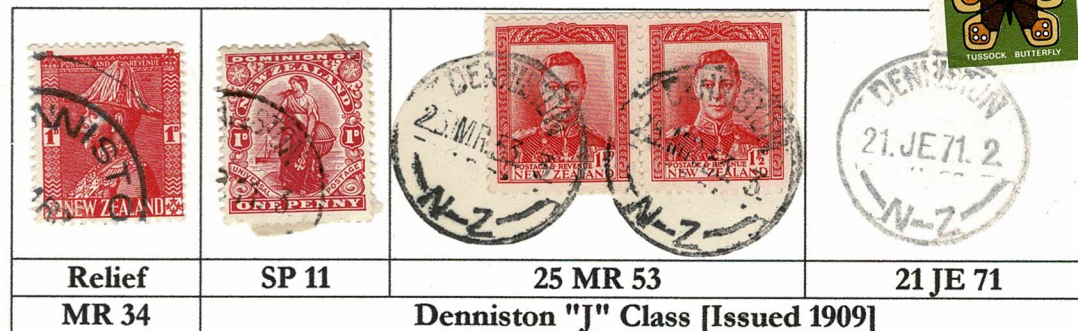
A significant amount of correspondence exists, from New Zealand towns, addressed to either the **Editor or Manager of the Tasmanian News in Hobart, Tasmania** in the period 1903-1910. These contained money to purchase **lottery tickets**. These envelopes, have been 'spiked' and saved and often have evidence of papers representing the lottery tickets, stuck to them.

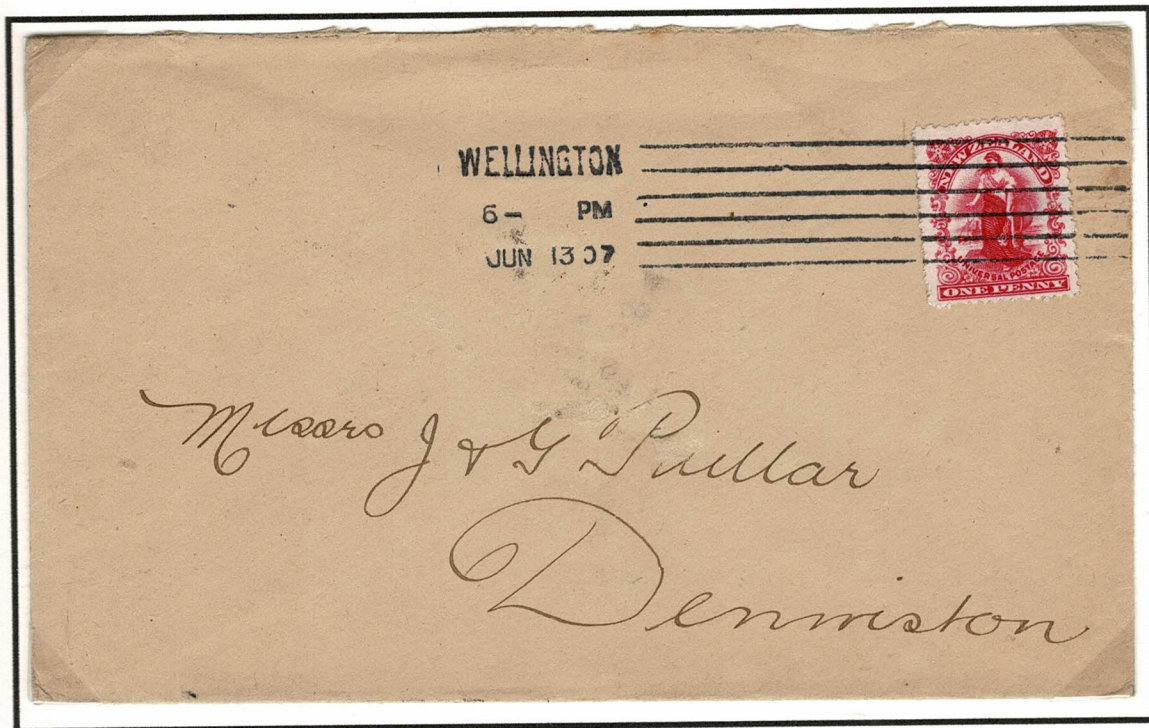


Denniston 7 SP 10
4 x 1/2 d N Z Railway
Newspaper Stamps
1901 issue Perforation 14
wove paper.

1/2 d carried one
newspaper any distance

Rare in blocks
Rare with Post Office
cancellation





Inwards mail: Wellington JUN 13 07, via Westport 15 JE 07 to Messrs J & G Pullar Denniston, received Denniston "A" Class 17 JE 07



From Archibald Clark & Sons Ltd, Wellington. This firm was established in Auckland January 1, 1850. It was a clothing business, importing initially then manufacturing under "Chief" and Zealandia" brands. Large firm with 500 employees and several branches. Ceased trading in 1928

Victoria Street,
Wellington, 16 MAY 1911⁹⁰
Dear Sir or Madam,
Our Representative, ~~W. J. Pullar~~
will have the pleasure of calling on you on or
about the 25 MAY 1911 and hopes to
be favoured with your esteemed commands,
which will have our prompt attention.
Yours faithfully,
ARCHD. CLARK & SONS, Ltd.



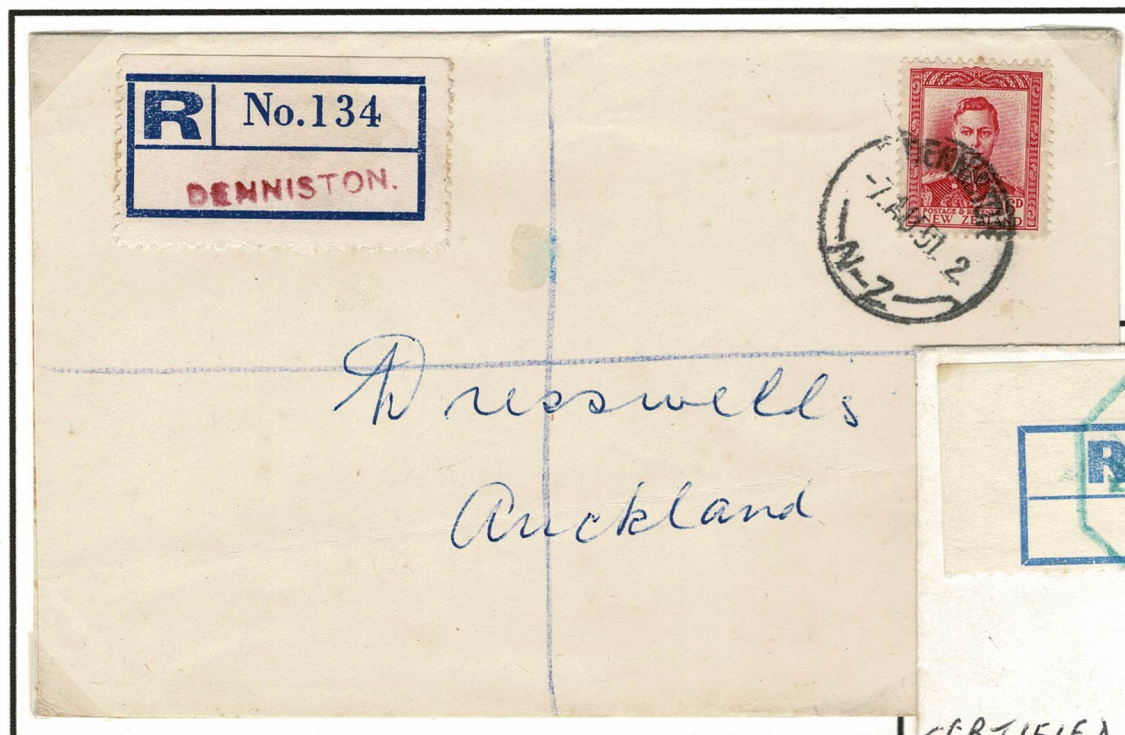
Advice postcard with ½ d KE stamp - [correct postcard rate December 1907-1915] cancelled Nelson "C" Class 16 MY 11 4pm, received Denniston 18 MY 11

Any supplies for residents, shop-keepers or hoteliers at Denniston or Burnett's Face had to be transported up to the Plateau. Up until about 1884, the only access was via the **Incline**, not only for supplies but for people as well. There are stories about the experiences of newcomers to the Plateau. Some never came down again - until in a coffin! When the **bridle horse track** was formed, foot access improved and horse riding became possible. The **road** was not completed until about 1913 - it was narrow with many switchbacks often requiring two attempts to get round. When the coal was transported by truck after both the Incline and Aerial ropeway were closed [1953], major widening was required so the articulated vehicles could negotiate the bends.

From the above items, it is evident that some intrepid sale representatives made the journey before the road was formed. There are comments in "The Hill" [by Cecelia Adams, published 1971] and "Coaling from the Clouds" by R J Meyer [1971] that the merchants were unhappy with the West Coal Company acting as common carriers, from Conn's Creek, taking orders and getting supplies direct from Westport firms and bypassing the local merchants.

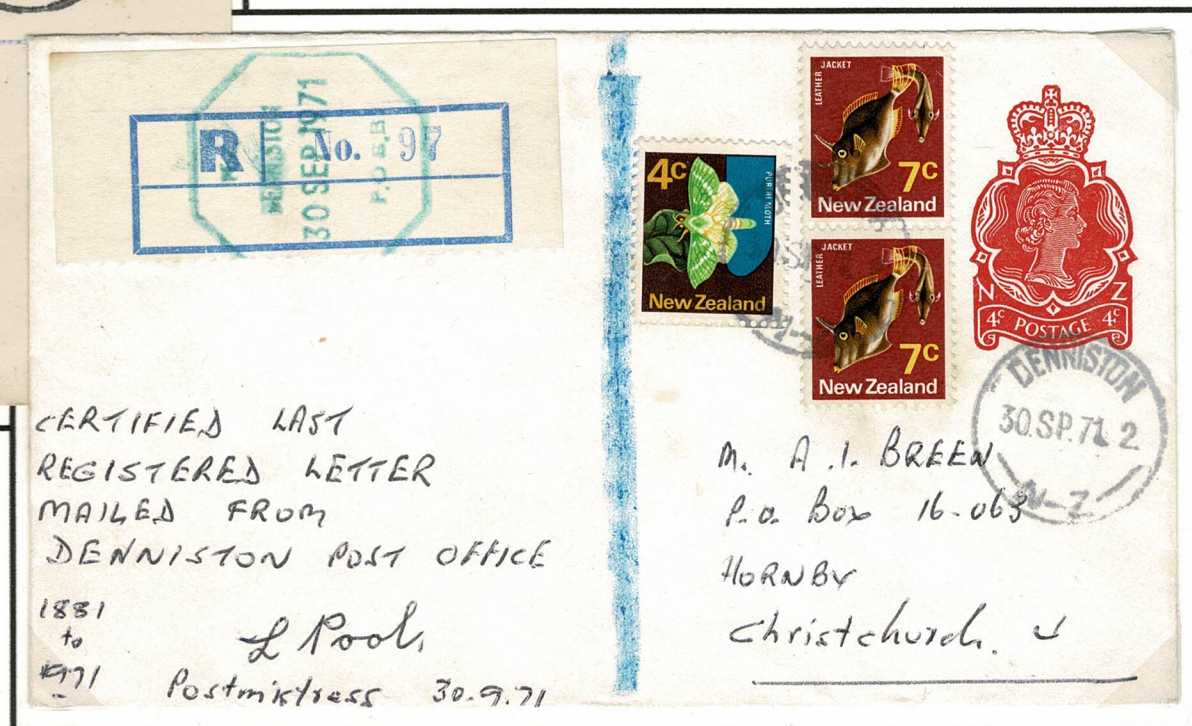


Denniston 13 MY 35 on official King's Jubilee First Airmail New Zealand - Australia - England - May 1935. [one stamp lost]. The postmaster at Denniston [G C C Curry 29/11/30 to 10/7/35] missed noticing the 4 airmail stamps on the back of the envelope. This was noticed at Westport where the **WP 1 Obliterator** from 1860's was used to cancel the stamps. Post Office regulations did permit a dated cancellation to be used in this situation but needs manuscript annotation



Registered Denniston 7 AU 51 with straight line on R-label.

This was just after the 1951 'Waterfront Strike' had ended. The Buller miners [881 men] went on strike in sympathy 6 March 1951 and returned after a secret ballot 6 July 1951 - 85 days



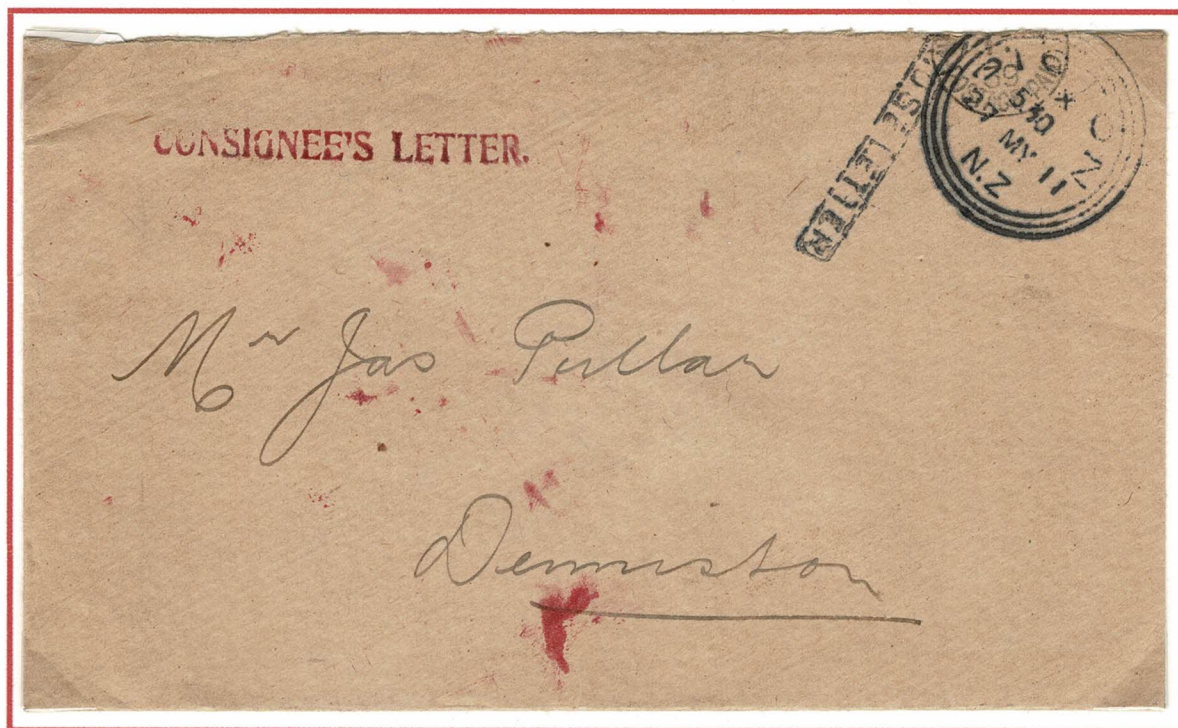
Registered Denniston 30 SP 71 with Octagonal P.O.S.B. 30 SEP 1971 on label and receipt [in envelope] Collector mail Endorsed

"Certified last Registered Letter mailed from Denniston Post Office 1881 to 1971" signed "L Poole Postmistress 30.9.71"

CERTIFIED LAST REGISTERED LETTER MAILED FROM DENNISTON POST OFFICE
1881 to 1971
L Poole, Postmistress 30.9.71

Consignee's Letters

A **Consignee's Letter** contains the details of a consignment of goods sent at the same time, usually by a supplier - the **Consignor** - to a merchant. The Consignee's letter would be sent by the postal service while the goods themselves went by rail or ship or both to their destination. In some cases the consignee's letter was despatched on the same transport system as the goods and travelled part or all of its journey before being given to a Post Office - this is the definition of a **Loose Letter** - a loose letter did not incur any additional postage. **Examples are uncommon.** These are each to **Mr J Pullar at Denniston** - store-keeper



Consignee's Letter hand stamp in red - seal on envelope has **Ross & Glendinning Limited Wellington.**

Moss type 4 model C 1d meter number 39 of the Company

Carried to **Picton** where cancelled "G" Class **27 MY 11** and boxed **Loose Letter** [Type 1 PSNZ Vol III P 267] Received **Denniston 29 MY 11**

Coastal Shipping SS Arahura at Picton 27 May and Westport 28 May 1911

Ross & Glendinning Limited was established in 1862, they established the **Roslyn Woollen Mills** and produced a variety of woollen goods on sale throughout New Zealand through its branches and agents - yarns, rugs, shawls, blankets - as well as a variety of hats - especially straw hats from its own factory

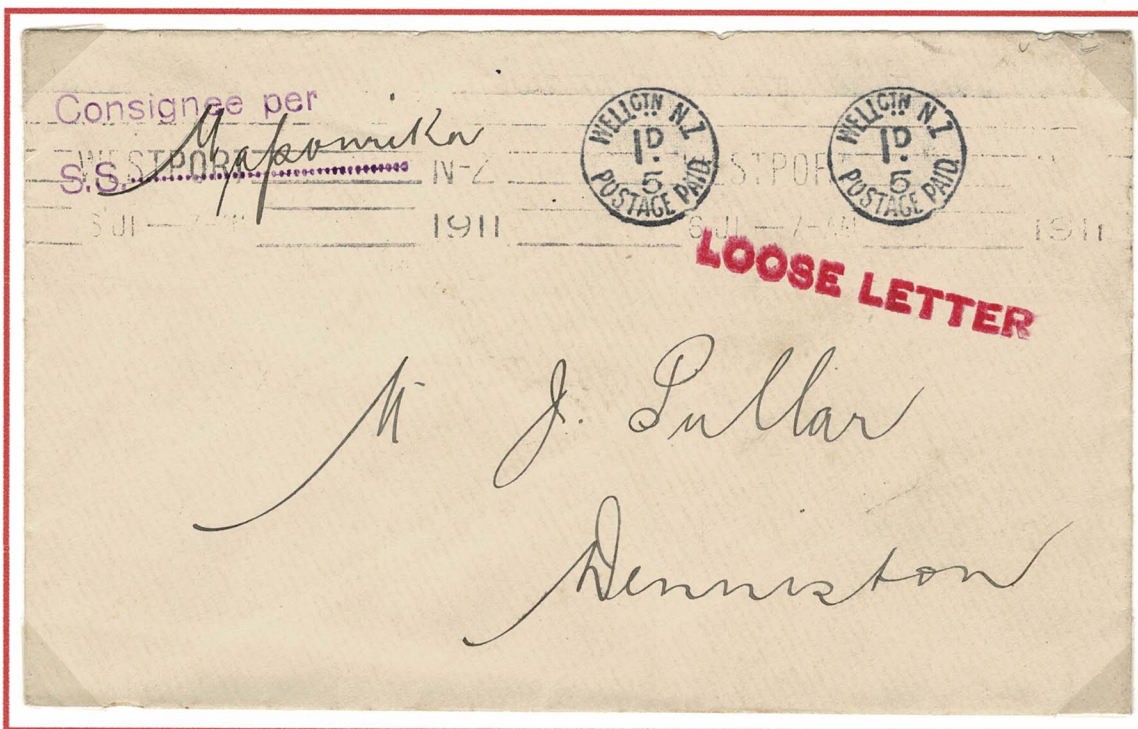


"Consignees letter" to Messers J Pullar & Co, Denniston, Westport

Addressed in same handwriting as address 1d Dominion cancelled Westport "F" Class **17 JE 11 1pm.**

No receiving Denniston datestamp.

Envelope has nothing to identify the consignor - it is possible that this was a letter from a Westport merchant who was despatching goods to Denniston.



Consignee per **S.S.** stamp with "**Mapourika**" added.
Addressed to "**Mr J Pullar Denniston**"

Envelope from **Joseph Nathan & Co. Ltd. Wellington.**

Postage paid with two strikes of **Moss meter** machine Type 4
model C - 1d - Number "5"

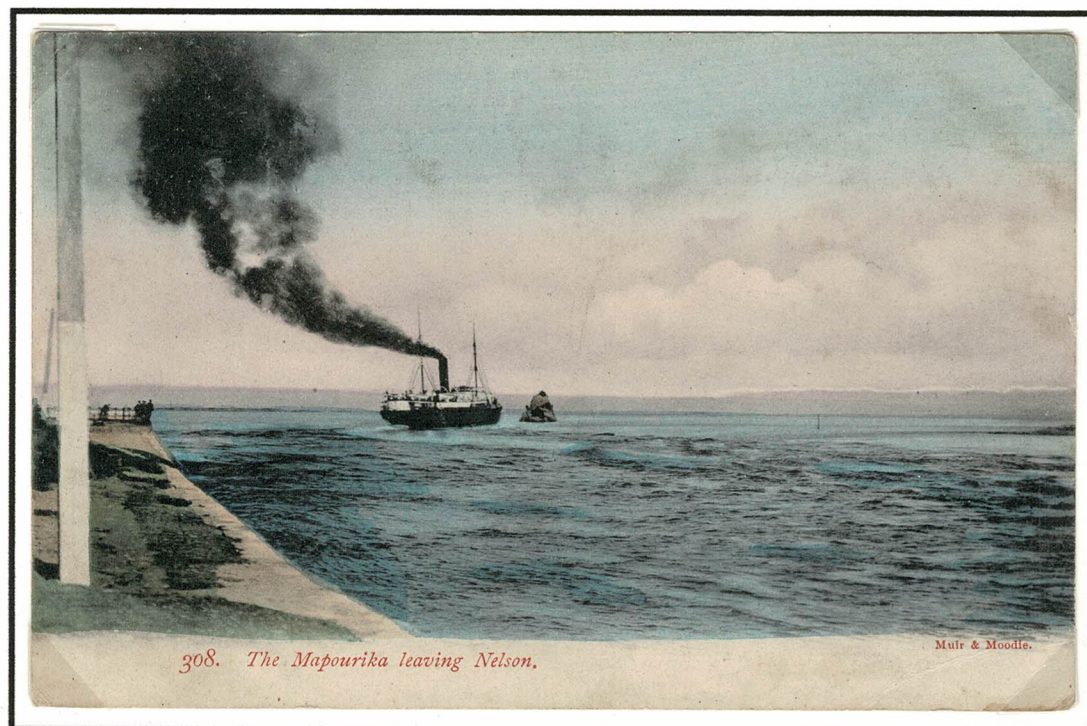
Postage was 1d with no additional charge for Consignee's letters
or for Loose Letters. No obvious explanation for **2d postage**

Meters cancelled **Westport** 6-line continuous [Saville] machine
6 JL 1911 7-AM

Has **Loose Letter** marking of Westport

Received **Denniston 6 JL 11.**

Established in 1873, **Joseph Nathan & Co** is best known as the Founder of "**Glaxo**" the fore-runner of Glaxo Smithkline the largest pharmaceutical company in the World. In 1893 the New Zealand Dairy Farmers Union had established the Bunnythorpe dairy factory in 1893. It was bought by Joseph Nathan Co. Ltd who began the first dried milk operations in New Zealand. 'Glaxo' became the brand name for their baby milk product. Nathan also dealt in simple stock including colonial produce, fancy goods, clocks, jewellery, ironmongery and patent medicines, fore-runners to latter-day vitamins and drugs. Joseph Nathan is known also for the technological development of refrigerated shipping and in 1882, the "**Dunedin**" made its first journey, delivering near perfect product to the UK.



Postcard, divided back, phototyped in Germany
"**308 The Mapourika leaving Nelson**"

Issued by Muir & Moodie Dunedin N.Z from their
Copyright Series of Views.

View of vessel with steam up and a cloud of coal smoke
from the West Coast coal used.

S.S. Mapourika was 1203 gt was launched in 1898 and
sold in 1921 becoming the "Ngaio"

The **Mapourika** and the **Arahura** were two of the Union
Steamship Co vessels. They served the West Coast with
regular runs between Wellington - Picton - Nelson -
Westport - Greymouth carrying passengers and general
cargo but not coal.

The **Mapourika** was contracted as **mail carrier** from
"**Greymouth north**" between 1901 and 1917.

DENNISTON MOTORS

The Original Motor Service

**DENNISTON, BURNETT'S FACE
WAIMANGAROA AND WESTPORT.**

For the convenience of the public the proprietors will run a direct service to and from Westport and the Hill.

Place of starting from Westport—
Post Office Hotel.

DAILY TIME-TABLE.

Mon., Tues., Wed., Thursday and Friday:

	a.m.	p.m.
Leave Burnett's Face	8.15	3.30
Leave Denniston	8.30	4.0
Leave Westport	8.0	4.0

SATURDAY:

	a.m.	p.m.
Leave Burnett's Face for Waimangaroa	7.30	3.45
Leave Denniston for Waimangaroa	7.45	4.15
Leave Burnett's Face for Westport	9.45	
Leave Denniston for Westport	10.0	
Leave Westport for Denniston and Burnett's Face		5.10

Granity, Seddonville and Westport trains will be met daily to suit passengers going to the Hill.

SUNDAY SERVICE.

Leave Burnett's Face 1.15 p.m. for Westport.

Leave Denniston 1.30 p.m. for Westport.

Leave Westport 9 p.m. for Hill.

Orders will be received and parcels collected and delivered with expedition, thus saving railage and delay.

Special Trips.—Sporting bodies specially arranged for. Contracts arranged.

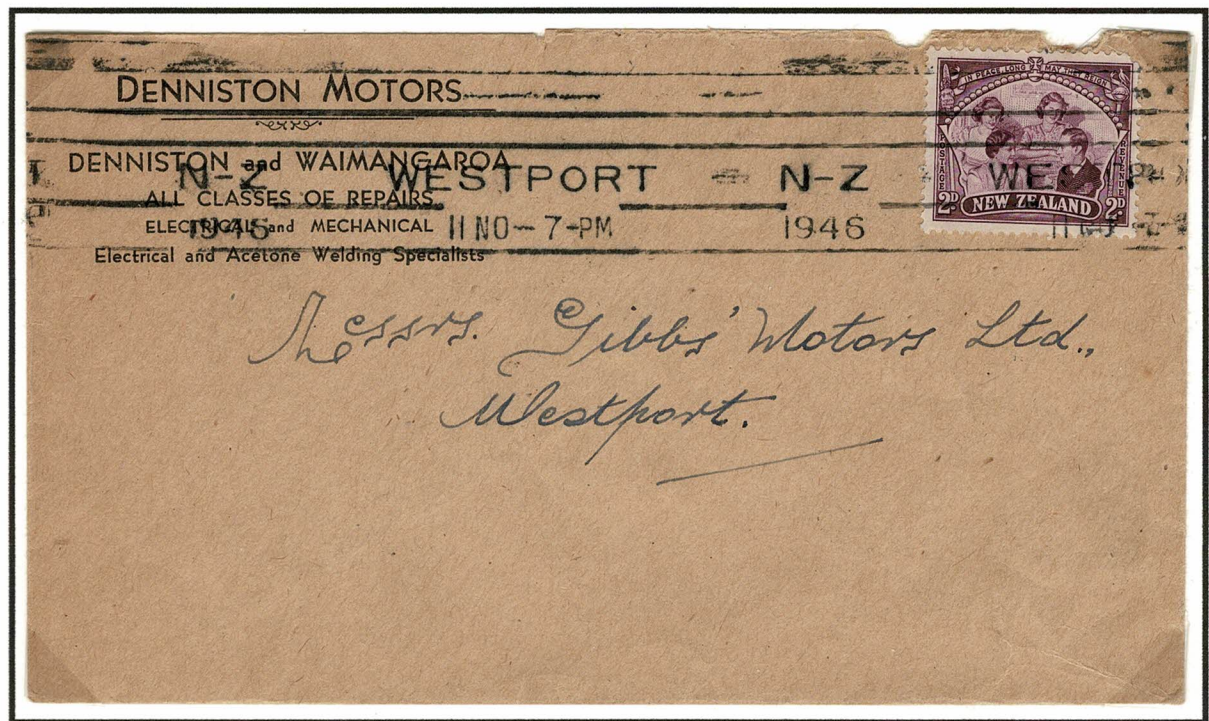
Supplies of Benzine, Oils, Tyres and accessories available.

Repairs and adjustments executed by qualified engineer.

G. Gardiner & J. Wilson
PROPRIETORS.

Phone No. 9.

Grey River Argus February 1927

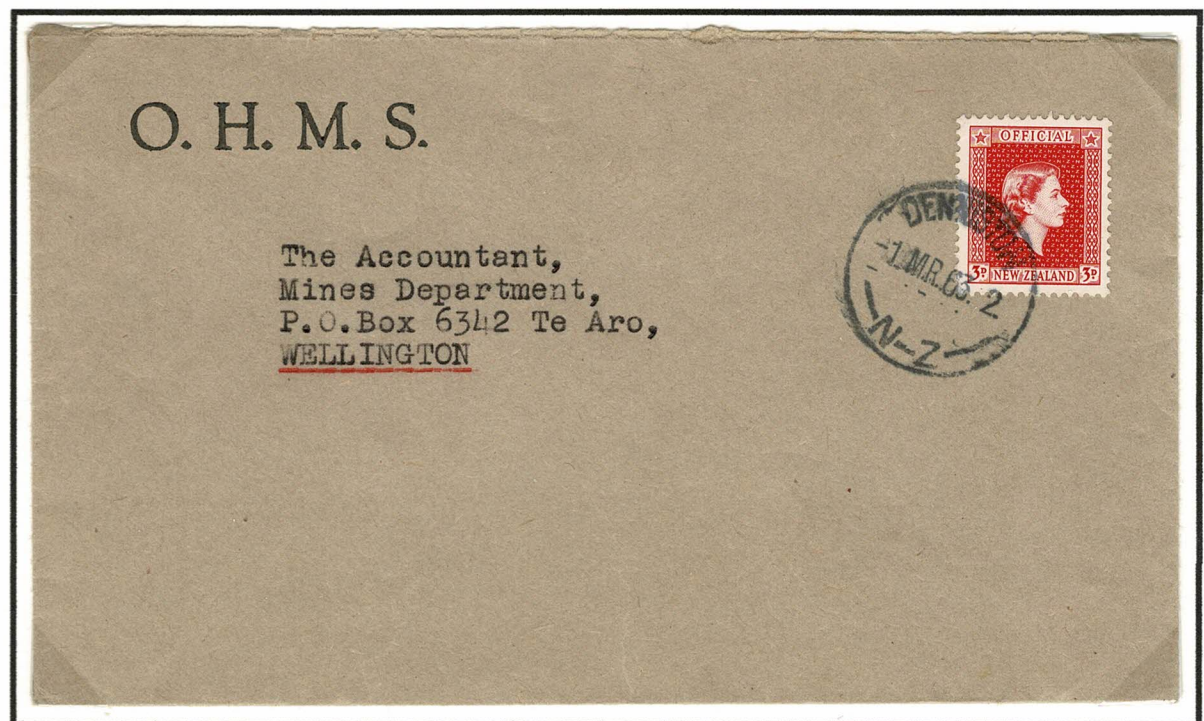


Denniston Motors of Denniston and Waimangaroa envelope.

Cancelled Westport Saville machine 11 NO 1946 7-PM.

Papers Past research show Denniston Motors were licensed for passengers from 1927 to 1938

Note The text in the advertisement "to and from Westport and the Hill" - and "passengers going to the Hill" the local name for Denniston!

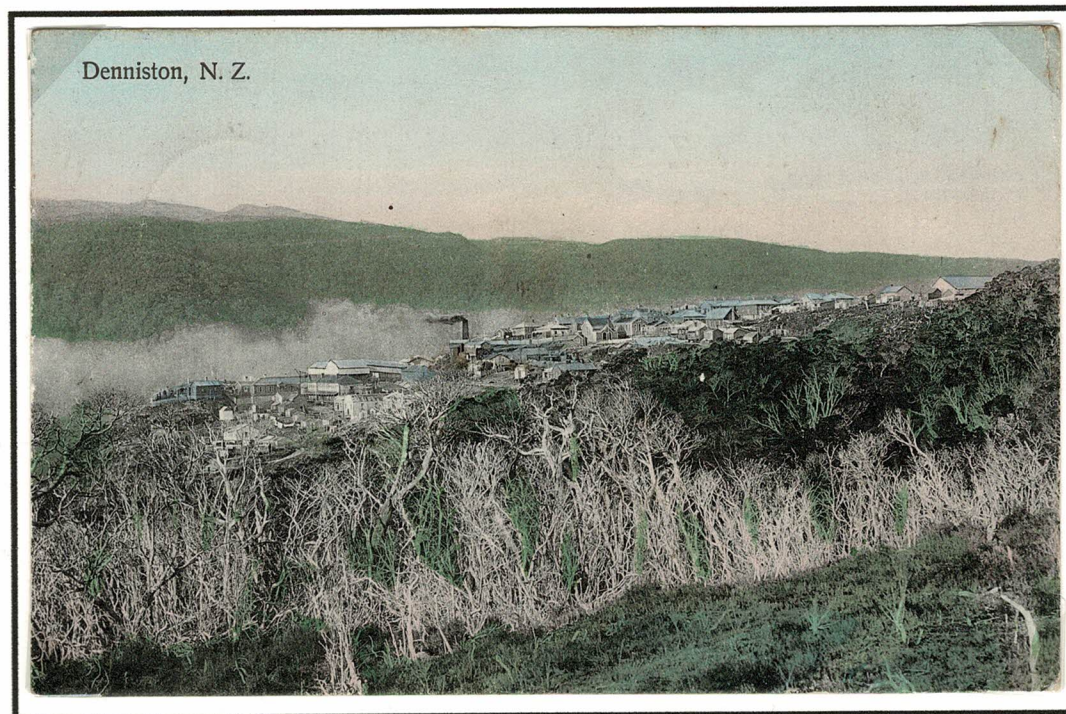


O.H.M.S envelope 3rd official cancelled Denniston 1 MR 63 to Mines Department, Wellington

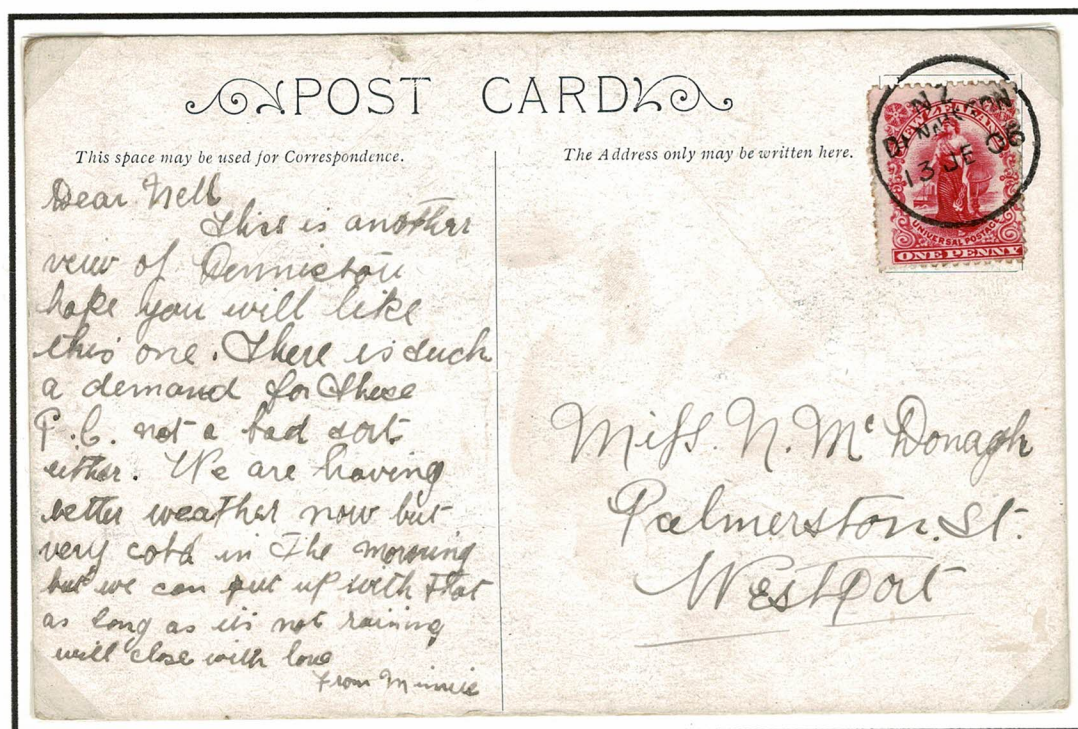
When State Coal Mines took over the Westport Coal Company [WCC] mines at Denniston, the Mines Department took over the WCC office at the Brakehead near the top of the Incline



Detail from the postcard shows the **Power House chimney** which was behind the Coal Bins at Brakehead at top of Incline. It was damaged in the 1929 Murchison earthquake



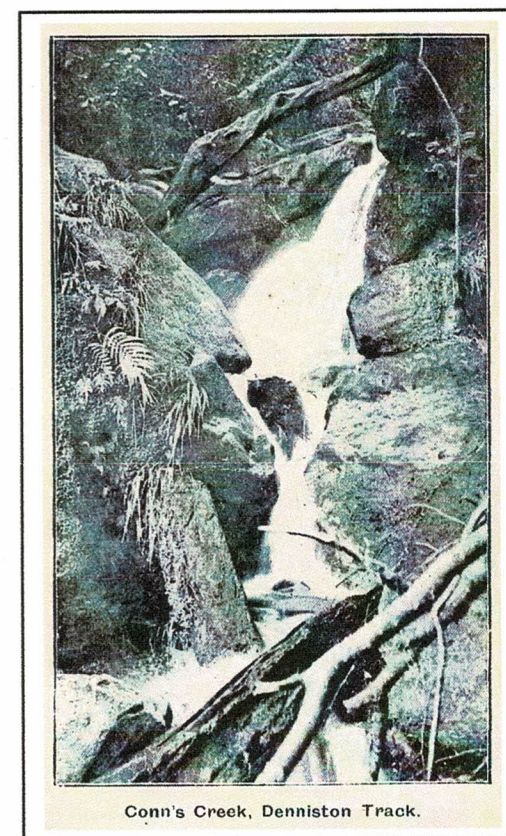
"Denniston, N.Z." divided back postcard issued by Brown Bros., Millerton, N.Z. mailed at **Waimangaroa Jn 30 SP 11**, to a Wellington Hotel address



Postcard "**Conn's Creek, Denniston Track**"
Divided back mailed **Denniston "A" Class 13 JE 06** No print details

Message: *"This is another view of Denniston hope you like this one. There is such a demand for these PC not a bad sort either. We are having better weather now but very cold in the morning but we can put up with that as long as it's not raining."*

Denniston average rainfall is over 2.5 meters



Conn's Creek is named after a Mr Conn and Party who picked up a 5½ oz gold nugget in the Waimangaroa River in March 1879.



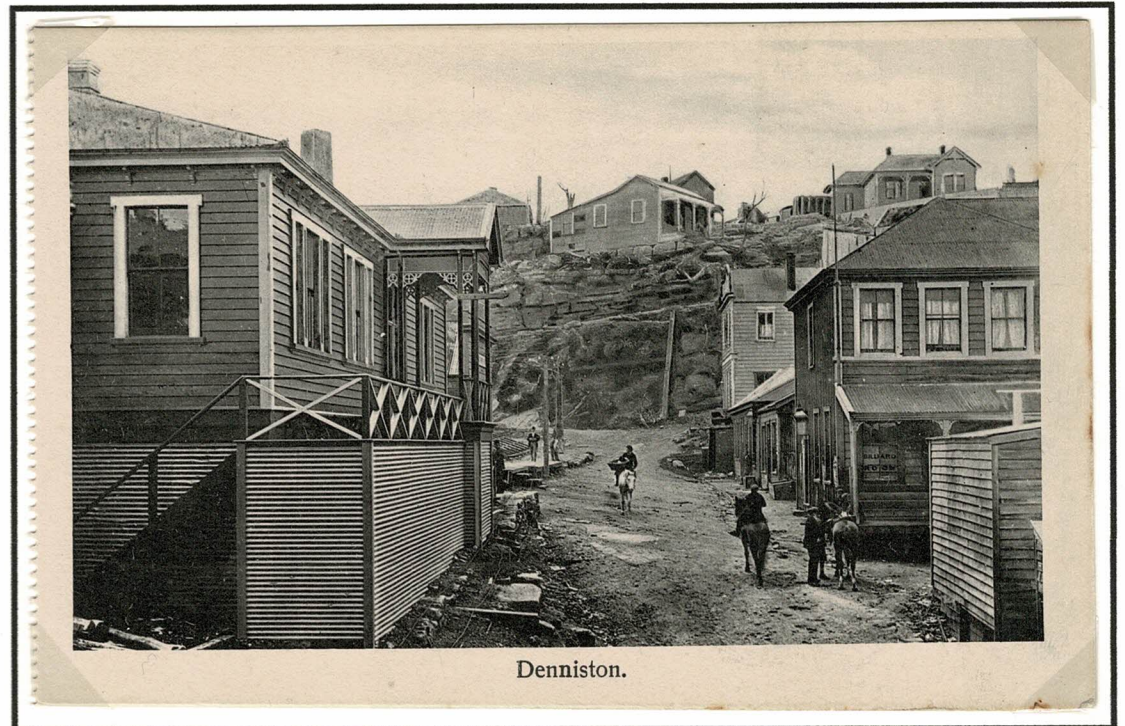
'Denniston Plateau 1997B' divided back postcard with no photographer or print details.

View is from the north-east looking across one of the **dams** towards the coast - hidden by mist.

The dam was used to provide water for the **upper brake**. The braking system resembled a direct-acting horizontal winding engine, but the action was directly opposite. Water was used to check the action of the pistons, instead of steam to give them motion. The water was drawn off at each stroke and replaced with a fresh supply, as the severe pressure would raise it to boiling point. The braking system had to handle the 12 ton loaded wagon on the steep incline.

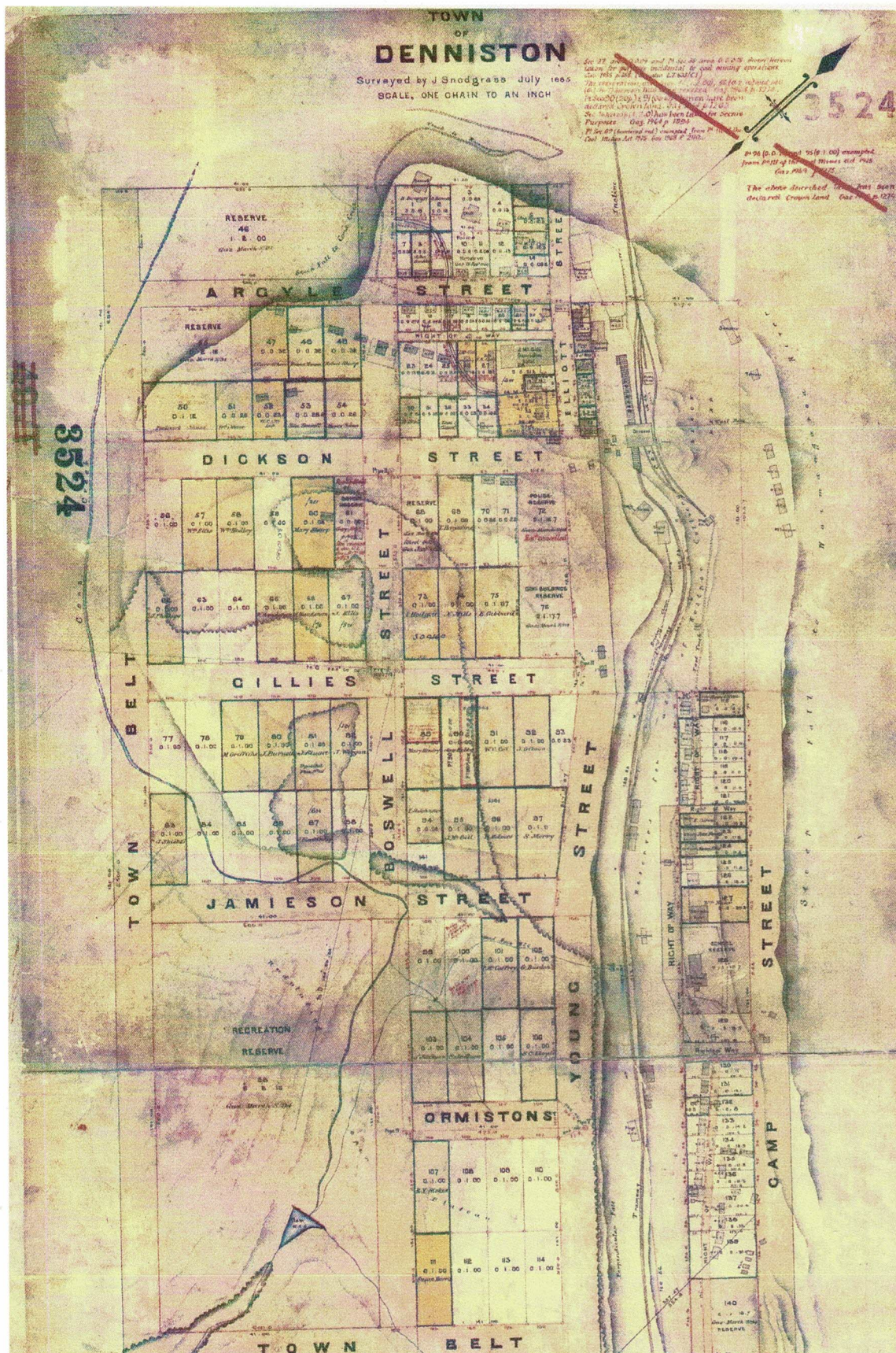


Exhibitor's photo 1984 of one of the last houses



"Denniston" from the postcard booklet "24 beautiful Views of Westland"

View shows "main street" looking up from the east with Mulholland's Hotel on the right and Mine Manager's house at left. Two horses can be seen. References indicate that horses were uncommon until the road was developed in 1913 and were used by the various mine managers to access the mines and by the doctor when needed.



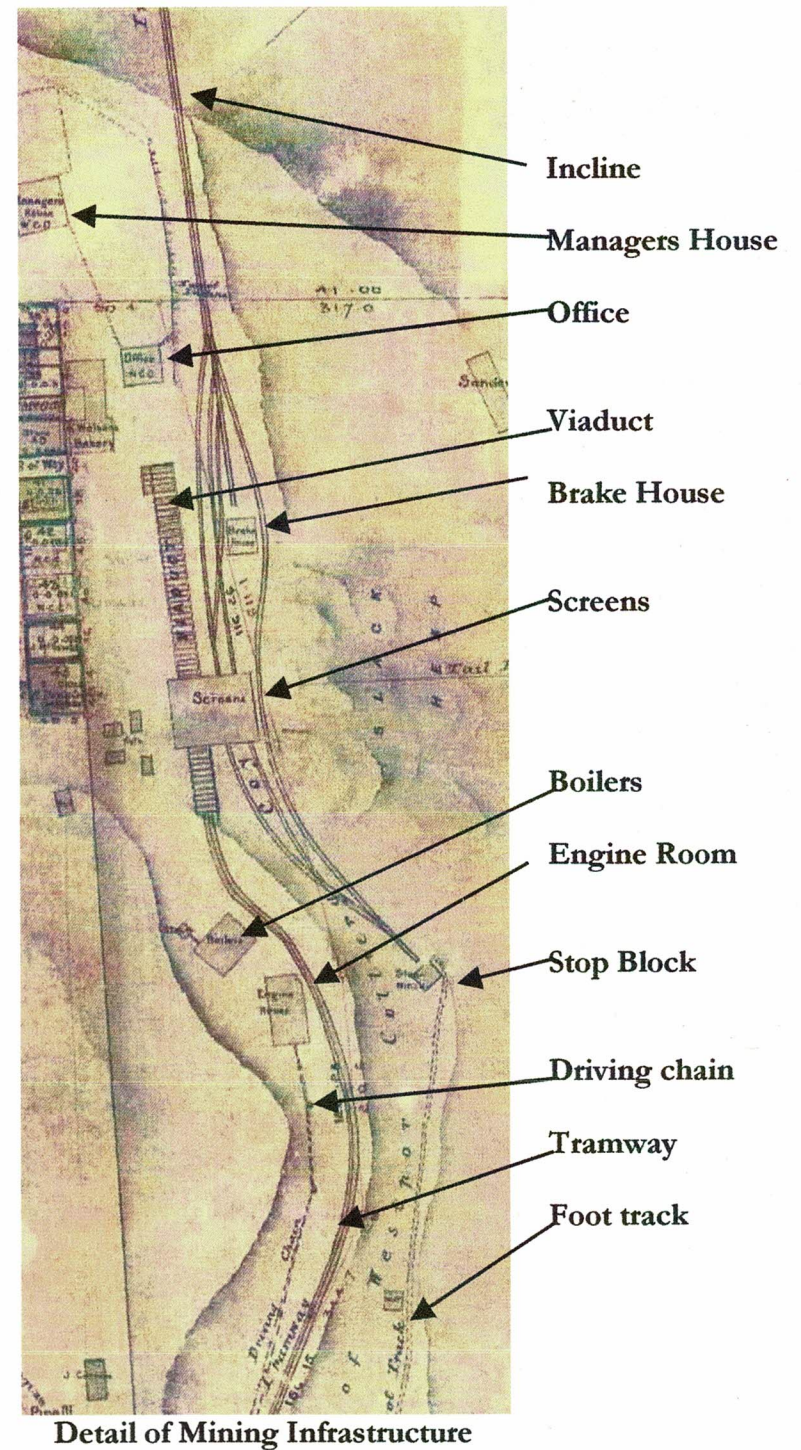
Town of Denniston Surveyed by J Snodgrass July 1885

Scale one chain to an inch

Original in National Archives Coloured reproduction from Exhibitor's Library

Richardson in "The Denniston Miners' Union" comments on Page 11

"A surveyors' map of Denniston drawn in 1885. the reality was somewhat different. Denniston was them and remained for some time, little more than a camp."



Detail of Mining Infrastructure

Denniston Group - Specific References:

"Coaling from the Clouds" - "The Mount Rochfort Railway and the Denniston Incline" R J Meyer, 1971

"The Hill" - "The Story of Denniston" Ceceila Adams, 1971

"The Denniston Miners' Union" - "A Centennial History 1884-1984" Len Richardson, 1984

"Silk Amongst the Coal" - From Wales to Burnetts Face and beyond" Beatrice June Fayen, 1994

"Denniston Then and Now" Les Wright for Friends of the Hill, 1998

"The Spirit of Denniston Hill" Dai Hayward, 2003

"On Denniston" DVD, Memory Line Productions, 2004

"Denniston's Incline" - "Coal From the Clouds" Bill Prebble, 2008

"Life on Denniston Plateau" DVD by Helen Bollinger for Friends of the Hill, 2015

Burnett's Face

The settlement was named after James Burnett by Julius von Haast, in 1860, who, having found loose coal explored and found a seam of coal under a coating of moss. It was in a narrow valley about 2km above Denniston that wound its way further back to the hills where the mines were later developed. Burnett's Face was a creek, a wide road alongside which was the rope road to carry coal from the mines and houses, shops, and hotels, built in terrace fashion on each side. Nothing remains now.

