THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KENT COALFIELD, 1896-1946

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of the University of Kent at Canterbury

by

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SYNOPSIS OF THESIS

for degree of Ph.D. entitled:

'THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KENT COALFIELD, 1896-1946'

Candidate

W. Johnson

One of the unique features of the Kent Coalfield is that it is entirely concealed by newer rocks. The existence of a coalfield under southern England, being a direct link between those of South Wales, Somerset and Bristol in the west and the Ruhr, Belgium and northern France in the east, was predicted by the geologist R. A. C. Godwin-Austen as early as 1856. It was, however, only the rapid increase in demand for Britain's coal in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that made it worth considering testing this hypothesis. The first boring was made in the years 1886-90, and although it discovered coal, this did not in itself prove the existence of a viable coalfield. This could be done only by incurring the heavy cost of boring systematically over a wide area. As the financial returns from such an undertaking were uncertain, it was not surprising that in the early years, around the turn of the century, a dominant role was played by speculators, who were able to induce numerous small investors to risk some of their savings in the expectation of high profits. As minerals in Britain were privately owned, the early pioneer companies not only had to meet the cost of the exploratory borings, but also, if they were not to see the benefit of their work accrue to others, lease beforehand the right to mine coal from local landowners in as much of the surrounding area as possible. This policy was pursued most vigorously by Arthur Burr, a Surrey land speculator, who raised capital by creating the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. and then floating a series of companies allied to it. Burr's enterprise would probably have been successful had it not been for the water problems encountered at depth in the coalfield. As a result the Concessions group found itself in control of most of the coalfield, but without the necessary capital to sink and adequately equip its own collieries. By 1910, however, the discovery of iron ore deposits in east Kent, coupled with the fact that Kent coal was excellent for coking purposes, began to attract the large steel firms of Bolckow, Vaughan Ltd. and Dorman, Long & Co. Ltd. into the area. The First World War intervened, however, to delay their plans, and to provide an extended lease of life to the Concessions group, which, by the summer of 1914, was facing financial collapse. By the time Dorman, Long & Co., in alliance with Weetman Pearson (Lord Cowdray), had acquired control over the greater part of the coalfield from the Concessions group, not only was the country's coal industry declining, but so was its steel industry, which suffered an even more severe rate of contraction during the inter-war years. As a result Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. was forced to concentrate just on coal production, and this in turn was hampered not only by the water problems, but also by labour shortages and the schemes introduced by the government in 1930 to restrict the country's coal output, in an attempt to maintain prices and revenue in the industry. Nevertheless production did show a substantial increase between 1927 and 1935, after which it declined as miners left the coalfield to return to their former districts, where employment opportunities were improving in the late thirties. Supporting roles were played in the inter-war years by Richard Tilden Smith, a share underwriter turned industrialist with long standing interests in the coalfield, who acquired one of the Concessions group's two collieries, and by the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. Ltd., which through subsidiary companies, took over the only colliery to be developed by a pioneer company outside the Concessions group.

The impossibility of Kent coal, because of its nature, ever gaining more than token access to the more lucrative household market, and then the failure of the local steel industry to materialise meant that the companies had to develop alternative outlets for their growing outputs. Although nearness to industrial markets in the south-east of England did confer certain advantages, they were poor consolation for the hoped for developments of either the early pioneers or the later industrialists. Instead of the expected profits, the companies mostly incurred losses, and only the company acquired by Powell Duffryn ever paid a dividend to its shareholders in the years before nationalisation.

From the point of view of the Kent miners, the shortage of labour in the coalfield, particularly in the years 1914-20 and 1927-35, was to an important extent responsible for their being amongst the highest paid in the industry. At the same time the more favourable employment opportunities prevailing in Kent compared with other mining districts enabled the Kent Mine Workers Association to develop into a well organised union, which on the whole was able to look after the interests of its members fairly successfully.

Throughout the period 1896 to 1946 the Kent Coalfield existed very much at the margin of the British coal industry. Its failure to develop substantially along the lines envisaged by either the early pioneers or by the later industrialists meant that its importance in national terms always remained small.

