

FIRST INSPECTION DISTRICT—1896.

MR. GEORGE A. SCHILLING,

Secretary Bureau of Labor Statistics, Springfield, Ill.:

DEAR SIR:—In accordance with section twelve of "An act providing for the health and safety of persons employed in coal mines," I herewith submit to you the First Annual Coal Report of the First Inspection District (as re-districted by the 39th General Assembly) for the year ending July 1, 1896.

This report contains tabulated statements by counties of the number of mines that are in operation in this district; the number of shipping mines; number of mines in local trade; the number of new and abandoned mines; estimated number of acres of coal worked out during the year, with the total number of persons at each mine; number of tons of lump and other grades of coal; the average value of lump coal, with the average value of other grades at the mine; the aggregate value of the total product; the number of fatal and non-fatal accidents; number of widows and orphans; number of miners employed in the mines summer and winter; number of boys under sixteen years of age employed in the mines; average number of running days; the number of kegs of powder used, and the number of tons of coal mined by machines.

The following summary is for the fiscal year 1896:

Total number of mines.....	86
Number of shipping mines.....	38
Number of local mines.....	48
Number of new mines.....	15
Number of abandoned mines.....	11
Estimated number of acres worked out.....	588.25
Number of miners employed in winter.....	7,700
Number of miners employed in summer.....	6,309
Number of others employed in winter.....	1,502
Number of others employed in summer.....	1,277
Number of boys under sixteen years of age.....	242
Average number of running days.....	179.8
Number of kegs of powder used.....	16,876
Number of men injured in non-fatal accidents.....	215
Number of men killed by injuries received.....	18
Number of widows.....	14
Number of orphans.....	58
Total tons of all grades produced.....	3,034,778
Total tons of lump coal.....	2,559,706
Total tons of other grades.....	475,063
Number of tons produced to each fatal accident.....	163,043
Number of tons produced to each non-fatal accident.....	14,115
Average value of lump coal at the mine.....	\$1.117
Number of mining machines in use.....	11
Tons of coal produced by machines.....	22,611
Number of men employed at machines.....	61

The following table shows the total production by counties, with the increase or decrease for the years ending July 1, 1895 and 1896:

Counties.	1895.	1896.	Increase, tons.	Decrease, tons.
Grundy.....	1,261,838	1,247,394		15,444
Kankakee.....	83,513	72,395		11,118
LaSalle.....	1,084,552	1,409,085	324,533	
Livingston.....	267,133	218,953		48,180
Will.....	38,675	86,951	48,276	
Totals.....	2,735,711	3,034,778		
Net increase.....			299,067	

New Mines.—LaSalle County: In the month of October, 1895, the C., W. & V. Coal Company opened a new shaft, located two miles east of Streator on the line of the Santa Fé R. R. The shaft is sunk to a depth of 116 feet to seam No. 7, which is 6 feet thick. The curbing is 6x8 timber and the cages are self-dumping. The tower and other buildings on the surface are covered with fire-proof material. In June of this year a new air and escape shaft was completed; the entire plant is of a first-class character with double hoisting engine geared, and promises to be one of the large producers of the country.

Baer & Roberts have opened a new shaft north of Streator. At present the entries are being driven to prove the seam.

Price & Jones have sunk a new shaft in the bottom land along Prairie creek, at North Streator. The shaft is sunk in to the same seam as they were operating in their old shaft and does away with a slope at their old shaft, which was in bad order.

Livingston County: John Marshall reopened his old shaft last year and operated with twelve men for seven months.

Grundy County: The Chicago, Wilmington & Vermilion Coal Company has sunk a new shaft near Braidwood. The shaft is 99 feet deep and is equipped in a substantial manner. The seam is 3 feet thick with a good fire-clay mining. The mine is at present troubled with a good deal of water, but it is expected that this will become less as the mine is developed.

Joseph D. Meager, of Morris, has sunk a new escapement shaft. This has made a great improvement in the ventilation of his mine.

The Whitebreast Fuel Company is now operating the Clarke City and Gardner mines. Extensive repairs are now going on with a view of working these mines to their full capacity.

John Casewell has leased the mine formerly operated by Harry Smoek at Pleasant Hill, two miles south of Streator.

Fires.—On October 11, 1895, the tower buildings and elevator screen house of the B shaft, Clarke City, was destroyed by fire. The fire originated in or about the bins in which the coal was stored; the loss to the company was \$7,000.

New Mines.—Livingston County: The Streator Clay Manufacturing Company has sunk a new shaft down to seam No. 2, a depth of 222 feet. The seam is 2 feet and 3 inches thick. This shaft was sunk as an escape shaft for the