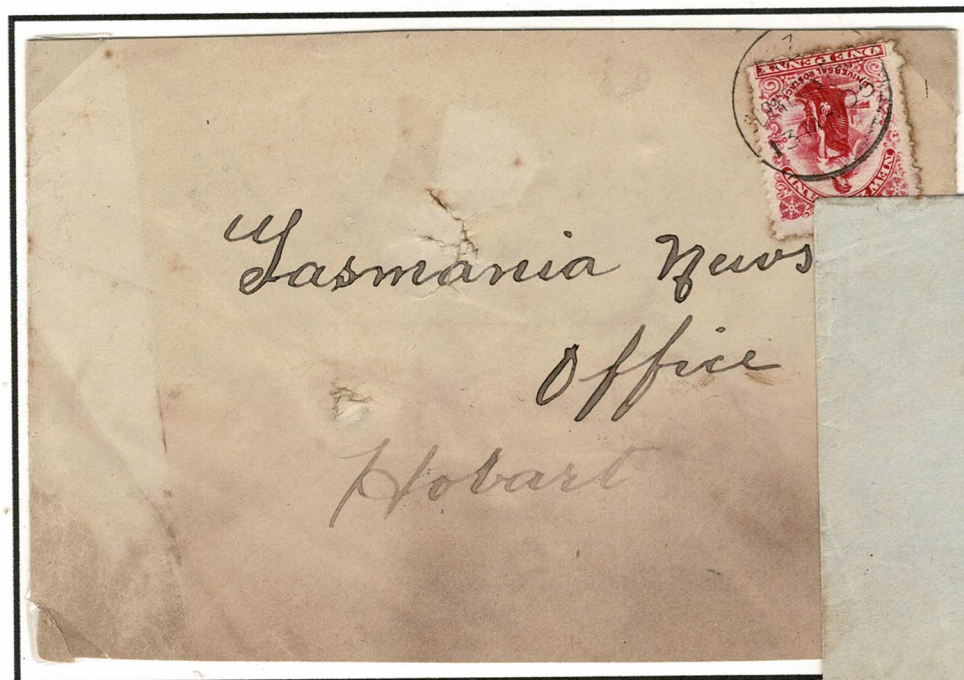
The **Coalbrookdale** mine [1889-1944] and **Ironbridge** [1893-1945] were the initial mines above Burnett's Face. The coal was transported from each mine by ropeways merging at Burnett's Face then by tramway to the Bins at Denniston. **Peak population was 627 at 1911 census - the peak production was in 1910 with 348,000 tons.**

Postal Matters

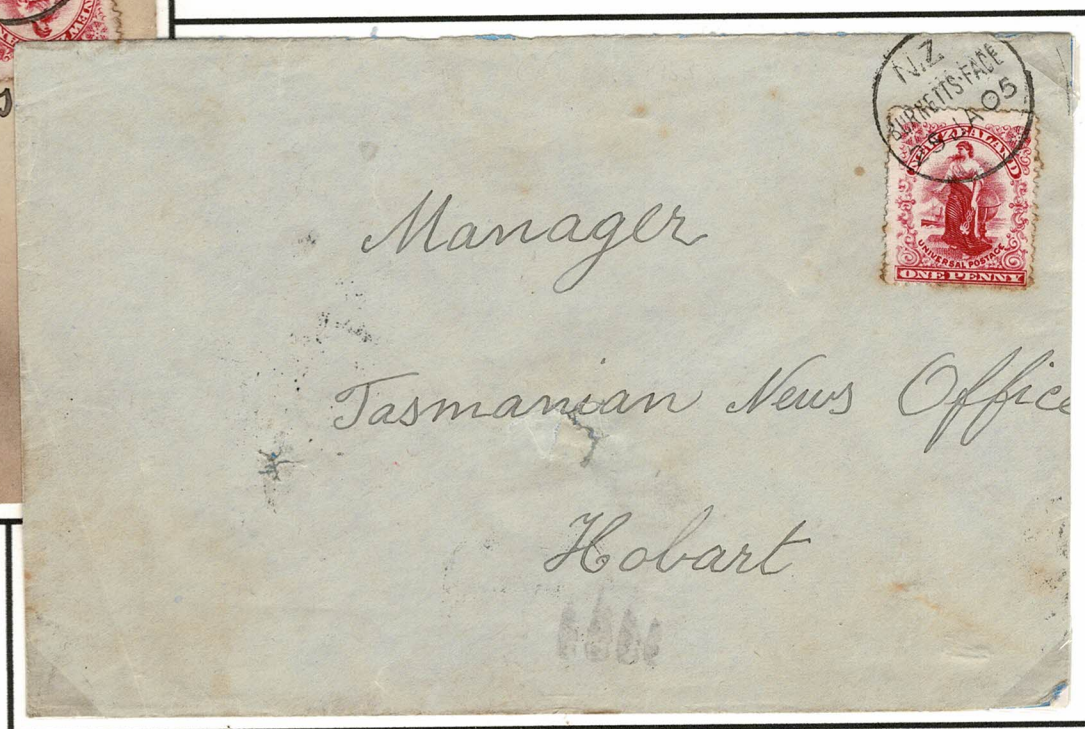
Burnett's Face Post Office opened **1 January 1891** with Ann Button as postmistress. The mail from Denniston was carried on foot along the track, later it was sent in an empty coal tub, when the track was improved horses were used and from 1915 when the road was developed, by car. The office was made permanent 6 June 1924, it was in a small building adjacent to a store which caught fire 2 October 1928 but the Post Office was saved by a bucket brigade. George Pullar, general provision merchants, considered taking over the Post Office in 1928 but eventually decided against [in Post Office archives]. There was a postal delivery daily, from at least 1934, to the three areas Cedar [at Ironbridge mine entrance area], Gully [the main settlement], and Coalbrookdale [at the site of that mine].

The apostrophe was officially removed **1 June 1951**. It was downgraded to **Telephone Office 26 February 1953** and closed 15 April 1957. It used an "A" Class until replaced by "J" Class in 1921 which was itself replaced in 1923 by another "J" Class datestamps.

27 JL 91	31 MY 92	14 DE 99	17 JL 03	28 AP 13	18 NO 17
Left stamp repaired re-perfed		Burnett's Face "A" Clas			



Burnett's Face 13 MR 05 via Westport 13 MR 05, Wellington machine MAR 15, 1905, to Hobart MR 24 1905



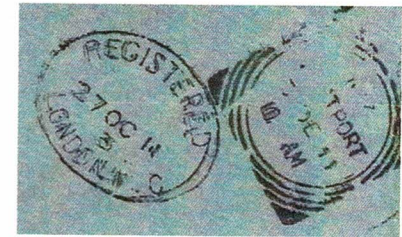
Burnett's Face 25 JA 05 via Westport 25 MR 05, Wellington machine 27 JAN 1905, to Hobart 4 Fe 05 1905

					
26 OC 21	11 MR 22	11 JL 29.2	6 AP 38	3 AU 48.2	26 JL 49.2
"J" 29 copy proof	"J" 25 copy proof	Burnett's Face "J" Class 25mm			



Inwards mail to Burnett's Face

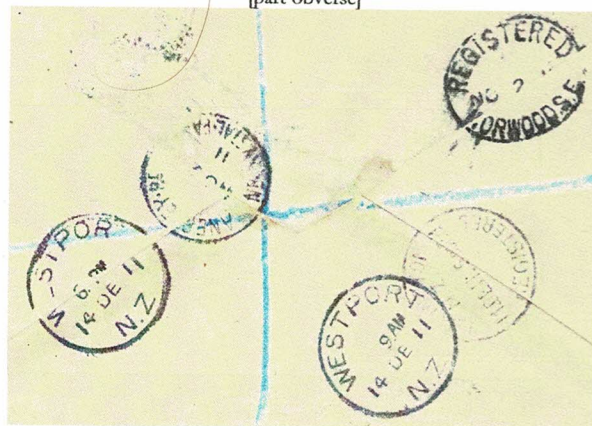
Registered Charing Cross OC 27 11, London Registered 27 OC 14
with Wellington Registered, **Westport "F" Class 7 DE 11**
Addressed to Westport but redirected with
"C/o Pullar Burnett's Face"
No receiving Burnett's Face datestamp

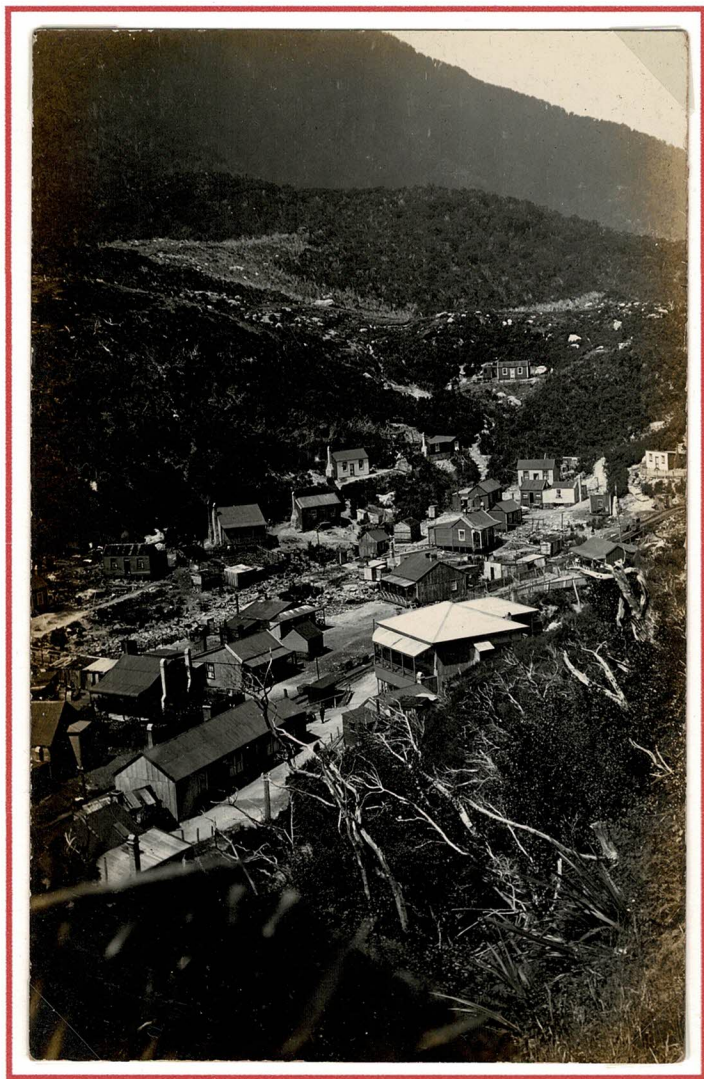


It is possible that addressees **"JB and Frank Barton"** were part of the Australian **Barton Bros Circus** that toured the South Island in 1911 showing at Reefton, Waiuta, Kumara, Hokitika, Greymouth and Westport during **October 1911**. I can find no references to the Circus showing at Denniston or Burnett's Face

Inwards mail to Burnett's Face

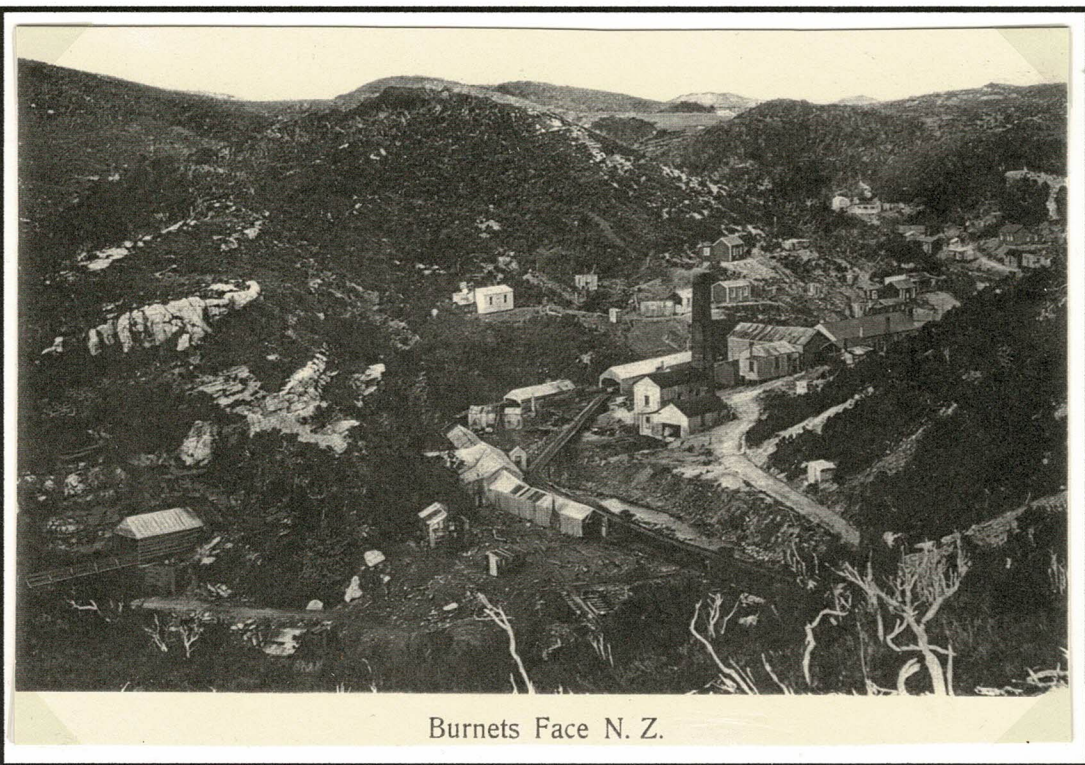
Registered at Norwood - adhesives cancelled Anerley PO Anerley-Sta
- Ealing NO 2 11 with Registered Norwood NO 2 11, Wellington
Registered 11 DE 11, Westport "B" Class 14 DE 11 9am
Westport "B" Class 14 DE 11 6pm when redirected with
"C/o Pullar Bros Burnett's Face Denniston"
No receiving Burnett's Face datestamp.
[part obverse]



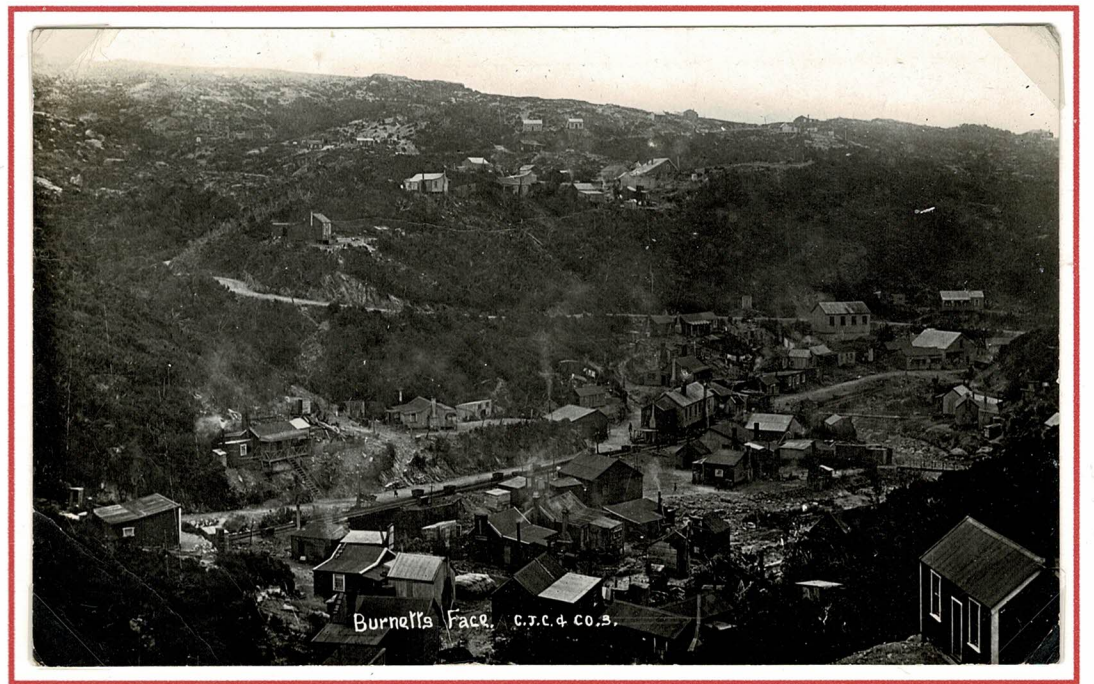


Undivided back real
 photograph postcard
 No details
 View is Burnett's Face
 looking toward Mt William

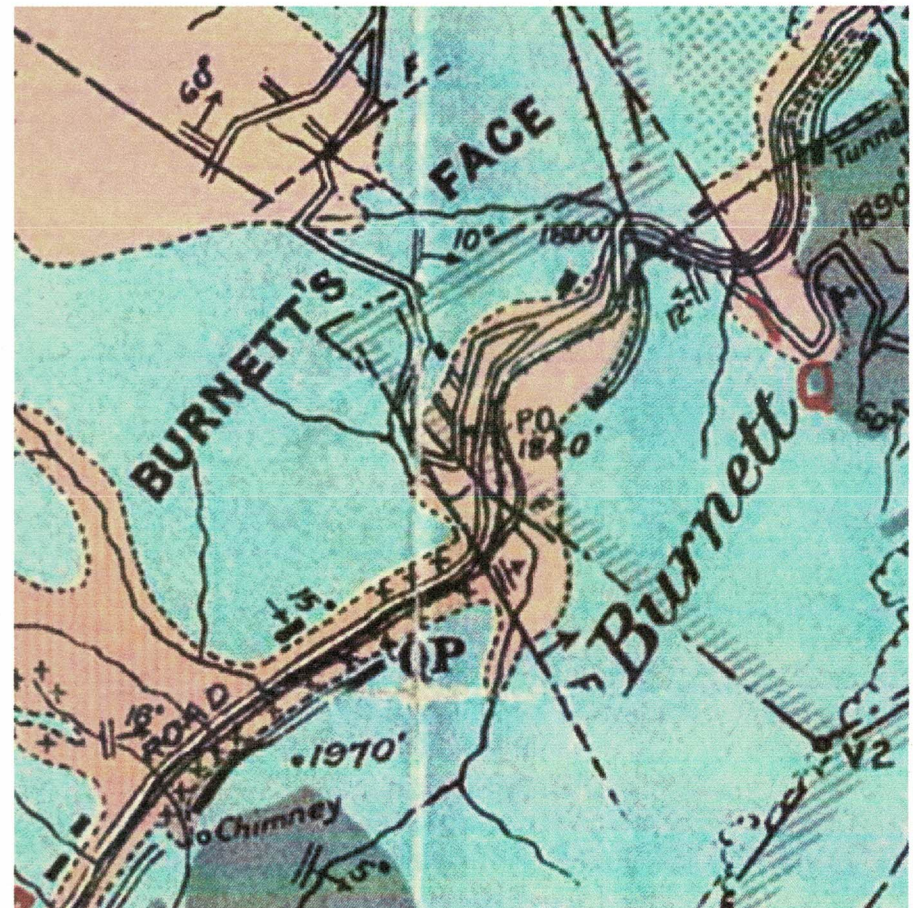
"Burnets Face N.Z" postcard - no details



Burnets Face N.Z.



Divided Back real photograph "**Burnetts Face C.J.C & Co.s**" produced by Frank
 Duncan, Auckland [after 1915]



Detail from 1914 map showing Burnett's Face with the Ropeway to Denniston at top with the ones from Ironbridge [right] and
 Coalbrookdale [left] Mines. **Post Office** is shown

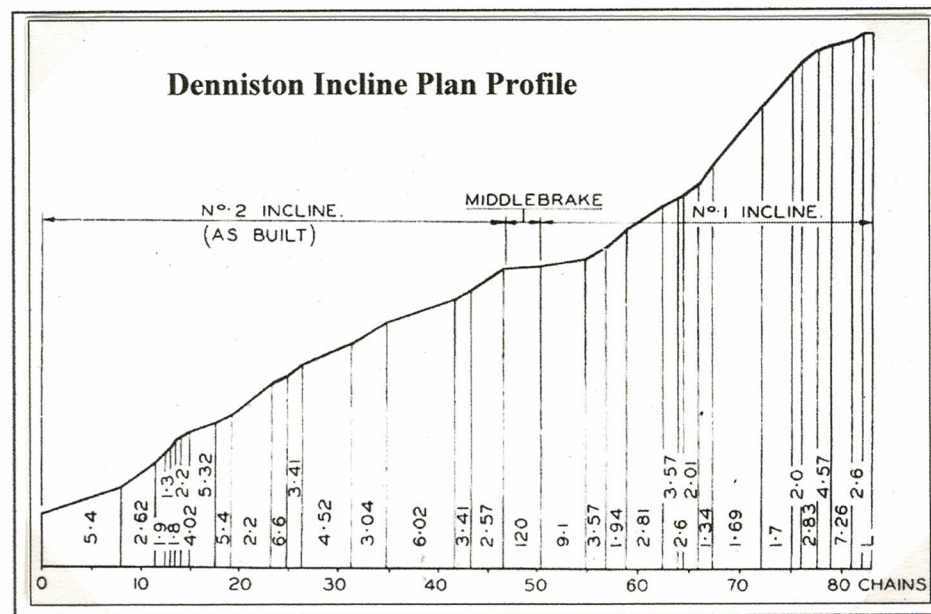
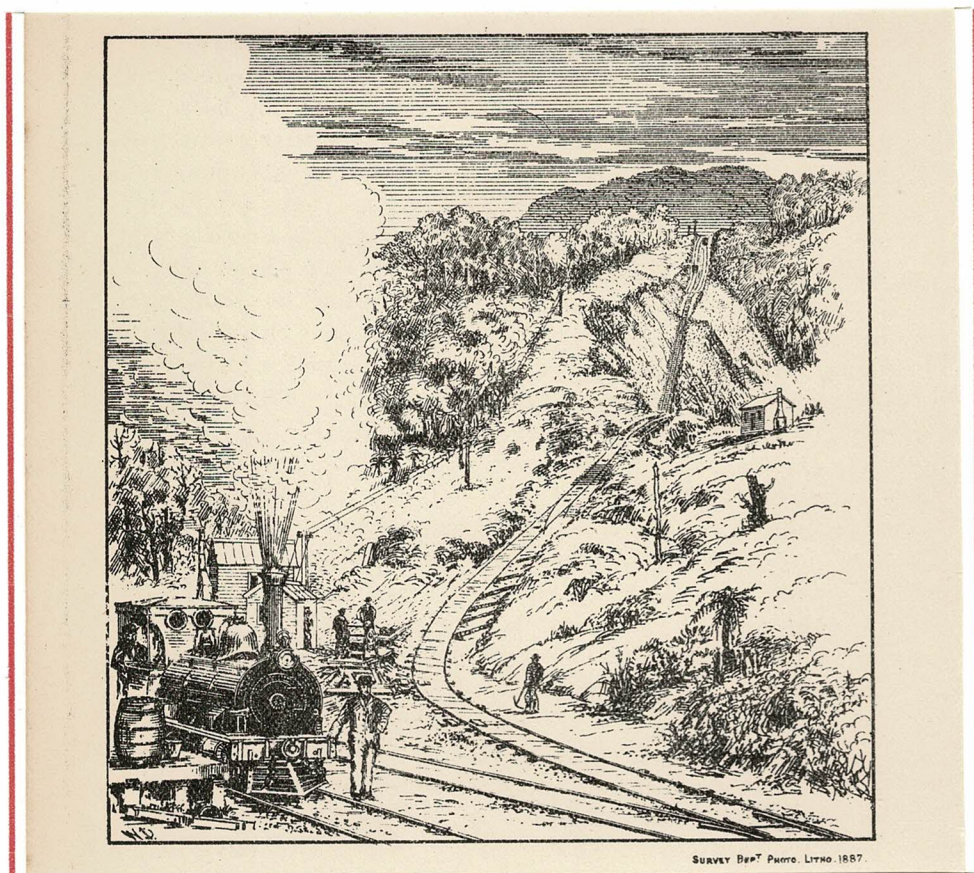
The Denniston Incline

This self-acting tramway incline ran from the Coal Bins serving the mines at Denniston and Burnetts face down to Conns's Creek at Waimangaroa. It had a total fall of 1700 feet over 83 chain of track - 518 meters over 1650 meters. The **Upper Incline** had 830 feet drop over 33 chain while the **Lower Incline** was 50 chain in length with a fall of 864 feet. The two parts had the **Middle Brake** between with the **Upper Brake** and **Lower Brake** all being used to control the wagons decent. The trucks were exchange between the Upper and Lower Incline at Middle Brake.

The Young Brothers were appointed engineers by the Westport Colliery Company [and the subsequent Westport Coal Company] to design and supervise the work and call tenders using the plans drawn up for the Coalbrookdale Colliery Company. The successful tender was from Messrs Day and Blair. Construction started in 1878 and went well with the 'last spike' being driven by Mary Burns, daughter of the Westport Colliery Company General Manager **24 October 1879**. The occasion was marked by a public holiday in Westport.

Construction continued on the Screens and Bins at Denniston and a 2 foot horse tramway to the coalface at the Banbury mine. The Top Brake was completed in mid-**April 1880** and the first loaded wagons totalling 60 tons were sent down the Incline to Waimangaroa and on to Westport. The Incline served many purposes including passengers, supplies and mail - the Denniston Track was a difficult route for walking or packhorse and the road was not constructed to Denniston until 1930.

The Incline and Westport Coal Company was taken over by **State Mines** on April 1, 1948. It **closed August 16, 1967** ending the life of a civil engineering project that was the largest in the Colony of New Zealand at the time of construction. It was referred locally as "The Eight Wonder of the World." Almost **13,000,000 tons of coal** was transported down the incline. The Inangahua earthquake May 24, 1968 wrecked most of the Upper Incline and would have caused its closure. In August 1969, tenders were called for the removal of all materials including rails and sleepers. The Upper Brakehead area is now a heritage site.



This Incline Plan is by Peter Dyer and is seen in all publications about the Denniston Incline [c 1971]

"Waimangaroa Incline" Westport coal Company - grade 1 in 2.45
 Survey Dept Photo Litho 1887. Was the frontispiece of the 1888 Report on the Mining Industry of New Zealand to Parliament

The Photograph from which this Litho was taken is shown on the cover of "Coaling From the Clouds" by R J Meyer and reproduced inside with *"Denniston Incline about 1880, shortly after its opening. The little "C" class locomotive waits to return to Westport. A short way up the incline is the arched bridge over Conn's Creek, and then the viaduct that carried the rails along the side of the spur."*

In "Denniston Incline Coal From the Clouds" by Bill Prebble, Page 30 shows this photograph and *"This view of the lower incline, seen from Conn's Creek circa 1881 ... Three bridges are clearly visible on the lower incline ... Beside the two workmen is a winch - this was used to pull forward empty wagons so the incline brake rope could be attached.... Representative of the first motive power to work the Conn's Creek branch, Dubs-built C-class locomotive of 1875..." Photo attributed to H T Lock.*

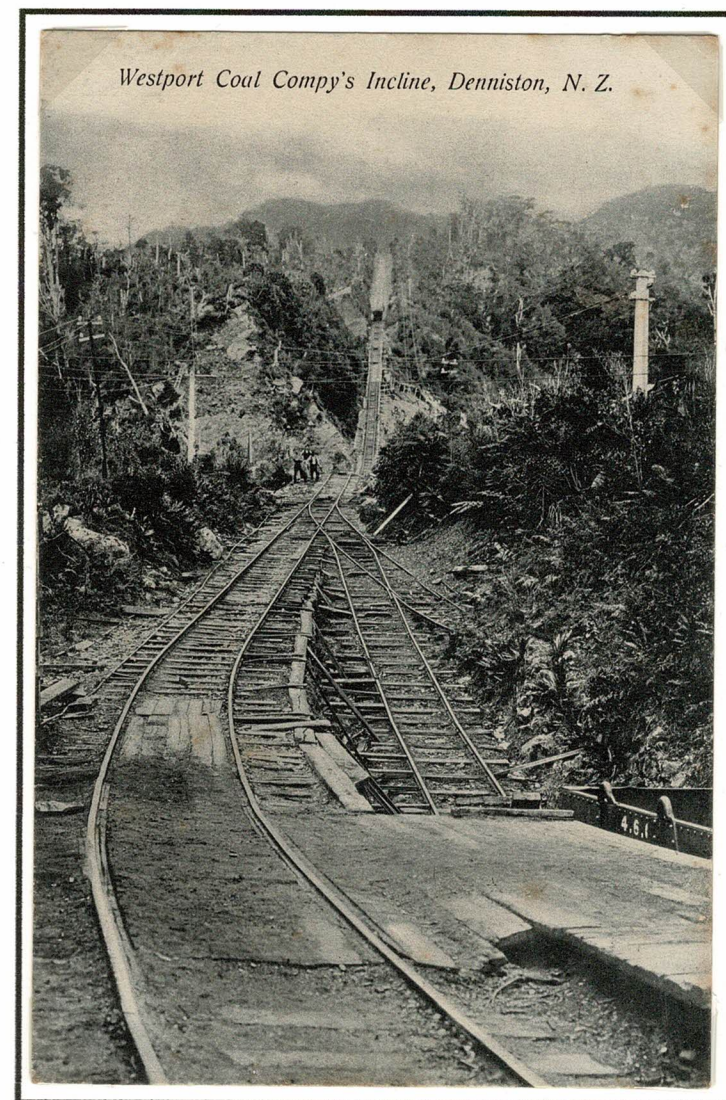
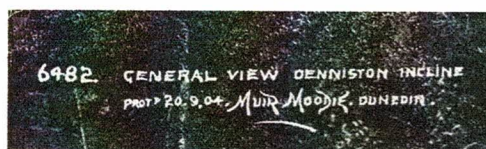


Muir & Moodie No. 6482. General View Denniston Incline. Westport

"General View Denniston Incline, Westport" No. 6482 Muir & Moodie,
Undivided back Issued by Muir & Moodie from their **Copyright Series of Views**

The photograph, attributed to Dominion Museum, which is reproduced in this postcard is featured as the Frontispiece to **"Coaling From the Clouds"** where the description reads:

"Conns Creek, and that locals fondly call the eighth wonder of the world - the Denniston Incline as seen from the lookout on the Denniston Track up to the mining village in 1904"



Westport Coal Compy's Incline, Denniston, N. Z.

"Westport Coal Comp's Incline, Denniston, N.Z."
Divided back, **"The Coast Series"** Printed in Berlin

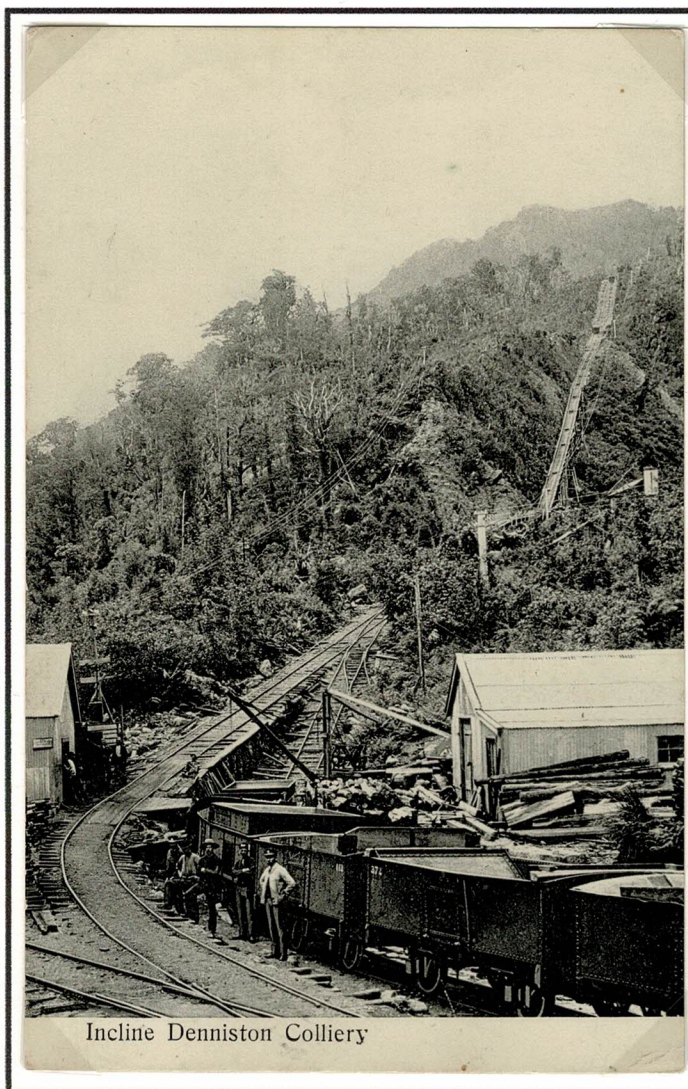
A photograph **"Lower Incline, Denniston"** Protd 20.9.04 Muir Moodie. Dunedin,. Is shown on P 31 of "Denniston Incline" - it is the photograph that is reproduced in this postcard as part of "The Coast Series" It is numbered 6481. the description reads:

"... 20 September 1904 looking from Conns Creek up the lower incline. Immediately to the left is a control shed for telephone communication with the brakeman at Middle Brake. Outside the shed is a lever controlling the points just up the incline, close to where three men are standing. These points provide access to the two lines in the foreground ... A full wagon is descending the incline and is about to run over a wooden viaduct that was later filled in ... After the descending wagon reaches the position immediately in front of the camera the incline rope will be swapped to the empty Q wagon barely visible in the right foreground."

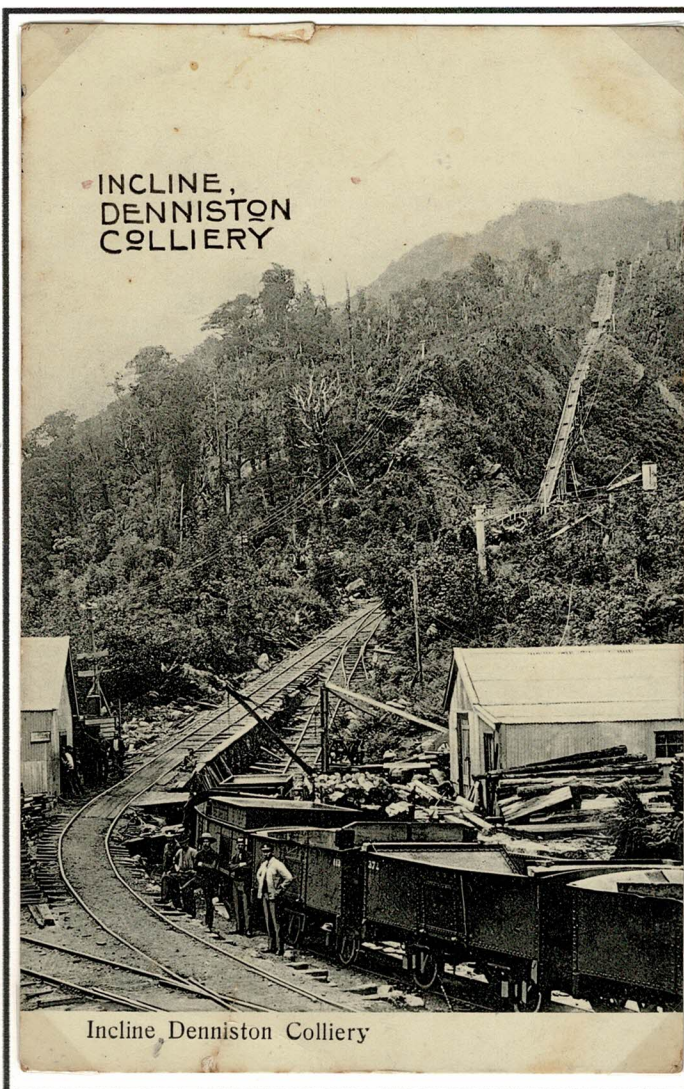
Both publications, "Coaling From the Clouds" and "Denniston Incline Coal From the Clouds" reproduce photographs which were taken by Muir & Moodie dated **20.9.04** - 6479 Upper Incline Denniston; 6481 General View Denniston Incline; 6482 Denniston from Waimangaroa; 6484 Waimangaroa.

Each has **"Protd 20.9.04 Muir Moodie, Dunedin"**

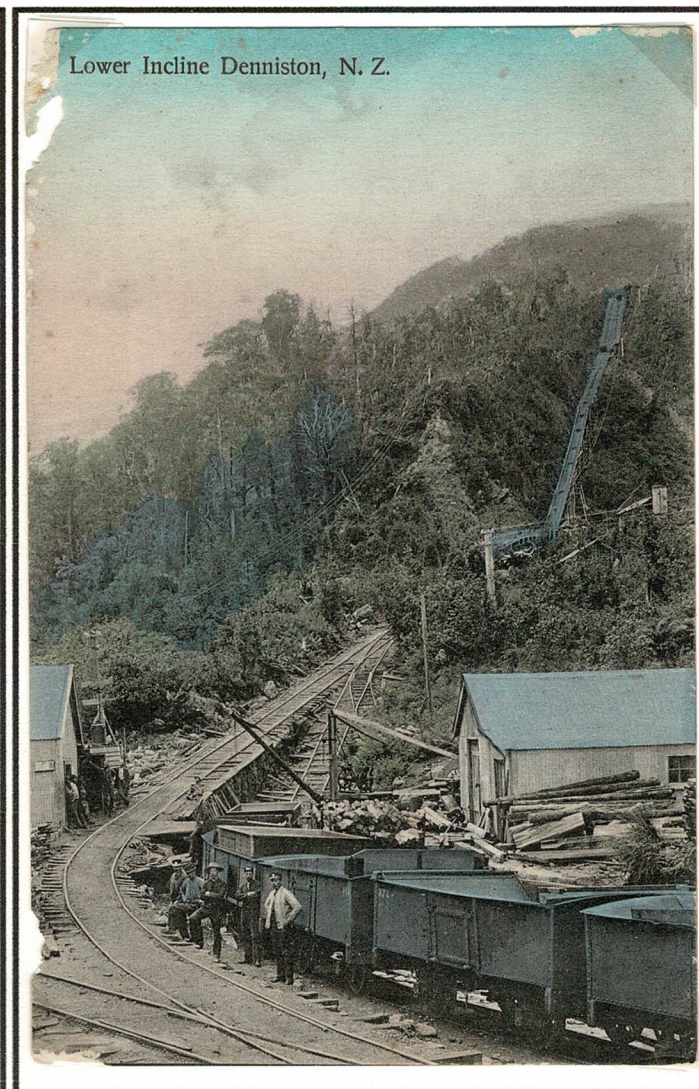
George Moodie, in 1904, embarked on an enormous undertaking for Muir & Moodie. This was to re-photograph the whole of New Zealand with a view to forming an up-to-date catalogue suitable for the new postcard market. These photographs [1904-1906] were taken with a whole-plate eight by six and half inch camera to produce views for the new "Postcard" series. To get these images, George would have had to carry his camera etc up the Denniston Track



Incline Denniston Colliery



Incline Denniston Colliery



Lower Incline Denniston, N. Z.

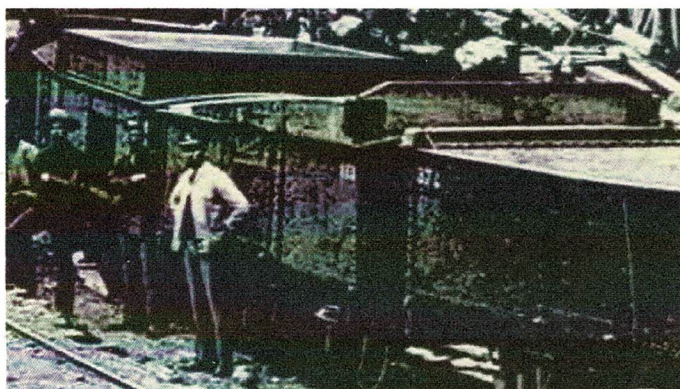
Incline Denniston Colliery, Real Photo Postcard.
 Issued by G Parkhouse, divided back used Westport
 "F" Class 15 FE 11

Incline Denniston Colliery, Real Photo Postcard.
 Issued by G Parkhouse, divided back used Dunedin
 machine AP 23 1913

Lower Incline Denniston, N.Z. issued by Brown
 Bros., Millerton, N.Z. Divided back unused

"Coal from the Clouds" P 36 has this image and attributes the Photograph to H T Locke [Correctly H T Lock] the information reads: *"Better arrangements for wagon handling at Conns Creek were evident in this picture, which was taken before 1900. The wagons were of early "O" class but were fitted with a fixed hopper arrangement to make discharge easier."*

"Denniston Incline" P 71 has a very similar image [photographer unknown] with *"A group of "O" wagons in the early 1890s... Of the five 6-ton fixed hopper O wagons visible, three have the basic wooden extension while the other two have the later central raised iron box extension."*



Left, detail from the postcard. The wagon in centre has the wooden extensions while the one at left has the raised iron box extension.

These wagons weighed 4 tons for a designated load of 6 tons of coal. There were too light for a descending full wagon to haul an empty up the incline. The modifications, wooden extensions at one end and sides, made at Westport enabled the wagons to carry 6½-7 tons - creating sufficient weight to work the incline within the capacity of the haulage gear. The later modifications with the raised iron central box section served the same purpose but were more durable.

Incline Denniston Colliery, Real Photo Postcard.
 Issued by G Parkhouse, divided back.

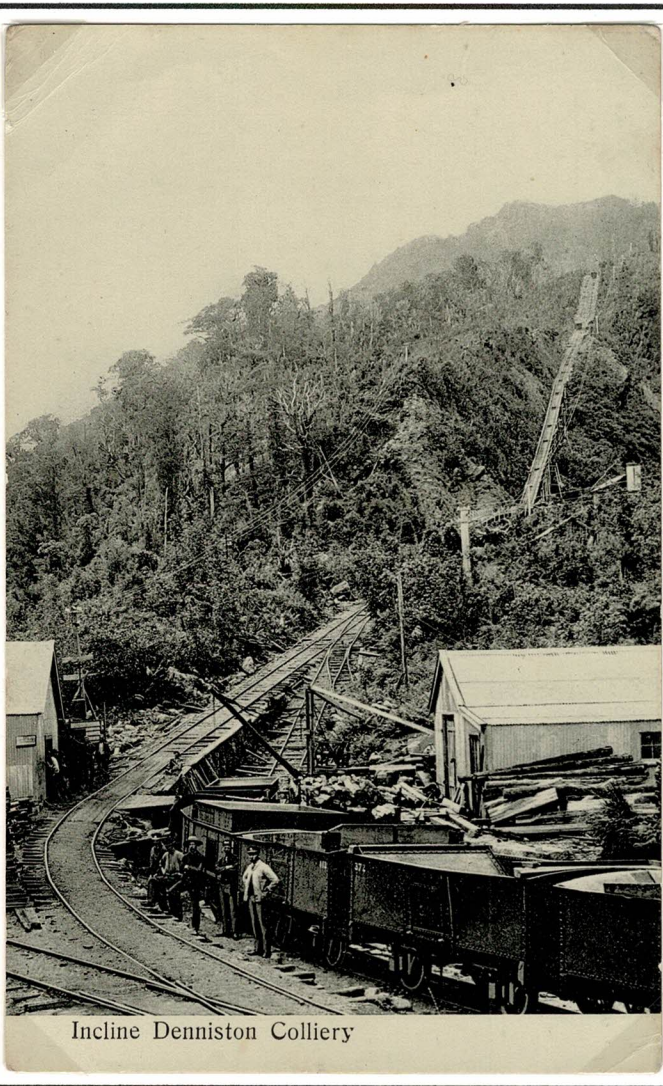
Photo attributed to **H T Lock**
 [New Zealand Illustrated Magazine 1 May 1901]

Grandad writes to Lesley:

*"This is Denniston 2500 feet up"
 From the start up the Hill to the top is 7 miles."
 "The coal mine is at the top."
 "In the picture you will see a small railway which
 the coal comes down."
 "The full truck of coal pulls the empty one up."*

**"Incline
 Denniston"**
 from Booklet "24
 Beautiful Views of
 Westland"

No print details
 View shows several
 "O" wagons with the
 wooden extensions to
 increase capacity

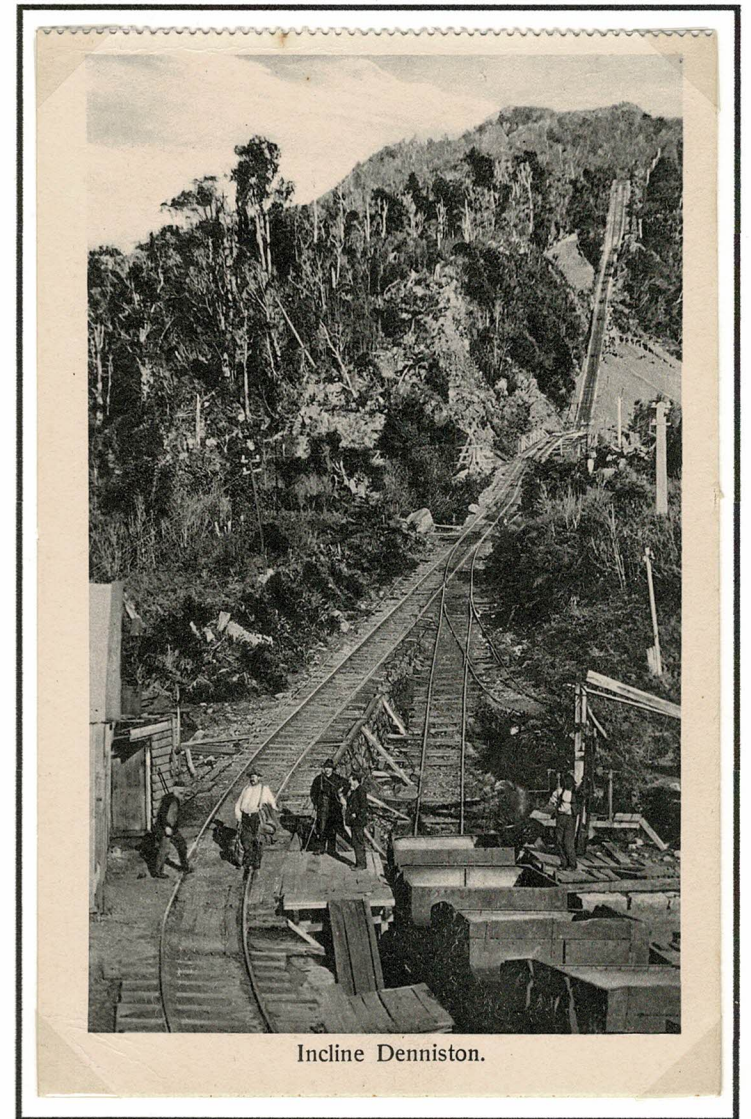


Incline Denniston Colliery

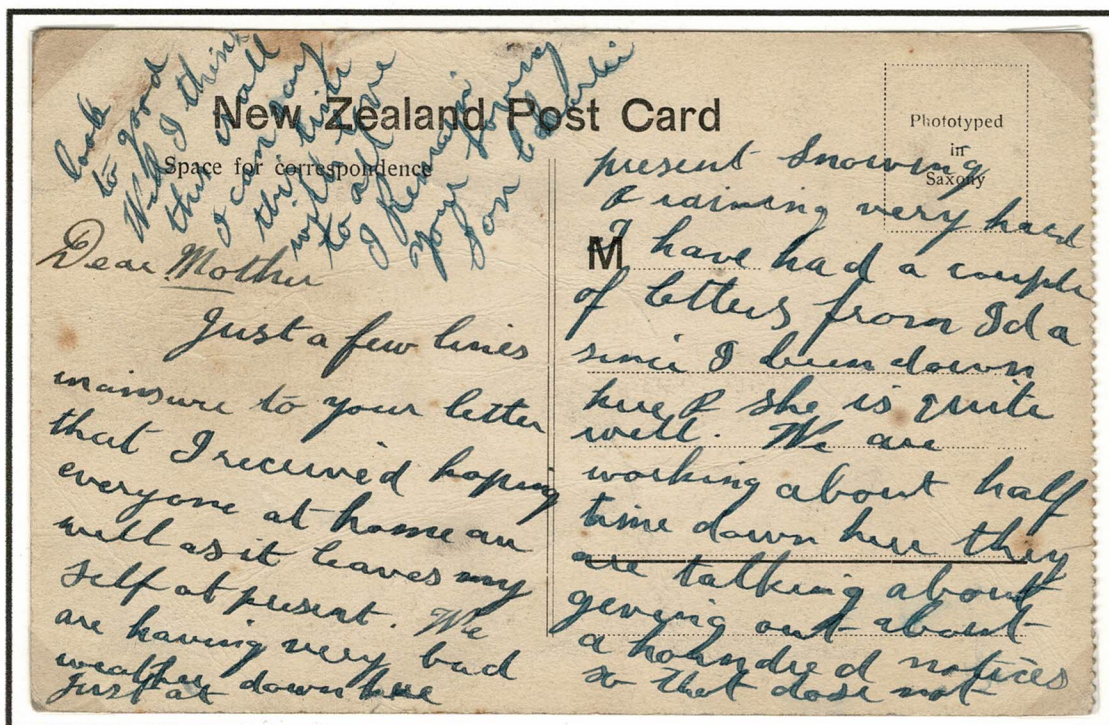
H T Lock was a photographer in Westport,
 his advertisements are in the Westport
 Times 27 April 1880 to 11 May 1886.

In 1880 he was advertising:
**"Views of Westport and Wellington Coal
 Companies Works, Waimangaroa."**

He was still active in 1910 having a
 photograph of coal wagons waiting shipping
 at Westport Wharves [NZ Herald]



Incline Denniston.



Probably written during Coal Crisis 1905-1906 but undated

Incline Denniston booklet postcard, Charlie writes to his mother:

"... We are having very bad weather down here. Just at present snowing and raining hard ... We are working about half time down here. ... They are talking about giving out about a hundred notices so that does not look too good."



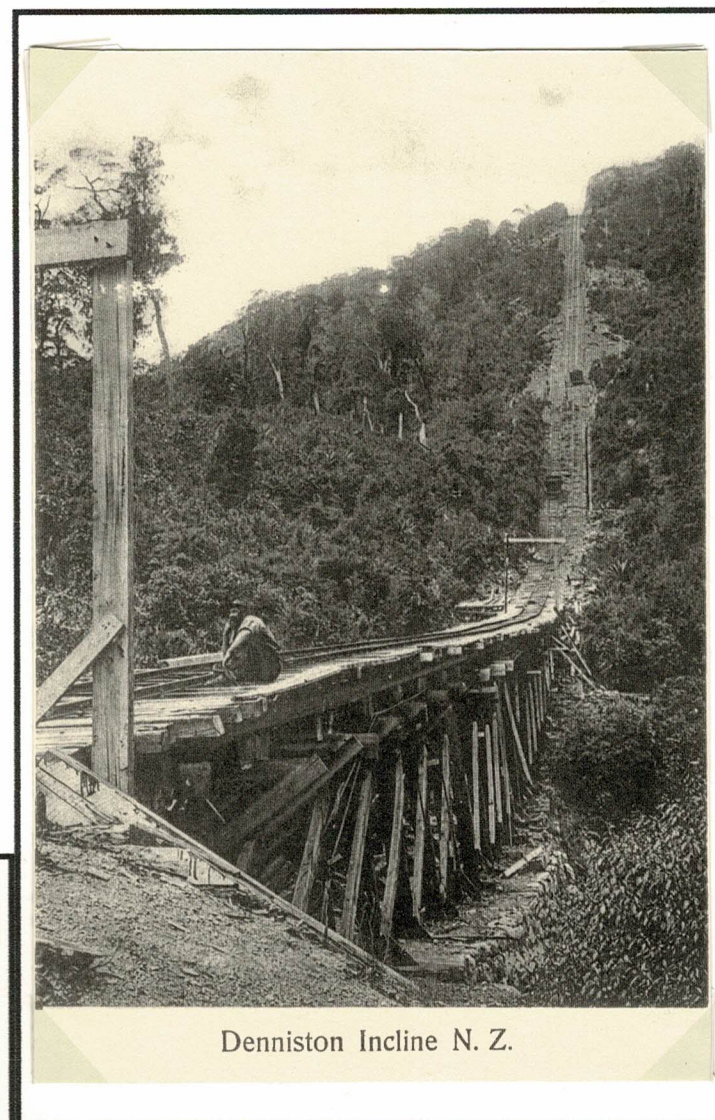
Two postcard views of the **wooden viaduct** on the **Lower Incline** just above the bridge over Conn's Creek

The Left view has no wagons on the Incline [very unusual]
Right view and descending full wagon on right and empty on left.

6480 Upper Incline, Denniston, Coalbrookdale, West Coast NZ

Muir & Moodie from the Copyright Series of Views

Divided back with "Made in Germany"



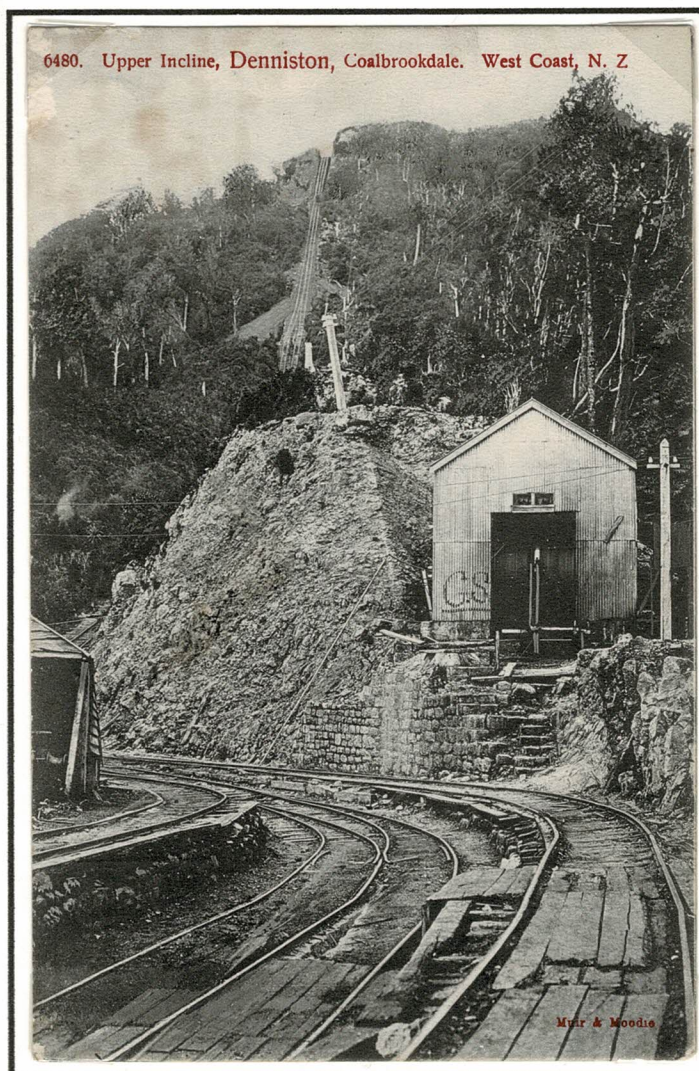
Denniston Incline N. Z.