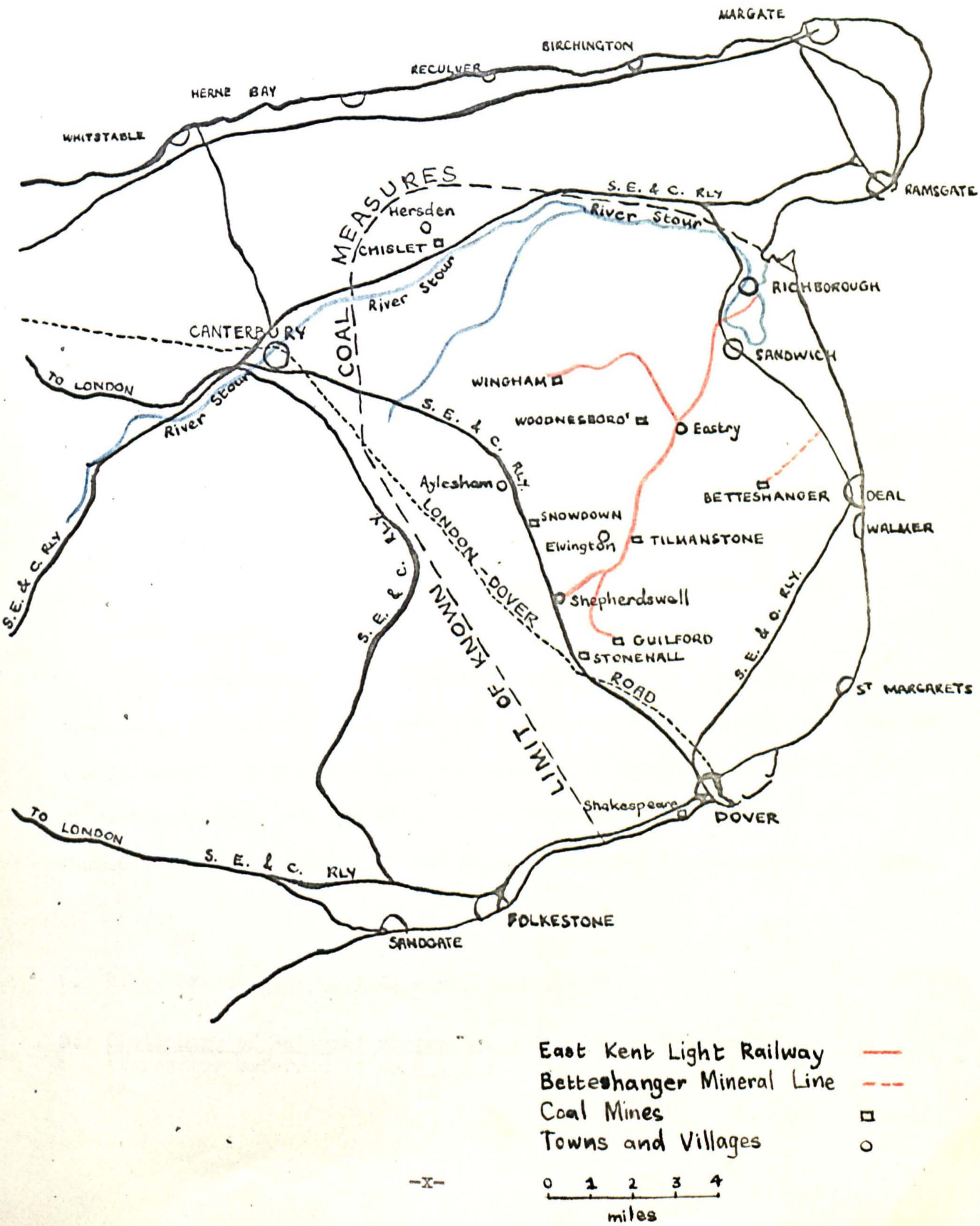
INTRODUCTION

A high proportion of the literature on the history of coal mining in Britain is concerned with developments at the national level, while studies of individual coalfields view events mostly from the standpoint of the district miners' union. As a consequence the colliery company, which before nationalisation was the business unit in the industry, either tends to be lost sight of altogether, or is glimpsed only occasionally from the standpoint of its employees. So although coal owners are mentioned from time to time, they tend to remain somewhat shadowy figures in mining history. This thesis attempts to redress the balance slightly by placing emphasis on the role of the entrepreneur in developing the Kent Coalfield. The unique nature of this development was such, however, that it would have been a distortion to have done otherwise.

One of the unique features of the Kent Coalfield is that it is entirely concealed by newer rocks. How its existence was predicted by geological theory, and that theory then tested, is the subject of both The Search for Coal in Southern England and Investment and Development, 1896-1920: The Years of the Speculator and Small Investor. The latter Chapter also explains why the coalfield initially attracted only speculators and small investors, and how profit expectations were completely upset by underground water problems and, to a lesser extent, by the nature of the coal produced. Why certain large industrialists were prepared, and able, to acquire control of the coalfield in the inter-war years is the subject of Investment and Development, 1921-46: The Industrialists' Takeover of the Coalfield. Although the coalfield then underwent a period of rapid development, particularly in the years 1927-35, continuing water problems, labour shortages, government policy and finally the Second World War all had detrimental effects on Production.

