

THE COAL TRADE IN NOVA SCOTIA DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1916

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Approximate figures of the outputs of the Nova Scotia coal companies during the first half of 1916, with comparative figures for the first six months of the two preceding years, are as follows:

	First Six Months of		
	1914.	1915.	1916.
Dominion Coal Co.—			
Glace Bay Mines...	2,254,000	2,075,000	2,153,000
Springhill Mines....	200,000	199,000	189,000
N. S. Steel & Co. ...	396,500	256,300	288,000
Acadia Coal Co.	207,600	144,000	200,000
Inverness C. & Ry. Co.	125,800	103,000	138,000
Intercolonial Coal Co.	170,000	90,000	66,700
Maritime C. & Ry. Co.	73,500	76,000	102,000
Minudie Coal Co. ...	31,000	38,000	32,000
Colonial Coal Co. ...	26,000	20,000	20,000
Cape Breton Coal & Ry. Co.	12,000	6,000
	3,496,400	3,007,300	3,188,700

The situation of the coal-trade at the close of the first half of 1916 is exactly the reverse of what it was at the corresponding date a year ago. At the 30th June, 1915, the output showed a decrease of about 430,000 tons compared with the first six months of 1914, the bulk of the decrease being attributable to depressed conditions during the first quarter of 1915, and it was forecasted that the production of coal would show a marked improvement during the closing half of 1915, as was actually the case. At the 30th June, 1916, the production compared with the first half of 1915, shows an increase of approximately 180,000 tons, the bulk of this increase being to the credit of the first quarter of 1916. It may now be forecasted that the production of the second half of 1916 will show a marked decrease when compared with the last six months of 1915. The figures for 1916 at the end of April showed a much more favorable comparison with 1915, and during May and June a heavy falling off in production took place. For example the production of the Dominion Coal Company's Glace Bay collieries were as follows during May and June in the two years:

	1915.	1916.
May	428,000	353,000
June	448,000	336,000
	876,000	689,000

Decrease: 187,000 tons.

Indications are that the coal production for the year will be at least 500,000 tons below the small output of 1915, and may not exceed 6,000,000 tons. That is to say, the production of coal in Nova Scotia during 1916 is going to be 1¼ million tons below the normal capacity of the collieries, and it will be necessary to hark back to 1911 to find so small a provincial coal production as apparently we are to see in 1916.

This is a matter of first rate importance. Some nine months ago, the writer ventured to point out that the question of recruiting among miners was resolving itself into a choice between men and munitions, and in a review of the Nova Scotia coal-trade for 1915, once more emphasised the inevitable tendency towards a serious drop in the production of coal. The fact that the

outputs of the first quarter of 1916 were greater than the output in the first quarter of 1915 obscured the true tendency of events, and it was not realised by those who made these comparisons that the production of coal during the first quarter of 1915 was at the lowest possible ebb.

Enlistments in the mining district have for some months past been discontinued, but the damage has been done, and outputs cannot now recover until "the boys come home."

The reduction in production is not solely due to recruiting. It is in part due to the requisitioning of the coal-freighting steamers by the Admiralty. This condition has affected the Dominion Coal Co. in particular. During the winter this Company has four large steamers for its winter business, two of which the Admiralty requisitioned. As a consequence of the reduction in carrying capacity it was not possible to take away the full production of the mines, and some idle time resulted. Because of this many of the workmen sought more steady work elsewhere, and this has still further reduced the output capacity.

The awkwardness of the situation so far as it affects the Dominion Coal Company and its workmen is well explained in a resolution passed by the members of the Provincial Workmen's Association and forwarded to the Premier of Canada, the text of which is appended to these notes. This resolution does not, however, cover the serious situation which faces the coal consumer in Montreal and other cities of Eastern Canada and Newfoundland which look to the mines of the Dominion Coal Company for their winter coal stocks. If the shipments of coal from Cape Breton to St. Lawrence ports exceed one-quarter of the normal seasonal tonnage things will have to improve very considerably both in the matter of outputs and of ships to carry the coal to market. The production of the two companies operating in the Joggins field is again worthy of note, the Maritime Coal & Railway Company showing one of the largest percentage increases in the Province. The Inverness Company shows an encouraging increase. The International Coal Company's production has been much decreased by the fire that occurred in November last, which has compelled this Company to abandon its workings in the Drummond Main Seam. Good progress is being made in development of other seams underlying, and larger outputs should be obtained during the last half of the year than have been found possible during the first half.

The Acadia Coal Company has returned almost to the production it had before the explosion in the Allan Shafts. Some coal was lost by a hasty and rather foolish strike on the part of the workmen of this Company. The Nova Scotia Coal & Steel Company also shows an increase, but its production is still very considerably behind the figures of 1914.

The fairly general increases shown in the production of the smaller companies, particularly the small mainland collieries, are a result of the demand for coal, and there is no doubt the increases would be much larger were it not for the shortage of miners. Yet these numerous individual increases, encouraging as they doubtless are to the companies to whose credit they stand, are wiped out and more than nullified by the decrease in the production of the Dominion Coal Company.