Left: **Real Photograph Postcard**
Headed "**Denniston 8/2/06**" mailed to Christchurch

Message reads in part:

"... I am leaving up here this morning so I thought I would send you this PC one of the boys where I am staying took this photo. This is where the trucks run up & down with eh coal. Denniston is perched right at the top of the hill. You have to walk about four miles through the bush to get there ... "

Sent during Coal Crisis 1905-06

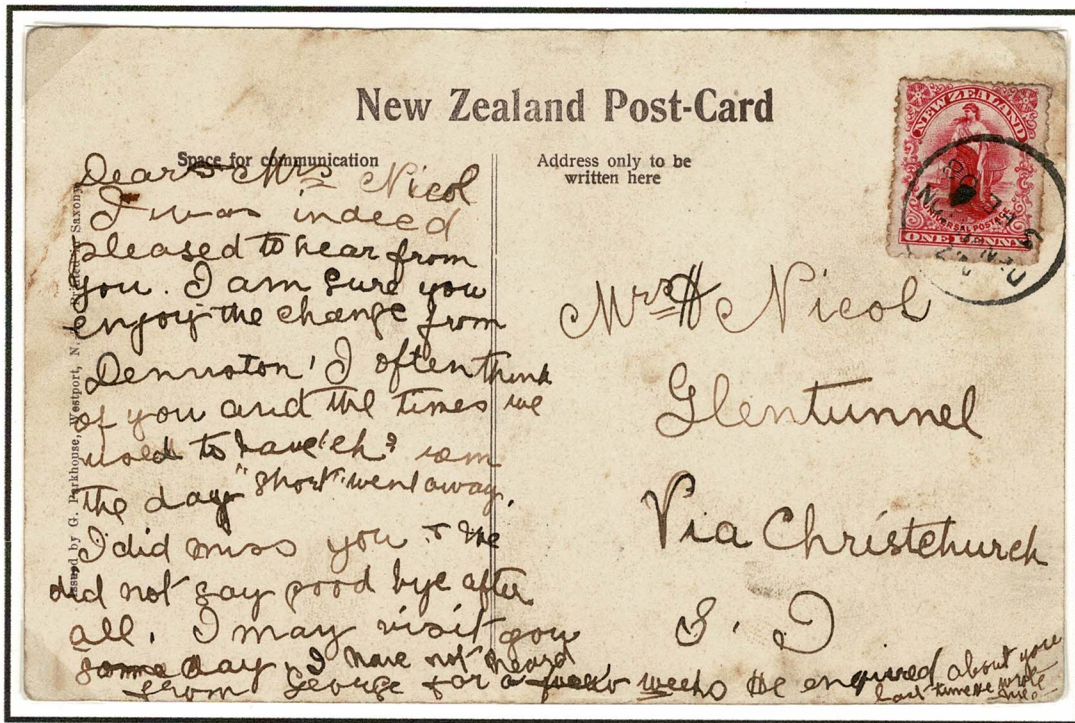


Right:
Ada is writing to Alma

*"This not a very pretty one [postcard] but I did not have any others...."
"Ask Ernest if he remembers taking a shortcut through this Incline coming down from Denniston..."*

Numerous accidents over the years on the Incline led to a ban on wagon-riding from about 1890, although, clearly, some still took the risk at times.

View is of the **Middle Brake** with the brakehouse in the foreground and the Upper Incline in the background
Probably from the **20.9.04 Moodie Photographs**



**"Top Incline - Denniston" D Maloney Photo,
Issued by G Parkhouse, Westport N.Z.**

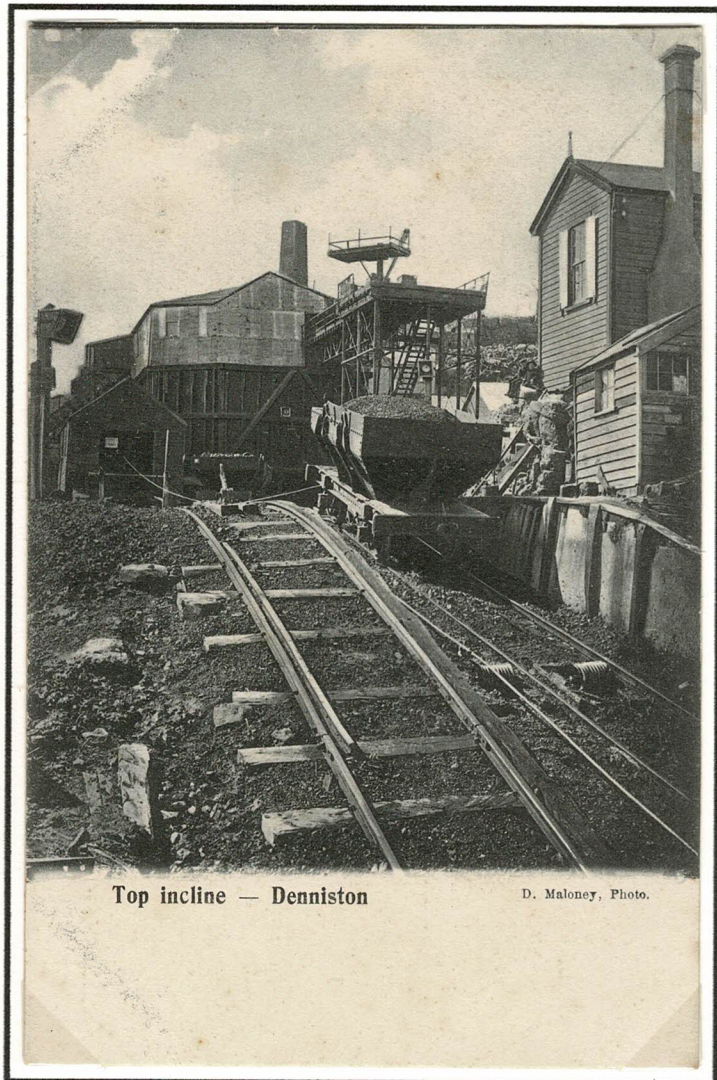
Mailed Denniston 5 SE 08 to Glentunnel

Message in part:

"... I am sure you enjoy the change from Denniston. I often think of you and the times we had eh! ...

[on picture side]

*"Dear dirty Denniston how sweet it is.
The black diamond eh!"*



**"Top Incline - Denniston"
D Maloney Photo,
Issued by G Parkhouse, Westport N.Z.
Divided back
Printed in Saxony.**

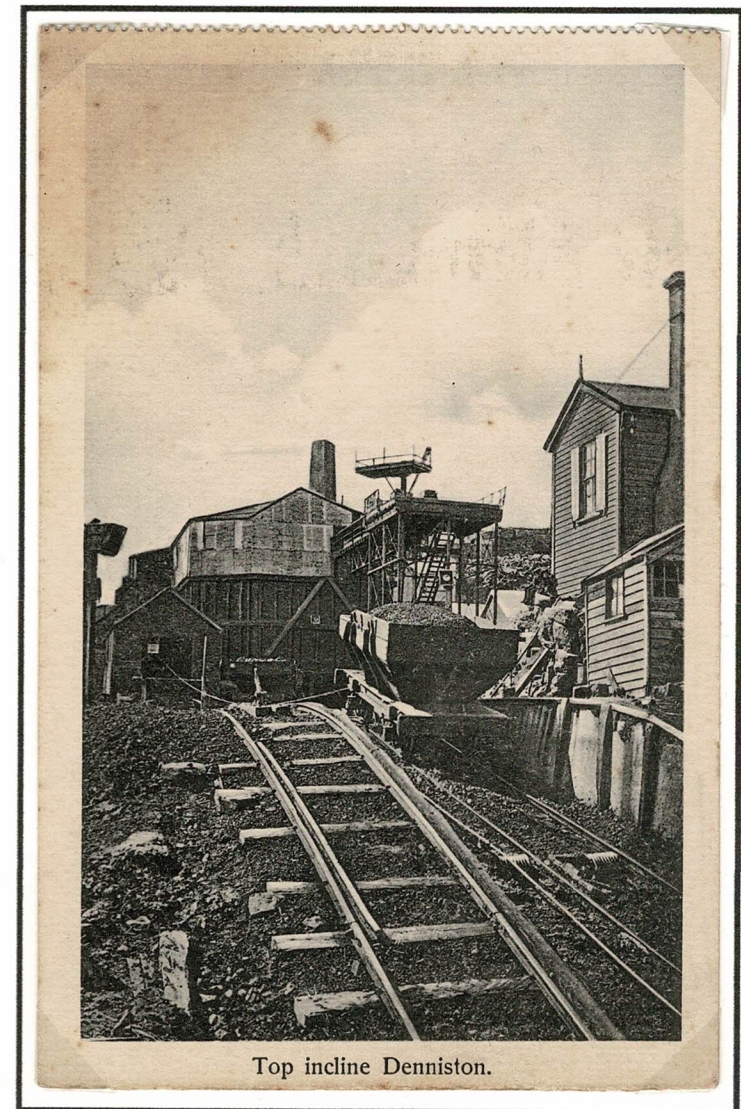
The Postcard on right is from Booklet
"24 Beautiful Views of Westland"

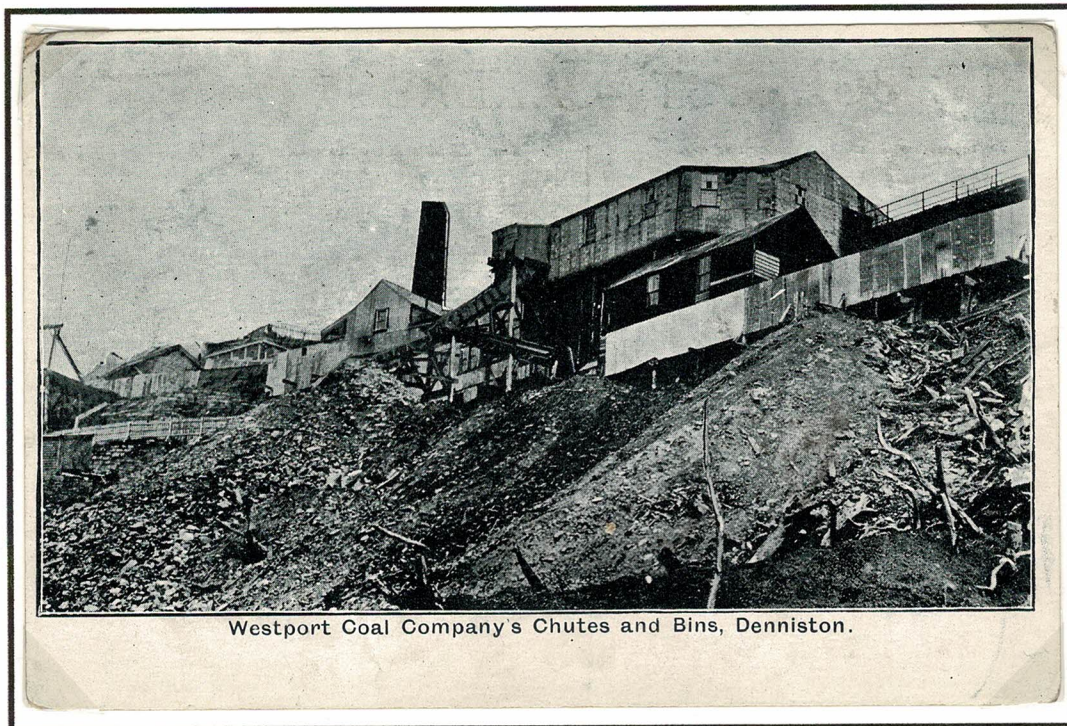
The view is c 1900. It shows the original Bins [extended 1902] with the new steel gantry, brakehouse at left and Mine Managers house on the right.

The boiler-house chimney of the engine house in background provided the steam power to work the endless ropeway that brought loaded skips from the mines at Burnetts Face.

The crane on the gantry was used to unload materials and supplies sent up the Incline.

The loaded wagon is an "O" class with a moveable hopper - these were introduced from 1897 - reclassified as "Q" class later





Westport Coal Company's Chutes and Bins, Denniston.

**"Westport Coal Company's Chutes and Bins,
Denniston"**

divided back postcard, no photograph or printer details

The view is pre-1902 [the extension of the bins to additional 2000 tons was in 1902]

View looking up to the Bins with the Boiler house and engine house with chimney at left centre and Brakehouse at right centre.

At left are the foundations of the Original horse-tramway to the **Banbury Mine** with the track as **Rope-road** and used to access the Burnetts Face mines until replaced by a surface road in 1904.

The piles in the foreground are dumps of "slack" coal.



DENNISTON INCLINE.

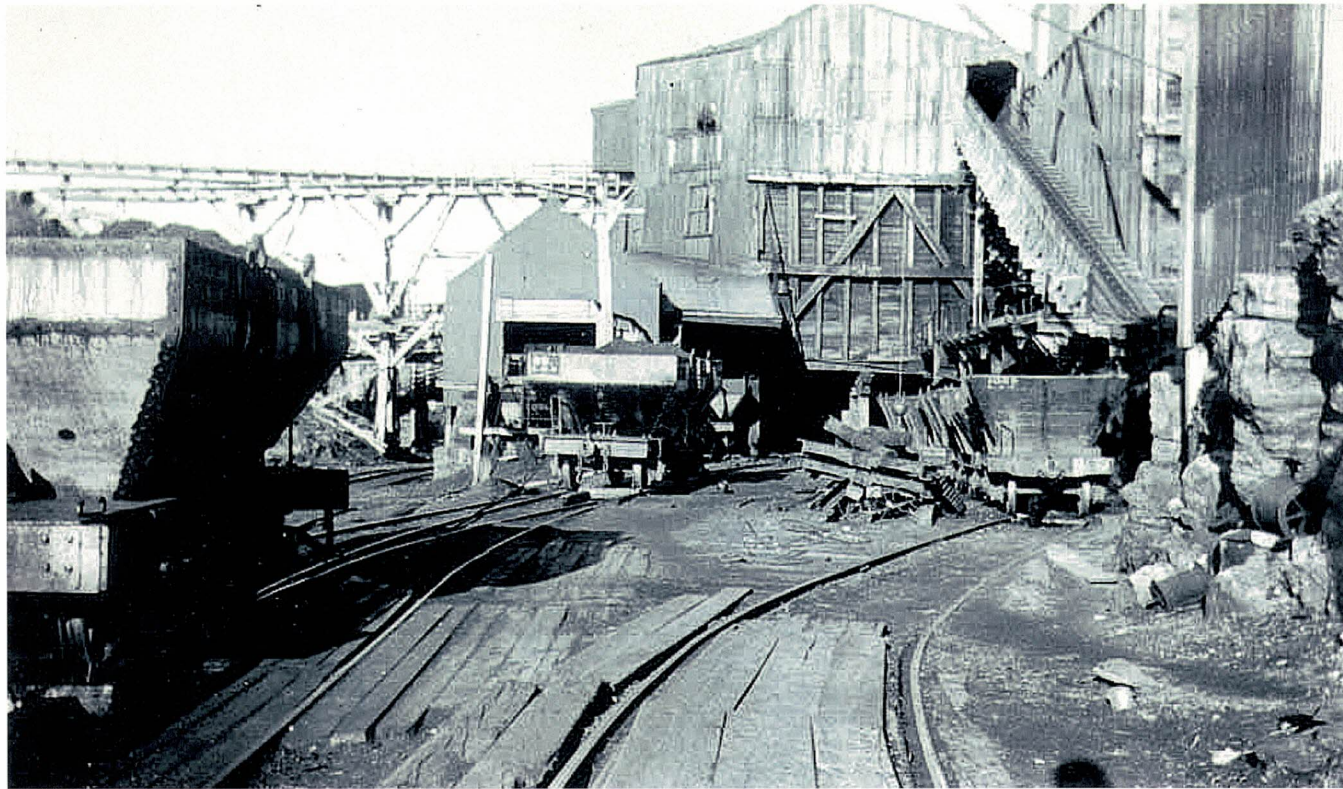
OVERLOOKING
WAIMANGAROA.

"Denniston Incline" "Overlooking Waimangaroa"
Divided back postcard printed in Britain for Universal Post
Card Co. Dunedin

The view is from the Top Incline looking down to the Waimangaroa River with an empty "Q" class wagon approaching. The rocks here were cut and used as foundations and walls at the Brakehead

Right: Looking down the Incline
Marshall Photo 1996





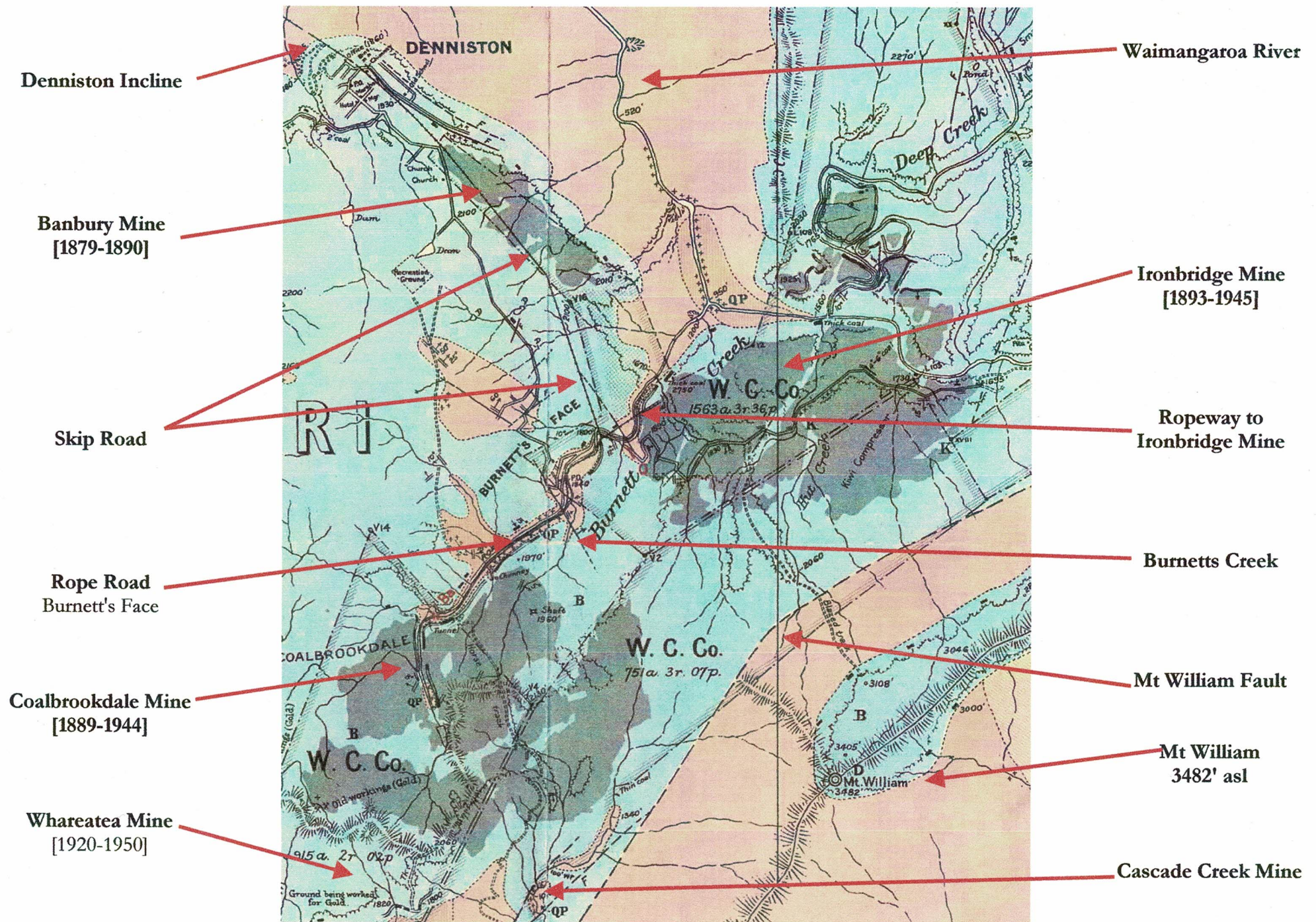
Above:
 The Brakehead c 1950 with the
 extended bins and conveyor belt
 and loading chute in centre with
 2 loaded wagons at left ready to
 descend the Incline and an empty
 on the right
 Photo reproduction Coal Museum
 Westport



Left:
 The Brakehead c 1994 Marshall
 Photograph showing the
 extensive rock foundations with a
 "Q" class hopper in centre.

Department of Conservation has
 since rehabilitated the site with
 information boards

Denniston Coalfield: Mines, Railways and Tramways



Scan of part Map 6 of **Geological Survey of Buller Coalfield** showing coal-bearing areas and general geology compiled from Lands & Survey Department and surveys by Morgan, Bartrum and Whitehorn of the Geological Survey Branch of the Mines Department. Maps drawn by G E Harris, 1914. [Exhibitor has original]

The Denniston Coalfield is high on the Rockfort Plateau. The Westport Coal Company office near the head of the Incline was at 1840 feet above sea level [asl], the **Denniston Post Office** was at 1900 feet asl. The **Burnetts Face Post Office** was at 1910 feet asl. The Plateau itself is dominated by the Mt William Range with Mt William as 3482 feet asl.

Burnett's Face - Denniston Skip Road

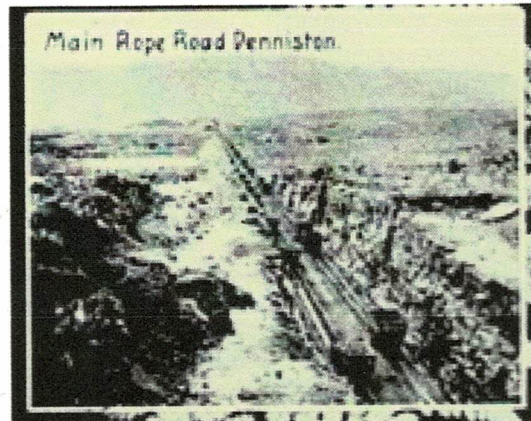
By 1889, the Coalbrookdale mine was in full operation and the skipway or haulage road had been extended through the old Banbury mine workings to this new mine. Steam provided the motive power for the endless rope to which the skips were hooked by chains for their journey to the bins. When the Ironbridge mine was commenced in 1893, a 24-chain [480m] deviation to join the haulage road to the Coalbrookdale line was completed. Because of ground movement within the old Banbury mine, a surface road 2.4km long was constructed - this included 2 bridges - it was completed in 1904. It continued in use until replaced by the Aerial ropeway in 1952. The Skip Road or Skipway or Haulage Road was a frequent subject for photographers and postcards.



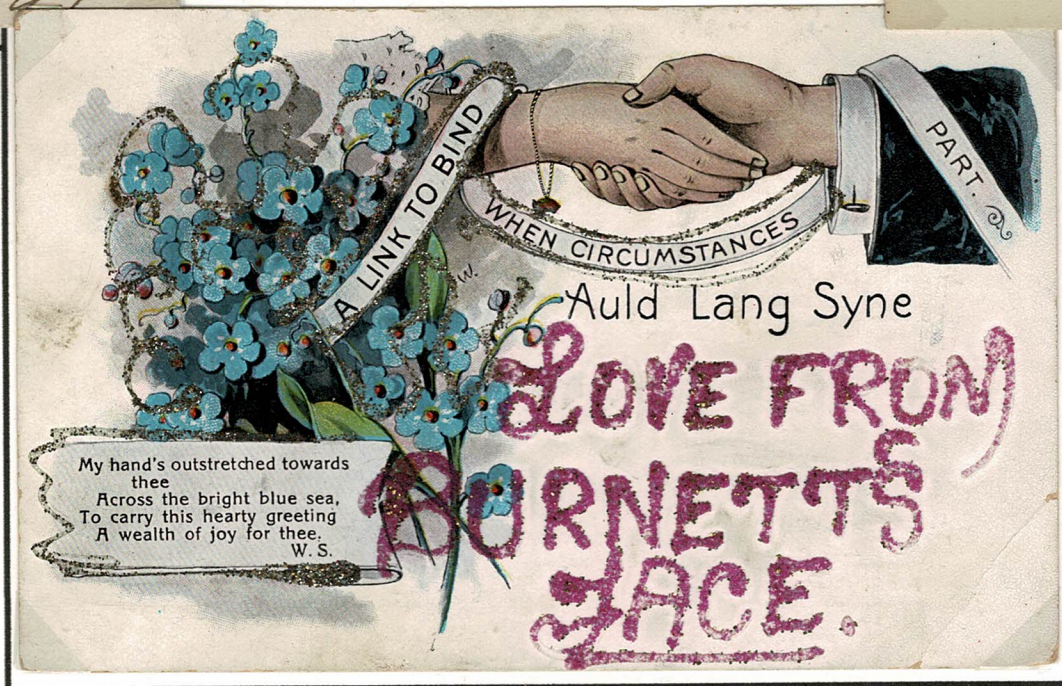
Postcards Issued by G Parkhouse.
"Kia Ora Westport N.Z."

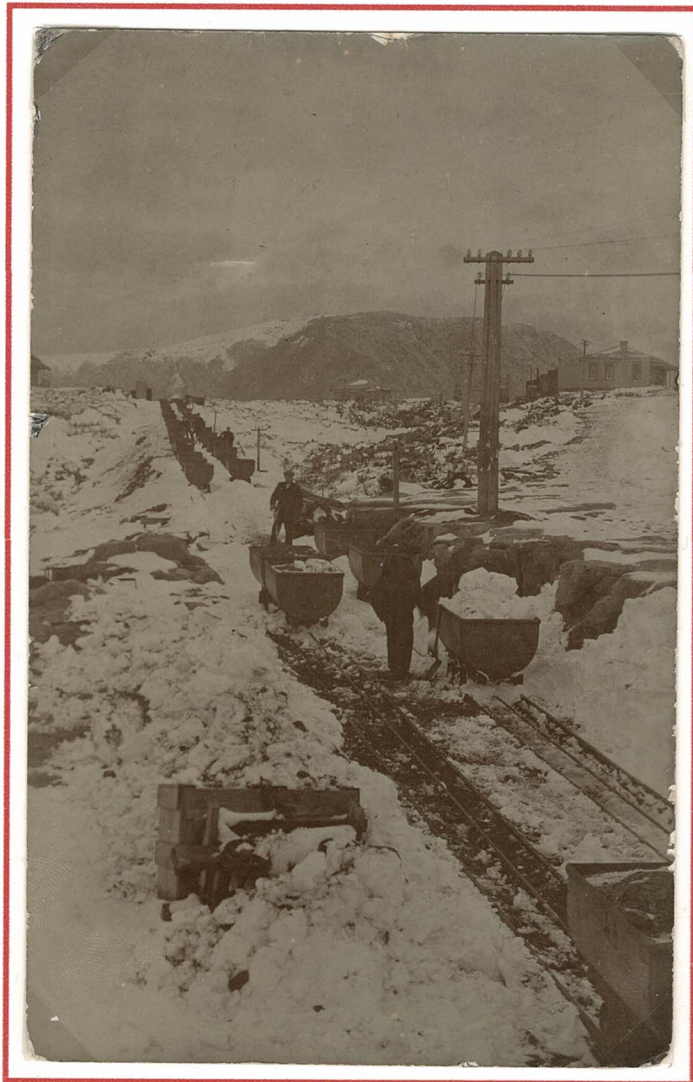


"Denniston Coal Works"



"Main Rope Road Denniston"





Real Photo Postcard - no photographer or print details

Annotated:

"Shoveling snow on the Denniston Skip Road to Burnetts face 12/6/18"

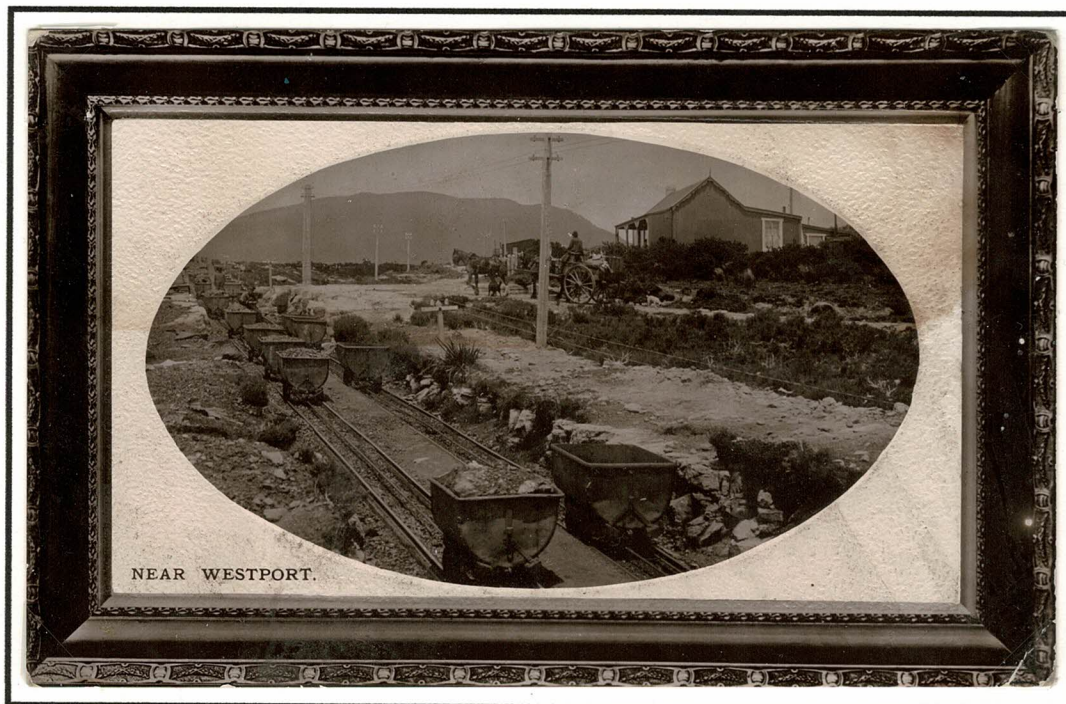


"Near Westport"

Divided back 'frame-type' postcards printed in Britain and issued by the **Universal Post Card Co. Dunedin**

A list of postcards from Universal Post card Co in 2017 listed in Postcard Pillar, 9 sepia toned cards - all scenic in Otago.

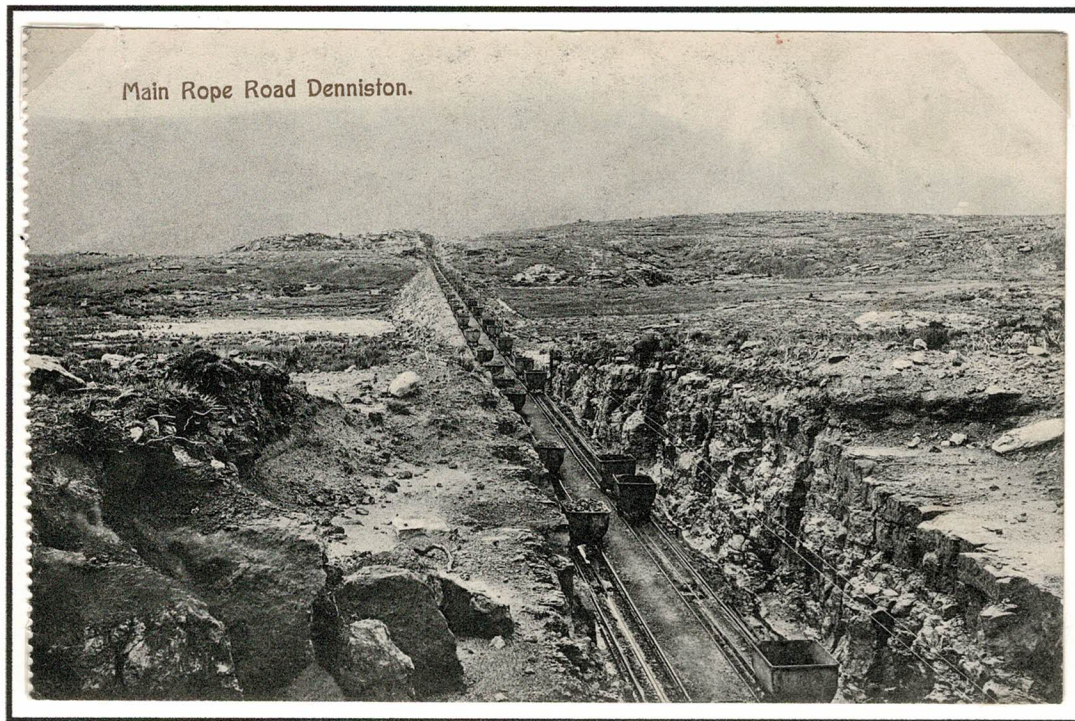
Papers past shed no light beyond a 1908 advertisement offering prizes for verses [suitable for Tinsel postcards?] and mention in Magistrate Courts as Plaintiff - 1910, 1911 & 1913



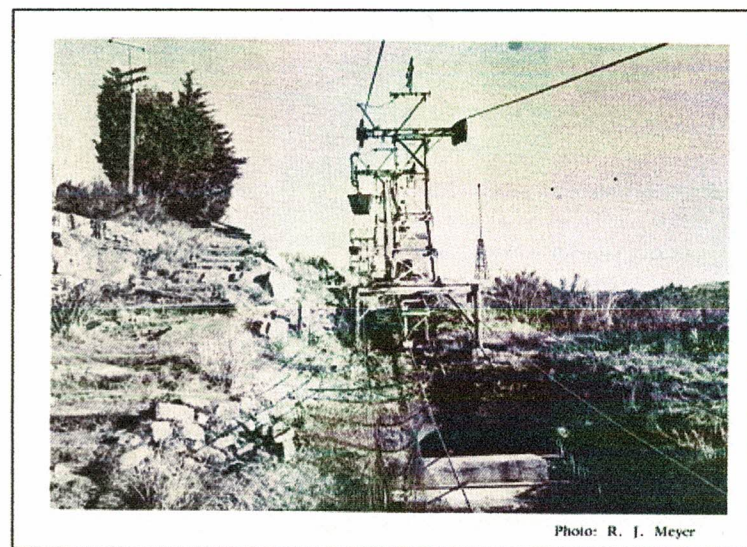
Coal Transport on the Plateau

- 1 1880-1890 A 2 foot tramway with horse-drawn tubs was built from the Banbury Mine to the Brakehead at Denniston
- 2 1890-1904 An endless ropeway was constructed through the Banbury Mine to a junction at Burnetts Face to Ironbridge [1891] and Coalbrookdale Mines [1893]
- 3 1904-1952 A surface road - the Skip Road constructed replacing the section through the Banbury Mine
- 4 1952-1968 An aerial monocable replaced the Skip Road serving the Whareatea, Sullivan and Escarpment Mines
- 5 1968- Coal transported from loading infrastructure by road

The Denniston Incline and the Conns Creek railway branch were closed 16 August 1967 and coal was then sent by aerial cable to the Bins and trucked from the brakehead. The Bins were destroyed by fire in early 1968 resulting in the aerial cable being closed and all coal was then trucked from the plateau.

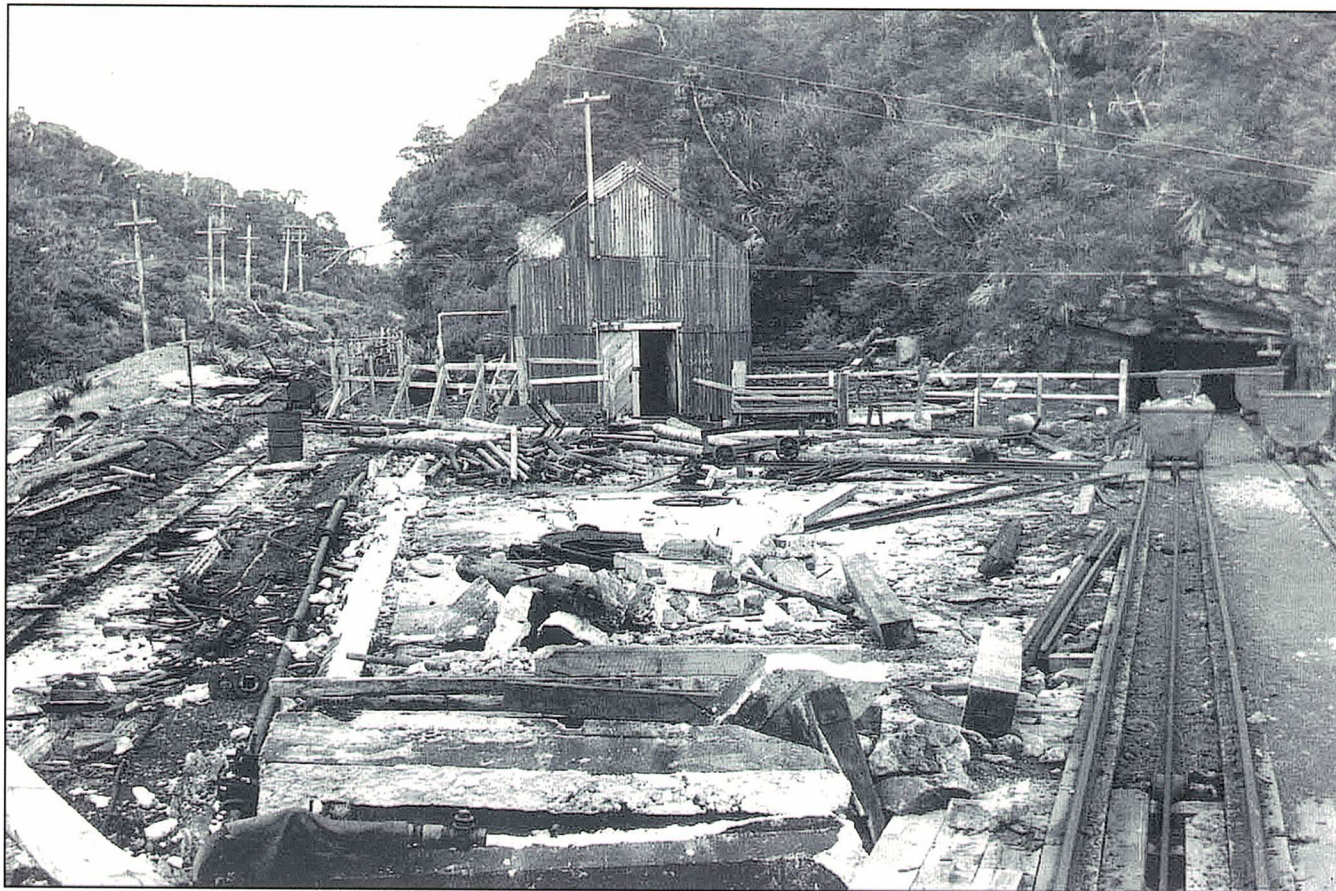


"Main Rope Road Denniston" Divided back, printed in Saxony, no photographer or publisher details. From unknown booklet



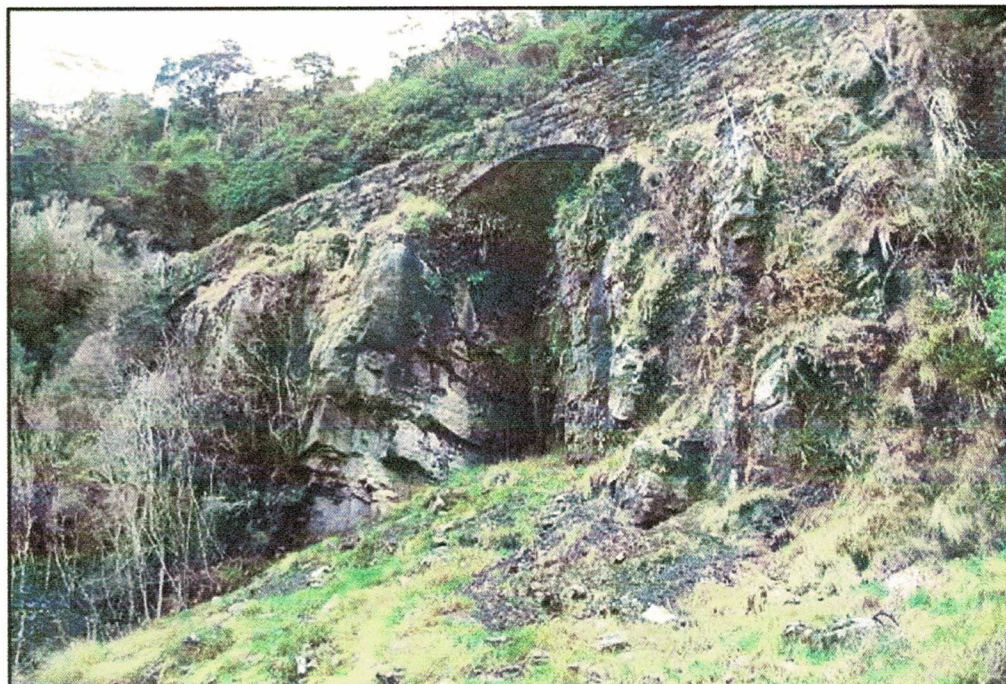
Marshall photographs of aerial winding gear 1984 and 1996





Above:
**Mouth of Coalbrookdale
 mine and rope-way c 1950**

The Mine was closed in 1944 but the rope-road continued in use for the mines that were developed further up the Plateau. It was replaced in 1952 by an aerial system.
 Photo reproduction Coal Museum Westport



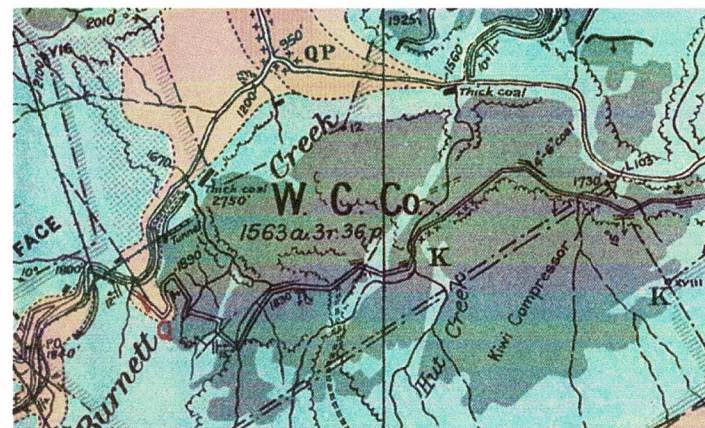
Left:
 Two dry stone arches that lead to the entrance of the **Banbury Mine** [1879-1890] A tramway carried coal to the bins at Denniston - horse-drawn. When the mine closed the tramway was the route of the rope-way to Burnetts Face mines until replaced by the surface skip road in 1904
 Marshall Photo 1984

Ironbridge Mine

Development of what was to become the Ironbridge coal mine started in 1889. Named after a wrought iron bridge constructed high over Burnett's Creek to the mine main drive entrance. From the entrance a rope-road crossed the bridge and entered the western side via a tunnel, linking to the main **Banbury rope-road**.

By 1898, the workings reached Deep Creek (the area also known as Taipo) to the north-east, where the Kiwi fan-house and compressors were later installed. [See map detail]

In 1904, a **new entrance** was constructed into the Ironbridge Mine further south. A **new rope-way** was constructed to join the Coalbrookdale line at Burnett's Face over a wooden bridge over Burnett's Creek with a deep cutting and a tunnel. The mine closed in 1945 and the infrastructure - bathhouse, blacksmith shop and stable were removed



Detail from 1914 map showing the Ironbridge Mine with Burnett's Creek running south and Deep Creek north from the Waimangaroa River. The 'new' rope-road from the mine joins the Coalbrookdale line at Burnett's Face



Real Photo Postcard - divided back with no photographer or printer details.

The view is of the wooden bridge over Burnett's Creek leading to the Ironbridge mine entrance through the corrugated iron shed

Real Photo Postcard

"Burnetts Face Under Snow 10/5/13"
"S Davis Photo"

Message reads:

*"This one was taken on the bridge by the house.
You can see the snow underfoot"*



The Westport Coal Company Limited - Instructions for Firemen, Deputies & Shot-firers.

A document, with perforated left edge, printed by **J L Munson & Son at the Buller Miner Office, Westport.** [Weekly paper 1881-1923]. Signed and dated: **"19th day of April 1904 Henry Sowerby Mine" Manager.** Henry Sowerby was the Mine Manager at **Ironbridge Coal Mine 1899-1906.** Sowerby passed the First Class Mine Manager's Examination in 1887 under the Coal Mines Act of 1886 and was initially employed as Deputy Mine Manager at the Kaitangata Mine then as Manager at Wallsend Coal mine in Grey District. He retired in 1907 to Otago.

THE
Westport Coal Company, Limited

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIREMEN, DEPUTIES & SHOT-FIRERS

Destructive explosions sometimes occur from fine coal dust in the mine being suddenly ignited by blown-out shots.

In every case where shot firing is necessary it is essential that the position and depth of hole, the quantity of powder, and the extent and nature of tamping, are such, that the charge is sufficient, and that the force of the shot is all expended and spent, in breaking down the coal.

The firemen, deputies, and shot-firers are, in addition, therefore, to their ordinary duties, responsible for personally attending to the following special conditions and duties:

No shot shall be fired where the coal is not holed or undercut to a depth of at least 3 feet, and more when necessary. The hole must not be bored into the fast or beyond the holing. The powder must be skilfully laid in sufficient quantity, but no more than is enough to throw down the undercut coal.

The shot-firer shall inspect every shot hole before the charge is laid therein; and shall satisfy himself as to its direction and depth.

No hole shall be tamped with coal or coal dust. In every case damp clay and sand, or non-inflammable, broken stone, shall be used as tamping.

The shot-firer must refuse to allow, light, or fire, any shot where there is reasonable doubt as to its being successful.

Where strong tamping is needed the compression of air at the bottom of the hole should be avoided by pushing in the first part of the tamping in small portions.

Dated this 19th day of April 1904

Henry Sowerby
Mine Manager.

1890 Maritime Strike or Great Coal Strike"

Between **August and November 1890**, the Mines at Denniston and Burnetts Face along with most other major coal mines and wharves were on strike called by the Maritime Council in a dispute with the Union Steamship Company. The East Coast Australian mines were also involved. The outcome was a Government victory with the Union being humiliated by the use of "free labour" and "special constables" to replace the striking workers.

1913 Great Strike

The Buller Mines went on strike **November 5, 1913** in solidarity with the waterside workers. The dispute actually started in the Huntly coal mines after union officials were dismissed but was overtaken by the waterside dispute. The outcome as a Government victory using the tactics of "free labour" and special constables" - the mines resumed work in **January 1914**.

1923 West Coast Mines "Lockout" and consequences



On Bankruptcy Business Only to Miner at Burnetts Face 1924

Official Assignee's Office envelope [30,000/7/23] with Hand struck WESTPORT identifying the office, mailed with 1d Universal overprinted OFFICIAL cancelled at Westport machine **MAY 3 1924** addressed to **Mr J Martin Burnett's Face**

Delivered via Denniston Post Office with transit cancellation of **Denniston 4 MY 24** and sent on the Burnett's Face.

Received at **Burnetts Face 5 MY 24** where Mr Martin opened it and wrote "*opened by me and not for Martin Plateau*"

Post Office Form PO 154 Officially Sealed label applied and initialled at Burnetts Face Post Office with **Burnetts Face 6 MY 23**

Readdressed to "*Denniston*" in red.

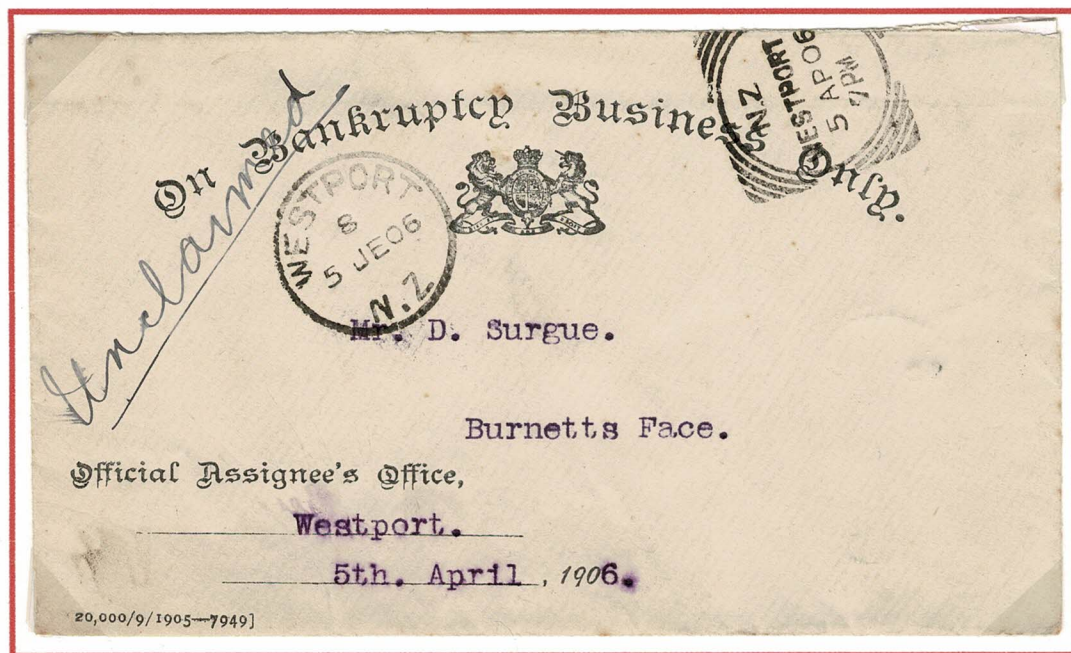
Received Denniston 13 MY 24 "*Not*" added and Denniston address deleted with "*Back Burnetts face*" in red manuscript

Received **Burnetts Face 14 MY 24** where "*Unknown by Letter carrier*" applied in manuscript, held by **Regulation** then "pointing hand" "**Return to Sender**" marking applied.

Received Westport Unclaimed 2 JUN 1924

Coal Depression 1905-1906

There was an **over supply of coal during 1905-1906** caused in part by lower cost coal imports from Australia and the increased production from the State Coal Mines. This affected the non-State owned mines in the main because suddenly, there was little market for coal. Stockpiling coal was not a viable option. As a consequence, many mines reduced their operations to only a few days each week. Miners were encouraged to job share, offered extended time off and encouraged to seek alternative employment. With reduction in work availability some miners were forced into bankruptcy.



On Bankruptcy Business Only envelope from Official Assignee's Office 20,000/9/1905 - 7949" "Westport 5th April 1906"

Sent free of postage with Westport "F" Class 5 AP 06 7pm

Addressed to Burnetts Face received 6 AP 06 [no index]

Manuscript "**Unclaimed**" - the Post Office Rules state "Unclaimed" was the manuscript marking to be applied on undeliverable mail addressed to a Post Office for delivery over the counter [An office without a letter-carrier]

Held at **Burnetts Face Post Office** [2 months] returned to sender received **Westport "B" Class 5 JE 06.**

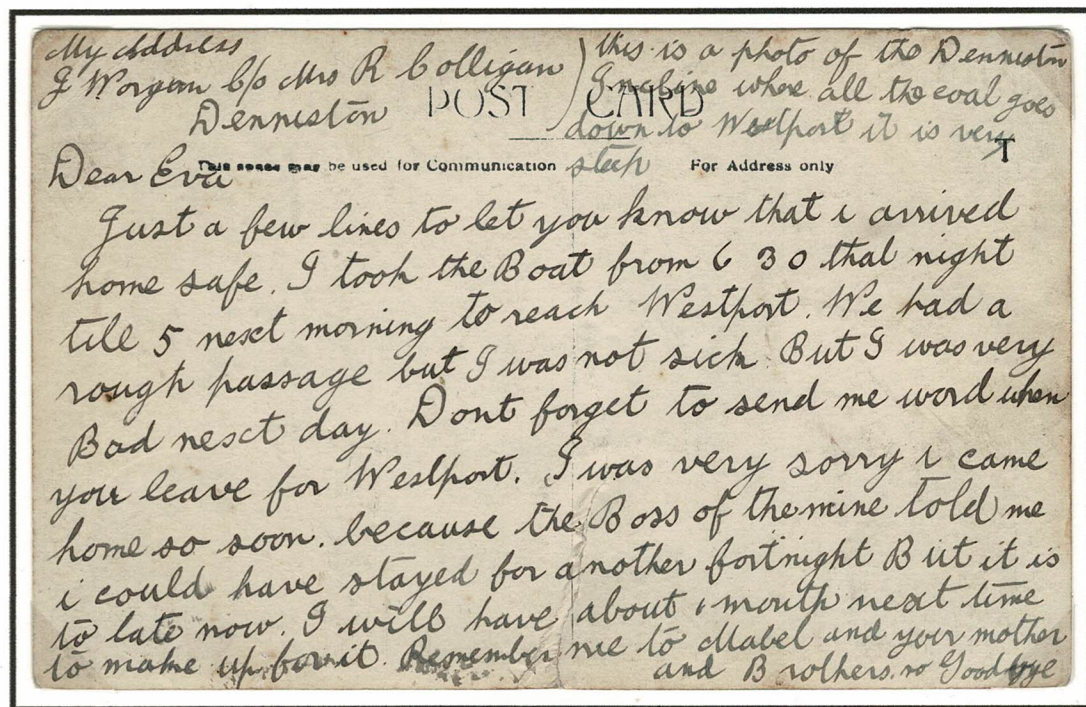
Reverse has the diamond shaped stamp of **W.T Slee** commission agent **Westport.**



Undivided back [pre 1907]
real photograph postcard
without details.

The card and the detail of time off from mining indicate this is during the Coal Depression period 1905-1906

Photograph is of the view looking down the Incline from top brake with Waimangaroa and River in centre



Message in part ...

"I took the boat from 6.30pm that night till 5 next morning to reach Westport. We had a rough passage ... I was very sorry I came home so soon because the boss of the mine told me I could have stayed for another fortnight. But it is too late now. I will have about a month next time to make up for it"

"This is a photo of the Denniston Incline where all the coal does down to Westport, it is very steep." "My address J Morgan c/- Mrs R Colligan, Denniston"

1923 West Coast Mines "Lockout"

Len Richardson¹ Chapter 7 "Syndicalism, Communism & Recession" "The 1920s were crisis years on the coalfields of the western world. The days of King Coal were numbered." Technological changes were a major contributor with oil for shipping lines and electrification of railways. These were compounded by the developing recession and Depression. The Buller and Grey Districts were worst affected and the coal production declines were never really arrested. The Miners Union was in perpetual struggle with Mine owners, the Arbitration Court and the various radical groups.

The Arbitration Court reduced wages and the mine owners were determined to reduce them further. The Miners Union proposed better wages and conditions but the Westport Coal Company refused any discussion and tried to force the dispute to the Arbitration Court. The Miners responded by a **Work-to Rule** in strict accord with the Mines Act but was really a "go-slow" The mine owners dismissed who they considered the ring leaders - at Denniston this included the Union President. A "lock-out" started 2 days later and over 1200 West Coast miners were out of work. The mine owners were happy for this to continue as coal demand was reduced and they were aware that the Miners Union was nearly insolvent and relief payments for miners was minimal.

The Denniston miners were forced to agree to the Westport Coal Company terms and returned to work after 80 days. At least 60 miners left the plateau [mainly single men] and others were forced into bankruptcy. The Millerton and Stockton Mines were similarly affected with over 50 miners leaving the area.



Official Assignee to Bankrupt Miner at Stockton

Official Assignee's Office envelope [30,000/7/23] mailed with 1d Universal overprinted **OFFICIAL** cancelled at Westport machine **MAY 3 1924** addressed to **Mr J B Smith Stockton**.

Received **Stockton Mine 4 MY 24**. Mr Smith called for the letter at the Post Office [no letter-carriers] ripped it open wrote:
"opened by me but not for me J B Smith"

Letter has been **resealed** by Post Office using stamp selvage - no official resealing stickers.

Letter retained the **Regulation 10** days and then cancelled **Stockton Mine 15 MY 24** and Stockton address deleted and **"Denniston"** in red manuscript applied.

Received at **Denniston 16 MY 24**. Letter held **Regulation 10** days **Denniston 21 MY 24** applied and **"Try Burnetts Face"** in red manuscript. There was a letter-carrier service at Denniston but the handstamp "Not Known by Postmen Denniston" was not used.

Received **Burnetts Face 21 MY 24** [front & back] where The "Try" was deleted and datestamped **Burnetts Face 22 MY 22**.

Letter held the **Regulation 10** days, stamped **Burnetts Face 31 MY 24** and **"Not to be found"** in manuscript applied and the "Pointing hand" **"Return to Sender"** returned to Westport.

"Back to" applied above the Official Assignee's Office

¹ Coal, Class & Community, The United Mineworkers of New Zealand 1880-1960

Following the Blackball coal miners' strike of February-March 1908, a conference of West Coast miners' unions met in Greymouth in **August 1908** to form a **New Zealand Federation of Miners**. Robert Semple was elected president and Patrick Hickey secretary. Affirming the class struggle, they were a direct challenge to the existing industrial arbitration legislation.

In **1909** the Miners' Federation changed its name to **New Zealand Federation of Labour**. It became popularly known as the "Red" Federation and its members as **Red Feds**. Besides coal and gold miners, the Federation gained the affiliation of most waterside unions, as well as general labourers', shearers', and other, mainly unskilled, unions.

By 1912 it united a quarter of New Zealand's organised workers. Its weekly journal, the **Maoriland Worker**, reached a circulation of 10,000 early in 1913.

The "Red" Federation conducted a number of industrial disputes and, by aggressive action, was able to gain important concessions for its members. It suffered its first setback in the Auckland General Labourers' dispute of 1912, and was again defeated in the bitter Waihi gold miners' strike later that year.

In **July 1913** the Federation joined forces with several more moderate unions to become the **United Federation of Labour**. It suffered a crushing defeat in the nationwide waterfront strike of October 1913.

The **New Zealand Coal Miners Federation** was formed in **July 1915** and became the **United Mine Workers** in **1923**.

1939 Denniston Strike

The Westport Coal Company introduced **50 "big" tubs** in the Denniston mines without consultation with the Union and in breach of the existing Award. The tubs are filled at the coal face by the 'Hewers' and trucked out by 'Truckers' and attached to the ropeway feeding to the Bins at Denniston for loading into the wagons to descend the Incline on the way to the Westport Wharves. On **November 6, 1939**, the **414 miners** went out on strike which lasted **15 days** until they were ordered back to work by the Government under the **Emergency Act**.

Wanganui Herald November 19, 1939

MINERS ORDERED BACK TO WORK

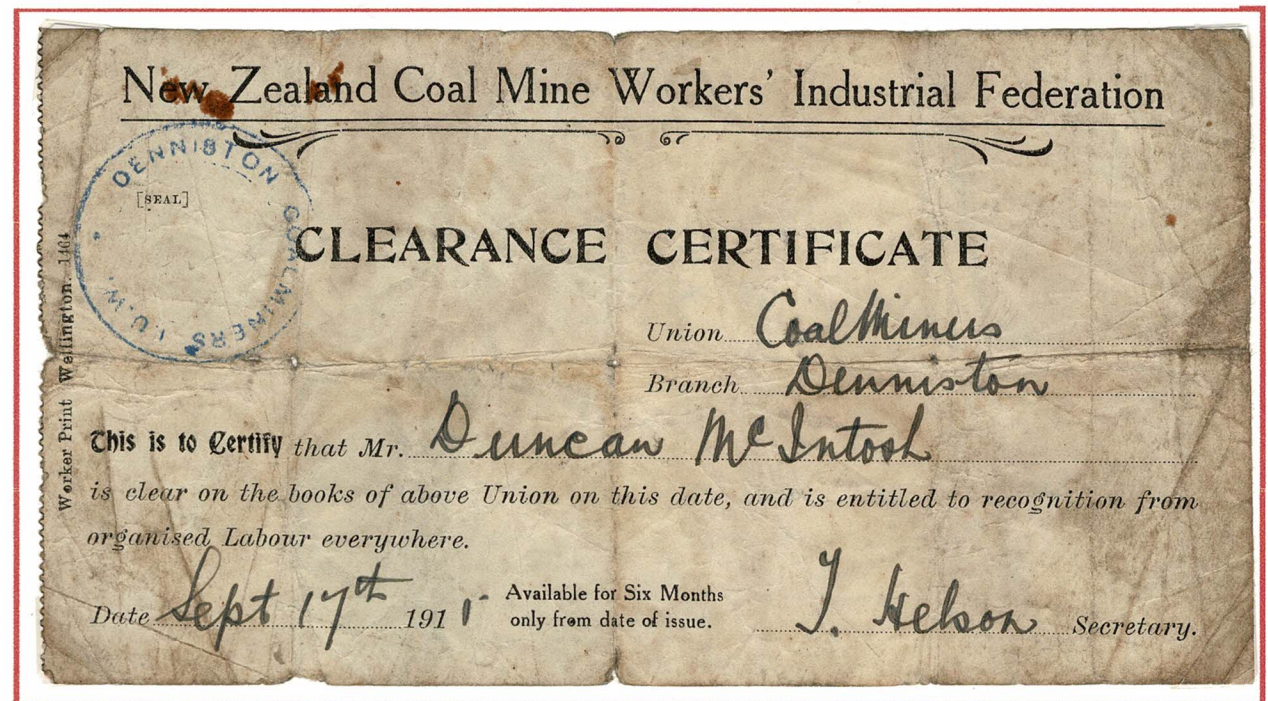
MINISTER'S TELEGRAM TO DENNISTON

EXECUTIVE TO INTERVIEW MANAGER

WESTPORT, Last Night

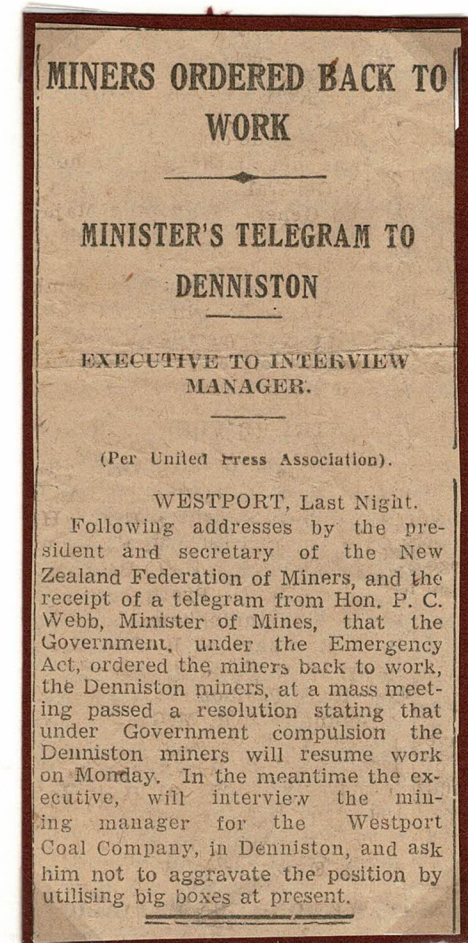
"Following addresses by the President and Secretary of the New Zealand Federation of Miners and the receipt of a telegram from Hon P.C./ Webb, Minister of Mines, that the Government, under the Emergency Act, ordered the miners back to work, the Denniston miners, at a mass meeting passed a resolution stating that under Government compulsion the Denniston miners would resume work on Monday. In the meantime the executive will interview the mining manager for the Westport Coal Company, in Denniston and ask him not to aggravate the position by utilizing the big boxes at present."

National Coal Miners Organisations



New Zealand Coal Mine Workers Industrial Federation Clearance Certificate from Coal Miners Union and **Denniston** with the seal at left. Dated **Sept 17th, 1915** signed by **J Nelson Secretary** [He was secretary to Denniston Miners Union 1915-1924]

Denniston Miners Union was formed in 1884 and a publication "**The Denniston Miners' Union A Centennial History 1884-1984**" by Len Richardson is detailed in the Union history

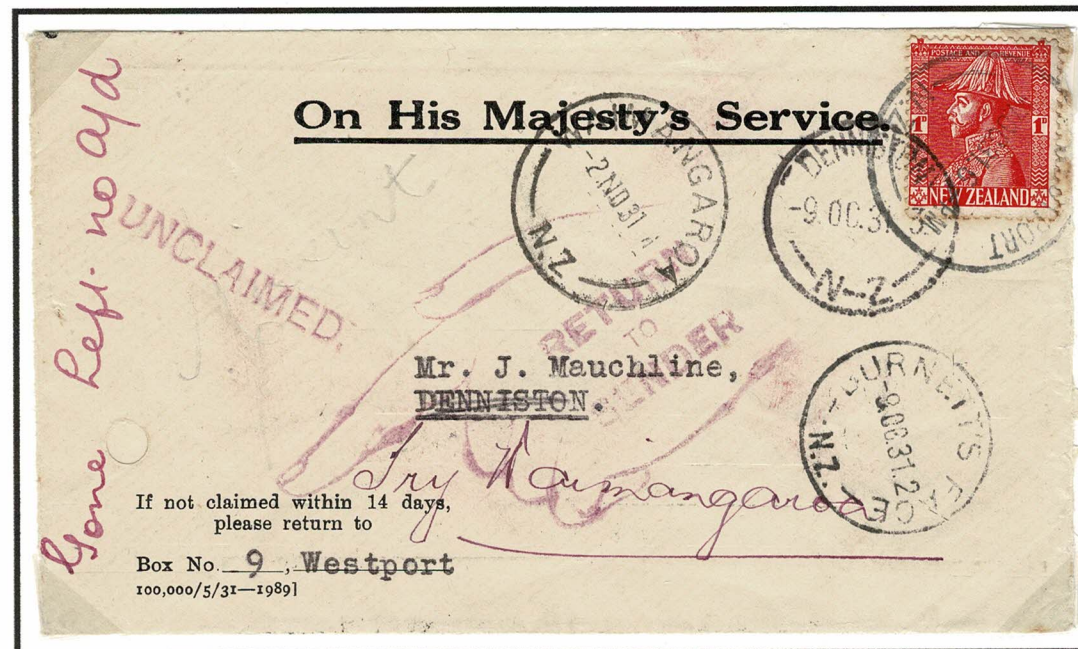


Great Depression 1931-1933

The period from late 1928 to the early 1930's was a difficult time to be a coal miner. The whole nation was affected by the Great Depression [1931-1933] but the mining areas were the worst affected and the West Coast mining settlements were hardest hit. Wages were reduced, working days were cut with men laid off on to the growing unemployment list. Many sought work elsewhere. Even to the stage of trying to rework old gold mining claims.

There were eight short lived strikes at the Denniston Mines in the period February 1930 to July 1932 affecting over 450 men and 34 days were lost to strike.

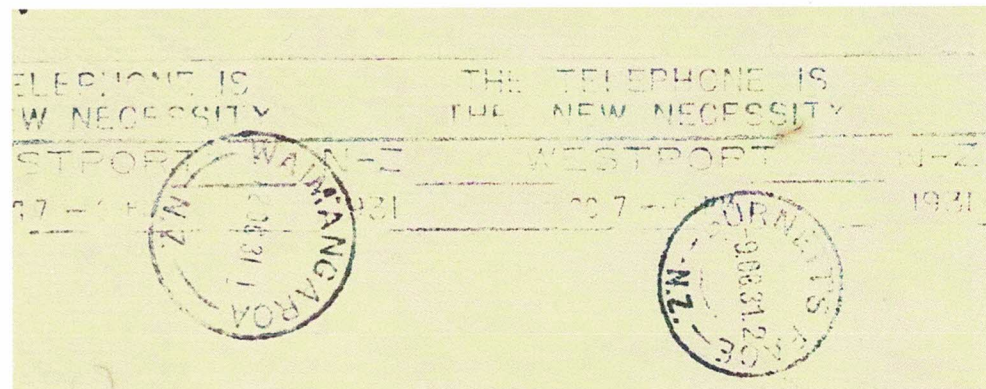
On August 20, 1932, the Denniston Mines were on strike for 80 days affecting 450 miners as the men refused to work under the new terms offered by the Westport Coal Company. New terms were agreed and work resumed.



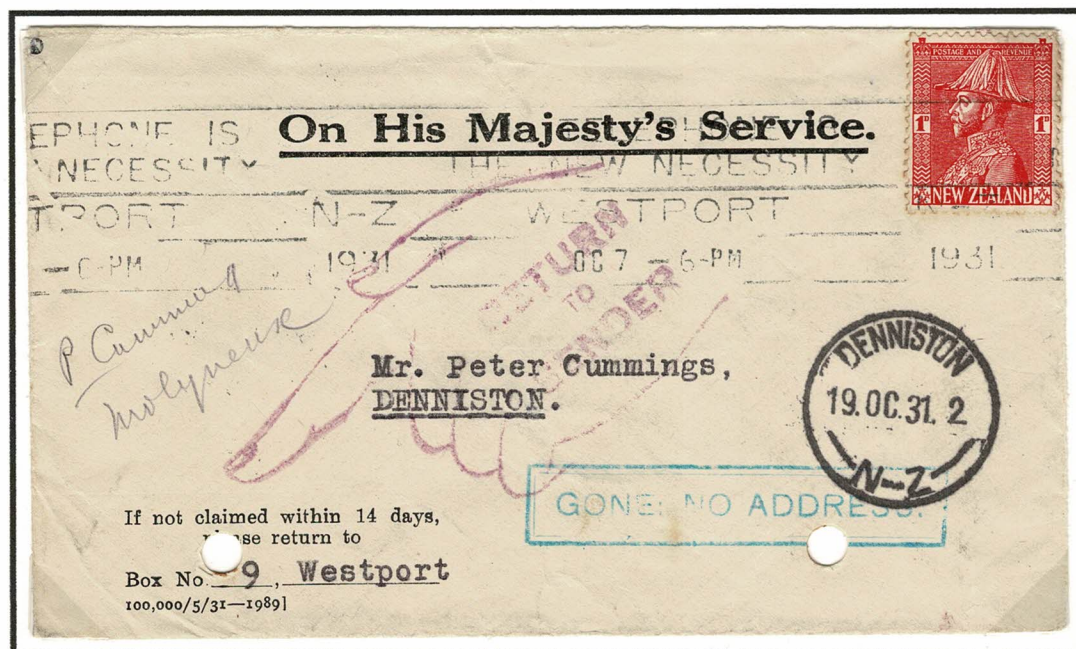
OHMS envelope [100,000/5/31] with 1d Field Marshall cancelled Westport "C" Class 29mm 7 OC 31 addressed to Mr J Mauchline Denniston, received Denniston 9 OC 31 and sent on to Burnetts Face received 9 OC 31 where Denniston was deleted and "Try Waimangaroa" added in manuscript.

Received Waimangaroa 12 OC 31 where "Gone Left no a/d" was applied. Letter held as per Regulation and Unclaimed stamped with Waimangaroa 2 NO 31 with pointing hand Return to Sender marking.

The Regulations re "Try Address" includes "If the officer has reasonable certainty that the address town name is wrong then the name of the town may be altered."



The addresses Mr J Mauchline is listed as a member of the Denniston Miners Union in May 1926 as "Trucker" from Marshallvale [a 'suburb'] of Denniston



OHMS envelope [100,000/5/31] with 1d Field Marshall cancelled Westport machine OC 7 1931 6 PM Addressed to Peter Cummings Denniston, received Denniston 9 OC 31 where the letter was held as per Regulation Denniston 19 OC 31 and boxed Gone No Address marking applied and pointing hand "Return to Sender" to Box 9 Westport.



"P Cumming Moleneux" has been added at left - this possible at Denniston but exact address was unknown. It would appear that the addressee may have gone to Otago seeking gold.

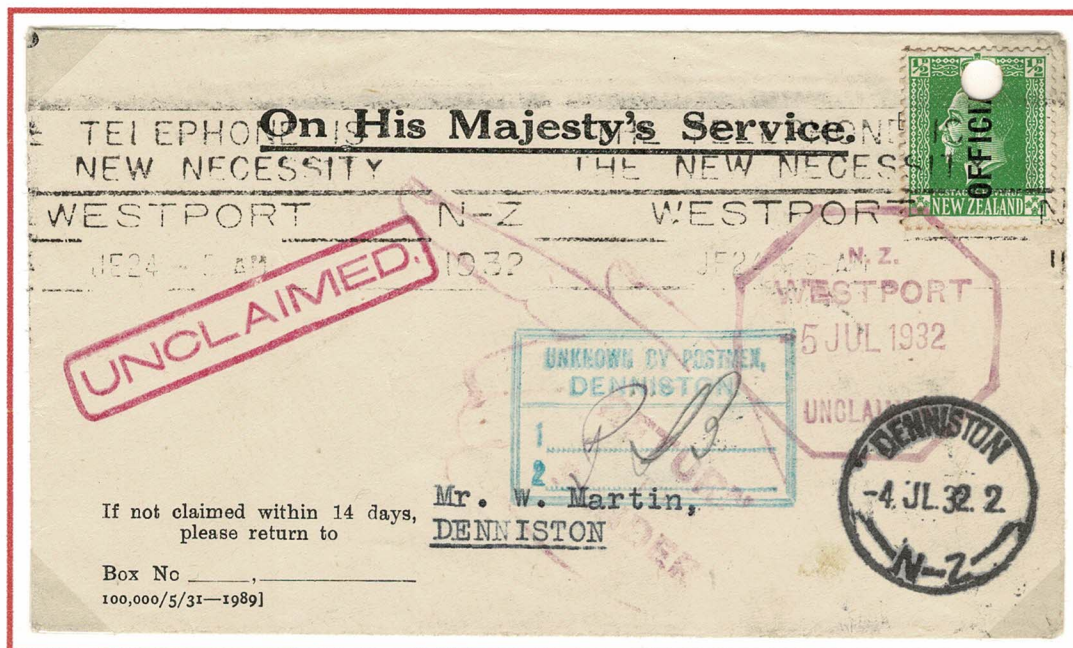
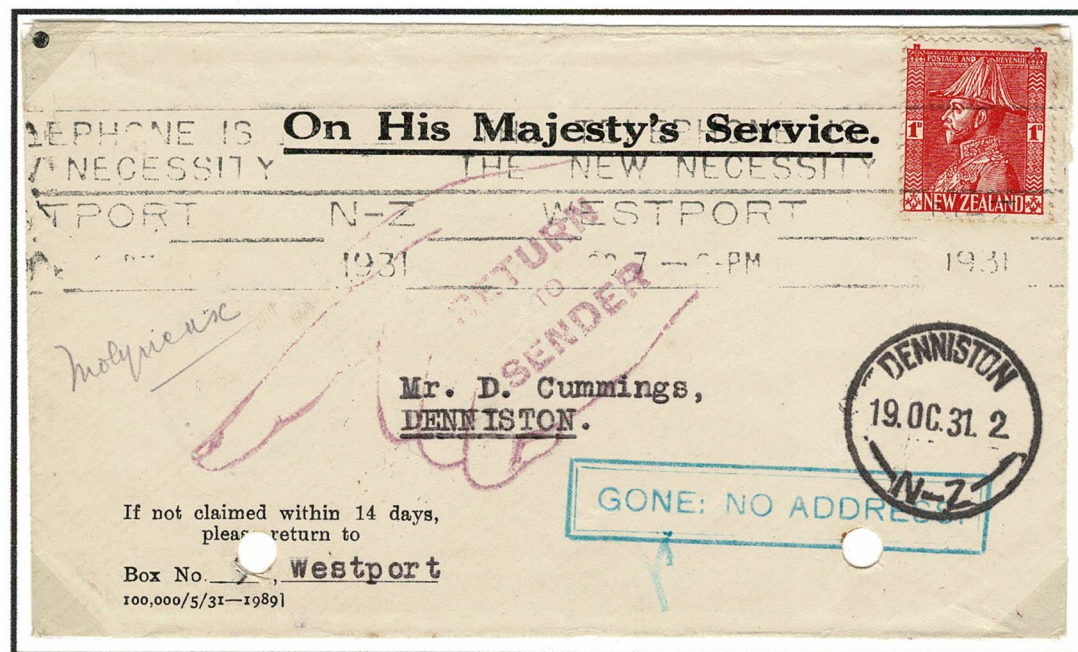
The 1926 Denniston Union membership lists P Cumming as "Rope Road Denniston"

OHMS envelope [100,000/5/31] with 1d Field Marshall cancelled Westport machine OC 7 1931 6 PM Addressed to Mr D Cummings Denniston, received Denniston 9 OC 31 where the letter was held as per Regulation Denniston 19 OC 31 and boxed **Gone No Address** marking applied and pointing hand "**Return to Sender**" to Box 9 Westport.



"**Moleneux**" has been added at left - this possible at Denniston but exact address was unknown. It would appear that the addressee and his brother may have gone to Otago seeking gold.

The 1926 Denniston Union membership lists D Cumming as "**Miner Denniston**"



OHMS envelope [100,000/5/31] with 1/2d KGV Official [postage rate had been reduced from 1d] cancelled Westport machine with advertisement for the telephone JE 24 1932 It is addressed to Mr W Martin Denniston. Received at Denniston 24 JE 32 [on reverse]

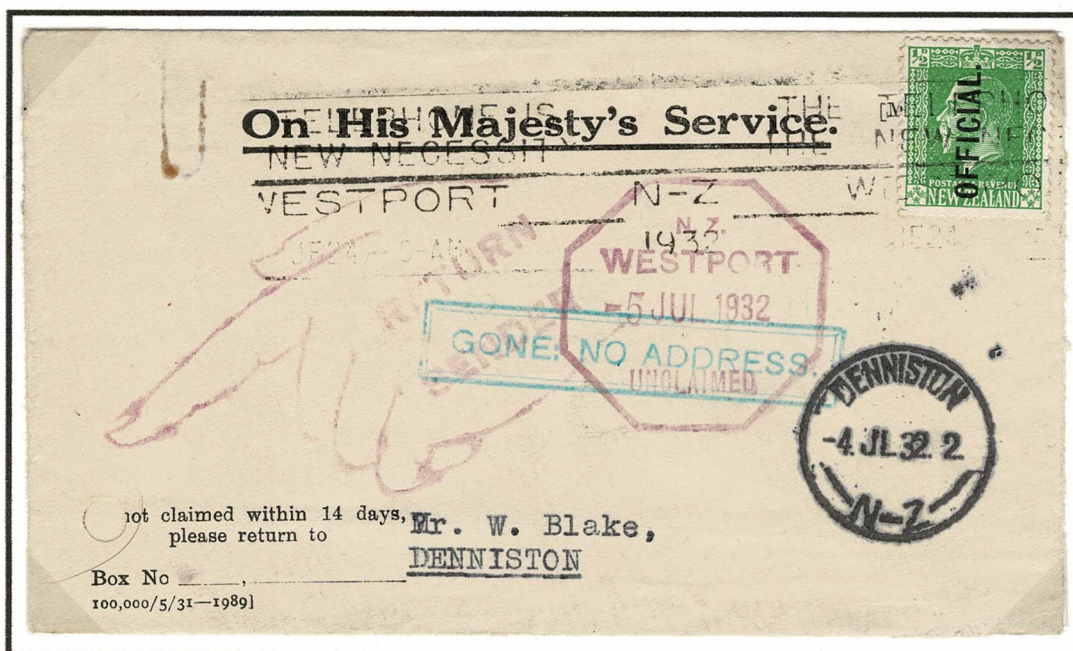
Has Unknown by Postmen Denniston marking [of type 91 P 498 Vol III of Postage Stamps of New Zealand] with "1" and "2" indicating two postal letter carriers in Denniston. Initialled "P B" [No others known]

Letter held as per Regulation Denniston 4 JL 32 and boxed **Unclaimed** and pointing hand "**Return to Sender**" to **Westport 5 JUL 32 Unclaimed** octagonal rubber datestamp.

The **Post Office Regulations** required every effort to effect letter delivery and articles are passed in turn to all the postmen or letter-carriers. If the Post Office has a specific marking [as had Denniston] then each postman will initial the marking Only after all have indicated that the address is not know to them is the article returned to the Chief Post Office where it may be returned to the sender if known or to the Returned Letter Office if not.

OHMS envelope [100,000/5/31] addressed to Mr W Blake Denniston received 4 JL 32, Letter held as per Regulation Denniston 24 JE 32 and Boxed **Gone No Address** applied and pointing hand "**Return to Sender**" to **Westport 5 JUL 32 Unclaimed** octagonal rubber datestamp.

Mr W Blake is listed in the Denniston Miners Union 1926 membership as "**Trucker**" "**Marshallvale**"



Buller Coalfield - Millerton-Stockton Group

The mines of the **Westport Coal Company** and the **Westport-Stockton Coal Company** on the Rochfort Plateau above the settlements of **Granity** and **Ngakawau** produced well over **25,000,000 tons of coal**. This was delivered to the Government railway initially via tramways and with much infrastructure secured the future of Granity and Ngakawau.

The **Millerton Mine** led to the development of **Millerton** township and the short-lived settlements at **Mine Creek** and **Mangatina**. The **Stockton Mine** township served the various Stockton mines. **This is their story.**

Early Days:

The 1873 Geological Survey by James Hector of the Plateau proved the existence of huge quantities of coal. This was the incentive for the Government railway north from Westport and the development of coal wharves and loading facilities at Westport.

The first mining of coal in this area of the Buller was in 1872 when the **Albion** mine opened at the junction of the Ngakawau River and Mine Creek. This failed 1874 due to high costs and difficult vessel access to the River. It was reactivated 1888-1890 by the Ngakawau-Wallsend Company but production was again hampered by poor harbour conditions.

Exploitation:

The **Westport Coal Company [WCC]** had an almost total monopoly of the supply of bituminous coal through its Denniston Mines and of its shipping through the owner - Union Steamship Company. Coal prices were high in the late 1880s-1900s and the WCC was in expansionist mood - there were 43 freezing works, other industries needed coal, the expanding railways and shipping all were coal dependent.

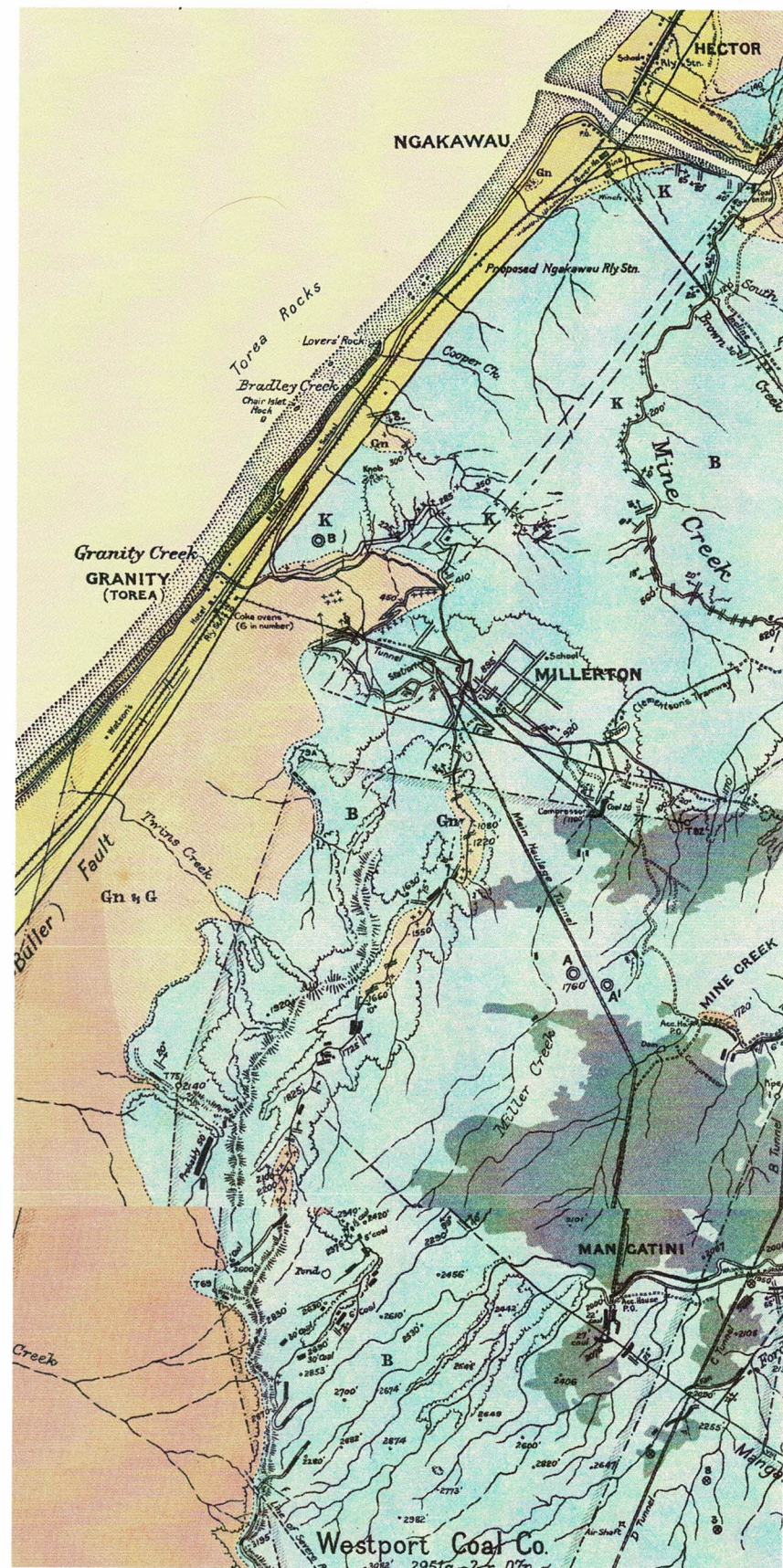
The WCC has expanded its coal lease to Granity Creek [later Millerton] and the Government, being determined to expand the coal industry, indicated that un-worked coal leases would be revoked. Rather than risk a rival company threatening the monopoly, the WCC, in **1891**, commenced development of the Incline from Granity and its mine at Millerton.

The **Westport-Stockton Coal Company [WCCC]** obtained a coal lease next to the WCC on its Mangatini boundary in **1905** and developed mines in competition with the WCC

The State took over Stockton in 1944 and the Millerton Mine in 1948. The Millerton mine closed in the 1960's having produced over 10,000,000 tons. The underground Stockton Mines were closed about 1967 with large scale opencast mining being developed after State purchase

This Group of mines had several aspects of significance to the Coal industry

- The early introduction of **coal cutting machines** at Millerton Mine in 1896
- The first **Electric Railway** in New Zealand 1906 at Stockton
- Extensive disagreements between WCC and its employees
- Tourist interest in the "**Burning Mine**" - fires started in 1909 and continue in the Millerton - Mine Creek - Mangatina workings.
- Large Scale open cast mining with huge machinery on Stockton areas



Scan of part Maps of **Geological Survey of Buller Coalfield** showing coal-bearing areas and general geology **Ngakawau, Granity, Millerton Mine Creek and Mangatini**, compiled from Lands & Survey Department and surveys by Morgan, Bartrum and Whitehorn of the Geological Survey Branch of the Mines Department. Maps drawn by G E Harris, 1914. [Exhibitor has original]

Granity Creek - Granity

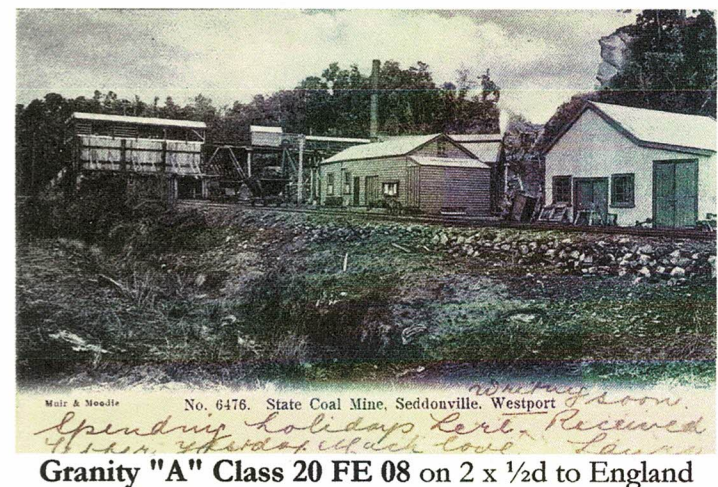
Granity Creek was a small settlement on the coast and a station on the railway from Westport to Mokihinui. The section to Ngakawau opened for traffic in 1878. Once it was nominated by the **Westport Coal Company** as the engineering base and loading station of the **Millerton Coal Mines** at the base of the Millerton incline tramway, the township developed and was renamed **Granity**.

Millerton Coal was transported down the Incline, screened and either loaded at the sidings into wagons or into the bins. Coal trains were formed and sent to the wharves at Westport. The wooden coal bins were able to hold 4,000 tons and were the largest in New Zealand. Construction and repair work were carried out at the engineering department of the Millerton Colliery - this included fitting shop, blacksmithing, carpentering and coal-tub repairs as well as an electric power plant which also supplied some of the township. There were also 6 coke ovens where coal was treated, gas released and coke bagged for distribution both locally in Westport and for shipping to other New Zealand ports.

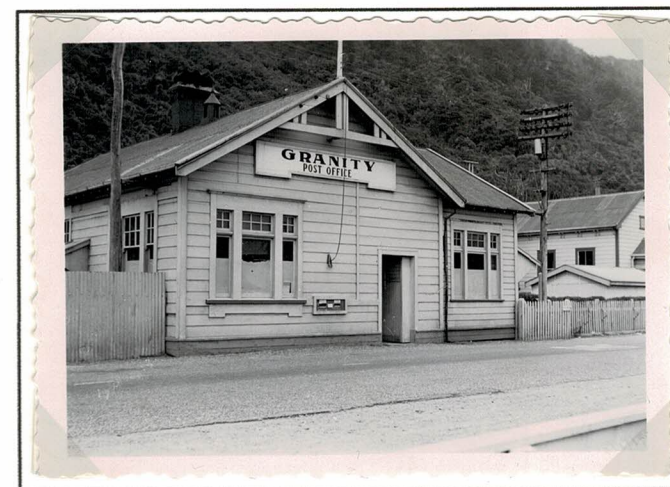
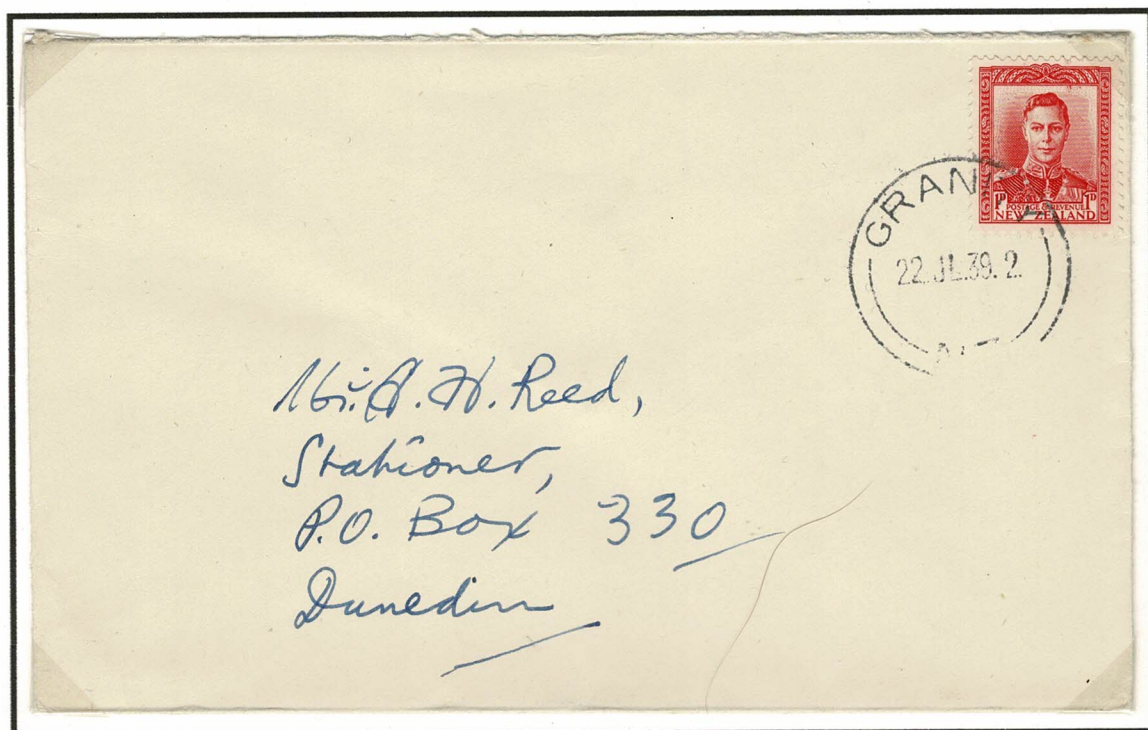
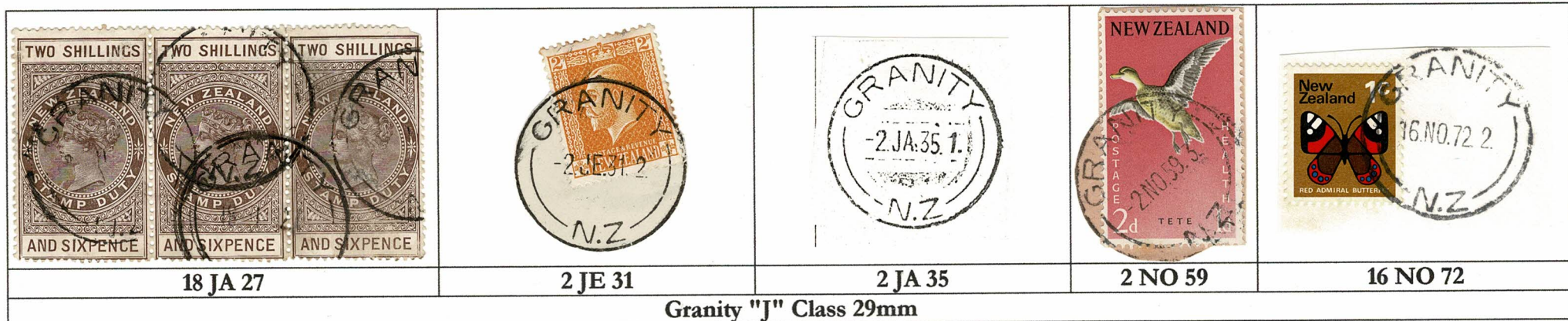
Postal matters:

Granity Creek Post Office opened **February 20, 1892** with a Miss L A Watson as the first postmistress. A telephone office was opened December 6, 1892 and Money Order & Savings bank facilities added July 24, 1893. The office used an "A" Class datestamp. Mails were exchanged with Westport by rail three times weekly. When a stationmaster, Mr Dawson, was appointed at Granity April 1, 1899, the Post Office was placed in that officer's charge. The name of the Post Office was changed to Granity May, 1, 1899

Granity Post Office renamed **May 1, 1899** and was at the Railway Station until 1911 when a separate post office building was provided on account of an increase in business. When the building was completed, the office was placed in the charge of a permanent Post Office Official. An "A" Class datestamp was 'proofed' at Wellington 27 AP 99 and used until replaced by 29mm "J" Class datestamp that was used until the office closed **February 5, 1988**.



Postcard State Coal Mine Seddonville, Westport
Message "Spending holidays here [Westport]"



Granity Post Office c 1964

1943 Envelope from **Granity Motors** from **Granity 28 JE 43** via **Westport 29 JE 1943** to **Miko** [10 km North "J" Class 30 JE 43, opened and redirected to Westport.

Granity Motors had the **Royal Mail** contract a daily service **Granity - Millerton - Stockton**. It was taken over in 1946 by New Zealand Railways bus.

Addressed to Corporal Allen and redirected to **"The Officer in Charge Buller Bn [Battalion] Home Guard Westport."**

The **Home Guard** was formed in 1940 along the lines of the British example, it was at first voluntary with a lower age restriction of 15 and no upper age limit. From 1942 it became compulsory for those between the ages of 35 and 50. By 1943 training and resources had improved so that almost 100,000 guardsmen had uniforms. The basic unit of the guard was the platoon. Platoons were intended primarily to provide defence of their own localities. **The Buller section was responsible for protecting the Port and railway to safeguard essential coal supply.** Disbanded December 1943



Westport Coal Company at Granity.

On **November 28, 1891**, the first shot was fired for the Granity Creek incline which was to carry the coal from the new mines to be developed at Millerton to the Coast. The Company put on a **special train** from Westport and about a hundred of Westport's leading citizens were entertained. In the period between this and the first commercial load of coal from the Plateau in early July 1896, was a period of building, exploration and surveying. At Granity, coal bins and screens to hold 4000 tons were constructed, 40 chains of sidings were built at the foot of the bins, seven rail lines under the bins, 16,000 tons of fill, a five line rail bridge across Granity Creek, blacksmith and carpentry shops, engineering shop and equipment and materials to build 300 tubs on site along with 400 tons of rails and 1000 sleepers.



"Granity, N.Z." divided back postcard issued by G. Parkhouse, Westport.
Phototyped in Saxony.
View looking North-west with railway sidings in foreground

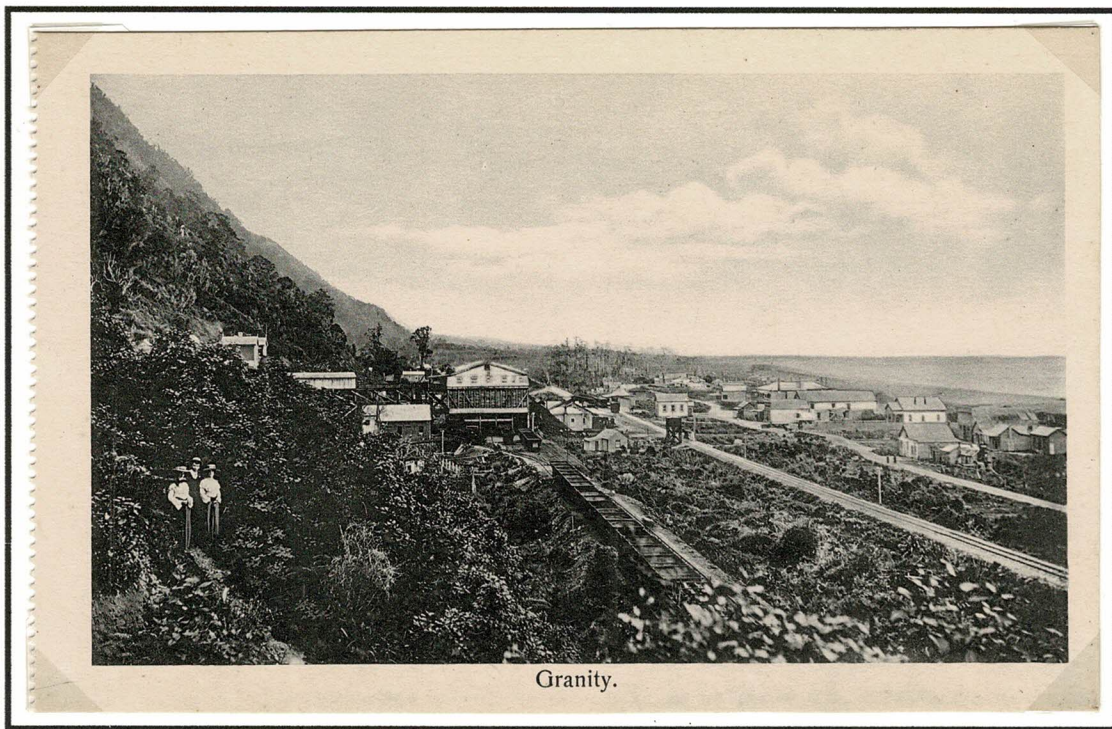


"Granity & Chair Rocks, N.Z." divided back postcard issued by Brown Bros., Millerton, N.Z. Parkhouse, Westport. Phototyped in Saxony.



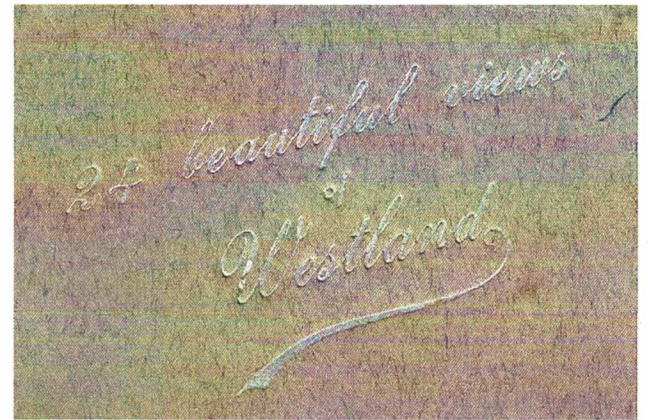
Granity
Token
2lb Loaf

In the early 1900's there was often a shortage of coinage - penny and half-penny - and a number of store owners produced **Bread Tokens** so their customers could but a number of these then exchange them for bread. On the West Coast, Bread Tokens are know from the **coal towns** of Waimangaroa, Runanga and Granity. At **Granity**, tokens were issued by **L J Carmine** - general store and bakery. The store, scan from Granity Museum is shown. It can be seen on the postcards as marked.



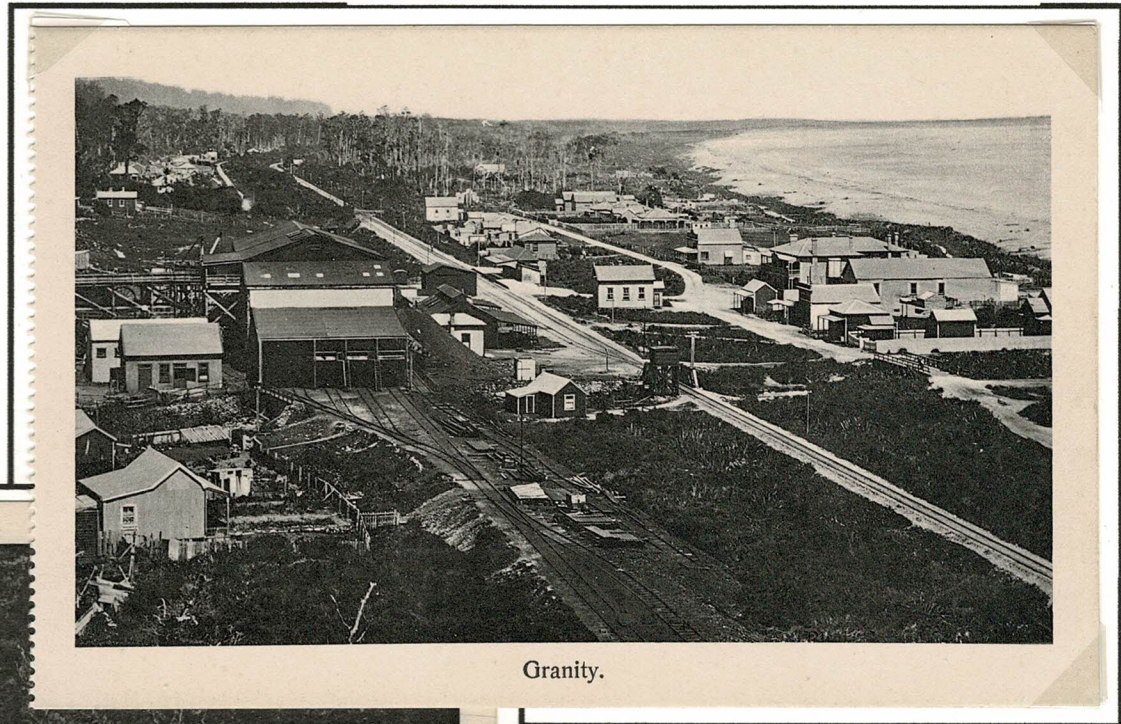
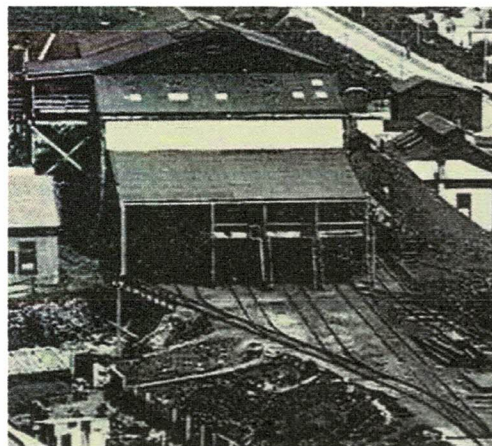
Granity.

New Zealand Post Card
 Space for correspondence
 M.....
 Phototyped
 in
 Saxony

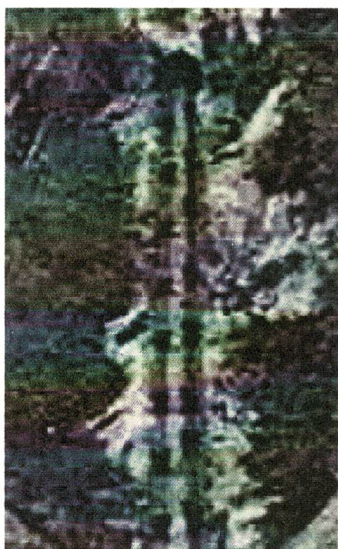


A stapled inter-leaved postcard booklet with "24 beautiful views of Westland" - no photographer or print details.

Detail of Postcard showing Coal Bins and the railway lines from the loading area



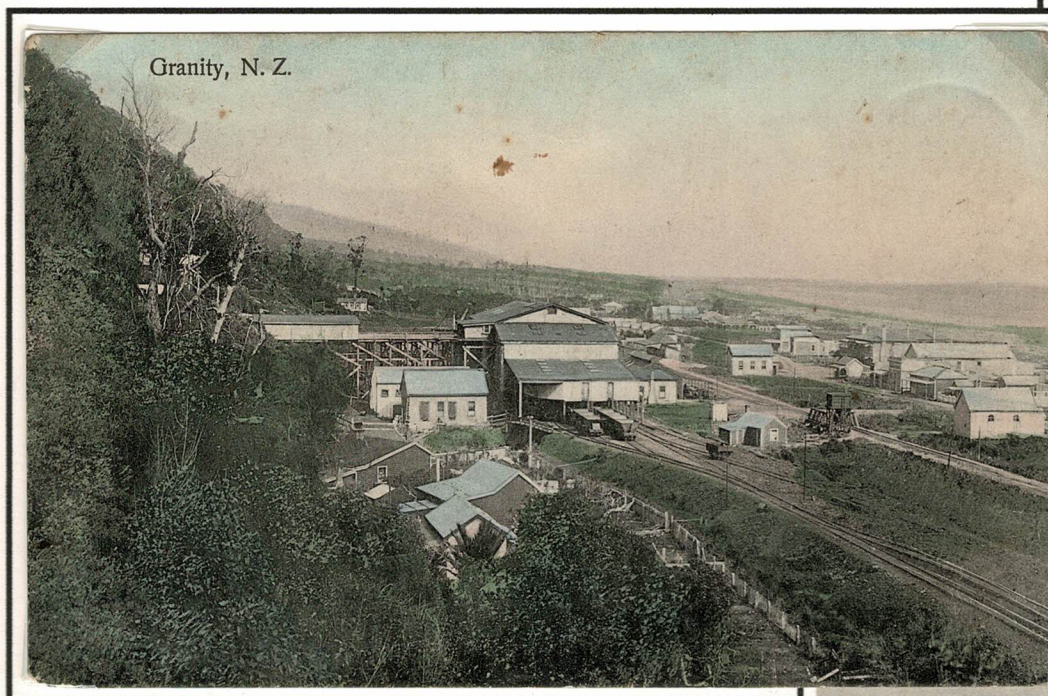
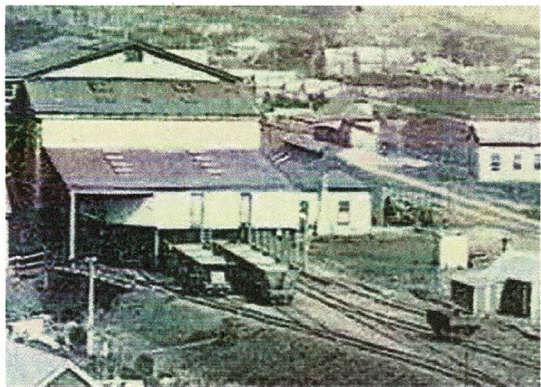
Granity.



Granity.

Detail showing the lower incline to the first tunnel with full tubs coming down and empty ones going up on 4-inch endless steel rope. The tubs each weighed 7 cwt and each carried 17 cwt of coal and were attached to the rope at about 66 foot intervals.

Postcards, divided back. identical views of **Granity** looking South. No photographer or printer details - Phototyped in Saxony. The view shows coal wagons at the **Bins** for loading



Upper: has *"Just a view of one of the Stations"* - has been folded and sent as enclosure

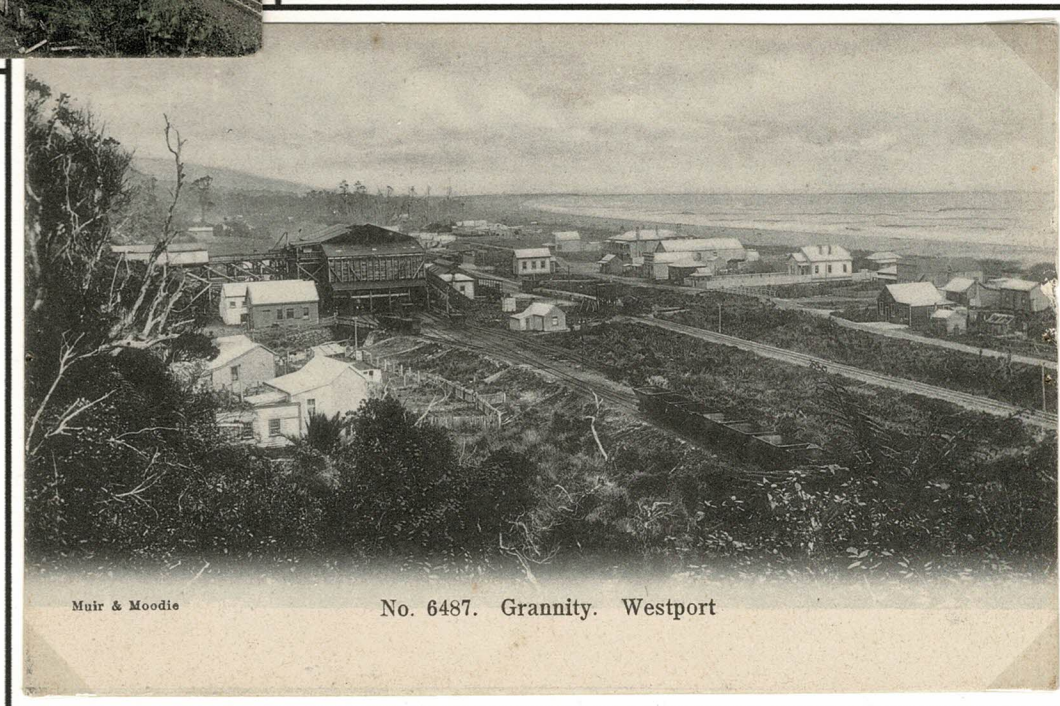
Left: undated not posted *"... Ben George & Kate have gone into the Granity Hotel they moved in last week, I hope they do well... Old Jack Birch has come back on the hill again to start on the coal today Mr McGarry was telling us. I never thought he would work again did you?... Phil is working moke poke this fortnight and it is miserable I can tell you.."*

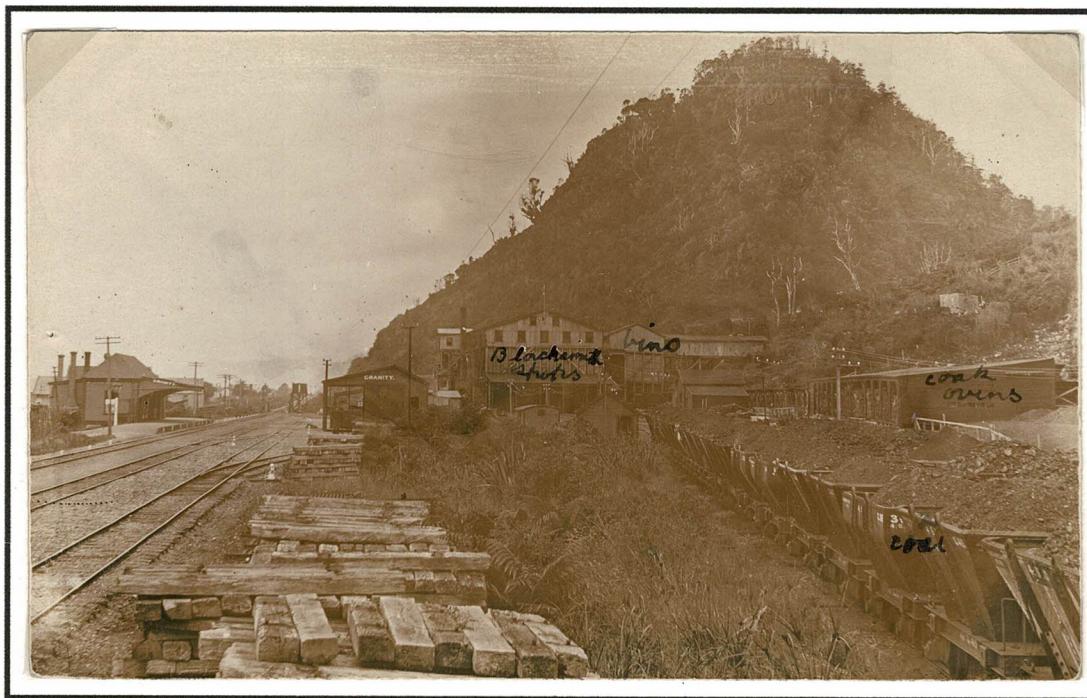
"The hill" - possibly refers to Millerton or Denniston
 "Moke poke" - miners slang for split shifts

"No 6487. Grannity. Westport"
 Muir & Moodie

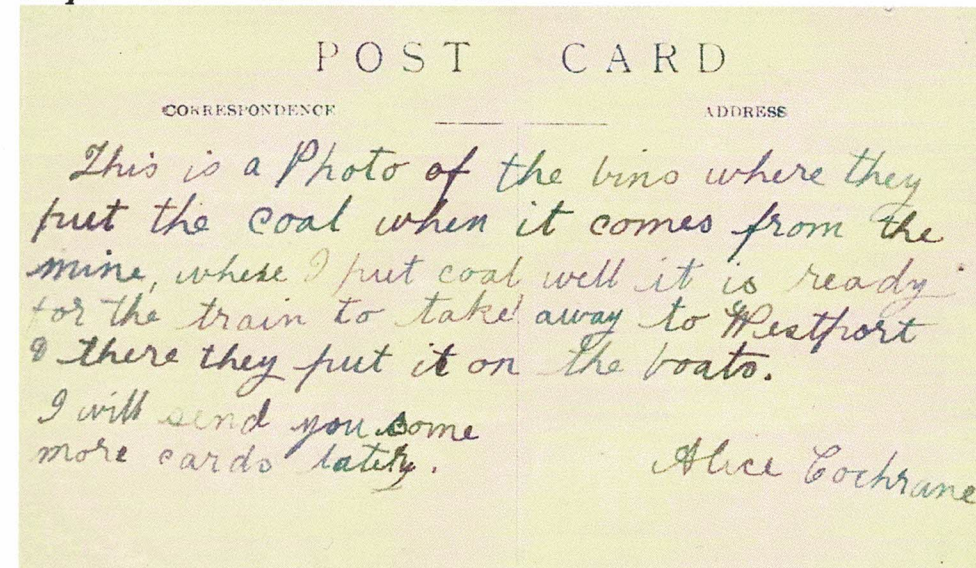
Issued by **MUIR & MOODIE** Dunedin N.Z.
 from their Copyright Series of Views.

Probable post 1910 as not printed in Saxony -
 Muir & Moodie changed to New Zealand printers





Real Photo Postcard. No details, view of Granity sidings and bins looking north with the railway station at left. Sender has annotated "**Blacksmith shops**" "**Bins**" "**Coke ovens**" "**Coal**"



1913 Great Strike

What became known as the "Great Strike" started at the Taupiri Coal Mines in Huntly with the dismissal of a number of Miners including all the union officials. This dispute was taken over by the United Federation of Labour that had had its origin in the Blackball Mine strike of 1908. The situation became complicated by the Waterfront Strike on October 23, 1913. **All coalmines stopped work November 5, 1913.** Farmers acting as "**Special Constables**" broke the Waterfront dispute and the General Strike ended December 20, 1913. The miners surrendered **January 13, 1914.**

The Westport Coal Company are having erected six coke ovens at Granity to utilise the soft coal and contemplate erecting more at an early date, as it is anticipated the coke will meet with ready sale. At present a large amount of the area that contains the soft material has to lie dormant, there being very little demand for it for some time past.

Greymouth Evening Star 1/9/1910

Framed real photograph postcard "**Granity New Zealand**" dated 6-11-13 - second day of the Miners' Strike

*Presbyterian Church
Granity, Westport
6-11-13*

"All things are a standstill here just now, the whole of New Zealand on strike."

"We have no idea how long it will last, but if it continues long we will have to live the simple life."

"A crowd of people have just arrived from Home here in the midst of no work, nothing, poor souls, it is hard and hundreds more are expected shortly."

"Let them all come, many will soon be back Home again."

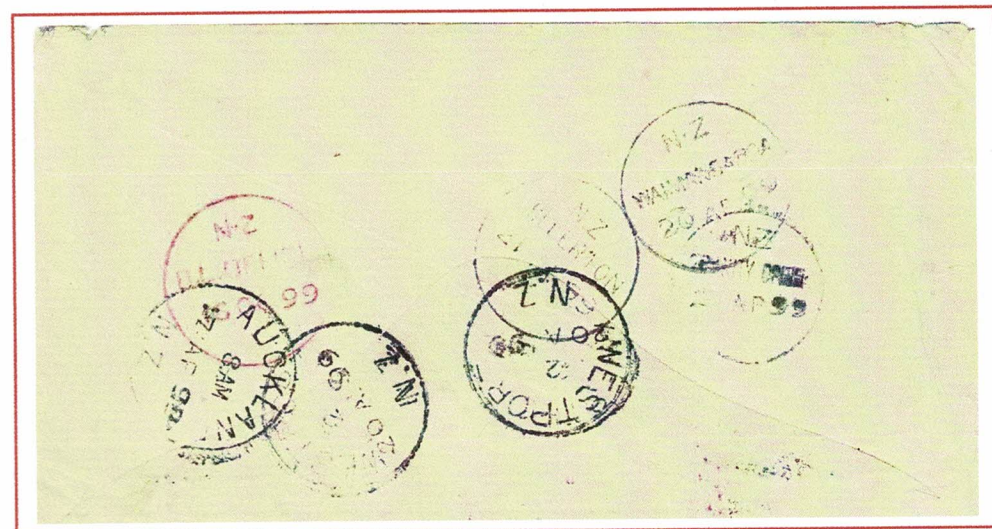


The Westport Coal Company had been recruiting coal miners from Britain to work the mines at Denniston and Millerton from 1906

Millerton

Millerton was named after the **Chairman of the Westport Coal Company**, H. J. Miller, It was first surveyed by John Snodgrass in 1893 and following this the Westport Harbour Board, which administered the area as a colliery reserve, sold a large number of leases by auction. In the early days of the mine most miners lived at **Granity**. In 1896 the population was 39 [24 male 15 female]. The town did not develop on a grid but sprawled up and down the hills as flat land was non-existent, houses were erected with scant regard to section boundaries. Once the mine was in full production, miners and families began to move up the hill.

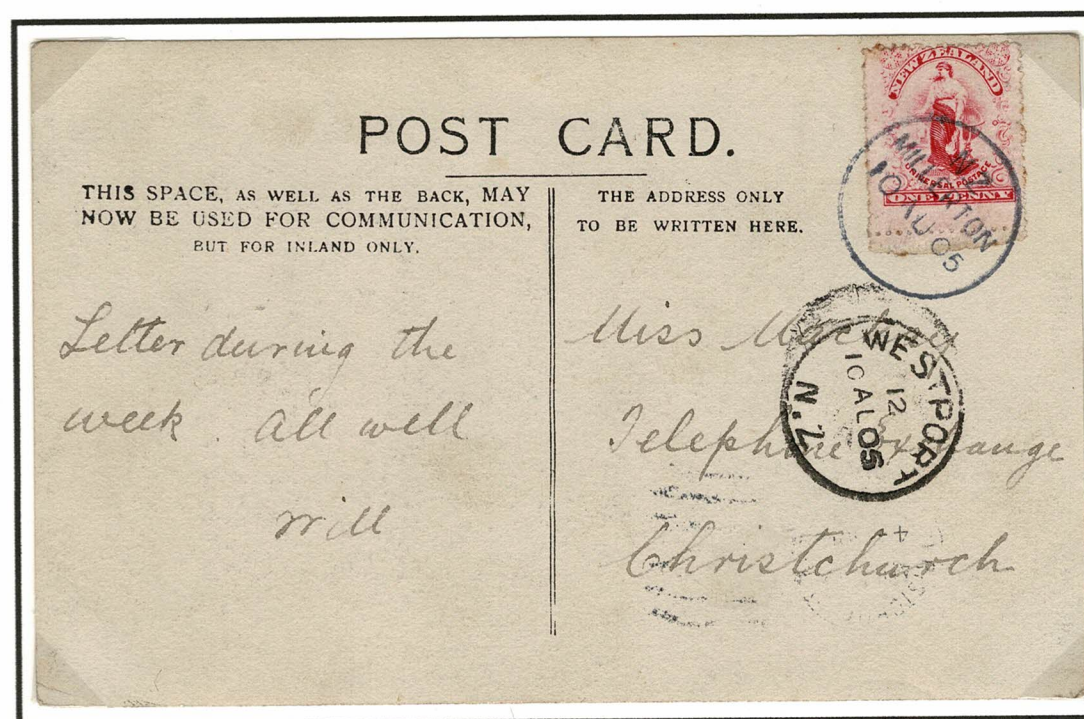
The **Millerton Post Office** opened **1 May 1898** with Mrs Geddes as postmaster. The office closed **5 February 1988**. Used an "A" Class and "J" Class datestamps.



Envelope mailed with 2d Tasmanian stamp cancelled at Hobart AP 6 1899 addressed "**Henry Lowe Miner Waimangaroa Auckld**" Received Auckland 17 AP 99 and sent to Westport received 20 AP 99. To Waimangaroa 20 AP 99 but redirected "**Millerton Granity Creek**" back to Westport 20 AP 99, **Granity Creek 21 AP 99**, **Millerton 21 AP 99** and returned to GPO Westport where it would have been advertised held the declared **UNCLAIMED** with Westport 25 SP 99 and redirected to Dead Letter Office - D.L. Office "A" Class 16 OC 99



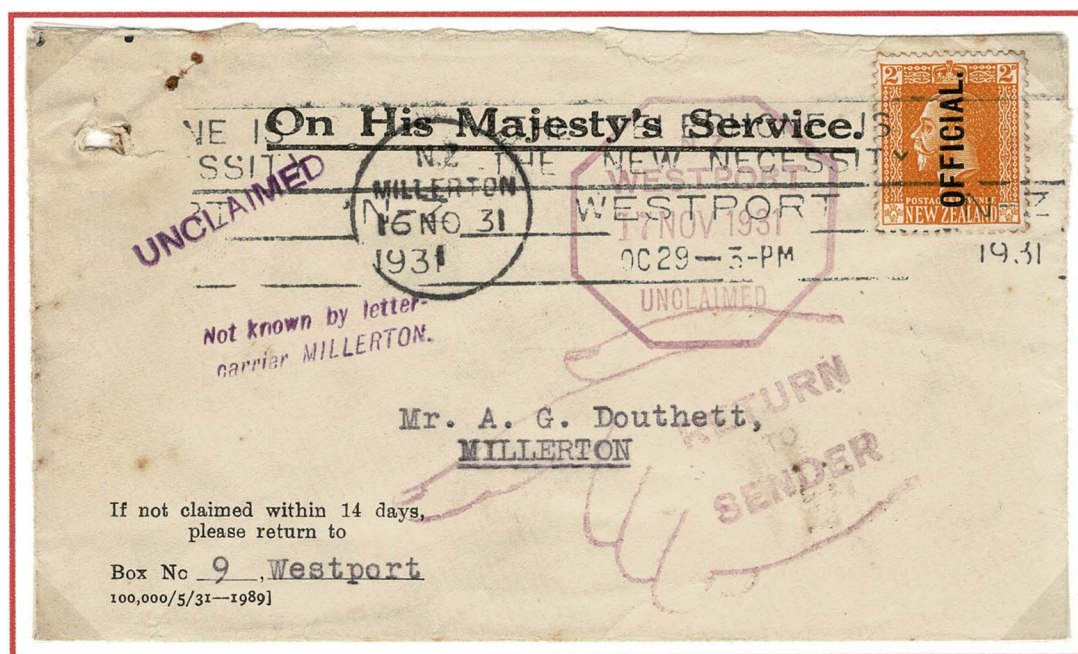
Real Photograph postcard - no details - annotated by sender "**S S Corinna - This is rather a distant view of the vessel**" **Burning Westport Coal Co Coal!**
S S Corinna was a **Union Steamship Company** passenger steamship of 1200 tons 1891-1930]



Millerton "A" Class 10 AU 05 to Westport 10 AU 05
"Letter during the week all well"

			
10 DE 11	5 OC 21	10 DE 30	2 JA 35
Millerton "A" Class			

		
3 SEP 56	3 JE 71	11 JL 73
Octagonal	Millerton "J" Class	



Andrew George Douthett, a miner at Stockton Mine, and Sidney Lowry, a brakeman, were admitted to the District Hospital at Westport on Wednesday evening suffering from injuries received at the Stockton mine at 3.30 p.m., through their being jammed between a locomotive and a quantity of timber. Douthett apparently fared worse than Lowry, as he had both legs broken, one having a compound fracture below the right knee. Lowry's injuries consisted mainly of bruises, but it was impossible to ascertain definitely last evening whether or not he had any internal injuries. Both were doing as well as can be expected on latest reports. Douthett and Lowry are each about twenty-four years of age. Both belong to the Buller district.

Hokitika Guardian 16 July 1928

On His Majesty's Service Envelope [100,000/5/1931] with 2d KDV Official sent Westport OC 29 3pm 1931 using slogan type 10 [PJNZ Vol III P 168] **"The Telephone is the New Necessity"** introduced at Westport in 1928 and used intermittently until withdrawn July 5, 1942.

Addressed to **A G Douthett Millerton** [see scan from newspaper] On reverse is **Millerton "A" Class 2 NO 31** corrected in manuscript to **30 OC** and **initialled**.

30 October was a Friday and 2 November was the Monday. The Postmaster obviously received the mail on Friday but did not backstamp until Monday then realising the error made the **manuscript correction**.

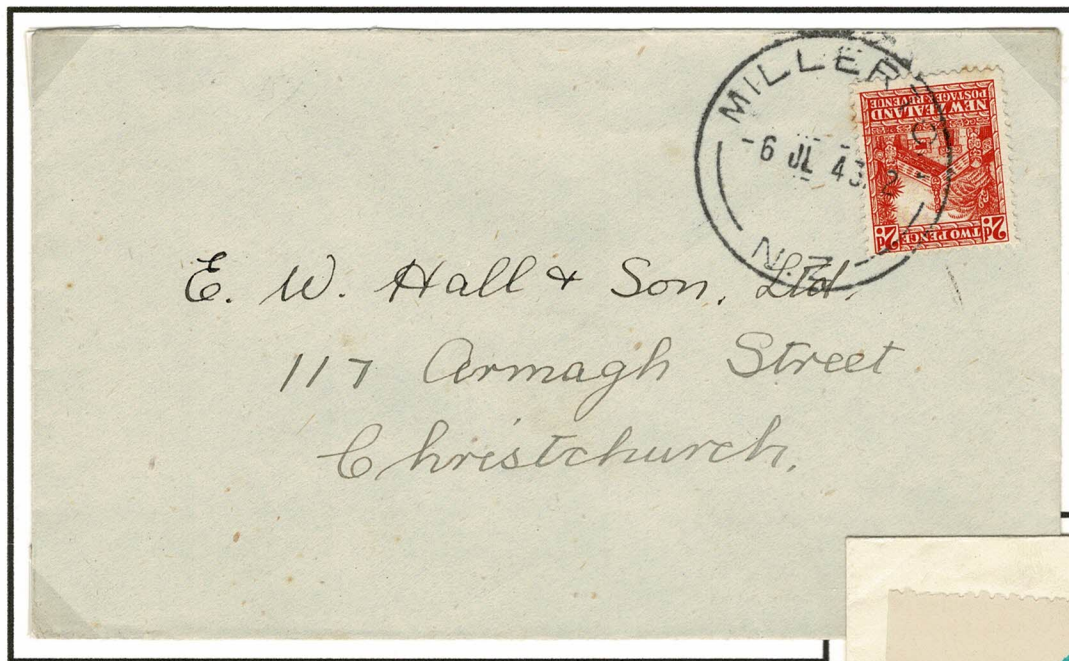
Douthett was not known to the letter carrier and 2-line marking **"Not known by letter-carrier MILLERTON"** applied [rare marking - exhibitor knows of no other]

Held at Millerton for 2 weeks as per Post Office regulations then **UNCLAIMED** applied with **Millerton 16 NO 31** the, as per regulations, Letter returned to Westport where **WESTPORT UNCLAIMED 17 NO 1931** and **Return to Sender** had applied and letter redirected the sender at Box 9 Westport



Not known by letter-carrier MILLERTON.

UNCLAIMED



Millerton "J" Class 6 JL 43

Addressee "E W Hall & Son" of Christchurch was a company specialising in "Pharmaceutical herbs" and had a nationwide mail distribution service. The archive of incoming mail was retained and covers feature in many postal history collections

Millerton Registered with "J" Class 16 AP 59 and octagonal **MO&SB** marking [Money Order & Savings Bank].

Mrs Walker of Dunedin was one of the pioneers of postmark collecting in new Zealand

Photo Millerton Post Office

Left c 1974; Right 1984 [Exhibitor photograph]



27/14.

Chief Post Office,

WESTPORT

4th August, 1959.

Memorandum for

The Postmaster,

MILLERTON.

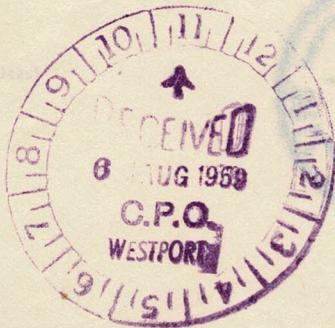
Date-stamp Impressions.

It is observed that many of the date-stamp impressions placed on mail matter at your office are indistinct. Please see that the necessary improvement is effected.

Every impression should show clearly the name of your office and the date. With this end in view, the date-stamp must be kept clean and the inking pad protected from dust.

Please forward hereon a sample impression of your date-stamp.

Date-stamp of the 3rd August, reading 2nd August.



[Handwritten signature]
Chief Postmaster.
acting

The Chief Postmaster,

Westport

Post Office Rule Book contains:

"The correct assembling of date-stamps at non-permanent offices is to be checked at the circulating offices by a regular examination of the date-stamp impressions on the correspondence posted at the non-permanent offices."

Memorandum 4th August 1959
on Form
"Mail 14.500/11/38-13952"

from Chief Post Office Westport to
Postmaster at Millerton advising him:

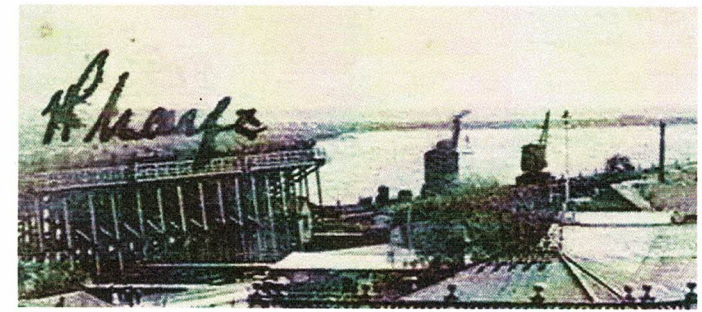
**"Date-stamp of 3rd August,
reading 2nd August."**

and requesting an impression of the
datestamp.



[Handwritten signature]
Postmaster.

Only Example Known



Detail of Muir & Moodie "6489 Westport N.Z."

postcard annotated by sender "Wharfs"

Shows the **Coal Staites** [loading system] erected 1880 and extended 1893 capable of holding 2000 tons. Use discontinued in 1902. The **Crane Wharf** built in 1899 shows 2 **steam cranes** [1907 & 1909] for coal loading.

Millerton "A" Class 28 JA 07 "Arrived safe good trip started work on Saturday... Address Millerton P.O."

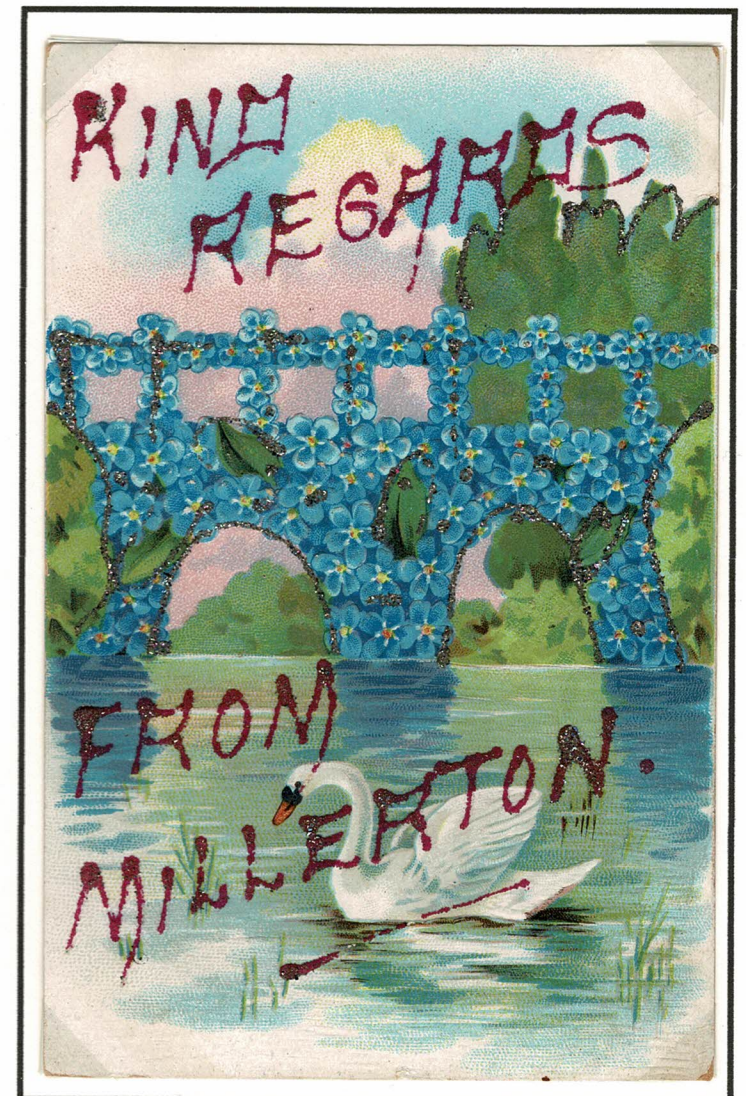


Novelty Tinsel Postcards were a craze but were not approved by the Post Office.

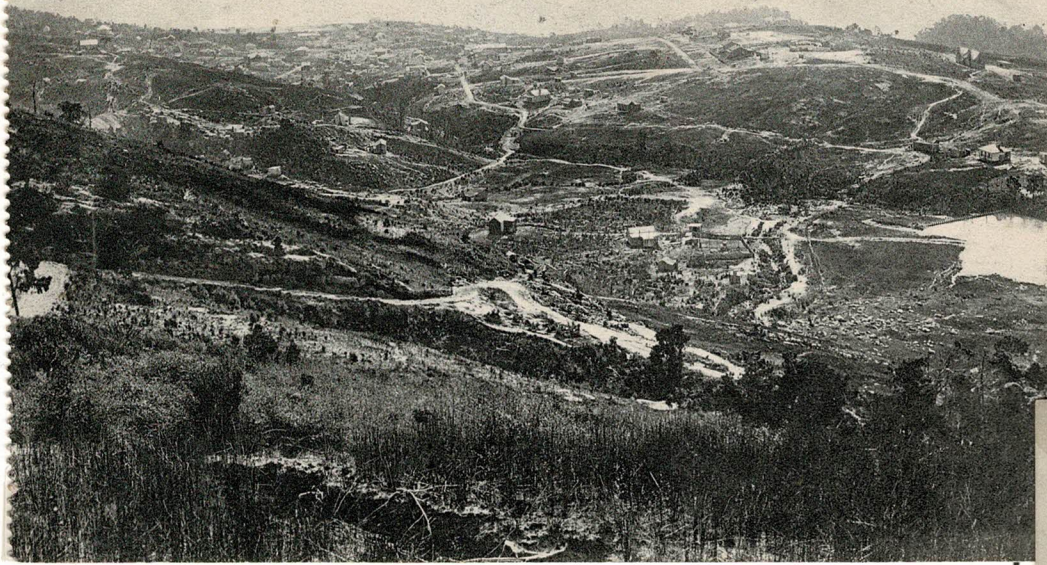
Left: "Best Love From Millerton" divided back, no details but mailed without a stamp Millerton 23 DE 10



Right: *Kind Regards From Millerton*" divided back postcard from "The Popular Series No. 456 Printed in Germany



Birds Eye view of Millerton.

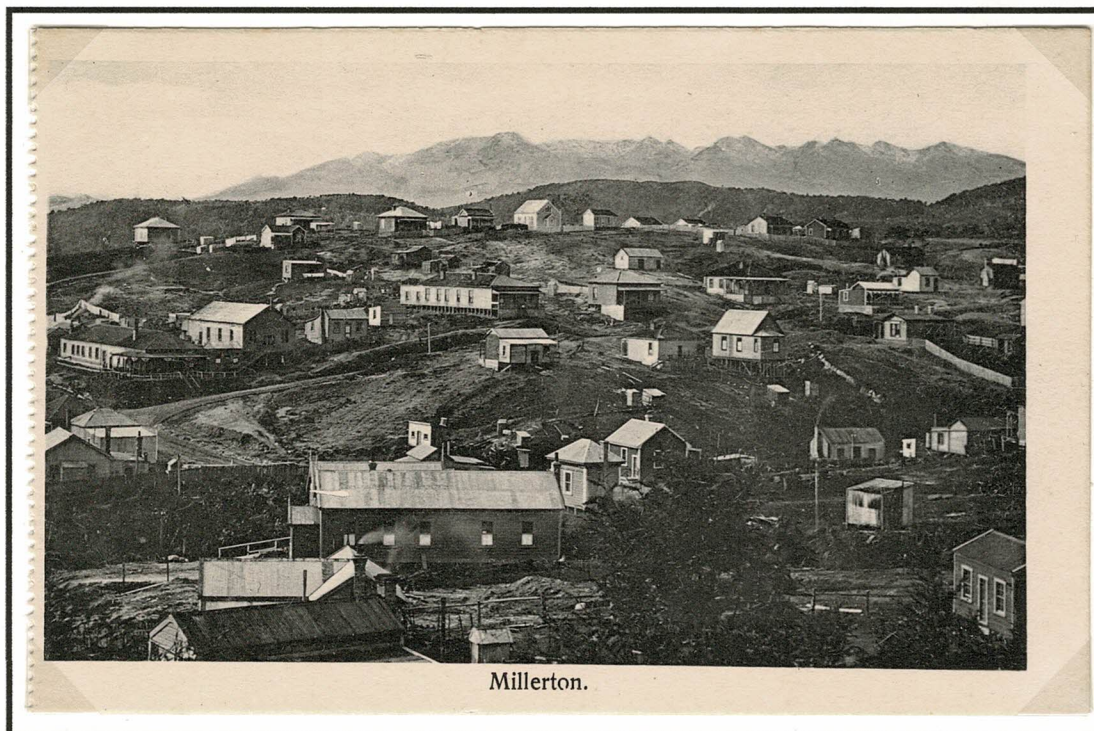
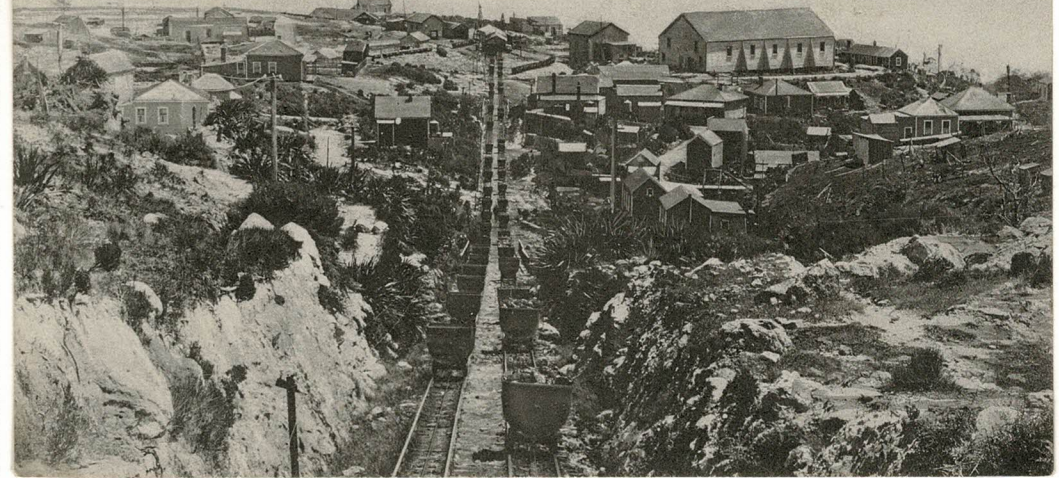


"Birds Eye view of Millerton" divided back postcard, no photographer details, printed in Saxony. The left edge is perforated indicating that it came from a booklet of cards from the same source.

"Millerton N.Z." divided back postcard, issued by G Parkhouse, Westport, Phototyped in Saxony. View shows the Millerton Incline. The view shows **full coal tubs descending on the right** and empty tubs on the left.

All other views show the **full tubs on the LEFT**.

Millerton, N. Z.



Millerton.

"Millerton" postcard from "24 Beautiful views of Westland" booklet. Phototyped in Saxony

Millerton became another insular mining town with butchery, bakery and grocery stores and regular representatives from Westport. There were Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian churches,; temperance and Army hall, picture theatre. There was a home guard detachment and air-raid shelters. School was set up in 1898 but blew down in a gale, the replacement was burnt down as was its replacement. Branch of the Westport School of Mines and of course a miners brass band

Millerton Mine

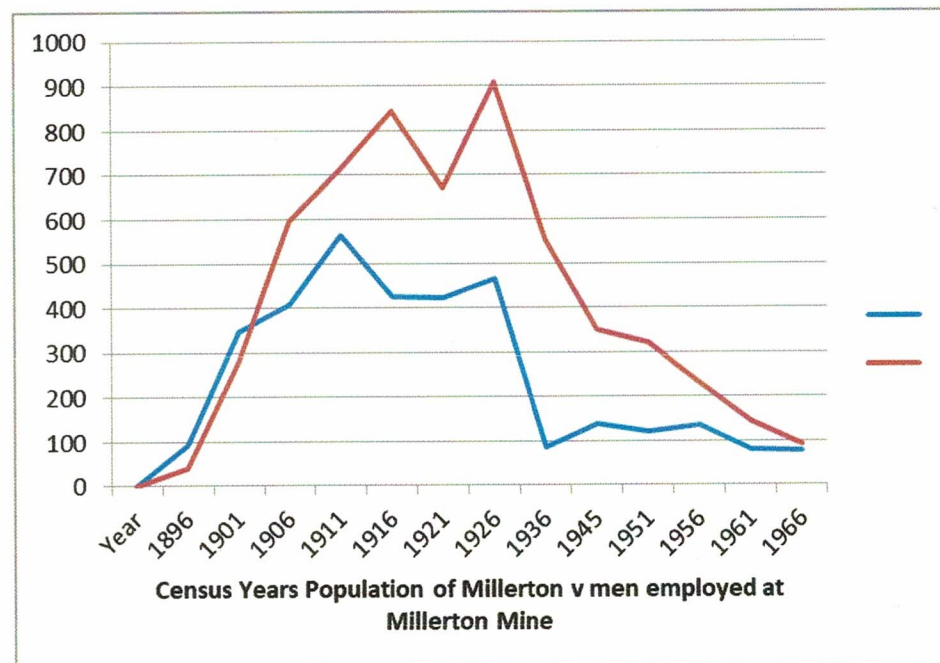
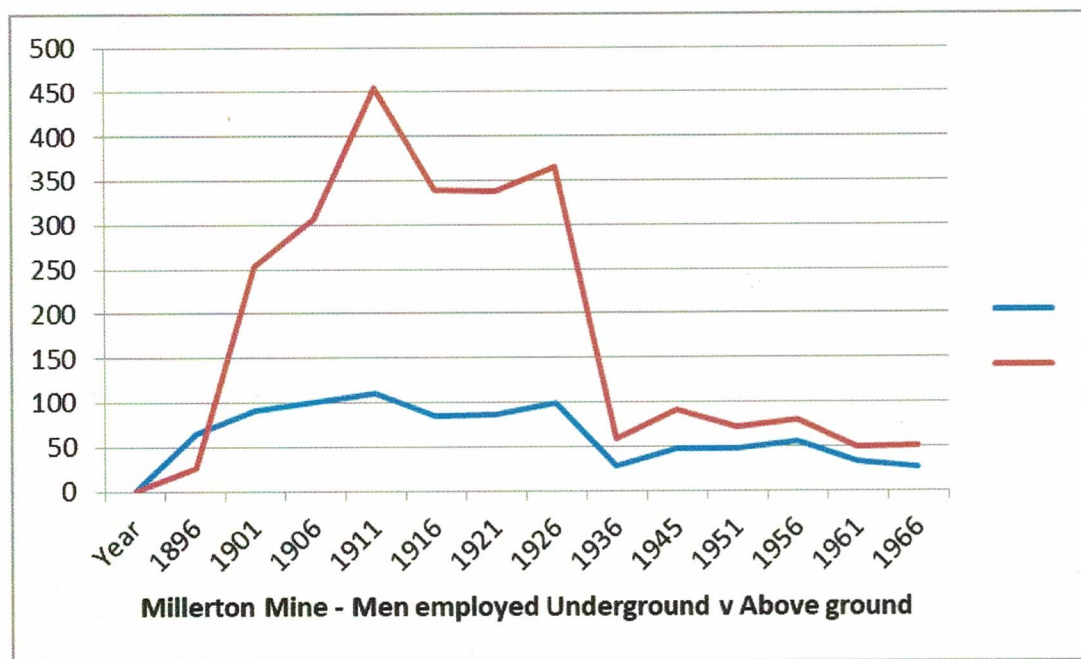
The **Westport Coal Company Millerton Mine** eventually consisted of three sections **Millerton, Mine Creek and Mangatina**. This can be seen on the [composite] 1914 map at the start of this section. Mining operations commenced with access drives well prior to the completion of the Incline and some 7000 tons of coal was washed down the Gracity Creek. The Incline was completed 30 June 1896 and the first coal, from what was known as the **"Dip Section"** sent down the first week of July.

Work at the Millerton Mine was characterised by a series of disagreements between the Westport Coal Company and its employees, over pay and working conditions - the Company was more motivated by profit than compassion. There were many situations where the disputes went to the Arbitration Court and many days of work lost. The mine was closed during the 1913 Great Strike and during the Depression years the mine was often idle because of disputes. It was also closed during the 1951 Waterfront Strike with production dropping by 45% that year.

The Millerton Mine's hey-day was during the first quarter of the 20th century when it supplied coal to gas works, freezing works, railways and factories throughout the country. Its importance was paramount during WWI when it supplied coal to the British Navy to fuel its warships in the Pacific Ocean. All production went down the Incline then by rail to Westport wharves and loaded on colliers of the Union Steamship Company - [the real owners of the mine].

The **State** took over the mine in March 1948 and it was formally taken over **1 April 1948** - the Westport Coal Company was no more. The fires that had plagued the mine restricted access to winnable coal in the early 1960's and the flooding, earth subsidence and slips which had started after the Murchison Earthquake in June 1929, caused more problems. The mine officially closed **16 September 1969**.

Total Production was over 10,500,000 tons with the peak year in 1914 of 352,071 tons with 115 men employed above ground and 472 underground



The Millerton Mine was referred to as the "Jewel in the Crown" of the Westport Coal Company but apart from the industrial issues the Coal from the Dip Section and Mine Creek were high in Sulphur [up to 6%] and iron pyrites. This caused significant problems for the British Navy coal powered ships with furnaces being damaged. Coal from the Mangatina section was lower in sulphur [2%].

The 10/- Shares in the Westport Coal Company rose to £2-4-0d when the mine opened and by early 1907 to £6-10-0d. The Directors rewarded themselves with a £200 increase in fees to £700. The mine was profitable and the Company paid good dividends to the shareholders.

The first fatality at Millerton was 20 August 1902 when a trucker was struck by a runaway truck at the bottom of the Incline. There 39 fatalities during the life of the mine, between 1902-1964.

Coal from Millerton was not marketed as such as the Company was still using the **"Coalbrookdale"** Brand [Denniston Mine] which received such widespread newspaper coverage when the **HMS Calliope**, using Coalbrookdale coal, was able to escape from Apia harbour in the 1889 hurricane while the vessels of other countries were lost.

Millerton Mine

The Incline:

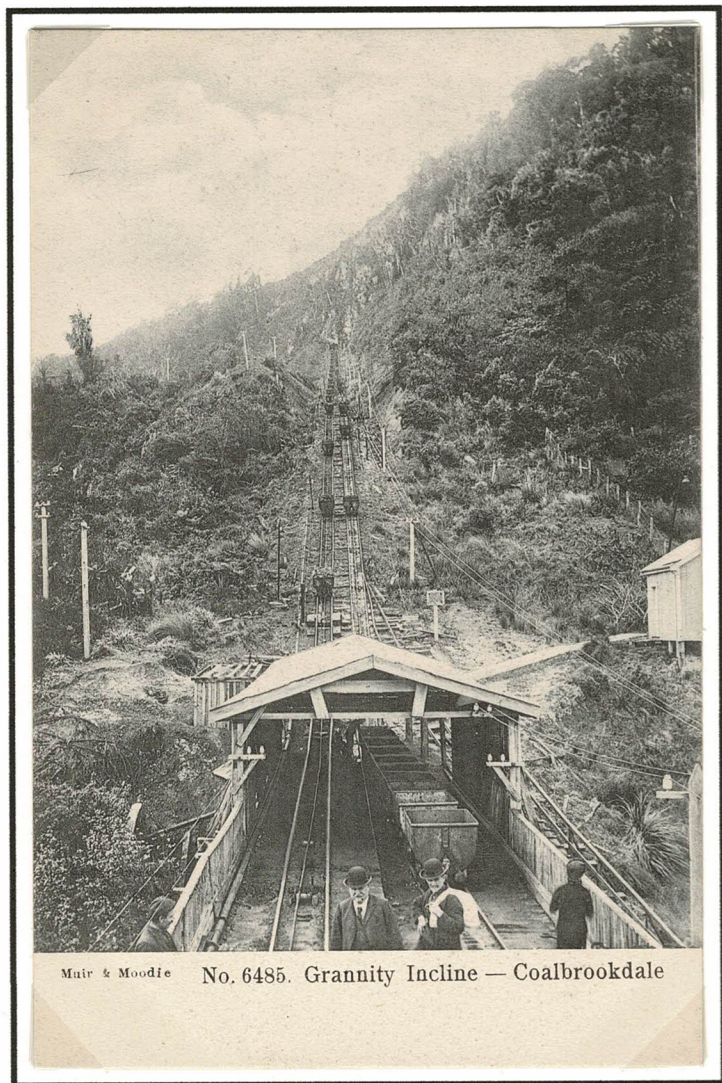
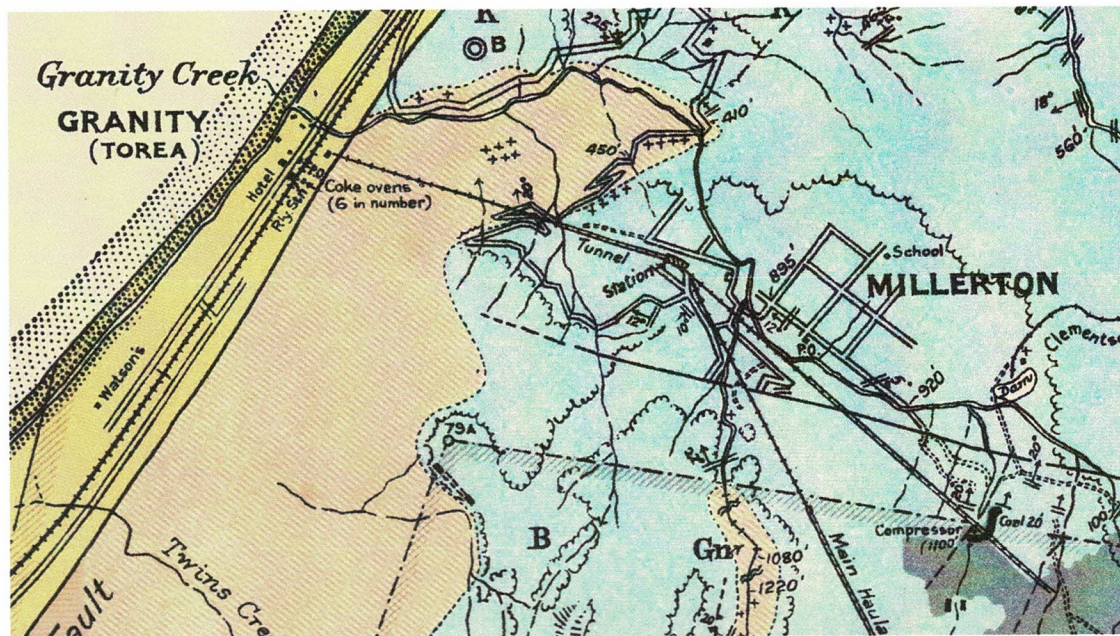
This was designed by Young Brothers who were also responsible for much of the Westport harbour works, the Brunner and Mt Rochfort railways and the Denniston Incline. The Millerton incline height was just half that of the Denniston Incline. The start was at Granity on **28 November 1891** with a trainload of dignitaries in attendance. The incline was in two sections - the **lower incline** was 45 chains [1000 yards] long and 1:4 with 2 tunnels with a skew bridge between. The **upper incline** was 51 chains [1125 yards] long at 1:14 leading to the mine mouth where the huge Compressors were sited. The upper incline was completed in **mid-1895** and the lower on **30 June 1896**.

Detail from 1914 Map of Buller Coalfield

Shows the line of the Millerton Incline from Granity and tunnels on the lower incline then the change of direction near the Station where the middle braking system was to the mouth of the Millerton Mine [Dip Section] where the main compressors were sited - noted on the map

A dam, for water supply to the hydraulic braking system is shown - fed by diverting part of Granity Creek.

The **Mine Creek** and **Managtini** sections of the Millerton Mine connected to the incline tramway above the railway station via "**Main Haulage Tunnel**".



Muir & Moodie No. 6485. Granity Incline — Coalbrookdale

Left:

"No 6485 Granity Incline -
Coalbrookdale" by Muir & Moodie
Undivided back [pre 1907]

Issued by **MUIR & MOODIE** Dunedin N.Z.
from their Copyright Series of Views.

Right:

"6485 Granity Incline,
Coalbrookdale N.Z." by Muir &
Moodie Divided back

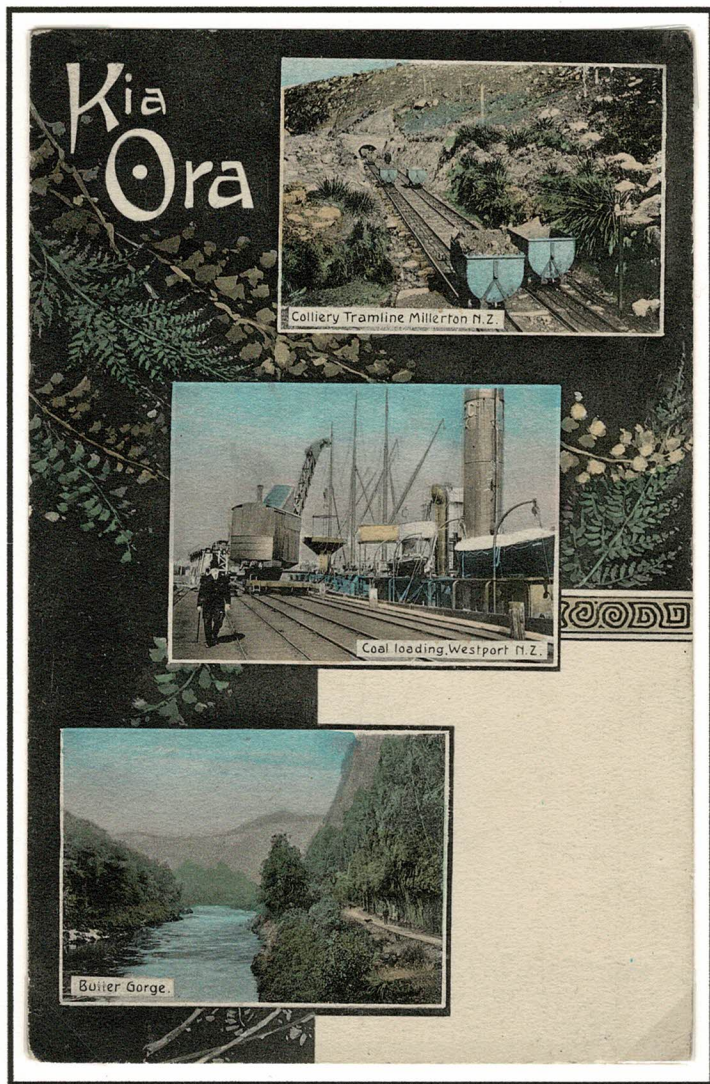
Issued by *Muir & Moodie* Dunedin N. Z.
from their Copyright Series of Views

This view is from the Bins looking
up the Incline tramway towards the
first tunnel with full tubs coming
down on the left and empty ones
going up on the right.



6485. Granity Incline, Coalbrookdale N. Z.

Muir & Moodie



View of the section of the Millerton tramway below the first tunnel, full tubs on the left.

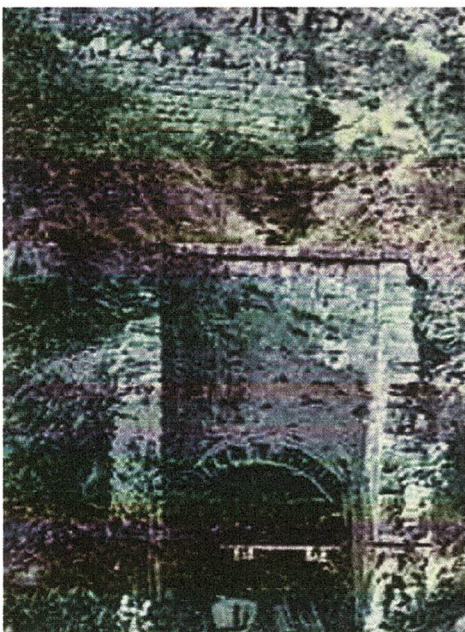
Divided back postcards, printed in Saxony, issued by G Parkhouse. One overprinted in gold lettering "*Season's Greetings 1908-9*"

Used from Westport 3 NO 08 2 PM "F" Class datestamp to Sussex [England].



"**Millerton N.Z**" divided back postcard, phototyped in Saxony, Issued by Brown Bros, Millerton, N.Z.
View is of the Tramway looking **DOWN** from near the Mine mouth - full tubs descending on the **right** empties coming up on the left.





Left: "**Incline Millerton**" from "24 beautiful Views of Westland" booklet

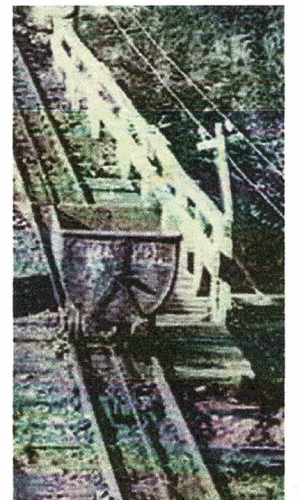
Right: "**Millerton Incline, N.Z.**" issued by Brown Bros, Millerton, N.Z.

Views show the Incline **between the two tunnels** on the lower incline looking up with loaded tubs coming down on the left.

The 18 foot span of the "**Skew Bridge**" sited between the tunnels is clearly seen - it is not in line with the tracks. The tunnels were 10 chains and 12 chains in length, each 10 feet wide and 7 feet high.

Before any coal had been mined, the unstable hillside above the upper tunnel began to show signs of movement and an **abutment** of some 30 feet at the entrance and another higher up were constructed at a cost of £2000.

The endless steel rope can be clearly seen - it was 4 inches thick and had a breaking strain of over 100 tons. The tubs were clipped on at the Mine.



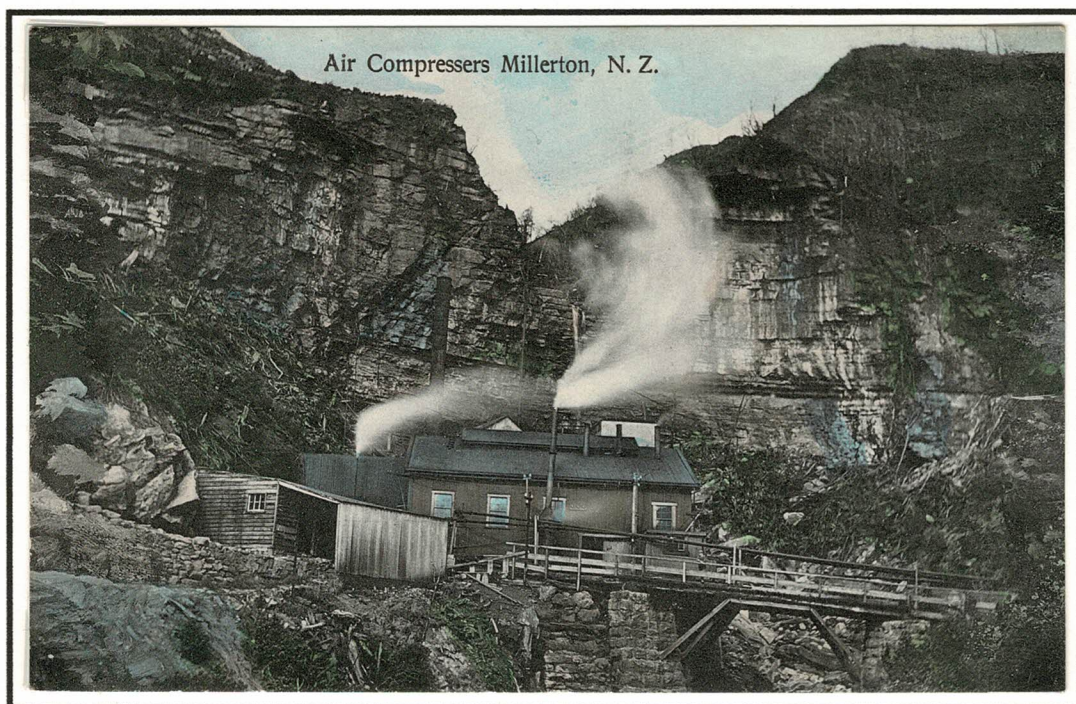


Real Photograph Postcard - no details shows the Incline with the view looking down with full tubs descending on the right.



Tramline-Millerton Colliery N.Z.

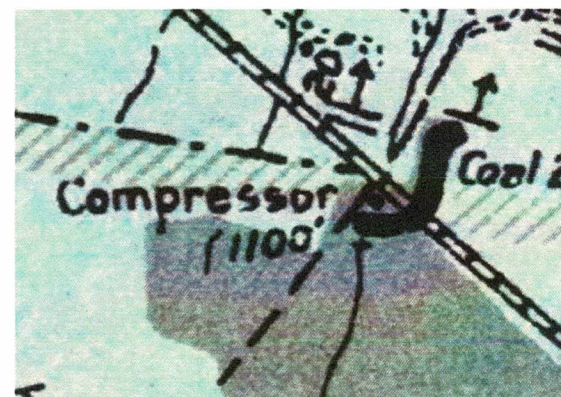
"Tramline-Millerton Colliery N.Z." Printed in Saxony, issued by G Parkhouse View of upper Incline and mouth of Millerton Mine. The compressors are not seen - these are just to the right of this view.



Air Compressors Millerton, N. Z.

"Air Compressors Millerton, N.Z." Divided back postcard printed in Saxony, Issued by Brown Bros., Millerton N.Z.

The **Compressors** were adjacent to the Power House and supplied the underground machinery, the main mine ventilation fan and drainage pumps.

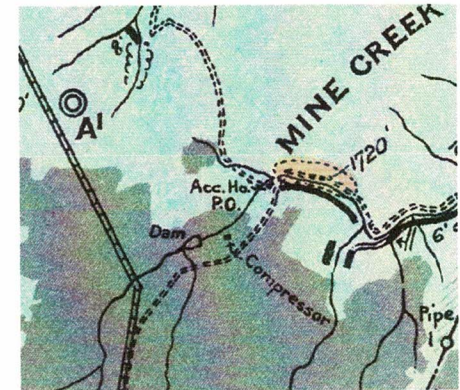


Detail from 1914 map showing Compressor adjacent to Incline and Mine mouth

Mine Creek

The **Mine Creek** section of the Millerton Mine was started in 1900. It was about 2km above Millerton. It had its own air compressor and generators supplying power to the Mine. Access to Millerton was via a track but all supplies came up the Incline then along the main haulage tunnel. It had a blacksmith shop and a boarding house. The Post Office was opened **1 December 1902**, closed between 13 December 1915 to 1 August 1916. It used an "A" class datestamp. Closed **23 March 1932**

The population at census was: 1906 - 53; 1911-70; 1916 - 22; 1921 - 35; 1926 - 10. Post Office archives record in 1931 record that there was a boarding house with 11 boarders and 6 men in huts. They note that since the Mangatina office closed [1930], all mail and telephone goes through the Mine Creek office and the Postmistress Mrs Laffey [runs the boarding house] requested that the office would stay open as the settlement is very isolated being 1000 feet above Millerton. Mrs Laffey resigned 23 February 1932 and no one was prepared to take over the office - temporarily closed 24 February 1932 and permanently closed 23 March 1932. In 1932 it records 12 men at Mine Creek "mostly unemployed." The Chief Postmaster at Westport recommended closure and the cost would be £2.

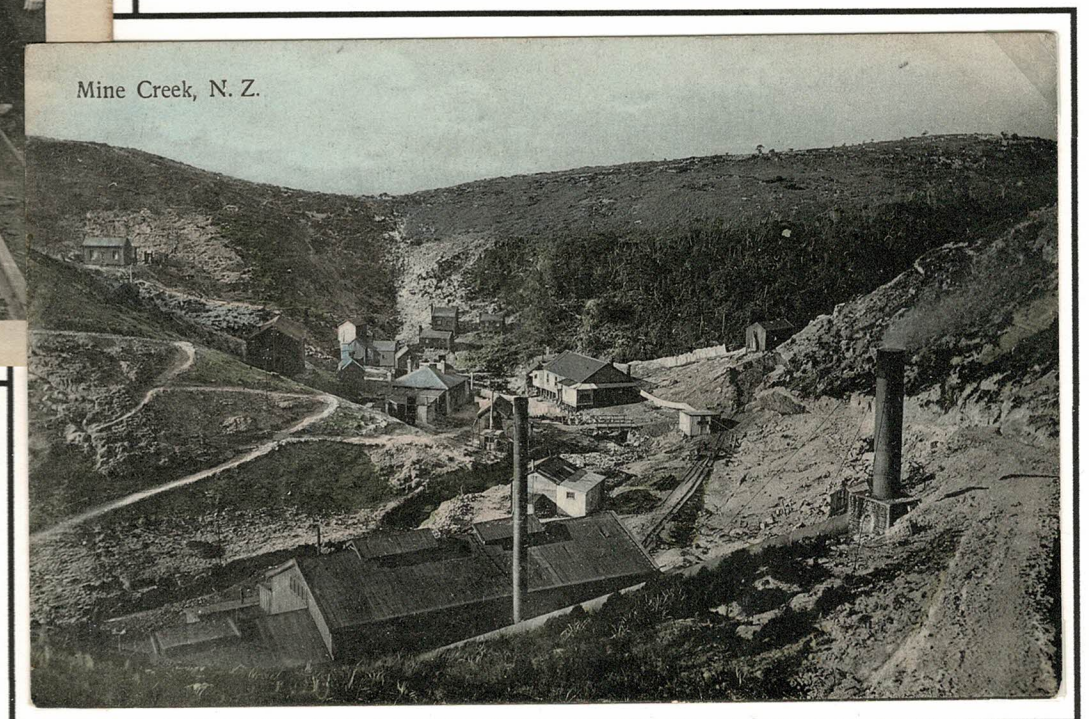


Details from 1914 map
Shows "Acc Hs" "P.O." "Compressor"
and "Dam"



"Mine Creek" from 24 Beautiful Views of Westland postcard booklet.

View shows the **chain clipping tubs onto the ropeway**. Men in bowler hats indicate a stage event by visitors [Company] rather than workers!



"Mine Creek N.Z." no details of photographer or printer

View over the Compressor and power house with accommodation house in centre

Mangatini - Mangatina

The Mine was called Mangatini but when the Post Office opened it was Mangatina. I can find no explanation for the difference in spelling.

Mangatini was reached from Mine Creek by a 2km horse track over a hill and across bare plateau to the gully where the community was settled. There were huts, a boarding house, billiards room, one general store and a hall. There was a bakery at Mine Creek and all supplies were sent up on a truck **through the mine tunnels** with the mail delivered the same way in a special padlocked box. Population was 100 at the 1911 census and just 49 in 1926. Post Office archive records just 4 boarders and 3 residences in 1931.

Mangatina Post Office opened **February 25, 1910**. Money Order & savings bank facilities were withdrawn 12 March 1930 and the office closed **22 October 1930** due to the ill-health of Sarah McCann, postmistress since opened, she was the boarding house keeper. Used a "J" Class 25mm datestamp.



12-word Telegram - 9d from Mangatina & FE 29 to Otahuhu



Real Photograph Postcard - undivided back - no photographer or print details

The writer has moved and *"it is a better house than we had in Ophir"*

Message in part reads:

"The photo on the other side represents Mangatina, the mine here is the mine where all the miners from Granity and Millerton go to. It is 8½ miles from here"

The view shows the ropeway from the mine at centre right



Real Photograph Postcard, divided back with universal postal union "Carte Postale". No photographer or printer details. Undated and sent under cover.

The view is of **Mangatina** from the opposite direction from the postcard on the previous page.

The writer has written *"This is a view of Mangatina"*

Message in part reads:

*"Andy Hunter has bought Carmine's Hotel at Millerton...
Bob Watson's house is going up next to George Watson ...I
think the house will be nicer than him don't you?"*

Joseph Vincent Carmine was the licensee at the **"Tramway Hotel"** in Millerton. He was balloted in 1918 for military service 1st Division New Zealand Expeditionary Force

Real Photograph Postcard divided back, no photographer details or printer, signed **"Ted"**

View is of the mouth of the Millerton Mine at the top of the Tramway incline to Gravity

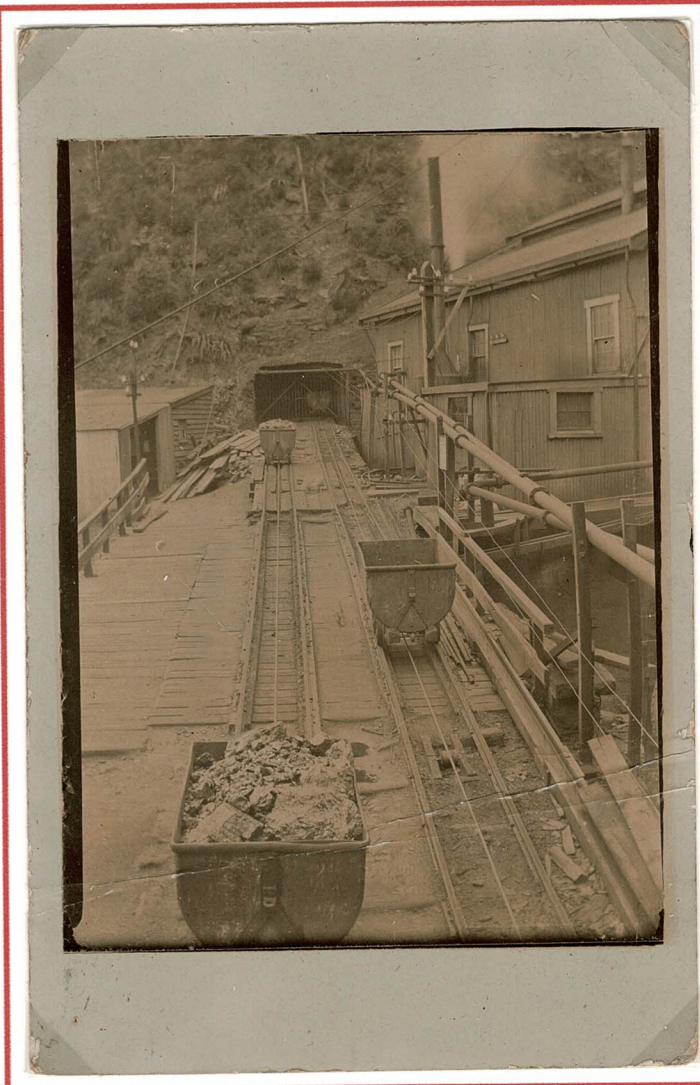
Comments by the Photographer.

"It is blowing like one thing up here & if you go outside you just about get blown away. I am at Mangatini mine at present"

"This is a photo of the mine mouth it is about the best one I have taken."

"I took the front off the camera the other day and cleaned the lens & not before they needed it."

"They are talking about going to Auckland so I must get some more plates of about here."



Ngakawau

Ngakawau is 3km north from Granity and 30km north from Westport. In the years before the railway was built, Ngakawau was a port-of-call for gold diggers and settlers making their way north to Mokihinui. The future of Ngakawau was assured, in 1905, when it was made the base for the loading station for the coal from the Stockton Mines. Later coal and timber from Charming Creek sustained the township. Many of the miners who worked at Millerton and Stockton chose to live at Ngakawau or Granity and travel to the mines. The name means "The Shags"

Early Coal Mining:

Coal outcrops were known from the late 1860's. The **Albion Mine [1877-1879]** was opened by the **Albion Ngakawau Coal Company** near the junction of Mine Creek and the Ngakawau River. Tenders were called for a 200 foot drive in May 1877 and some coal, for promotional purposes, was being won by late June 1877. It was proposed that coke ovens would be built and the coke exported to Port Pirie in Australia for smelting silver ore. The Company bought a vessel "**Coomerang**" and managed to load 90 tons of coal and navigate the Ngakawau River delivering to the Westport Wharves in early 1878. The Company received scathing press for over-promoting and under-delivering on promises.

The Mt Rochfort railway - **Westport - Ngakawau Railway** - is reported to have been opened **September 27, 1877** complete with excursion train. In fact the railway ended some distance short of the Ngakawau River. One of the reasons behind the extension of the railway was the promise of coal at Ngakawau but the Albion Ngakawau Coal Company made no attempt to construct a branch line from the mine. With no coal and no financial return, the railway ceased operations until mid 1880.

The Albion Mine was worked again 1888-1890 by the **Ngakawau-Wallsend Company**, producing about 400 tons which was shipped on small vessels to Westport as there was no railway connection and no loading facilities at Ngakawau. It was managed by George Broome who was later to manage the Westport-Stockton Coal Company mines at Stockton.

Postal matters:

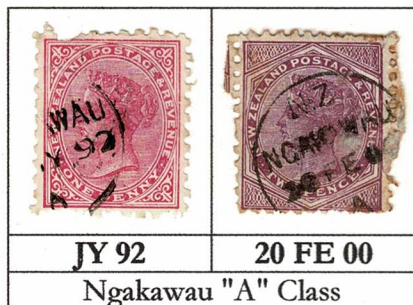
Postal services were twice weekly from Westport as part of the contracts through to Mokihinui and Karamea. This was by wagon along the beach. The railway was not used for mail services. The **Ngakawau Post Office opened December 1, 1883** at William McNairn's accommodation house, he was appointed the first **postmaster** and held that position until 1907. He also operated the Ferry across the Ngakawau River and had the mail contract at least for 1887-1888 between Westport and Mokihinui. The office was **closed February 5, 1988** as part of the restructuring of the New Zealand Post Office. It used a "**A**" **Class datestamp** which was replaced by a "**C**" **Class** in 1912. A relief datestamp is known in 1959.

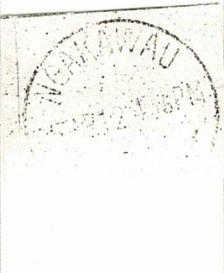






Right: Ngakawau "A" Class 3 JE 07 to England. Undivided back postcard "Hawks Crag, Buller Gorge, New Zealand.

Lower: Ngakawau "A" Class 15 JE 07 to England. Divided back postcard "F.T. Series No. 2212A Reflections, The Gardens Queenstown, N.Z."

UPU Regulations allowed the Divided Back postcards dated June 13, 1907

These postcards from Ngakawau span the change Undivided - Divided Back 3 June 1907 - 15 June 1907



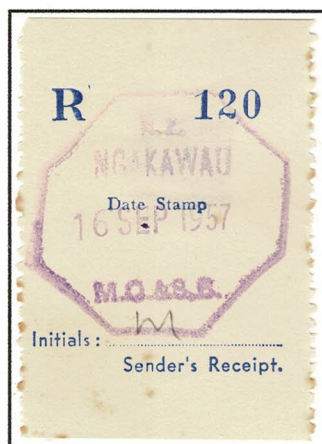
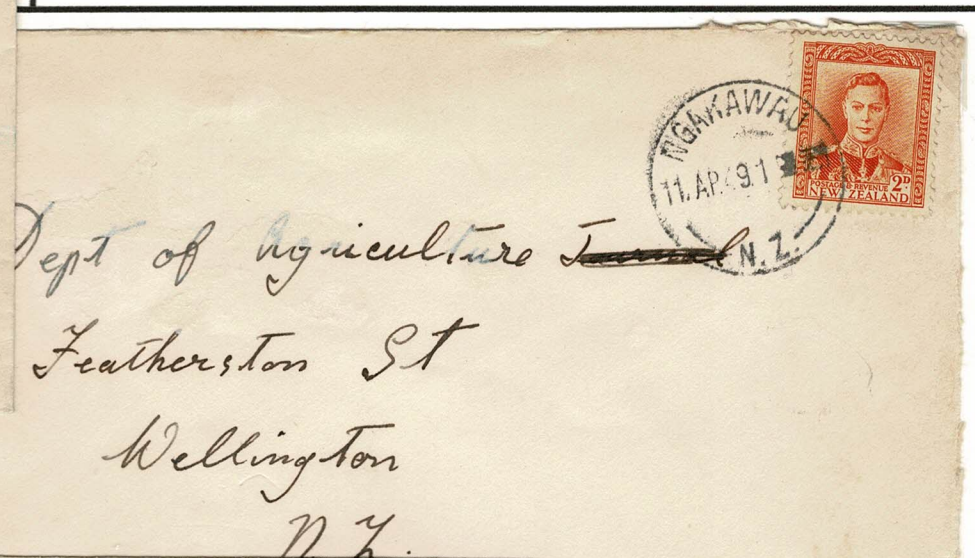
						
Copy Proof 17 AP 12 4.15PM	21 NO 18	9 NO 59 4-PM	17 MR 58 4PM	10 JE 70 4-PM	21 JE 71 4-PM	17 JE 71 4-PM
Ngakawau "C" Class Datestamps						



Ngakawau Registered "C" Class 8 NO 43 1PM with MO& SB
octagonal 8 NOV 1943

Ngakawau "C" Class 11 AP 49 1 PM

Mail clearance was 1 PM

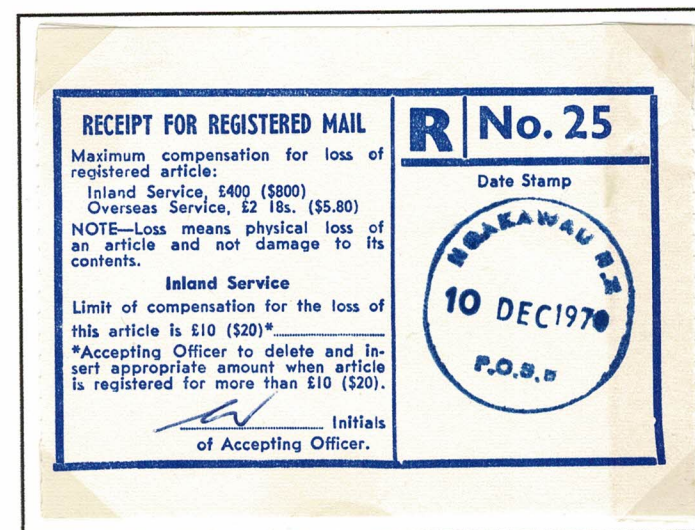


Ngakawau Registered
"C" Class 16 SP 57 4-PM

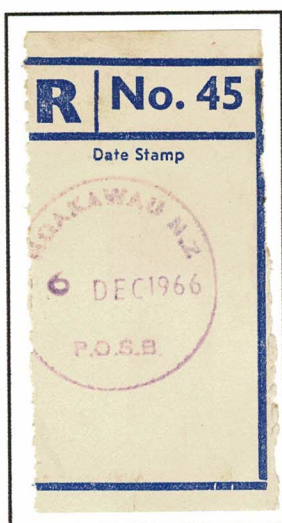
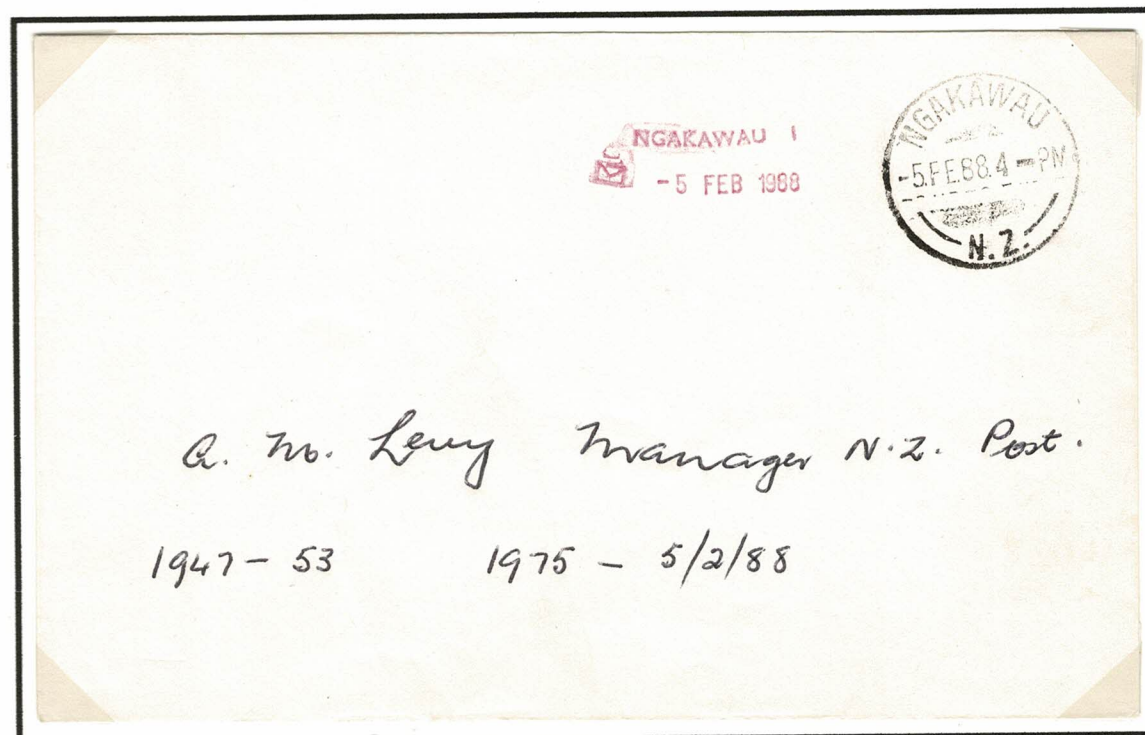
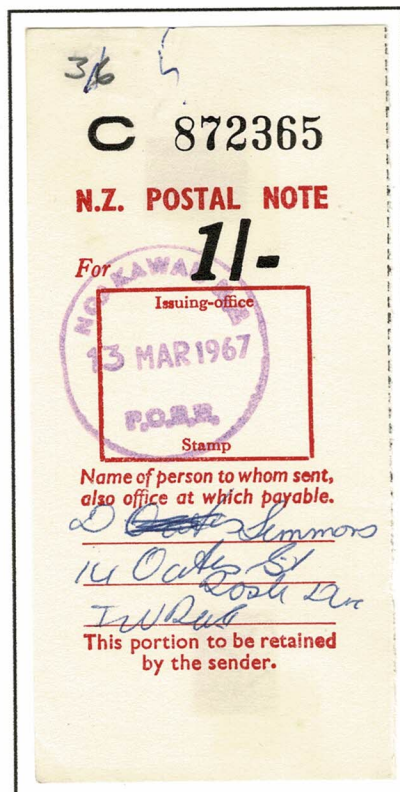
With Octagonal MO & SB
16 SEP 1957

Mail Clearance 4 PM

Collector mail



Ngakawau Registered "C" Class 10 DE 70 4-PM with manuscript on R-label. Collector mail Receipt 10 DEC 1970 but P.O.S.B - replaced M.O. & S. B in 1966



Ngakawau Relief datestamp 31 MR 59

Registration Receipt 6 DEC 1966 P.O.S.B. - Post Office Savings Bank

NZ Postal Note Receipt 13 MAR 1967 P.O.S.B. - Post Office Savings Bank

Ngakawau Last Day 5 FE 88 4-pm annotated by Manager N.Z. Post

Ngakawau Post Office photograph 1974





Divide back postcard "Rose Chameleon" with "Greetings from Ngakawau" in tinsel. Card from Wildt & Kray, London series No 1106. Printed in England

Written at Ngakawau, undated sent under cover from Maggie to her cousin Ethel. Maggie is telling her that "*your father and mother had arrived in Westport*" and were now staying a few days and how she enjoyed their brief stay with them.

Reproduction of photograph " Railway Station Ngakawau 1919."



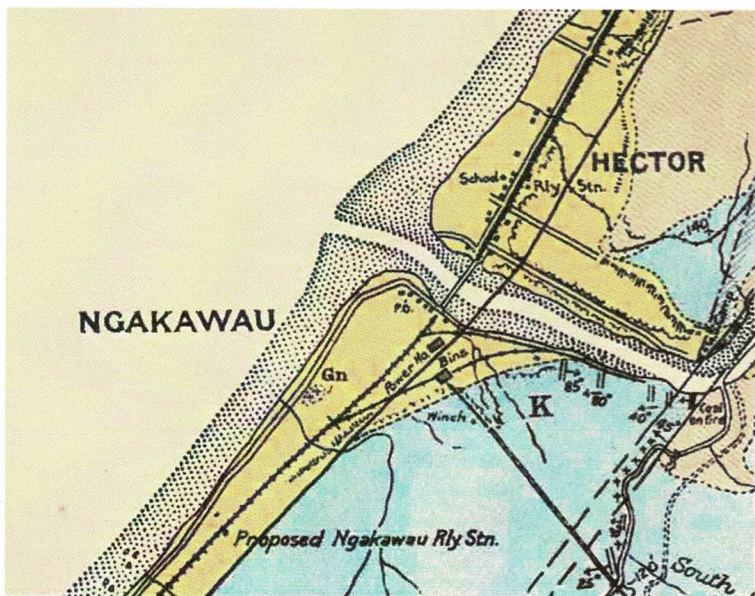
Westport - Stockton Coal Mining Company activity at Ngakawau.

Ngakawau was the base for the Coal Company terminal of the incline, the storage and loading bins and rail siding. The 1914 map detail at left shows the Powerhouse, bins, and winch with the railway siding joining the Government railway some distance south of Ngakawau and north of the railway station.

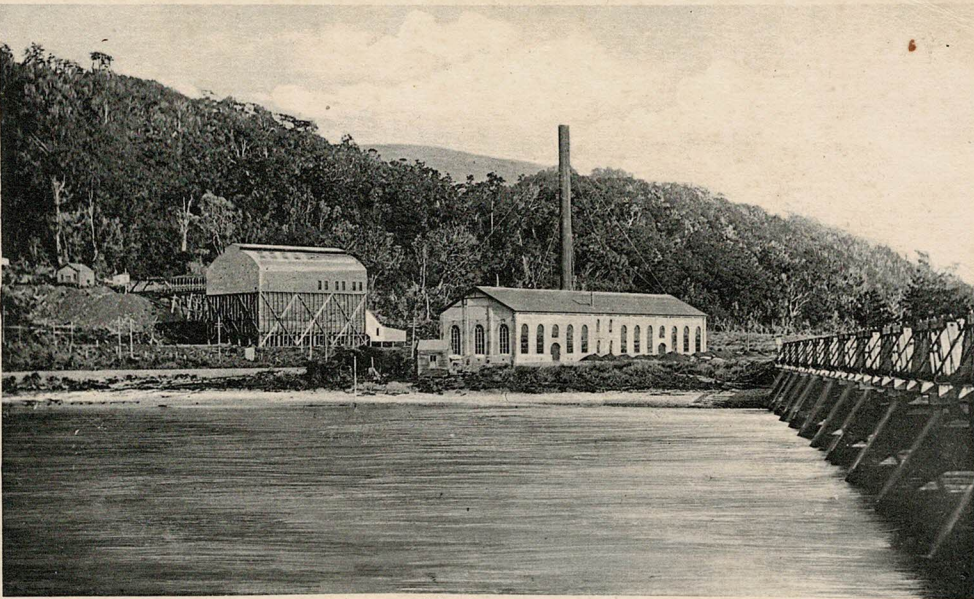
The map in the 1905 Company Prospectus shows that consents had been granted for two possible tramway routes but the final plans used a different route direct to Ngakawau.

The tunnel on the incline was commenced 28 August 1906 and by February 1908, the incline was formed and rail tracks were being laid, the bins were progressing and the foundations laid for the machinery and power plant. In July 1908 the powerhouse and bins were completed and over 200 men were working completing the work.

The power was turned on at a special ceremony **October 6, 1908** and the first wagons of coal came down the incline and arrived at Westport wharves on the 7th with 200 tons being sent to Wellington of *SS Rakanoa* October 30, 1908.



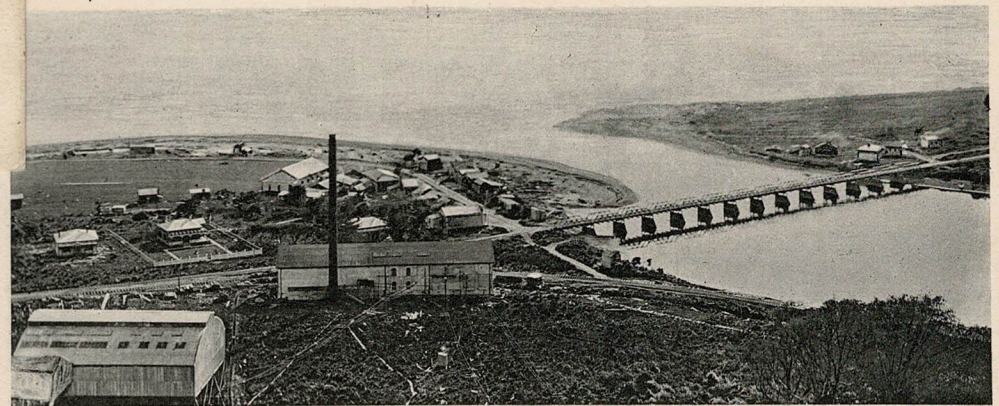
Detail from 1914 Map showing the site of the proposed Ngakawau Railway Station - not in the settlement and distant from the Incline. Hector settlement has the tramway from Charming Creek [timber and later coal]



Ngakawau.

Upper: a view looking south across the Ngakawau River, to the **Powerhouse and Coal Bins.**

Right: View from hill above Ngakawau with **bins and powerhouse** at left with the **railway siding** along the Ngakawau River and settlement of hector across the River



Ngakawau.

"Ngakawau" - 2 postcards from the **Booklet "24 Beautiful Views of Westland"** - no photographer or print details



Real Photograph postcard from **Frank Duncan**, Auckland.
Untitled and undated [1915-1921]

The view is from the hill above Ngakawau. Shows the coal bins with the tramway entrance, the railway siding and railway trucks for loading. The powerhouse has steam up and wagons can be seen on the railway siding.

The powerhouse remains but is no longer used.

Frank Duncan was a prolific producer of real photo postcards from a number of Photographer. From 1915 he used the stamped imprint "**Real Photo Post Cards Frank Duncan & Co Auckland.**" This changed in 1921 when the Company changed - ended in 1931.

Coal Handling Facilities at Ngakawau

The original Coal bins and loading facilities at Ngakawau were initially designed to hold 10,000 tons but for financial reasons the design was changed to a 4,000 ton capacity. When the Westport-Stockton Company mine was taken over by State Coal, the bins were upgraded in 1945 and the capacity increased to 12,000 tons. In the 1950's these bins were almost always full as coal was not finding a ready market and coal was also being held at the mines.



Ngakawau Coal Bins c 1948



Exhibitor photograph [1984] showing Aerial ropeway - upgraded by State Coal to carry up to 4000 tons a day

Following the successful exporting trials of coal for coking at steel mills in Japan, opencast mining increased and with the potential markets in other steel producing countries, State Coal built **new coal handling facilities** in 1980 - screening and loading - at Ngakawau to enable the demand to be met and the coal railed to Lyttelton for export.

Ngakawau - Postcard from Coal Museum Westport - shows the old **Powerhouse** with **new Coal handling facility** in background, the aerial ropeway is to the right



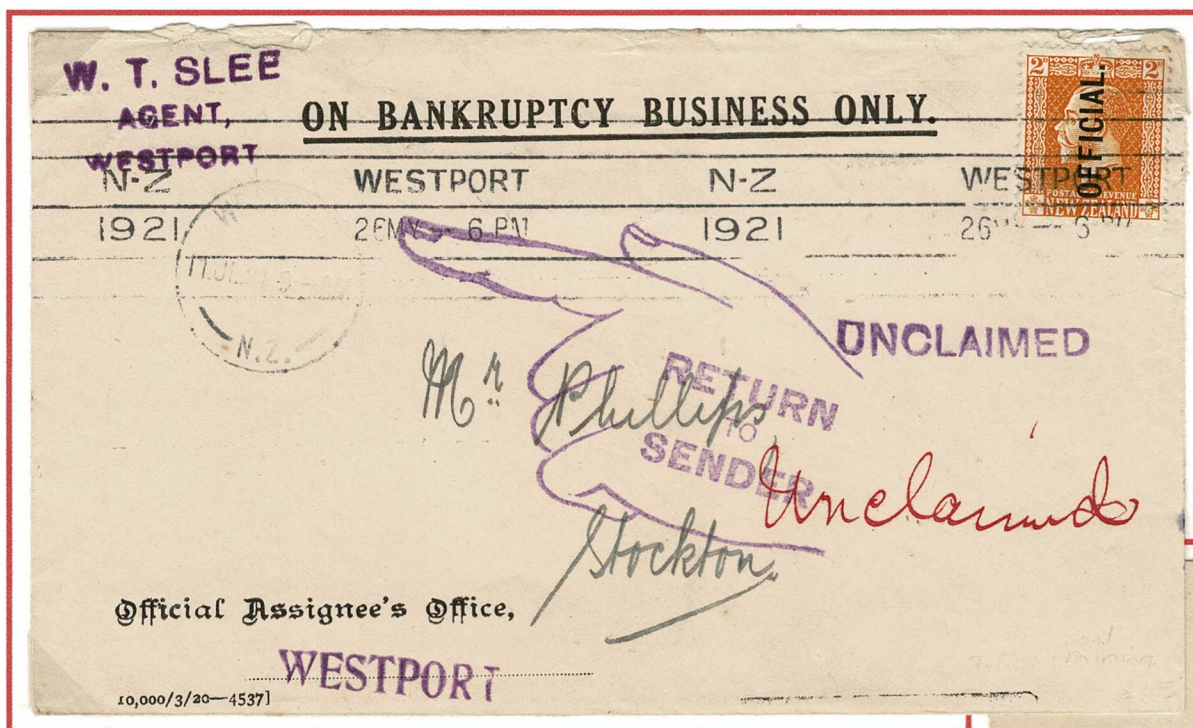
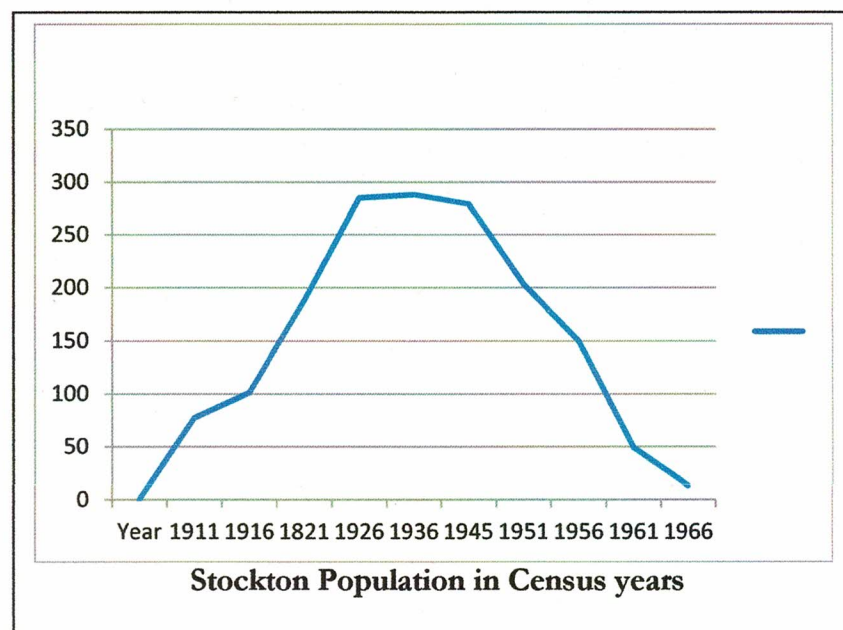
Stockton

With the development of the Incline, the railway and tunnel drives to the mine, a settlement was developing at the head of the incline, this was about 2km from Millerton and a rough track was developed and eventually a dray road. Population peaked in the period 1926-1945 then declined as the road to Millerton and Stockton improved the population declined as the better travel options allowed miners to live the sea-level townships of Granity, Ngakawau and Hector and travel daily. The decline in underground mining and the development of large scale open cast mining required fewer workers also contributed.

The **Stockton Mine Post Office** opened **4 March 1918** in the charge of Mrs M Corkill a shopkeeper. A telephone office was opened 6 March 1918. The office was temporarily closed **27 March 1923 to 1 May 1923**.

An application for a Postman's delivery 9 May 1938 recorded only 35 letters, 30 newspapers and 12 parcels - it was declined. A separate Post office building was opened **30 April 1940**. The office closed **18 December 1964** when the postmistress Miss V Perry resigned.

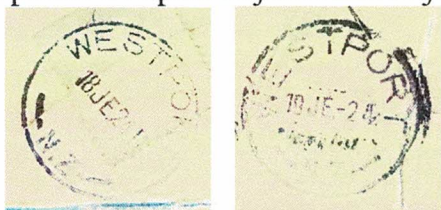
A **"J" Class datestamp** was used from the start but the datestamp was "Misplaced" at the Westport Chief post Office when it was closed and **manuscript** was used until the datestamp was located and re-issued - in June 1924.



On Bankruptcy Business Only envelope [10,000/3/20] sent Westport machine cancellation 26 MY 1921 on 2 KGV official addressed **"Mr Phillips Stockton"** received **Stockton Mine 27 MY 21** where letter held 6 weeks then manuscript **"Unclaimed"** applied and returned to Westport - received 11 JL 21 where **Unclaimed** stamps and **Return to Sender** applied.



Registered envelope to Westport with R-label and both postage stamps **manuscript cancelled "Stockton Mine 18/6/24"** back-stamped at Westport 18 JE 24 and 19 JE 24



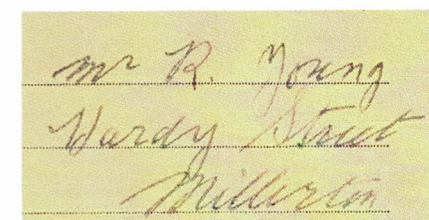
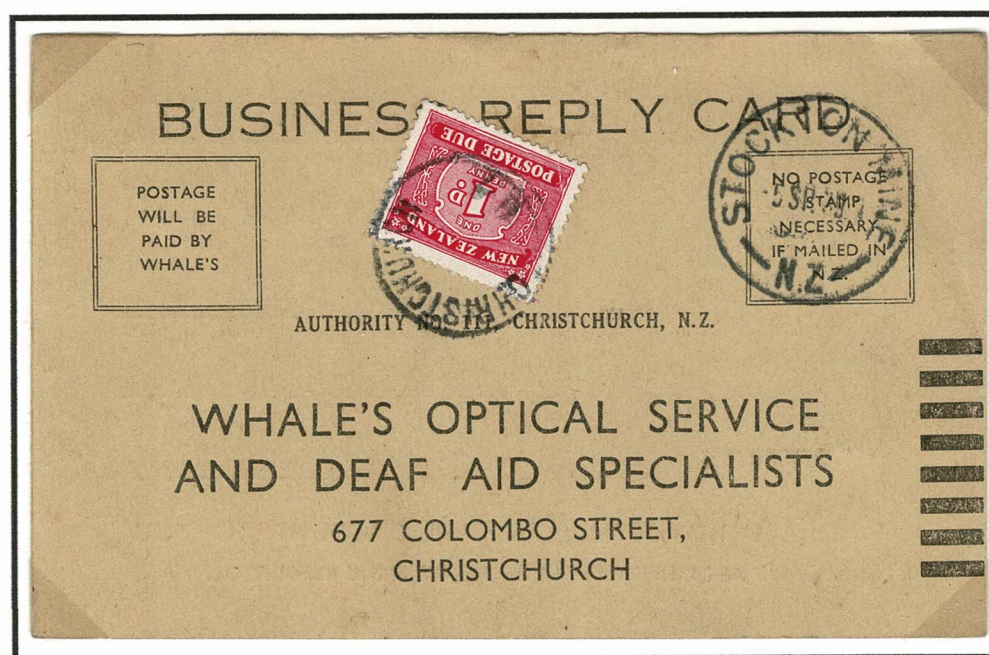
Manuscript was used after the **Post Office was re-opened on 1 May 1924** and the "J" Class datestamp was "misplaced" at the Westport Chief Post Office. One other manuscript cover is known.

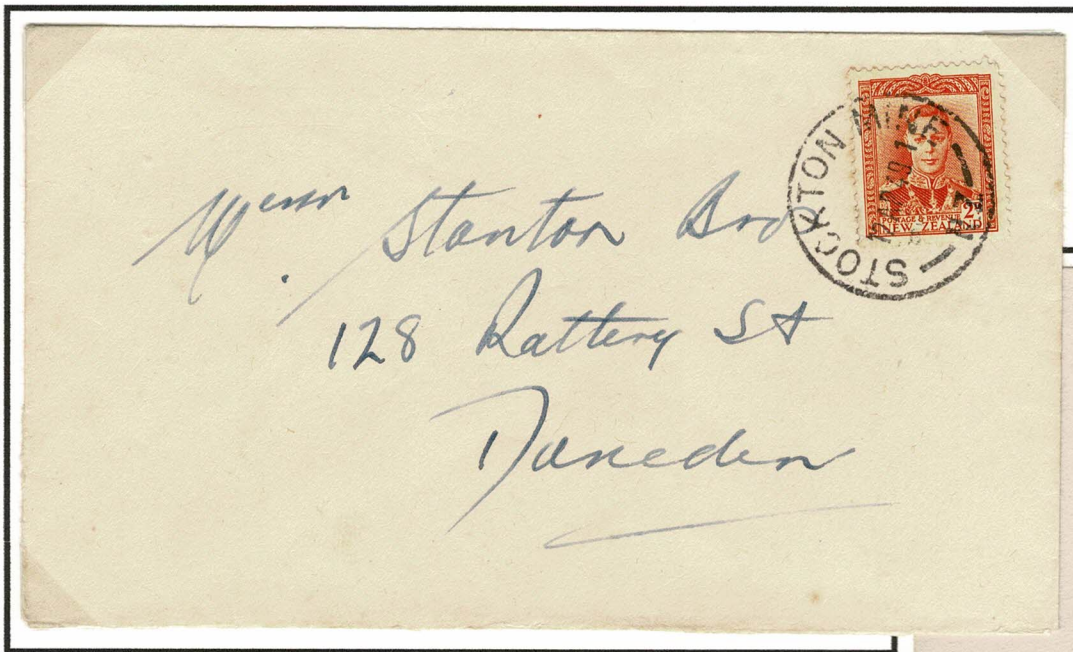




Inwards mail to "Stockton Mines" Left: 1937 Airmail from Stockton received **Stockton Mine 16 FE 37**. Right 1936 surface mail received **Stockton Mine 8 FE 37** where letter held and **"not known"** applied to **Westport Unclaimed 9 MAR 1937**, Dead Letter Office 22 MR 37

Business Reply Card mailed
Stockton Mine 5 SP 39 with
1d Postage Due paid by Whales
 Optical Service cancelled
Christchurch "B" class
 datestamp without date

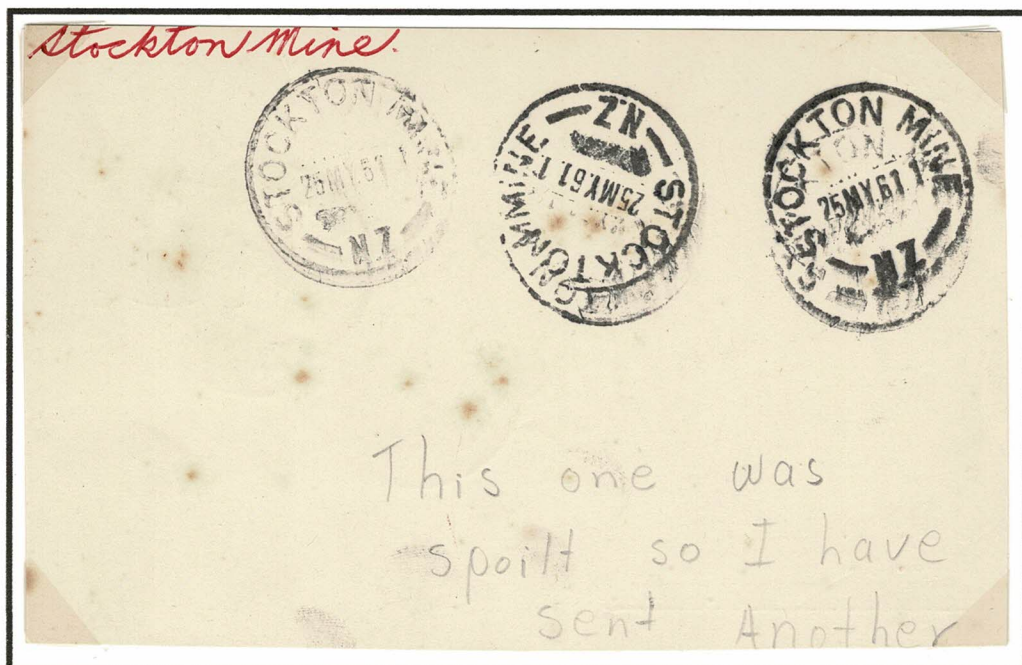




Stockton Mine 24 NO 48 & 12 AP 49 to Stanton Bros in Dunedin.
Stanton Bros [1931-1995] was a stationary company in Dunedin



Stockton Mine Post Office - photograph 1974. The proposal to build a separate Post Office building was dated 14 August 1939, staff moved in 30 April 1940

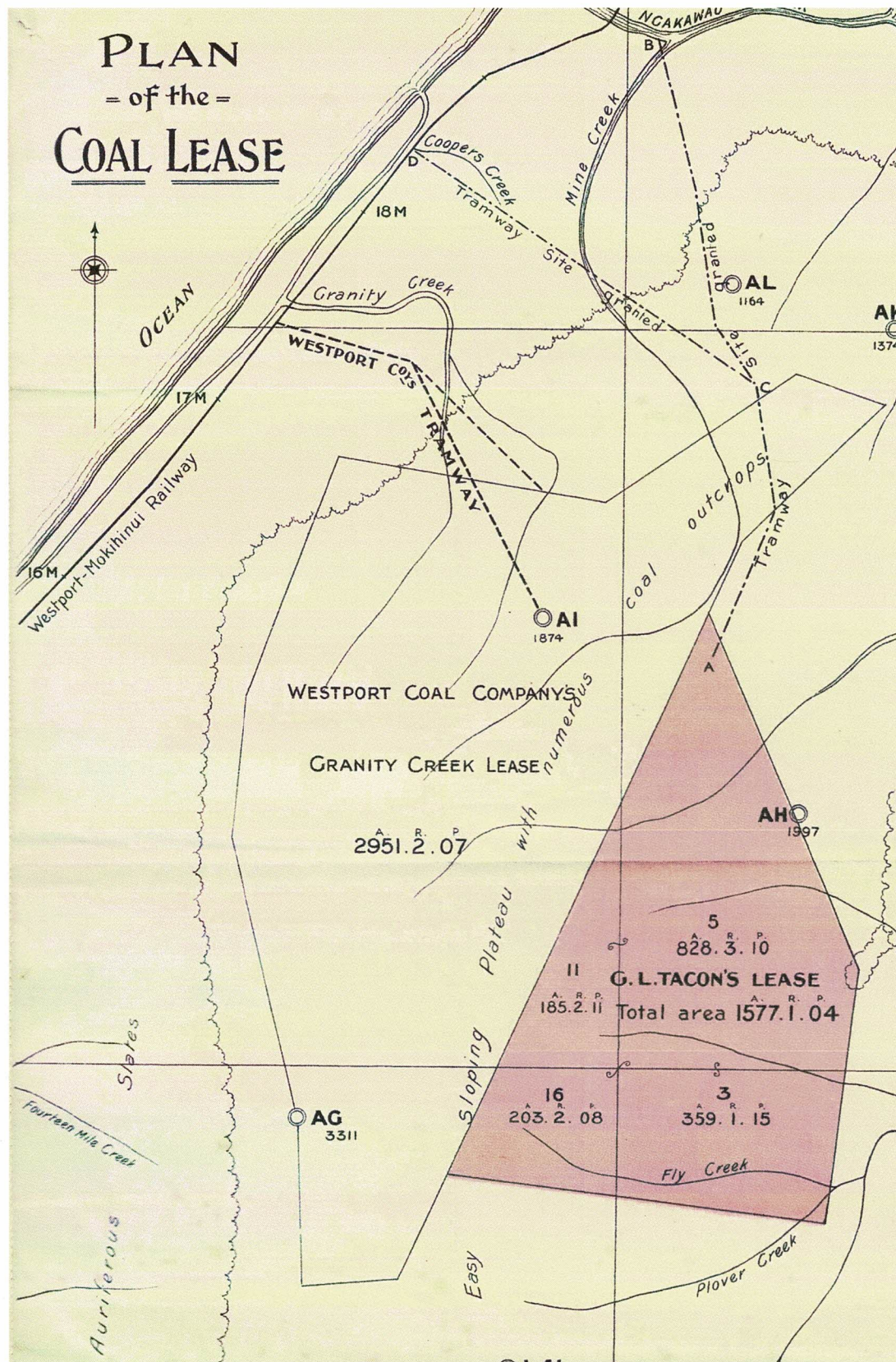


Left:
Collector mail 2c postal
card cancelled
Stockton Mine
25 MY 61 with note
from postmistress on
quality



Right:
Registered piece with
Stockton Mine
"J" Class and octagonal;
MO&SB dated
20 Feb 1956

Westport - Stockton Coal Mining Co. Ltd.



Scan from the 14-page Prospectus [in Exhibitors collection]

The Prospectus was mailed to interested parties and included a perforated Application for Shares form to be mailed to the Brokers

The Prospectus of the **Westport - Stockton Coal Mining Company Limited** was issued under The Companies Act 1903, 28th March 1905.

It was based on the purchase of a **Coal Lease** issued to G. [George] L. Tacon December 9, 1904. This was some 1577 acres adjoining the Westport Coal Company lease on the Eastern border. This Lease was to be purchased by the promoters of the Company March 21, 1905 and was to sold to the Company [in exchange for 6000 £5 shares].

The original Coal Lease had been granted two routes for tramway access, one to the Railway at Coopers Creek and the other to the junction of Mine Creek and the Ngakawau River. In the event, neither was used as a further application for tramway route was granted.

The Capital raised was to be £200,000 in 40,000 £5 shares - 24,000 for the public and 10,000 held in reserve [Vendors got 6000] The Shares were 10/- on application; 5/- on allotment, and calls of 10/-.

Despite the scepticism of the local press, the public bought over 55,000 10/- shares on release.

George Broome was hired 4 August 1905 as the mining engineer. He was a believer in new technology and specified modern electrical equipment for the mine. This included endless rope haulage, electric coal cutters, an electric railway and electric fans and pumps. This was to be powered from the coal-fired power station at Ngakawau.

Electric Railway - A New Zealand First

Railway construction and tunnel driving started in March 1906. The first underground portal was 6km from and 490m higher than the railhead at Ngakawau. The original railway was 4 km from the portal to the top of the endless rope haulage incline. The rope haulage was in two sections with a tunnel through the spur behind the railhead.

The first coal was carried October 6, 1908. There were mine extensions in 1910 to the "New Coal Mine" and by 1923 to the 'Fly Creek Mine' - eventually there was 9.65 km of electric railway.

The coal was carried in 30 cwt tubs on steel rails with 2 foot gauge but there were technical difficulties as predicted by a Mines Report and the mine was shut for several months. The track was re-laid at 3 foot gauge with a central braking rail and the tubs and electric locomotives required alteration. It restarted in December 1908.

There was an ill-fated attempt in 1923, to replace the electric trains with a flume system - this was a financial disaster and abandoned after 4 months. The railway continued in operation until replaced in 1953 by the aerial ropeway.

TACON, TANSEY & Co.,
Brokers,
161, HEREFORD STREET,
CHRISTCHURCH.

THE COMPANIES ACT, 1903.

PROSPECTUS

OF

The Westport-Stockton Coal Mining Co. Ltd.

(Company Limited by Shares.)

DATED THE 28th OF MARCH, 1905.

(Filed with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies.)

Directors :

R. W. CHAPMAN, of Christchurch, Sheep-farmer.

GEO. HUMPHREYS, of Christchurch, Merchant.

J. J. KINSEY, of Christchurch, Shipping Agent.

WM. REECE, of Christchurch, Merchant.

The Hon. H. F. WIGRAM, of Christchurch, M.L.C.

Bankers :

THE NATIONAL BANK OF NEW ZEALAND Ltd

Solicitors :

BESWICK & HARRIS, Christchurch.

Brokers :

HENDERSON & BURNS, Christchurch.

TACON, TANSEY & CO., Hereford Street, Christchurch, Greymouth and Westport.

Secretary (pro tem) :

L. W. HARLEY, Hereford Street, Christchurch.

Auditors :

(To be appointed by the Shareholders in General Meeting.)

The prospectus was widely promoted and mailed to those the Company thought would be prepared to invest. The shares were popular and over 55,000 were sold on release.

The prospectus had an "Application for Shares" form included

APPLICATION FOR SHARES.

TO THE DIRECTORS OF

THE WESTPORT-STOCKTON COAL MINING CO. LTD.

Dear Sirs,

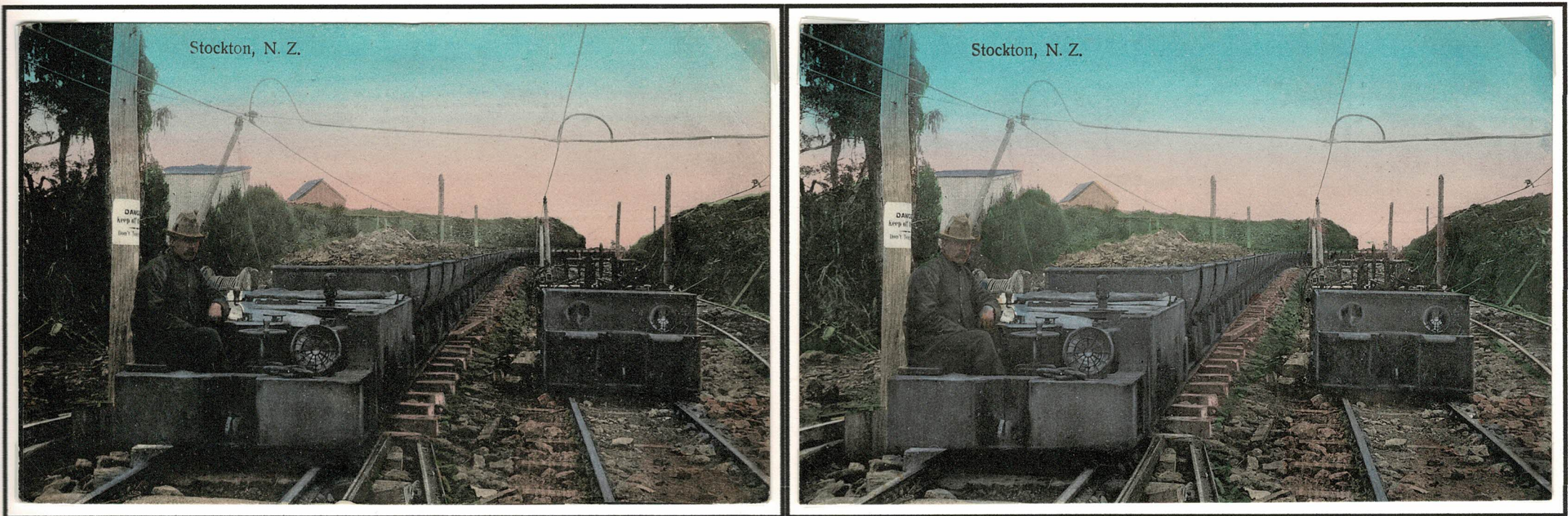
I beg to apply for _____ Shares of £5 each in the above-named Company, upon the terms of the Prospectus and subject to the Articles of Association, and I herewith hand you the sum of £ _____, being a deposit of Ten Shillings per Share payable on Application, and I agree to accept the same or any smaller number which may be allotted to me, and to pay the further instalments as provided by the said Prospectus.

TACON, TANSEY & Co.,
Brokers,
161, HEREFORD STREET,
CHRISTCHURCH.

Stockton Electric Railway

This was the **first electric railway in New Zealand**. It was powered by the coal-powered power station at Ngakawau that provided power for the entire coal operation. The station produced 6250 volts alternating current which drove generators at the substation to provide 275 volts direct current to run the locomotives and mining machinery. The track was originally 2 foot gauge and the coal tubs were to hold 30 cwt. The Government mine inspector said that the weight of the coal would be too much for the electric train to control on the incline. This proved to be correct and after the system started 6 October 1908, it was shut down while the gauge was increased to 3 feet and a centre rail for braking was installed on the incline. The locomotives and tubs also needed alterations. The system was back in operation in December 1908.

The tubs were not fitted with brakes and a brake trolley was behind the locomotive controlling the brakes and the centre rail. For a long train a second brake trolley was attached at the end. At the bins, the coal from each tub was tipped into the bins then formed up for the trip back up the incline. The railway track was extended as the mines expanded until there was over 10km of track including nearly 2km of tunnels.

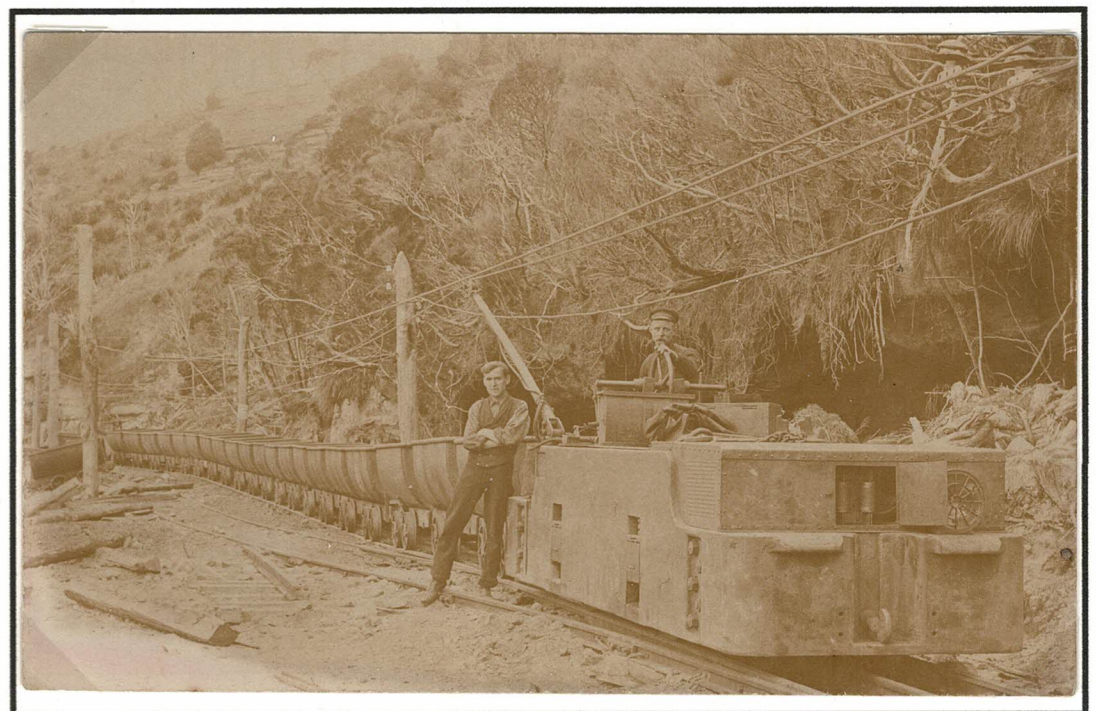


Two divided back postcards "**Stockton N.Z.**" - different printings showing **2 of the original 4 electric locomotives**. The rake of tubs appears to be full of rock and not coal - this was after the railway line was completed from the station, at what was to be Stockton, to the mine where the drive was developing. The rock was used to develop the area at the station where the trains were assembled before travelling down the Incline.

The sign on the pole reads:

"Danger keep off the line Don't Touch Wire"

Photo Postcard, no details, of **electric train with a rake of 20 empty tubs** - these if full would contain 45 tons of coal. The power was supplied by the overhead wires.



Plans to Close the Railway

In 1923, with production over 100,000 tons annually, the railway was struggling to manage. The Westport - Stockton Coal Company decided to build a 4 mile long water flume to carry the coal from the mine to the bins. It was estimated to cost £10000 with a similar cost saving annually. **The railway would still be retained to transport men to and from the mine.** The flume was built 1924-1925 at a cost of £70000 and was a total disaster and was **abandoned after 4 months** with the electric railway back in service.

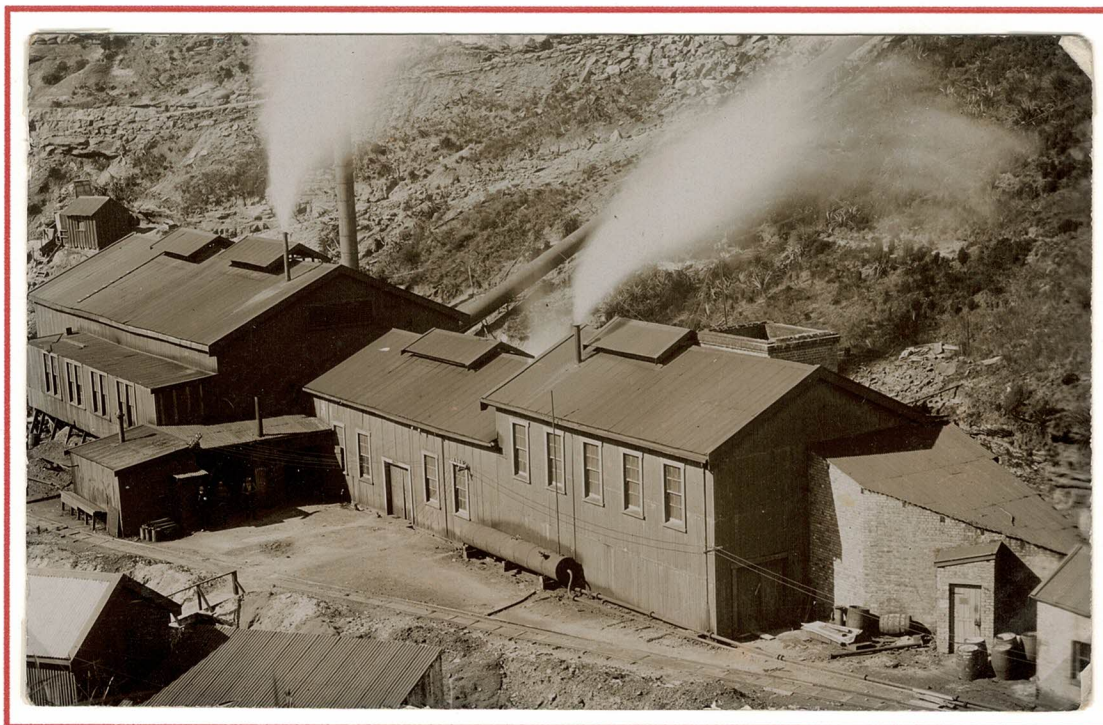
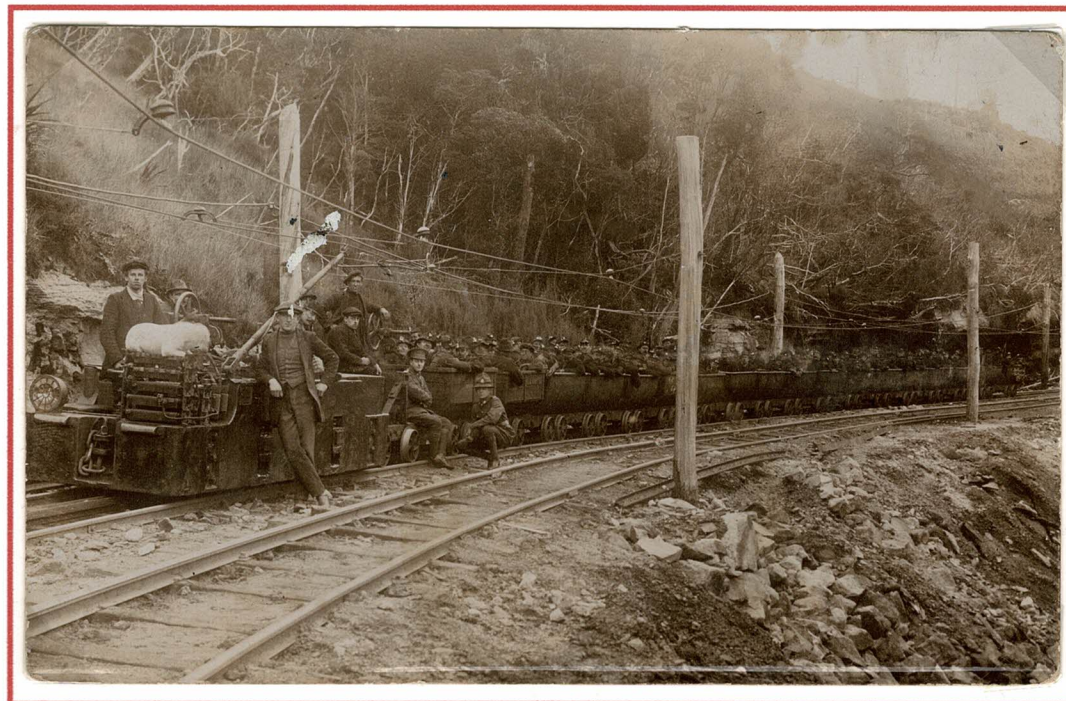
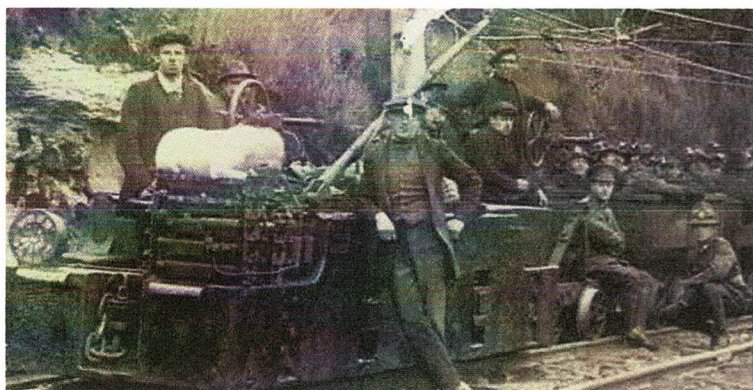
Real Photo Postcard - no print or photographer details

Annotated on the back:

"Stockton Electric Coal Train West Coast"

The view is the locomotive and a rake of 20 tubs each containing miners with helmets heading to the Mine.

Photo taken during the 4 months of Flume operation while electric train was transporting miners not coal



During the 1930's the Company was investigating the installation of an **aerial ropeway** for transporting coal from the plateau to the bins at Ngakawau.

In 1939, the **British Ropeway Engineering Company** designed an aerial ropeway at £34,745 to build and install. The Company accepted but within 2 weeks, WW2 was declared and the contract failed.

In 1949, the Government revived the aerial ropeway contract with work starting in late 1949. It was completed in **June 1953** and the **electric railway was abandoned and scrapped** having hauled over **5 million tons of bituminous coal**

Real Photo Postcard - [c 1924-25] no photographer or print details, Annotated on back **"Stockton Mines"** View is of Bathhouse [built 1924] and the engineering and locomotive workshop at Stockton

Promotion & Advertising

The Westport - Stockton Coal Mining Company commenced production in 1908. It was a direct competitor of the Westport Coal Company which had large mines at Denniston and Millerton. The Company had no colliers of its own and had to rely on the Union Steamship Company vessels - and, because the Union Steamship Company was the de facto owner of the Westport Coal Company the shipping rates were a little higher.

The Company embarked on a widespread advertising campaign throughout the South Island and Wellington promoting the fine attributes of Stockton coal for all purposes. It also offered very competitive successful tenders to New Zealand Railways.

AGENTS FOR: Pelaw Main Collieries
Taupiri Coal Mines Ltd.
Laidley's Coke

174 FEATHERSTON STREET,
Wellington. 1 APR 1919 19

Messrs Est^d Dellers Estate Carterton
Dr. to John Mill & Co.

TELEPHONE 1950
HOUSE TELEPHONE 1174

Shipping Agents & Coal Importers

Truck No.	Tons	Cwt.	Qrs.
To Pelaw Main Coal, ex			
<i>Mar 28</i>	<i>7 17</i>	<i>37/6</i>	<i>14 14 0</i>
<i>Scrd Stockton + Komata</i>			

STOCKTON SMITHY NUTS.

LANDING SATURDAY. Stockton has proven itself the best smithy and general coal obtainable. You want to improve your work? Just get Stockton Nuts. It's surprising how this coal will ease and better your work. Write us for quote and testimonials.

SAMUEL BROWN,
LIMITED,
DISTRICT AGENTS,
WELLINGTON.

Advertisement Wellington Daily Times 3 November 1909

1 April 1919, Invoice
John Mill & Co, Wellington for
"Screened Stockton"


John Mill & Co Ltd was established in the 1880's as a stock & station agent and had branches throughout the South Island and lower North Island

STOCKTON NUTS are absolutely the best Smith Coal in the Dominion.
PELAWMAIN COAL is the Cheapest and most Economical Household Coal.

John Mill & Co., Ltd.
SOLE AGENTS BLUFF.

Before making any arrangements for your Coal Supply consult
JOHN MILL & CO., LTD., BLUFF.

Messrs J. Johnston & Son
Invercargill



Bluff *6 June 1914*

Dear Sir,—

We beg to advise that we will be landing a shipment of *Screened* STOCKTON NUTS about the *11th* inst. Kindly let us have your requirements early.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MILL & Co., Ltd.
Per *[Signature]*

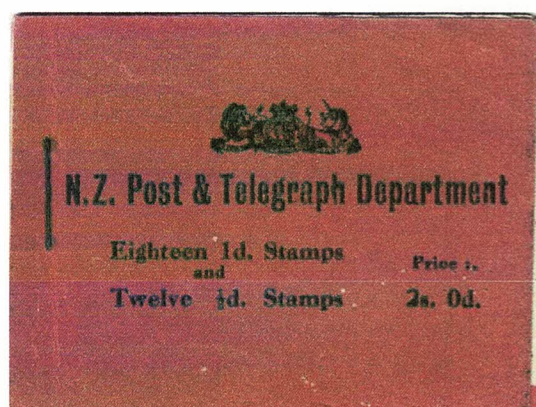
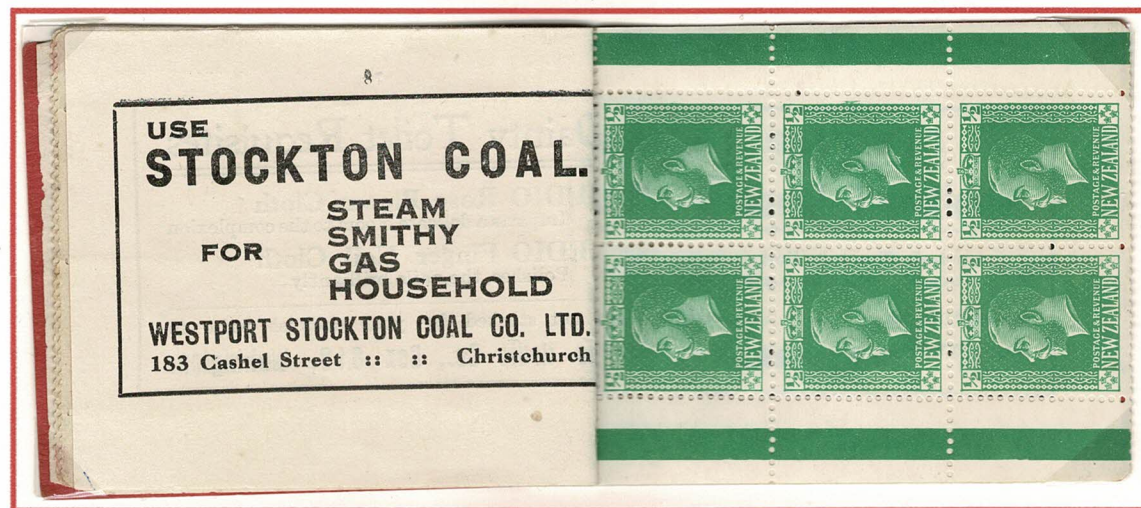
Promotional postcard with 1/2d Edward dated 6 June 1914 advising of the arrival of Screened Stockton Nuts at Bluff.

"Nuts" - coal that when screened pass through the 2 inch screens but are retailed by the 1 1/4 inch screens

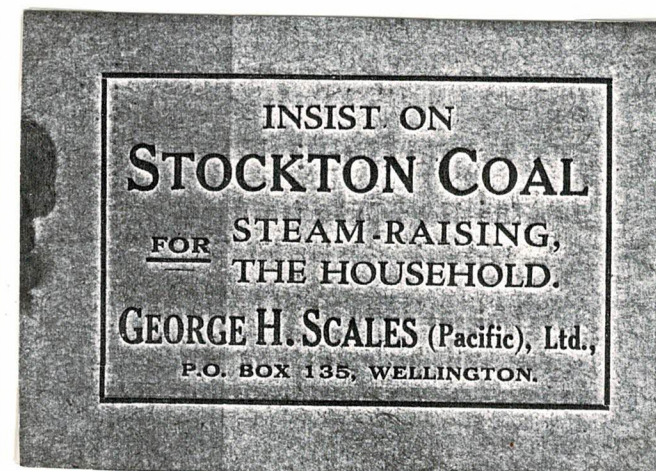
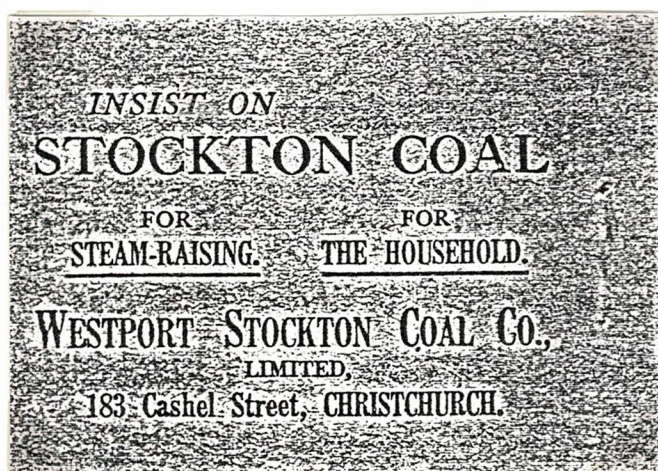
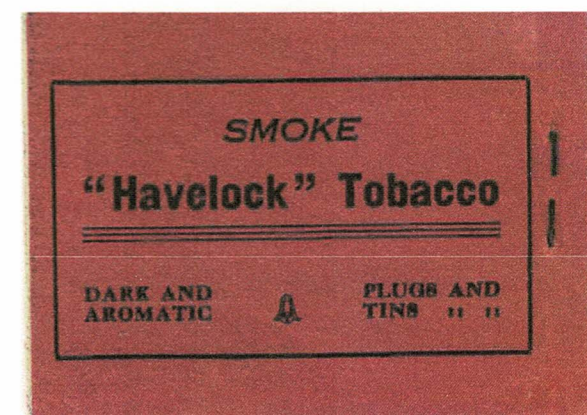
Post Office Advertising

With the printing of the Definitive King George V postage stamps in 1915, consideration was again given to the production of stamp booklets. This required special plates. The steel plates used for **the 2/- 1919 booklet** [3 panes of 1d Dominion and 2 panes of ½d KGV stamps were produced by Perkins, Bacon & Co and had the solid bars as an integral part.

The Post Office called tenders for **advertising** on the covers and inter-leaving in the booklets - no details are recorded in Postage Stamps of New Zealand and the premier New Zealand Stamp Catalogue [Campbell Patterson] does not list these.



Advertisements:	
Inside cover - Government Tourist Bureau	
1	Redio Co - polishing cloths
2	New Zealand Express Co., Ltd
Pane of 1d Dominion stamps	
3	Dunlop Rubber
4	Woods Peppermint Cure
Pane of 1d Dominion stamps	
5	Brooks Truss
6	Patherphones
Pane of 1d Dominion stamps	
7	Redio Co
8	Stockton Coal
Pane of ½d KGV stamps	
9	Manurial Insecticide
10	Challenge heating systems
Pane of ½d KGV stamps	
11	Thistle milk oates
12	Perforated Hone Co
Inside back cover - Highlander Milk	
Back Cover Havelock Tobacco	
Westport - Stockton Coal Co had a different advertisement in some booklets. One agent for Stockton Coal also had one advertisement	



Mining at Stockton

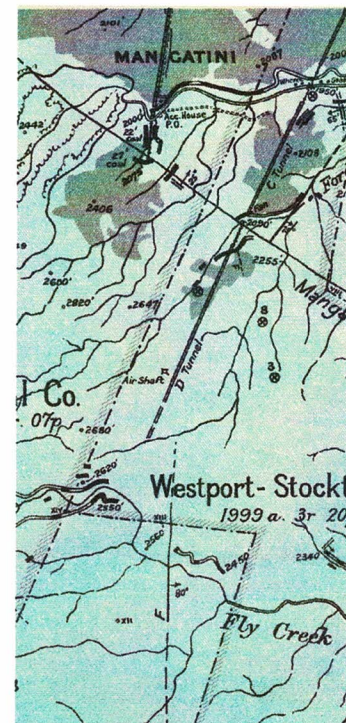
The Westport-Stockton Coal Company developed several inter-connected mines. These were all underground. The mine shipped its first coal in July 1908 - producing 3,267 tons that year. For the years until the State took over the production averaged over 100,000 tons annually with 250-300 men employed. The **peak production** year was 1955, **peak employment** underground was in 1930 with 113 miners, peak above ground was in 1929 with 215 men employed.

The mines, Webb, McCabe, New, Fly Creek, E Hill, Mt William, were accessed through a series of tunnels as can be seen on the details from the 1914 map which show "**B Tunnel**" - "**C Tunnel**" - "**D Tunnel**". The road to Stockton was extended to the Mt William Mine - the "Burma Road" ["A" Tunnel was on the Incline

In 1943, the Company took up a 400 acre lease from the Westport Coal Company with intention to introduce opencast mining but The miners objected because of the threat to employment. Negotiations between **State Mines** and the Company started in 1943 out of concern to secure enough coal for New Zealand Railways. As part of the deal, Downer, a private company was to start opencast mining on contract. Eventually the miners agreed despite the concern over the private contractor. The Company was bought for £200,000 as a going concern with millions of coal reserves with a takeover date **1 April 1944**. 2 months later the Company shares rose from 3/7d to 6/7d. The Company was then liquidated with shareholders receiving a good return.

The **Aerial Ropeway** was completed and opened **4 June 1953** was expected to be able to move 2000 tons a day. It was 8.5km in Length and after significant mechanical problems was operational but never quite fulfilled the early promises. Underground mining Was in steady decline from the late 1950's and ceased totally by 1980. The market for coal was down, the railways was converting to diesel, there were insufficient wagons for coal, problems at the Wharves at Westport, all contributed to the storing of coal at the mines - eventually over 70,000 tons was held at the mine. A 100,000 ton contract from the cement works at Cape Foulwind in 1959 allowed production to be maintained.

Opencast mining started **1947** but the output was variable - a high of 127,000 tons in 1948 to a low of 1000 tons in 1970 - totally dependent on orders. A proposed coal powered power station in Buller never happened, a briquette factory was mooted, the New Plymouth power station became fuelled by oil not coal. It was only a chance trial shipment that demonstrated superior coking ability for steel making that saved the mine. From 1975, output has been high supplying coal to the steel makers in Japan, Korea, Australia and Brazil. Production has been over 1,000,000 tons annually from 1995 with a **peak of over 2,000,000 in 2005**. All railed to Lyttelton and exported.



B

C

D



Real photo postcard by R S Richards of Christchurch showing the **Marion Shovel** dwarfing a car c **1950**. This was the first heavy machinery at Stockton. This steam powered shovel was used to strip overburden. It saw little use and was sold to be used on the Buller River breakwaters

State Coal Mines became a State-Owned Enterprise under legislation in 1986 becoming **CoalCorp** in 1987. CoalCorp upgraded the aerial ropeway, the loading facilities at Ngakawau and expanded the heavy machinery to dig and transport the coal.

In 1997 it was rebranded **Solid Energy** which went into liquidation in August 2015

The mines were bought by BT [**Bathurst & Tailey**] in 1997 and production continued with extensive rehabilitation of the land and mitigation of the acid mining drainage.

A - 434 29/1 GOVERNMENT GRANITY		DATE-STAMP	
2.40 P + MINES WELLINGTON		TELEGRAMS DEPT 16 AUG 56	
UNDER SECRETARY		Sent	Serial No.
MINES DEPT.		To	3025
Rec'd	By 3240	By	Checked
INLAND		TELEGRAMS DEPT	
Tel. 142. 100,000 pads/5/55-48096		176 AUG 1956	
<p>COMMER TRUCK MD159 INVOLVED ACCIDENT SMALLHOLMES TRUCK STOCKTON LAST FRIDAY VEHICLE IN BETTS FOR ESTIMATE APPROX £30 MAY WE PROCEED COPY OF REPORT BEING FORWARDED + MINES +</p> <p>CT MD159 £30 **</p>			

Inland Telegram [100,000 pads 5/55] from **Government Granity to Under Secretary Mines, Mines Dept. Wellington.** With Telegraph Office Wellington **16 AUG 56** and **Mines Dept** Received 16 AUG 1956.
 Message : "Commer Truck MD159 involved accident Smallholmes truck **Stockton** last Friday. Vehicle in Betts for estimate approx £30. may we proceed. Copy of report being forwarded. **Mines**"
 The **State Coal Mines Office** was at **Granity** - a branch of the Westport Office



NZ State Coal Mines MILLERTON
 ticket for railway wagon indicating source and coal type

"**Small**" coal is defined as between 3 and 25mm in size - it is screened, passing through the 25mm [1 inch] screen and retained by the 3mm screen.

Millerton-Stockton - Specific References

- *"From Clouds to Sea - 100 years of Coal from Millerton and Stockton"* by Norman Cranshaw, 1998
- *"The Stockton Coal Railway - New Zealand's First Electric Railway"* Graeme Carter & Elayne Robinson - The NZ Rail Observer March 2016

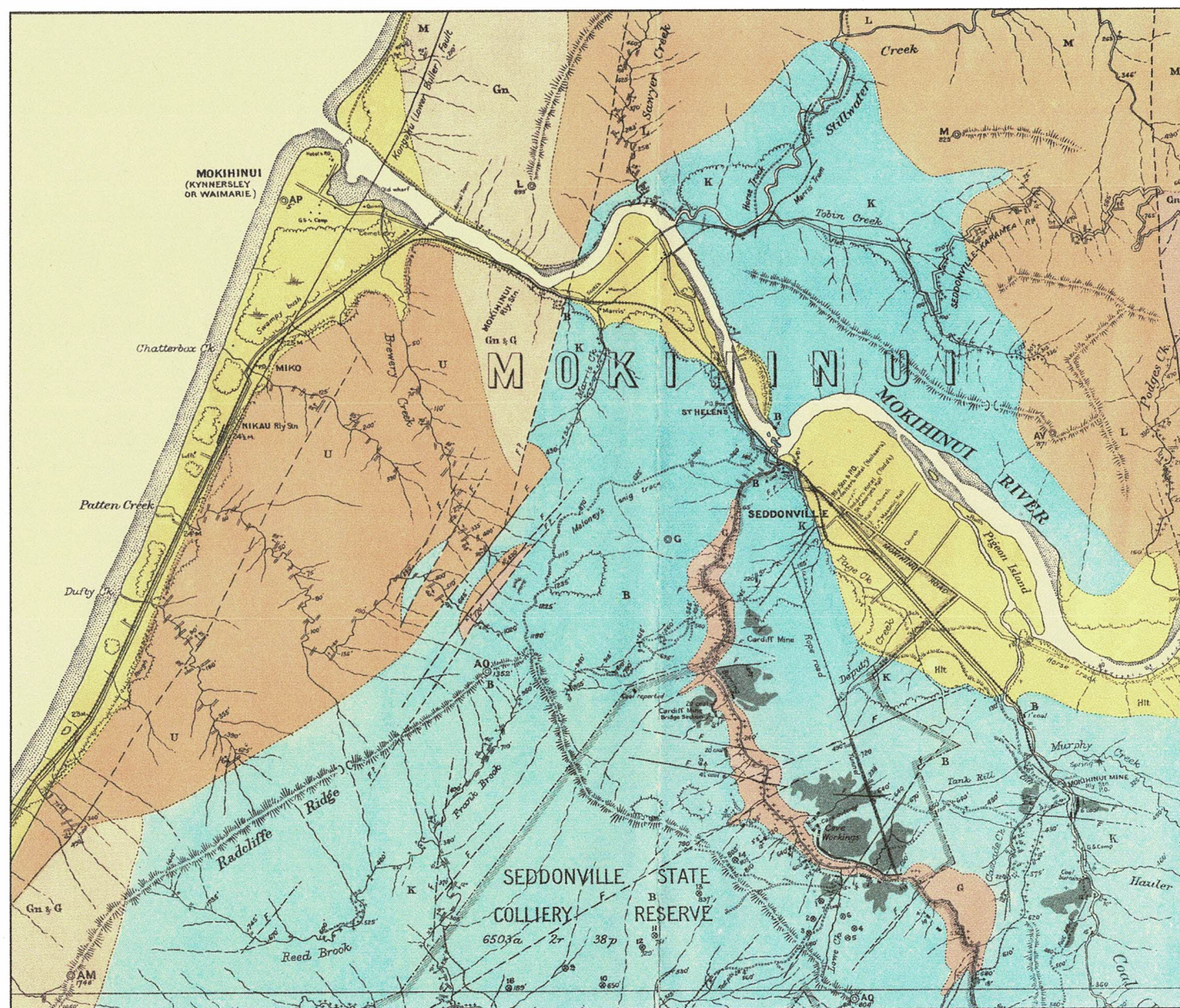
Buller Coalfield - Mokihinui-Seddonville Group

This is the Northern extension of the Buller Coalfield and the initial mining activity was within a few kilometres of what was to become Seddonville on the Mokihinui River and the Chasm Creek Tributary. After closure of the Seddonville State Mine in 1914, small scale mining in this area continued into the 1960's. From the late 1920's the centre of mining operations moved within the Seddonville Colliery Reserve to the Charming Creek area - a tributary of the Ngakawau River.

The area has produced over **2,000,000 tons of bituminous coal** with over half being from the Charming Creek Mine. The coal has between 5% and 6% sulphur content which because of environmental concerns in the 1980's, demand was restricted and hastened the closure of mining by 1984.

The Seddonville-Mokihinui area has several significant activities for the Coal Industry:

- First export of Bituminous Coal - to Nelson in 1862
- The **Seddonville State Coal Mine**, created under the 1901 Coal Mine Act was the first State Mine to produce coal - November 1903
- The development of **Co-operative mining** operations with political support but Union opposition
- The introduction of **Tribute mining** at Charming Creek 1931 causing significant Union opposition and industrial unrest
- The development of **Hydrological mining** techniques from the late 1920's and refinement in the 1950s at Charming Creek improved coal recovery



Scan of part Map 8 of **Geological Survey of Buller Coalfield** showing coal-bearing areas and general geology compiled from Lands & Survey Department and surveys by Morgan, Bartrum and Whitehorn of the Geological Survey Branch of the Mines Department. Maps drawn by G E Harris, 1914. [Exhibitor has original]

Discovery and Early Coal Mining:

On **February 27, 1862** a party including Thomas Brunner, James Burnett and John Rochfort, left Nelson for an expedition in the Buller under the direction of the Nelson Provisional Government. In his preliminary Report of **March 1862**, Burnett detailed the discovery of a coal seam outcrop 3km up the Mokihinui River. The official report on the Mokihinui Coalfield was not published in the Government Gazette until March 1863 and included details of the Mokihinui River mouth and its potential as a port for shipping coal. Mokihinui was named 1810 by a war party from Kaiapoi which had conquered the local tribes - **Mokihi** - raft; **Nui** - large - raft to cross the river

The **Phoenix Coal Mine Company** [Batty & Garvin] was formed as a direct result of the Burnett survey and prospected the area about 3km from the river mouth. A lease was taken out with the Provisional Government in Nelson and mining commenced in **April 1862** with the coal barged down the Mokihinui to a wharf. Tenders were called in **May 1862** for the formation of a road from the mine to the shipping place. The coal was exported to **Nelson** with irregular shipping from **May 1862**. This was the first export of bituminous coal. Despite the high quality of coal and a ready market in Nelson, the mine struggled with the river, supplies, shipping and the Mokihinui River bar. It is noted that the mine was being worked spasmodically by 1868 and was closed in **1870**. The Westport Times **January 1868** reported that the ketch "**Mary**" had berthed with the **first cargo of Mokihinui coal** delivered to **Westport**.

The Nelson Government passed the **Coal Field Leases [Mokihinui] Act in June 1863** and a number of leases were taken up and Companies formed including the Nelson and Mokihinui Coal Mining Co Ltd, and The New Zealand Coal Mining Company. The **Mokihinui Coal Company** was established in 1883 and developed a mine on a 42-year lease adjacent to the Phoenix Coal Lease. The mine was opened **1885** with peak year in 1894 when 59 men were employed and 11,000 tons was produced and railed to Westport. The mine closed in **1898** having produced **75,000 tons**.

Postal Matters:

The first **Mokihinui Post Office** was opened **January 1, 1868** at T A Brown's Post-Office Store. It was closed **January 1, 1874**. The Royal Mail contract was from Brown's Camp Hotel Westport by coach to Mokihinui Monday and Thursday, returning Tuesday and Friday. A report from the postmaster in Westport Times 11 July 1868 listed 5 unclaimed letters from March 1868. There were 3 hotels in Mokihinui in 1868 mainly catering for the gold prospectors on the Westport beaches and the quartz miners further up the River. No postal markings are known from this office.

A mail contract was operational from Westport to Karamea when that post office opened 1 June 1875. This was via Mokihinui crossing the River by the Ferry operated by Lewis Sweet who had an accommodation house. He became postmaster of the second Mokihinui Post Office and the mail contract to Karamea was "**via Mokihinui - Sweets**". The **Seatonville Post Office** opened December 1, 1884 16km east of where Seddonville would develop. It was the centre of quartz gold mining - Mokihinui Reefs. The office closed October 15, 1887 and there is a note in the Post Office archives that the ["A" Class] datestamp was returned to Wellington November 13, 1887. The mail contract was Ngakawau to Seatonville **via Mokihinui [Sweets]**.

The second **Mokihinui Post Office** was opened **January 1, 1885** in Lewis Sweet's store. It closed **August 31, 1899**. It used an "**A**" Class datestamp throughout and may have used manuscript markings before this was received [none recorded] Earliest use of "A" Class is 1887.



Mokihinui "A" Class

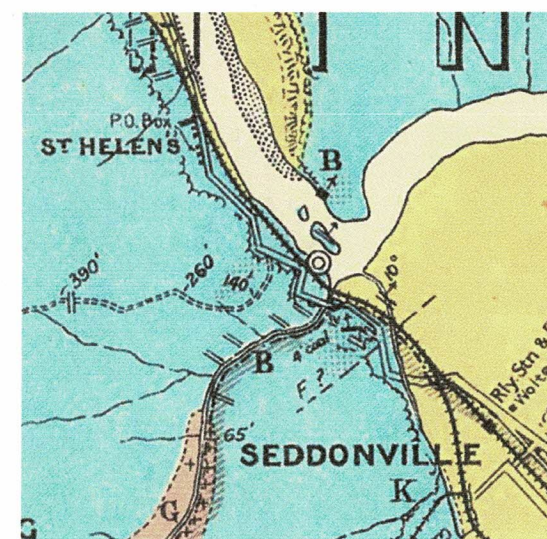
13 SP 93

18 AU 97



This office mainly served the men employed by the **Mokihinui Coal Company** which, in 1885, started developing a new coal mine at Coal Creek, 1km from Mokihinui with production from **1886**. A private railway was extended 2km from the Mine in 1887 connecting to the new wharf. This was later taken over by the Government when the railway was extended to Seddonville.

This Company had contracts with the Railway Commissioners supplying coal to the Wellington-Wanganui Railway in 1887 and contracts to supply up to 15,000 tons to railway depots in Timaru, Lyttelton, Wellington, Foxton, Wanganui and Napier. It bought and used the steamer "**Lawrence**" in 1889 - this foundered on the Mokihinui bar in 1891. The **first 25 trucks of coal** from the Mokihinui Coal Company arrived at Westport **September 15, 1893** on the newly opened railway. The peak year was 1894 when 59 men were employed and 11,000 tons was produced and railed to Westport. The mine was in difficulties and closed 1895 then was leased to the **Co-operative Knights of Labour** but it remained unprofitable. The company went into liquidation **June 5, 1898** and the mine closed. **Total production over 75,000 tons.**



Detail from 1914 map

The **Coal Creek Post Office** opened **November 1, 1887** - situated 2km from Seddonville and 1km from Mokihinui. **On January 1, 1903** it was renamed after confusion with Coal Creek Gorge - the area of the Brunner mine - as **St Helen's** [later **St Helens**] after the birth place of Premier Richard Seddon in Lancashire, England.

Post Office	Opened	Closed	Comments	Datestamps Used
Coal Creek	November 1, 1887	December 31, 1902	To St Helen's	"A" Class
St Helen's	January 1, 1903	February 28, 1925	To St Helens	"A" Class datestamp Proofed JA 8 03
St Helens	March 1, 1925	May 15, 1943	Reopened in 1944	"A" Class
St Helens	February 3, 1944	January 24, 1959	To Mokihinui	"A" Class "J" Class Proofed 18 OC 56
Mokihinui	January 24, 1959	May 31, 1961		"J" Class Proofed 26 NO 58



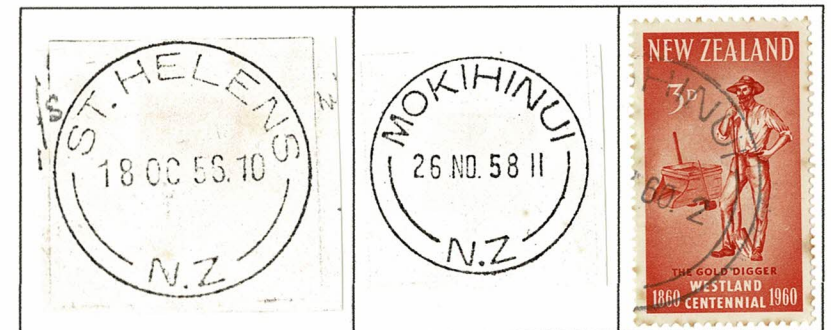
Coal Creek
JA 01

Copy Proof JA 8 03

05

St Helens
24 JE 27

10 DE 31



St Helens
Proof copy 18 OC 56

Mokihinui
Copy Proof 25 NO 58 "J" 35 1960



St Helens Post Office [c 1958]

Coal Creek / St Helens is based around the railway station on the railway to Seddonville 1km away. The population of both is around 600. The mining workforce, initially for the Mokihinui Company Mine, the Westport Cardiff Mine [later Seddonville State] and the Westport Co-operative Mine lived at both settlements. The population dropped after the State Mine closed in 1914 but increased again as the Charming Creek mining developed from the late 1920's until mining ceased in 1984.

The original settlement at **Mokihinui** was known by the alternate name - Kynnersley [T A S Kynnersley was the Commissioner for the Nelson South-West Goldfield 1865-1868]. About 1880 the name was officially changed to **Waimarie**. Post & Telegraph facilities were there 1910-1989.

Office	Service	Opened	Closed	Comments
Waimarie	Telegraph	Feb 1, 1910	Mar 9, 1913	To Post "J" Class 24mm
Waimarie	Post & Tel	Mar 10, 1913	Oct 12, 1942	To Telegraph
Waimarie	Telegraph	Oct 13, 1942	Oct 31, 1948	To Post & Tel
Waimarie	Post & Tel	Nov 1, 1948	Apr 3, 1967	To Mokihinui
Mokihinui	Post & Tel	Apr 4, 1967	May 30, 1989	"J" Class 29mm



Waimarie "J" 25mm

2 JA 35

24 SP 56

19 MY 58



Mokihinui

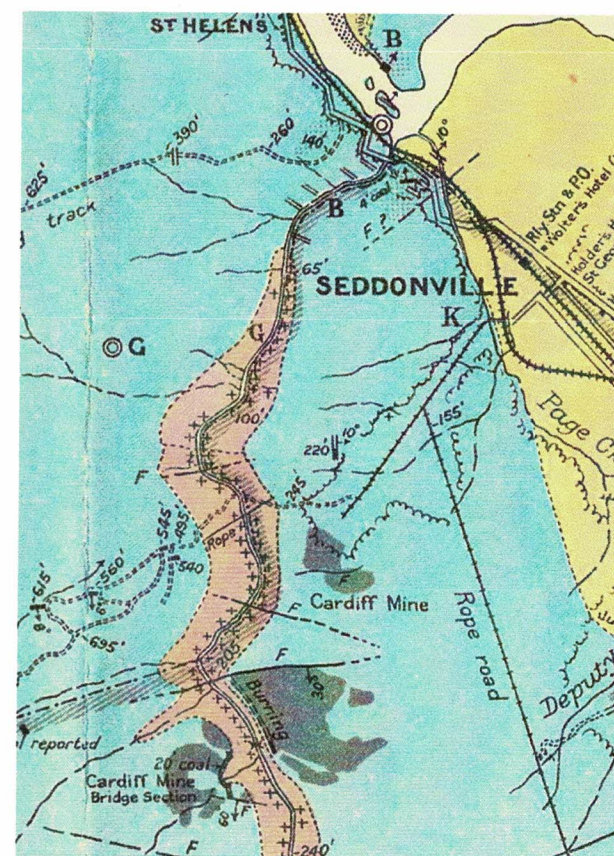
Proof copy 23 MR 67

7 AP 67

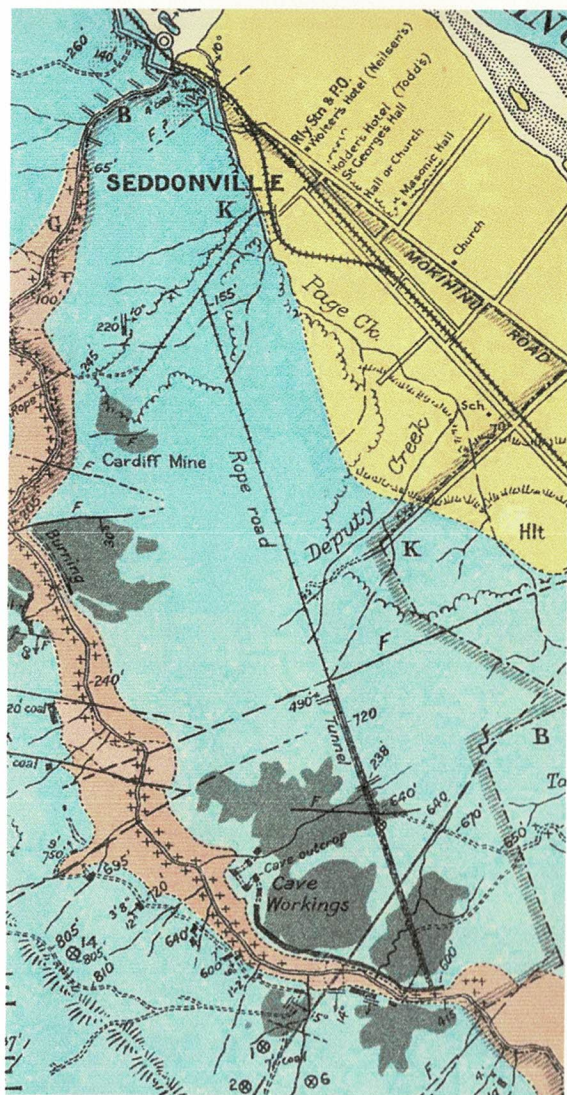
17 JL 68

28 JA 74

- The **Westport Cardiff Coal Company** prospectus was floated in May 1892 and promoted.
- Company Registered in **August 1892** with the head office in Christchurch.
- Prospecting in the Chasm Creek area on the lease of 1792 acres commenced **March 1893**.
- Tenders were called for works and sidings in **June 1893**.
- A new 18-20 foot seam was discovered and reported in **August 1893**.
- The annual report March 1894 indicated that the Company was expecting to be in production by the end of **April 1894**. The second AGM [March 1894] reported that 12,000 tons had been mined
- Delays over haulage costs dispute with Railways was an issue - reaching Parliament - eventually resolved by the Government purchasing the railway extension from Coal Creek.
- First shipment reached Christchurch **November 20, 1894** and Timaru on 22nd.
- Promoted as "**Best household and Steam Coal in the Market**" with ash 0.62/100pts coal compared with Mokihinui [4.14] and Brunner [6.20]
- Record weekly production May 1896 of 6974 tons 2 cwt - railed to Westport and exported
- Mine ceased work **September 1899** due to "**the supply of marketable coal has given out**" - soft coal was available, stockpiled but not marketable - caused a coal shortage to be reported. Mine idle
- **Fire** broke out in exposed section **January 28, 1900**.
- Company resolved into **liquidation March 15, 1900**.
- **July 1900** Government took over lease and plant over unpaid rent and royalties amounting to £7000 including debts to the Westport harbour Board.
- **October 1900** Mines Department prospecting in the un-worked "Cave" section of the lease
- Mines Commission of Inquiry into Mine management and Fire established December 1900.
- **August 1901** the Government announced the mine would shortly be a "**State Colliery**"
- 1901 Mines Report [1902] confirmed the mine would be "**Seddonville Colliery**"
- Westport-Cardiff mine produced over **220,000 tons** with **peak production in 1898 of 60,000 and employing 110 men**



Part of 1914 Map showing Cardiff Mines



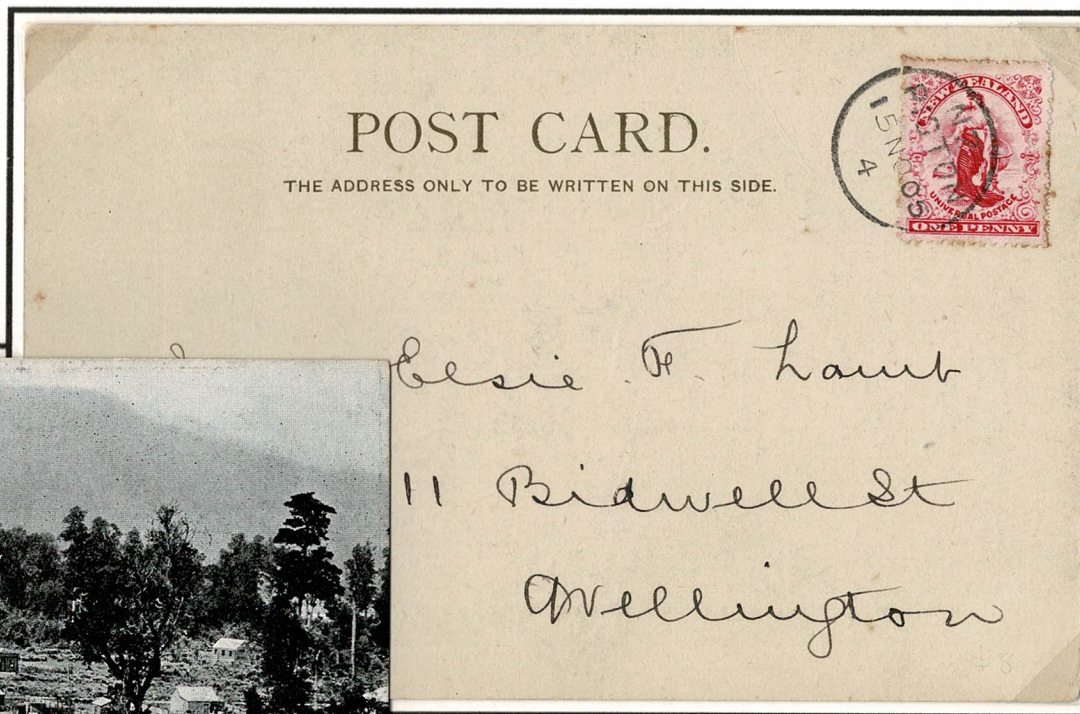
Detail from 1914 map showing the Cave Workings, tunnel, rope road and siding



Muir & Moodie

No. 6476. State Coal Mine, Seddonville. Westport

"State Coal Mine, Seddonville, Westport" No. 6476. Issued by Muir & Moody Dunedin N.Z from their Copyright Series of Views. "One Penny" [1901-16/12/1907]
View shows 2 loaded railway wagons on the State Mine Siding exiting the Bins after screening.



Picton 15 NO 05

Cards "Published by
Graham, Ltd,
Wellington - 38"

Photo by D Maloney,
Westport"

Maloney is listed in the
electoral roll
1905-1906 as
Photographer,
Westport.
1900 as miner at
Coalbrookdale
1911 & 1917 Miner



Published by Graham, Ltd., Wellington.—38

[Photo by D. Maloney. Westport,

A View of Seddonville, New Zealand, showing the State Coal Mine Bins in the foreground.

"A view of Seddonville, New Zealand, showing the State Coal Mine Bins in the foreground" [Actually it is the sawmill!]

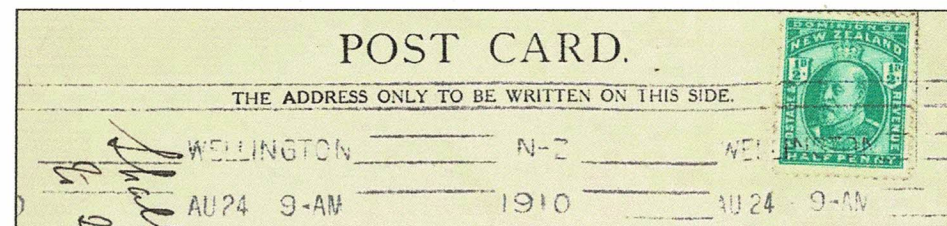
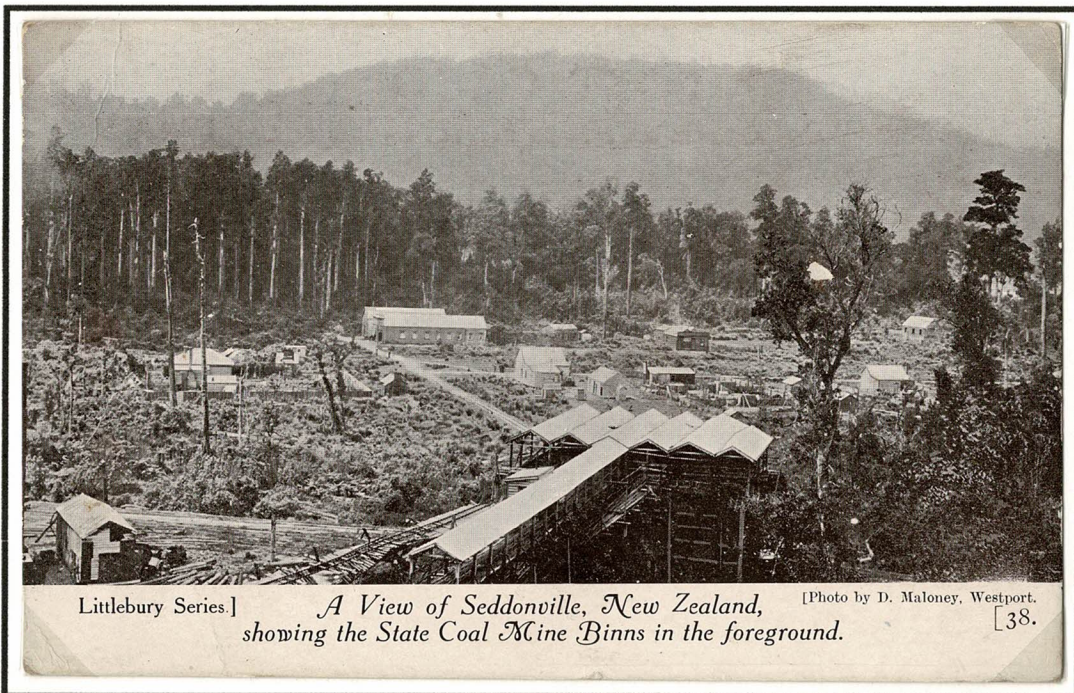
Published by Graham, Ltd., Wellington.—38

A View of Seddonville, New Zealand, showing the State Coal Mine Bins in the foreground.

[Photo by D. Maloney. Westport,

This must be the place where "Dick" came from - all amongst the coal - what say you? -

"This must be the place where "Dick" comes from all amongst the coal"
[Richard "Dick" Seddon]



"A view of Seddonville, New Zealand, showing the State Coal Mine Binns in the foreground"

Wellington AU 24 1910 - rate was ½d from 16 December 1907
 "Littlebury Series" Maloney Photograph.

The publication "Wish You Were Here" The Story of New Zealand Postcards P66 states that **Littlebury & Co** were wholesale stationers at 3 Willis Street and were active 1904-1911. It notes a **"striking similarity"** between the cards produced by **Graham Ltd.** Research in Papers Past Wellington newspapers found more accurate information.

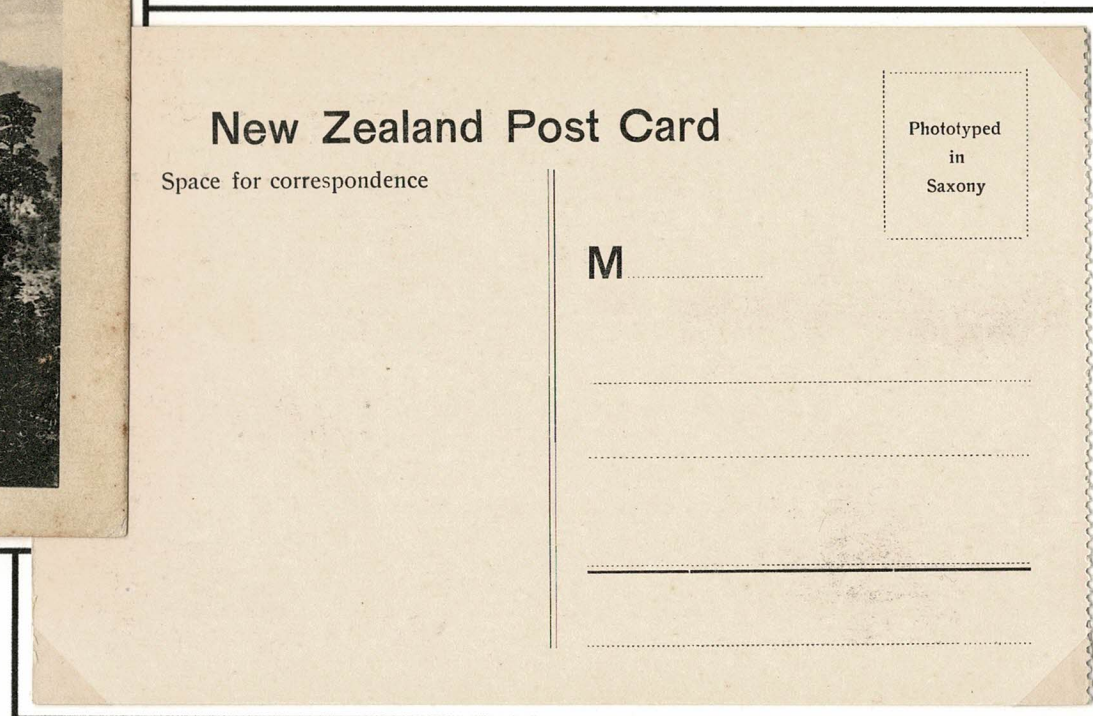
This undivided back card has the **same wording** as that published by **Graham Ltd** [see cards on previous sheet] but a **different size and font.** The address advice lettering style is also different. Graham Ltd was at **3 Willis Street, Wellington** advertising publishing a Wellington map **July 1, 1904.** **Littlebury and Company** were advertising in **August 1904** at **3 Willis Street** - probably bought out Graham Ltd - they were promoting the sale of this map in September 1905

Latest Littlebury and Company advertisement noted is dated January 26, 1907.

The **"Littlebury Series"** of postcards was being advertised from **August 6, 1904** to **24 August 1907**



"Seddonville N.Z." from Postcard Booklet **"24 Beautiful Views of Westland"** no publisher noted but the photograph is probably by D Maloney, Westport. Divided back Phototyped in Saxony



Seddonville

This was the main settlement in the Mokihinui and most of the miners lived there. Named after the Premier Richard Seddon. It became the terminus for the railway from Westport - Ngakawau when the line was completed in 1893 and the Mokihinui Mine railway was bought by the State. Population about 500.

The **Seddonville Post Office** opened **July 14, 1891** at the J A Clark store. Post & Telephone office at the Railway Station 1894 with Alice Janet Ballantyne in charge. Money Order & savings Bank facilities added **September 16, 1894**. Post Office closed **February 5, 1988**. It used an "A" Class and "J" Class datestamps.



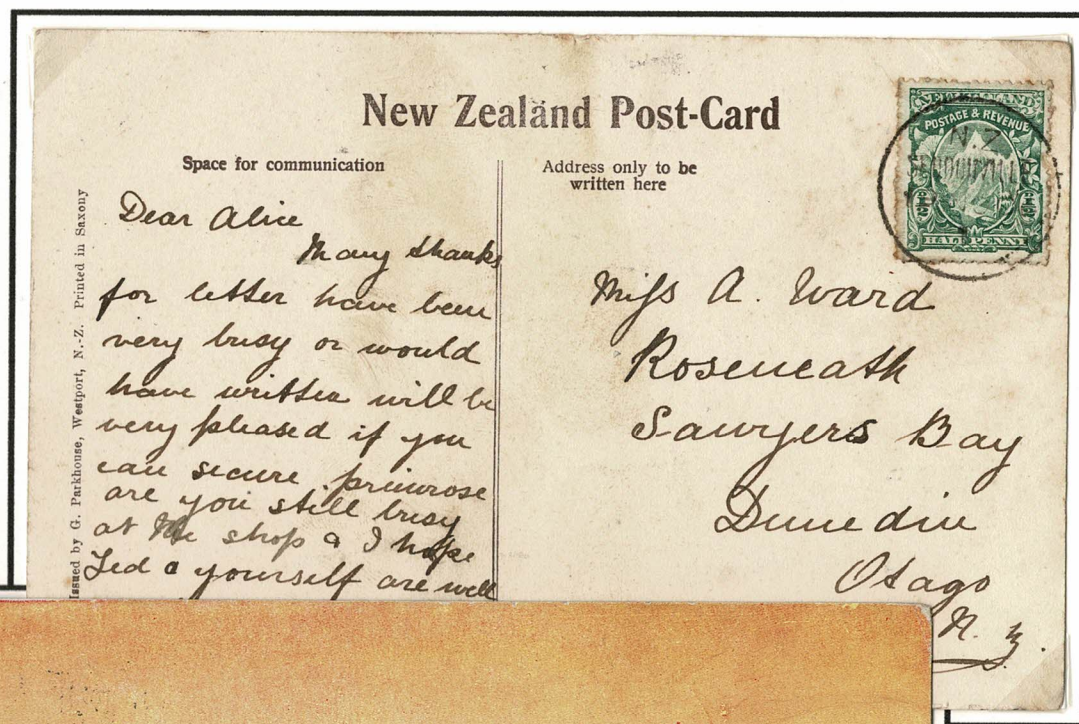
18 DE 06 16 OC 07 9 NO 18 5 JE 28



2 JA 35 27 DE 35 12 DE 50 21 JE 71

Right: **Seddonville 15 NO 08** on Postcard "Top Incline Denniston"

Below: **Seddonville 15 NO 27** on 1d Admiral Letter-card

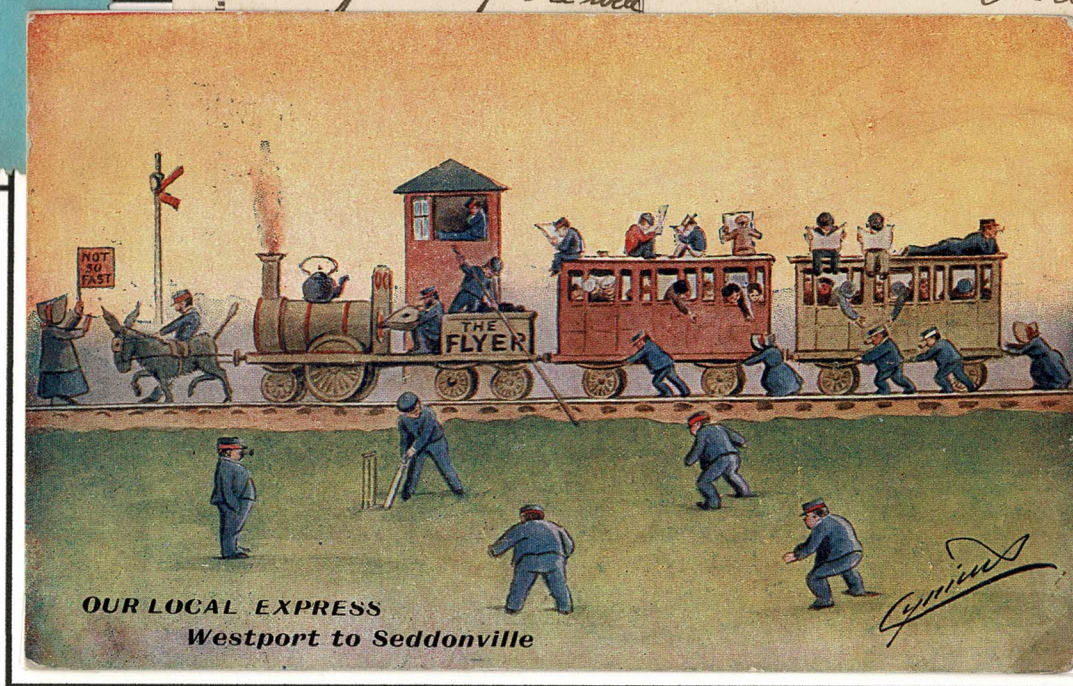


"Our Local Express Westport to Seddonville" Postcard mailed Westport "F" Class 23 DE 08 to Coopers Creek, West Oxford, Canterbury headed "Seddonville"

Card "Design on this card is the copyright of the Cynicus Publishing Co., Ltd., Tayport, Fife."

The maximum speed on the Westport-Seddonville Railway was 30 mph for coal trains [no air-brakes] and 35 mph for passenger trains - a constant cause for complaint!

The passenger service from Seddonville ceased in 1946



Mokihinui Mine & Westport Co-operative [Mokihinui] Company Mine - Upper Mokihinui

This was 5 km south-east of Seddonville - there were three areas mined on the Cascade and Coal Creeks. The mine was worked on the co-operative system. Work started in 1900 with the first coal shipped **July 3, 1900** via a tramway to screens at the extension of the railway from Seddonville with 30 tons sent to Westport for the Government and exported on the "*Hinemoa*" to Wellington.

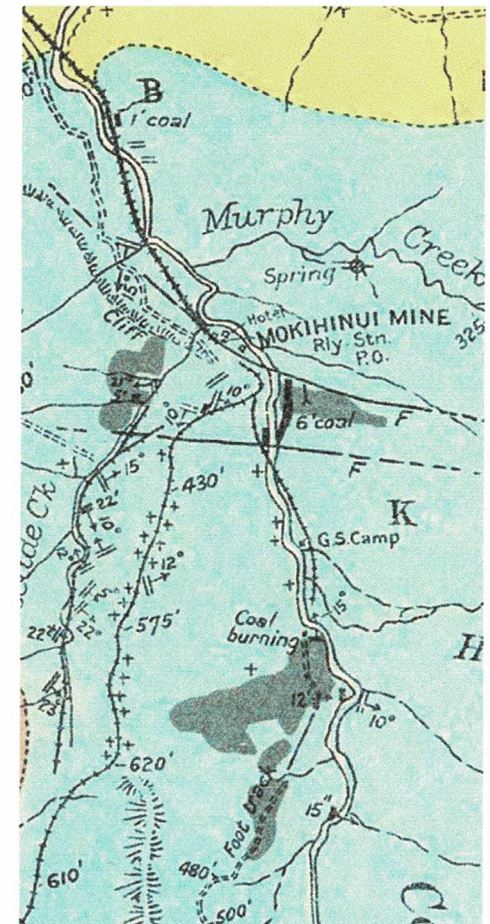
A **Fire** developed in one section in September 1900 [the map detail shows "**Coal Burning**"] - this did not affect the Output as that section was nearly worked out. A new section "Robin Hood" was opened in August 1900. The Mine was operational **1900-1918** with peak production in **1905 of 46,000 tons** employing **108 men**. **Total Production 300,000 tons**. The miners lived at Seddonville.

Postal Matters:

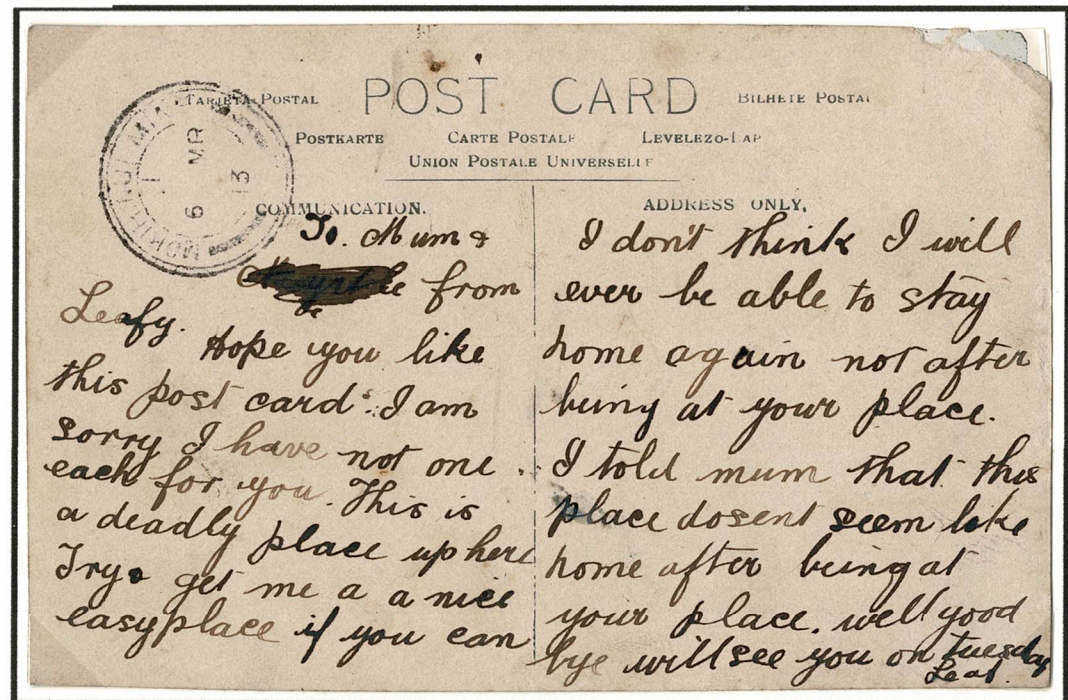
The West Coast Times reported November 26, 1900 that a telephone office had opened at Mokihinui Mine. Startup, from Post Office records, has a different date. The map indicates that the Post & telegraph Office at Railway Station An "**H**" **Class datestamp** was proofed MY 31 01 - used throughout life of the office. A Post Office report states there was just one householder at Mokihinui Mine in 1923. The telephone office closed when the Public Works Camp closed. There was a **Mokihinui Camp Post Office** January 1, 1930 - December 5, 1931 1km closer to Seddonville - highway Construction - unemployment relief.



Mokihinui Mine		
opened	closed	office
January 1, 1900	August 11, 1902	Telephone
July 7, 1903	August 31, 1893	Telephone
September 1, 1903	June 30, 1923	Post & Tel
July 1, 1923	October 10, 1948	Telephone



Real Photo Postcard. Divided back, no photographer or publisher. Annotated "*Cascade Mokihinui Mine*" - shows railway line from mine. Has Mokihinui Mine "H" Class 22 JE 03 [earliest recorded]



Real Photo [Twins] no details. Mokihinui Mine "H" Class 6 MR 13 [latest date] Message includes "*This is a deadly place up here Try & get me a nice easy place if you can.*"

Co-Operative Mining & Hydraulic Mining Techniques

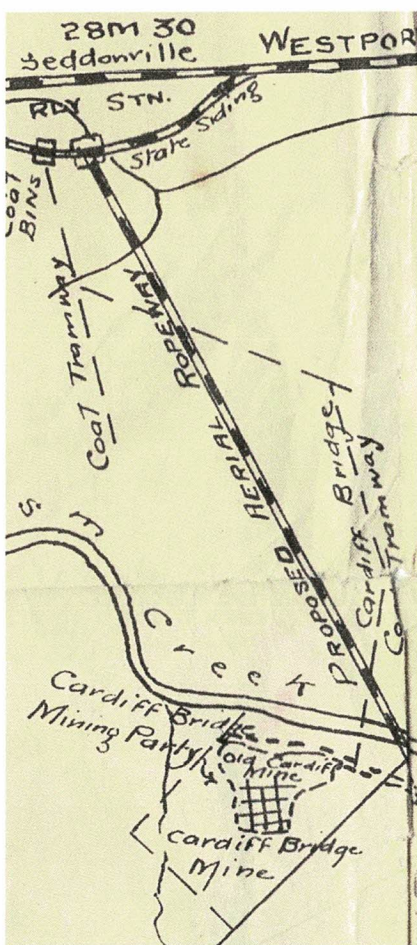
Co-operative coal mining is where a group of experienced miners with some capital were able to obtain a lease to work surface deposits of reopen old mines abandoned by the bigger companies as unprofitable. There were usually 6-10 in a co-operative and they shared equally all labour, expenses and profits. It is reported that co-operative miners were able to win coal at half the cost of the bigger companies.

The first co-operative mining venture in the Seddonville area was in 1895 when the Knights of Labour put a party of 10 - Lomas and party - having obtained the lease of the closed Mokihinui Company mine at St Helens. It was not profitable and the mine was eventually closed in 1898.

This form of coal mining had the support of the Premier Seddon who, in 1901 was to put a co-operative party into the old Cardiff Mine workings. It was reported on July, 16, 1920 that there were 4 co-operative parties [40 men] in Seddonville. The same paper [Christchurch Press] reported January 1, 1924 that 8 parties were working involving 120 men. They were usually known by the men who set them up - McGuire, Bennett, O'Brien & Dove, Mulholland, Murphy & Forsyth etc.

Up until the 1923 series of coal strikes, the Miners Union had not been too concerned about the co-operatives but with the strike closing all major West Coast mines, the co-operative miners prospered with some making £70 - £100 / man / fortnight. Union opposition remained. The production from the co-operative mines was over 250 tons a day and by 1923, the rail haulage from Seddonville to Ngakawau had increased requiring heavier locomotives and heavier rails.

The Westport Co-operative [Mokihinui] Company Mine [1900-1918] was not a true co-operative operation despite the name. In 1920 McGuire and party of 10 were producing 50 tons a day from this old Mokihinui mine and employing labour the build tramway to the old Cardiff [State] bins at Seddonville. This can be seen on the sketch map prepared for the Clydevale Coal Mines Company. The Hokitika Guardian February 17, 1921 reported: "**the share recently sold for £1200 in McGuire and party's co-operative mine, Mokihinui, was one-tenths interest.**"



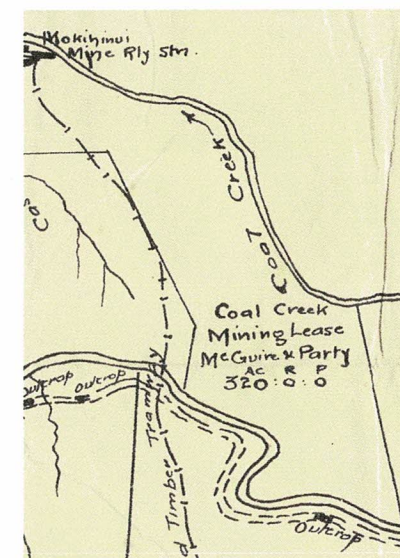
The **Cardiff Bridge Mining Party** took over part the lease of the old Cardiff Mine with approval of the Premier in 1901. It was a very successful co-operative mining venture. It can be seen on the copy of the [1922] sketch map for the Clydevale Coal Mines Company and it had taken over the old Cardiff-Seddonville tramway.

In 1924 a **flume** (water race used for carrying coal) was constructed from the mouth of the Cardiff Bridge mine to the railway at Seddonville, a distance of 1.6 km. The flume was lined with iron sheets. By the end of the year the flume was successfully transporting 120 tonnes of coal a day. There was a major advance at the same mine in 1927 when water was piped directly to the coal face. The coal could then be transported all the way to the bins, thus eliminating the work of filling and trucking.

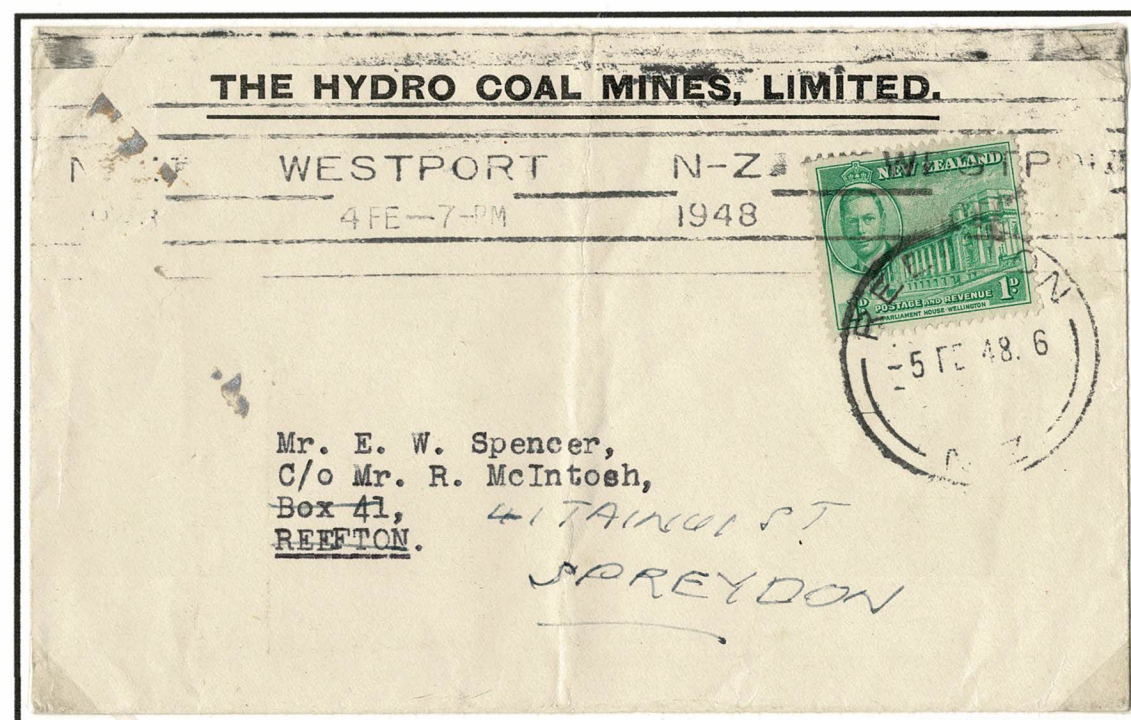
The old **Seddonville State Mine** workings were converted into a hydraulic mine in 1936 (renamed the **Hydro mine**). A flume was laid along the line of the old railway, about 1.7 km, to bins at Seddonville. There was still considerable coal left in pillars, originally thought to be too crushed to be mined and sold. After blasting, this was sluiced to the bins. Use of water allowed the fine material to be washed away, so that only clean coal was stored in the bins.

Hydro Mine 1936-1956 - 140,992 tons

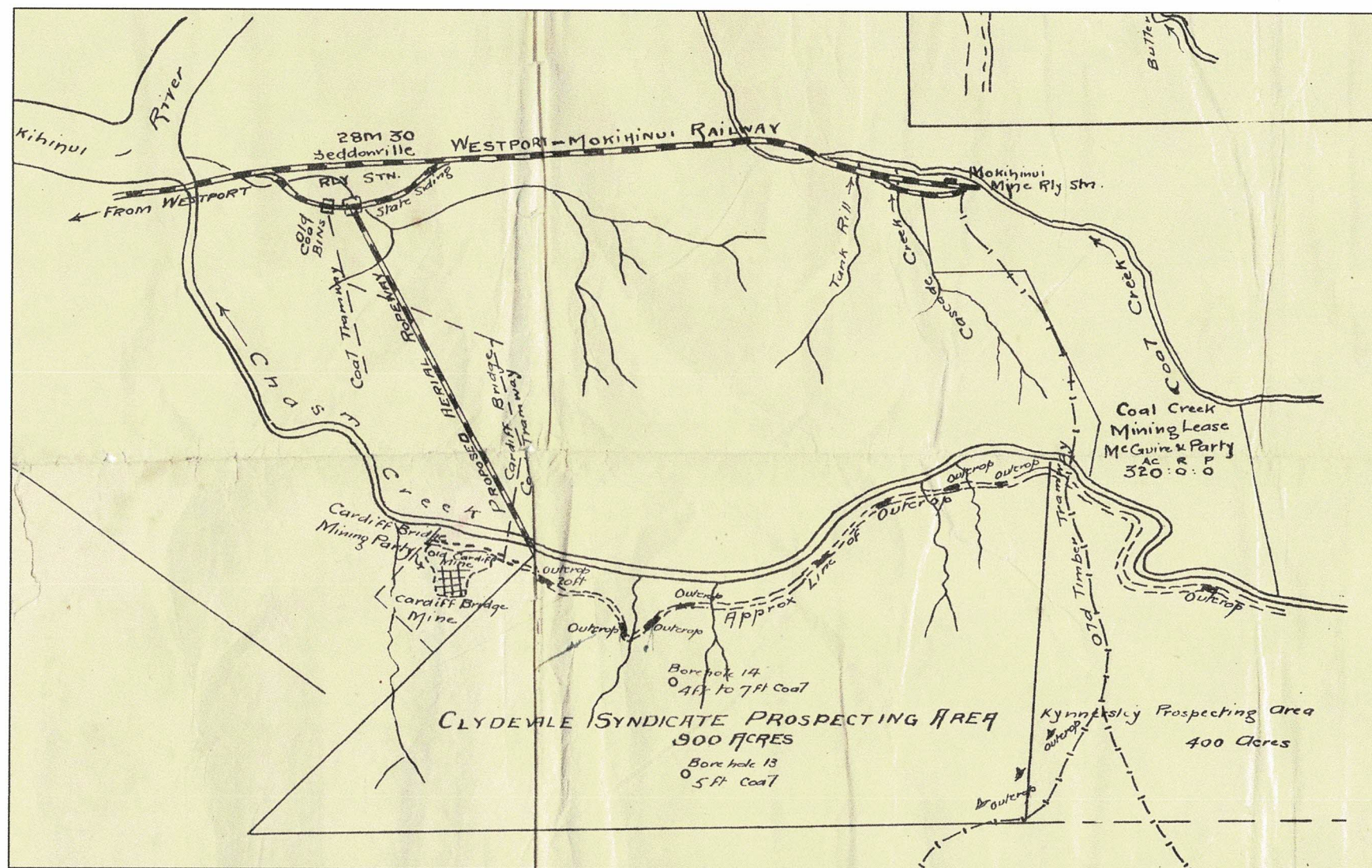
The **Hydro Coal Mines Limited** envelope from Westport 4 FE 1948 redirected from Reefton. This company expanded into timber from 1937 as easy won coal was depleted.



From "Clydevale Coal Mines Ltd Plan" June 20 1922 [exhibitor's library]



Clydevale Coal Mining Company 1924-1929



Central detail from "Sketch Plan of the Clydevale Coal Mines Ltd Area" prepared H R Young, Authorised Surveyor June 20, 1922
Original in Exhibit's Library

Clydevale Coal Mines Ltd Company was gazetted February 2, 1924 with capital of £20,000 and head office in Wellington with the objects "to carry on in New Zealand or elsewhere the trades or businesses of colliery and mine-owners, coal-masters ..." H R Young, who prepared the sketch map had 500 £1 shares. The original sketch plan was for 900 acres but the approved Coal lease was 1188 acres.

The Christchurch Press reported on the Company activities.

- Two shipments of machinery arrived at Westport December 5, 1924.
- January 22, 1925 states the erection of bins and an aerial Tramway will be completed within a few weeks.
- February 2, 1925 reported the bins were completed and coal expected for export end of next month.
- May 5, 1925 had an article on the Aerial rope-way - it was over 1 mile in length with 52 buckets capable of 140 tons/ hour.
From Colliery a 200m tramway and screen and upper bins fed the aerial buckets transporting the coal to the lower bins at the State siding at Seddonville. It was supervised by H R Young and Mr J Quinn the Mine manager.
- September 16, 1925 - the aerial was to be extended 10 chains to a new top field expected to yield up to 40,000 tons.
- February 28, 1926 reports the first coal from the new section was sent down to Seddonville for export.
- October 20, 1927 a new area 15 chains from the upper aerial terminus to the South-west was located.
- August 21, 1929, Mr J Quinn, the mine manager resigned to work at a co-operative mine in Runanga
- **June 17, 1929 Murchison Earthquake 7.8 on scale caused widespread damage forcing mine to close**
- **September 7, 1929 an advertisement appeared offering for sale the Clydevale lease aerial & plant**
- **Production total 20,798 tons.**

TENDERS FOR COAL MINE, AERIAL ROPEWAY, ETC.

TENDERS are invited for the purchase of the whole of the property of the Clydevale Coal Mines, Limited, as now situated at Seddonville, Westport District. The properties comprise the following:—1188 acres (more or less) Coal Lease No. 7148, issued from the N.Z. Government, being Section W108 in Block XV., of the Mokihinui Survey District and Section W109 in Block III. of the Ngakawau Survey District, for a term of sixty years with all unworked reserves of coal; Aerial Ropeway and all Plant, including Ten horse-power Boiler and Engine by Robey and Co., Ltd.; Bins, Sidings, Manager's House, Mine Tubs, Tools, and Plant.

Dove's Co-operative Mining in old Seddonville State Mine

In 1915 a 6 man co-operative - **O'Brien & Dove** - were working the old Seddonville State Mine producing about 12 tons a day. This party was operational until 1923. **John Thomas Dove's** party continued to 1928. As confirmed by the letters reproduced below, the Co-operative party was of 4 men and were looking to sell the Lease in 1930 for £100 per man. Dove and party and restarted mining in the same area during 1939 in response to a coal shortage and favourable prices.

- In total **Dove's output was 119,714 tons** [1915-1924] [1923-1928] [1939-1946].
- The **Glasgow Cooperative** [1925-1936] produced 36,212 tons over 12 years.
- The **Celtic Lease** [1925-1927] produced 6,043 tons over 3 years

copy
27/2 HR Young
Seddonville 20 Sept 30
Dear Sir
I am authorised
by Harlen & Gilbert to find sale
for the coal lease 17 acres part of
the old state mine together with the
main Tunnel and Tramway Rights to
Seddonville Siding there is 4 shareholders
in the party no debts only this years Rent
so I will give you the first chance
to buy this lease gives a chance to get
all the coal left in the State mine
Below the Glasgow Lease so I thought
if you and J W Slee was to join together
it would give slee a chance to get
all his coal on the left side of main
Tunnel through the main Tunnel as
it is the only way for slee to
get his coal on his (Celtic Lease)
see if J W Slee will join you to
buy us clean out I am
J T Dove

Letter from **Seddonville 20 Sept 30** to Mr H R Young -
[in exhibitors library]

"Dear Sir

I am authorised by Harlen & Gilbert to find sale for the coal lease 17 acres part of the **old State Mine** together with the Main Tunnel and Tramway rights to Seddonville Siding. There is 4 shareholders, no debts only this years Rent. So I will give you the first chance to buy this Lease gives a chance to get all the coal left in the State Mine below the Glasgow Lease so I thought if you and My J W Slee was to join together it would give Slee a chance to get all his coal on the left side of the mail tunnel through the main tunnel as it is the only way for Slee to get his coal on his [Celtic Lease]. See if J W Slee will join you to buy us clean out."

I am

J T Dove."

Transcript of letter from **Seddonville 23rd Sept 30**
to Mr W J Slee
[in exhibitors library]

"Dear Sir

I am authorised by Harlen & Gilbert to find sale for the coal lease 17 acres part of the **old State Mine** together with the Main Tunnel and Tramway rights to Seddonville Siding. There is 4 shareholders in the party, 2 Gilberts, Harlen & Dove, [no debts] only this years Rent.

So I will give you the first chance to buy this Lease gives a chance to get all the coal on your own ground on left hand side of main Drive [State} through the drive also all the coal that is left in the old State Mine.

The Glasgow cannot get much further down, they will be cut off at a place near old furnace. Me and Gilbert was approx 16 chains in main Drive to have a look on Sunday and it was in fair order [no gas]. Requires 15 or 20 £ for props in there, not much dirt to shift. **Somewhere about 100 £ per man would complete the deal.**

P.S. Let me know early what you think as I might get a local party together - we have applied for extension of time.

I am

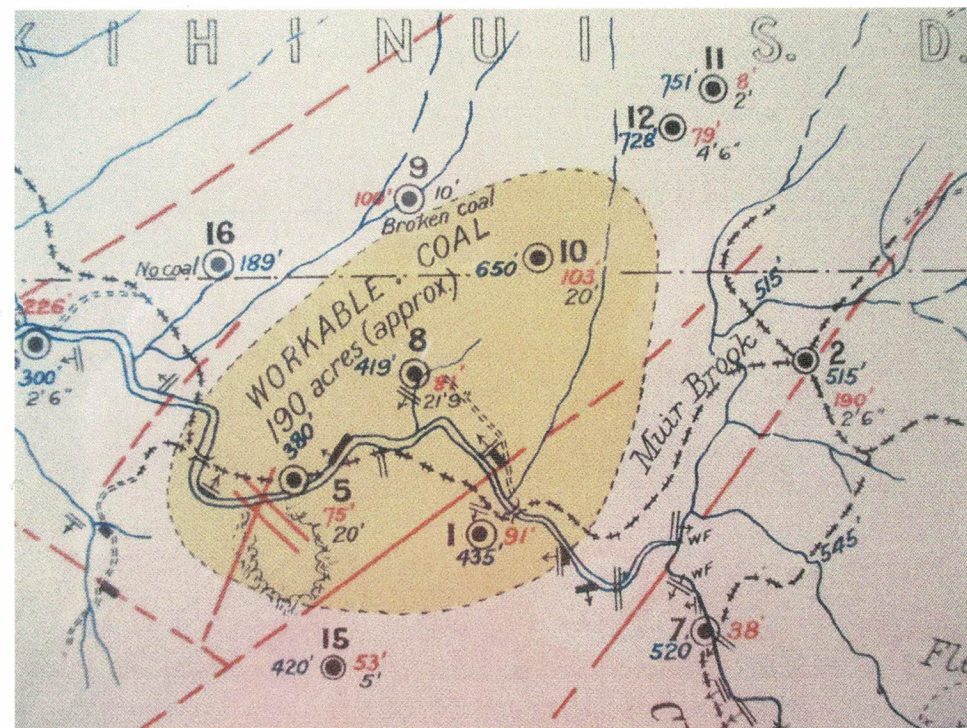
J T Dove"

Charming Creek Mine and Tribute Mining

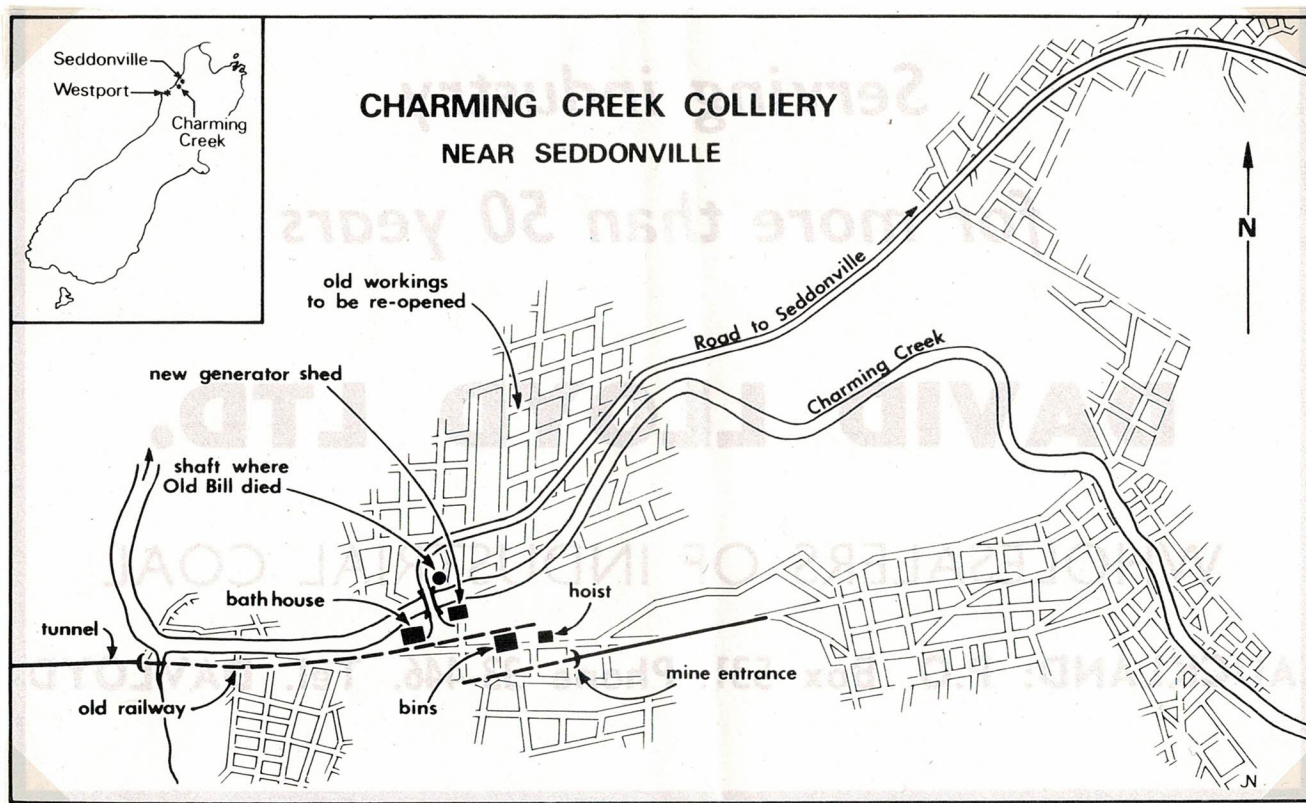
The Mines Department, in 1909, realising that Seddonville State Mine was nearing the end of economic life, undertook a survey of **16 bore-holes** in the Charming Creek [tributary of the Ngakawau River]. **Bore-hole 1 & 5** showed good coal, with bore-holes 8 and 10 also showing coal. This is the area that the **Charming Creek Mine** was developed

An area of 242 acres with coal 6-21 feet with estimated 2,000,000 of coal was set as a lease. This was let to the public in 1917. In 1919 the Westport-Charming Creek Coal and Timber Company was formed but was re-launched in 1926 as the **Charming Creek-Westport Coal Company**. Work started in 1927, by 1929 the bins at Ngakawau and the tramway were completed and production started in 1930.

After a dispute at Christmas 1930, in January 1931, management served notice on the miners and stood down the surface workers. 3 attempts were made to turn the mine into a **Tribute Mine** where the miners were contracted to the Company to deliver coal to the mine mouth at a set price. The Union called this **"pernicious and inimical"** and 200 unemployed miners from other Buller Mines marched on the Mine. Heated scenes at Westport where 'negotiations' were going on were besieged by 1000 miners. Police reinforcements were called in. Eventually the Tribute miners accepted mining standards and formed their own union.



"Seddonville State Colliery Plan showing the position of Bore-Holes in the Charming Creek Valley" dated 1912 - compiled from Maps of the Mines Department
Detail from a map in Exhibitors library



Coal was sent down a **Tramway** to Ngakawau until 1958 - it is now the **Charming Creek Walkway** - and coal was then trucked to Seddonville and railed to Westport. In the **1950's hydro mining** - with sluices at the face and flumes was introduced - this had been first used by a co-op mine at Cardiff Bridge Mine in 1927.

Peak production was **1942** with over **42,000** tons and 40 men underground and 29 surface workers. In 1975 it became the only underground mine in the Buller and passed the **1,000,000** tons of coal. Demand dropped with fewer than 10 and later just 5, employed until it closed in 1984.

From New Zealand Coal Spring 1982

Seddonville Specific References:

"Yesterdays of Seddonville 1873-1975" compiler D I Hammon, 1976. Dora Harmon was the daughter of **John Thomas Dove**. He worked 2 years on the Brunner Mine Disaster enquiry and worked at the Seddonville State until it closed then started the Co-operative party working old coal mines working until aged 90 - died 1963.

"Reflections on Charming Creek" Bill Prebble 2012.

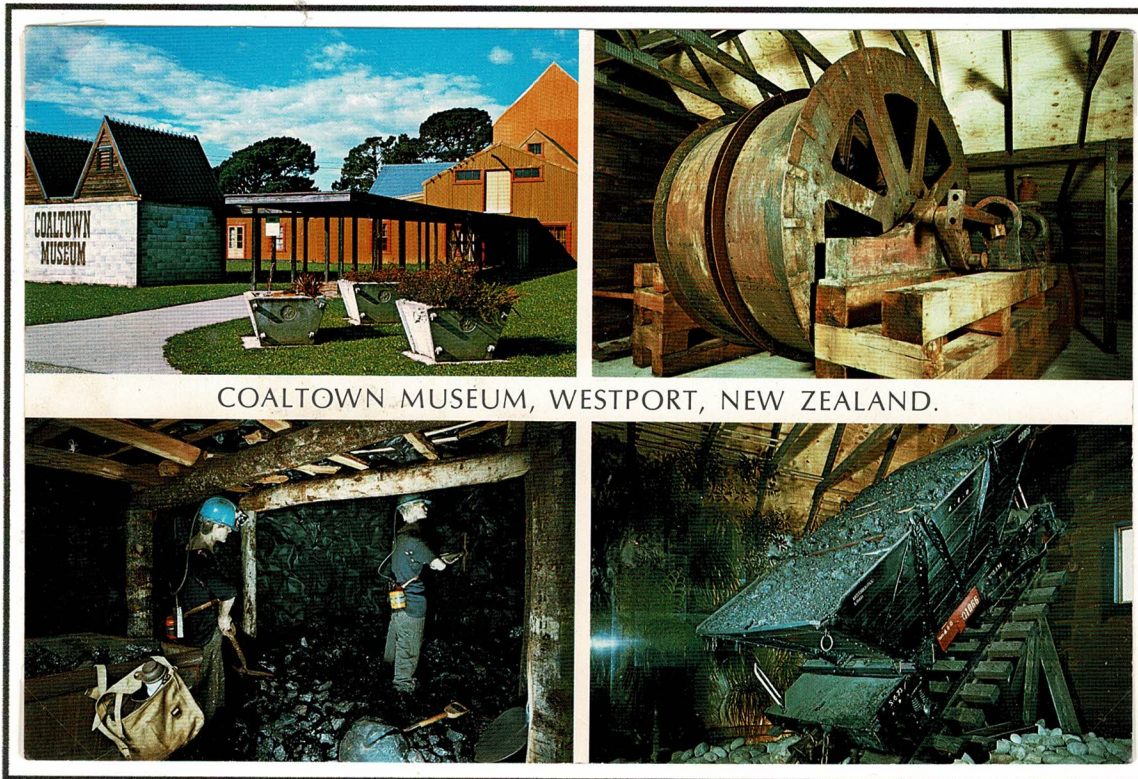
"Water Powers Charming Creek Mine" New Zealand Coal, Vol. 26 No. 3, Spring 1982

Buller Coalfield - Preserving the History for the Future

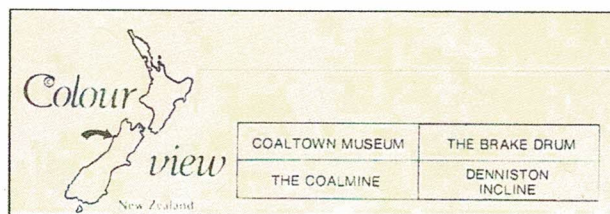
Coaltown Museum Westport

Displays include a true-to-life **coalmine**, one of the **20-ton brake drums** used on the Denniston Incline to control the descent of loaded wagons, a **"Q" class railway wagon** at 45° angle on which some of the Incline operated. Displays also focus on formation of coal, maritime history and unionism

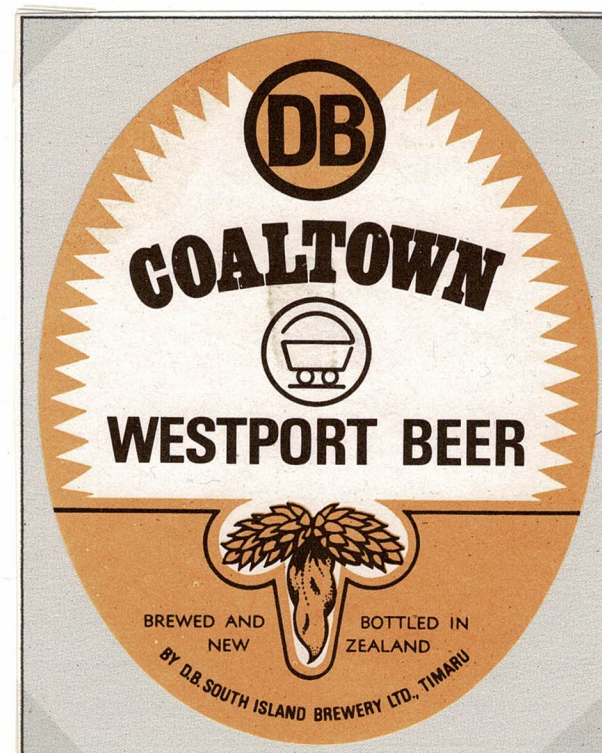
There is a separate film area featuring coal mining with historic footage of the Incline and Coal Trains etc



COALTOWN MUSEUM, WESTPORT, NEW ZEALAND.



Photography and Printing by Fotocentre Ltd. Oamaru North Otago



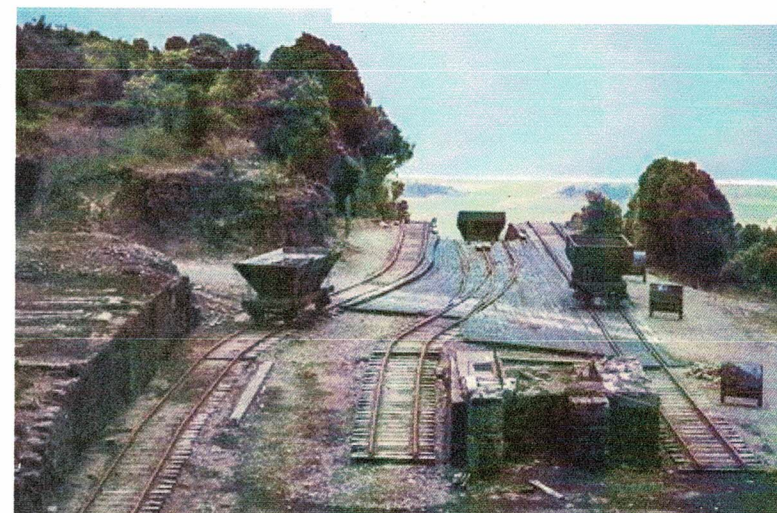
Just what is needed after a day or two exploring the History of Buller Coal

North Buller Museum - Granity

Located in the centre of Granity on a historical site, being **Coke Ovens** built 1909-1910. Building and site belongs to the Northern Buller Museum Trust. It also owns the **Millerton Incline** behind the Museum. Work is underway to get the Incline reinstated as a Walking Track. Included is a Nissan hut, is a Heritage structure and used to be a store for Solid Energy.

"Friends of the Hill Society" Denniston Museum

This is in what was the high school at Denniston can contains a fascinating amount of **Denniston and Burnetts Face** mining memorabilia even including one of the "Big Fifty" buses that transported miners to the mines. A 'mine experience' entering the old **Banbury Mine** was introduced but has now ceased operation due to changes in Mining regulations.



Restored Denniston Brakehead on a rare clear day
Marshall digital photo 2020

The **Denniston Brakehead** was abandoned until 1982 when the Lands & Survey Department cleaned it up for visitor use and installed **information boards**. The **Department of Conservation** took over the management and has cleared the regenerating bush from the site. It has restored the **rail tracks at Brakehead** and located restored **"Q" wagons** on site - three at Brakehead and two at Conns Creek. One of these is a crash survivor salvaged from the Waimangaroa River! Restoration is continuing at the area of **Middle Brake**. The Brakehead is now established as a major visitor site with links to the **Banbury Arches** which supported the main access from the mine where a section of the rope-road and three coal tubs has been restored. **Buller Coal History is in good hands.**