From the beginning, the coalfield's favourable location in relation to London and the south-eastern corner of England was partly offset by the coal not being suitable for household purposes. As a result alternative, and less remunerative, Markets had to be found for its output. The Nationalisation of Minerals and Mines is seen in the context of increasing government involvement in the affairs of the coal industry from the time of the First World War onwards. The Chapter also presents a final balance sheet in terms of returns to the investors in the various pioneer (mineral) and colliery companies, and in the latter case examines in detail the payment of compensation by the state. Having so far seen the miners only from the standpoint of their employers, a study is then made of the Kent Mine Workers' Association. The union's size, structure, finances and policy goals are, however, analysed within the context of the economic realities that faced the miners in the Kent Coalfield. Policies decided upon and directed from the national level by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain are introduced only to an extent considered sufficient to make local events intelligible, while, with one exception, lengthy narratives of strikes and lockouts have been avoided. The exception concerns the strike at Betteshanger Colliery in 1942, which, because it resulted in the failure of an attempt by the government to impose legal sanctions against strikers, has acquired recent topicality. As the standard accounts of this stoppage all contain certain errors or omissions, an opportunity has been taken to try to put the record straight. The thesis concludes with a study of Safety, Housing and Welfare, all of which both improved the living and working conditions of the miners, and at the same time imposed extra costs on the colliery companies.

Fig. 0.1: The Kent Coalfield



CHAPTER 1

THE SEARCH FOR COAL IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND

Coal in Kent, which lies more than 800 feet below the surface, is entirely concealed by more recently deposited rocks such as chalk, and does not therefore reveal itself through outcropping as do most other coalfields. This feature has made Kent unique amongst the coal producing areas of Britain. Although other concealed coalfields do exist, as in southern Yorkshire and northern Nottinghamshire, these are merely continuations under newer strata of the already exposed measures. The procedure adopted in sinking new pits in these areas in the early years of the present century was by following the coal from its surface outcrop near the Pennines eastwards under the newer rocks. Each new colliery was therefore only a short distance beyond the area where coal was already worked[1]. Kent however was over 150 miles from any other British coalfield, and but for the expert opinion of a number of eminent geologists, there would have been no obvious reason for supposing coal to be there at all. Its discovery was not therefore accidental, although chance played its part, but came as a result of borings made to test the validity of scientific theory.

Geologists, as early as the 1820's, had begun to speculate on the connection between the coal measures in south-western Britain and those on the Continent. There were then two schools of thought: one arguing for an east-west link, and the other for a connection from north to south. Thomas Weaver, an ex-pupil of the German geologist Abraham Werner[2], took

1. H. S. Jevons, The British Coal Trade (1915), p. 156.

2. Dictionary of National Biography, sub. Thomas Weaver (1773-1855). (Hereafter referred to as D.N.B.).

the former view. Writing in 1821, he thought that the coal tracts of Belgium corresponded with some of the coalfields in England[3]. Although he was not specific about which English coalfields he had in mind. The other view was put a year later by two of Britain's leading geologists, the Rev. W. D. Conybeare and William Phillips, who argued instead that any possible link must run from Somerset southwards through Devon, and then on to Brittany, central and southern France, and the coalfields of northern Spain[4]. While not believing that there was a connection between Belgium and England, they did however accept one between the coalfields of northern France, Belgium and Germany. The latter they thought consisted not of a single continuous coal field, but a series of insulated coal basins, which in many respects bore a remarkable resemblance to the coal districts (likewise consisting of many insulated basins) in the south-west of England. Conybeare repeated this view two years later in a paper written with the Rev. W. Buckland, the professor geology at Oxford University[5].

There was little further discussion of the matter however until 1846 when Sir Henry de la Bèche, the Director General of the Geological Survey, mentioned the possibility of coal measures lying beneath the newer secondary rocks of southern England[6]. Four years before this renewed speculation on the English side of the Channel was turning to the question of whether coal was to be found to the east of the Bristol and Somerset

3. T. Weaver, 'On Floetz Formations', Annals of Philosophy, new series, Vol. II, October 1821, p. 50. ('Floetz Formations' were Secondary and Tertiary rocks).

4. Rev. W. D. Conybeare and William Phillips, Outlines of the Geology of England and Wales, Part I, (1822), p. 466.

5. Rev. W. Buckland and Rev. W. D. Conybeare, 'Observations on the South-Western Coal District of England', Transactions of the Geological Society, 2nd series, Vol. 1, (1824), p. 220. From p. 210 it is clear that the South Wales Coalfield was included in the South-Western Coal District of England.

6. Sir Henry T. de la Bèche, 'On the formation of the Rocks of South Wales and South Western England', Memoirs of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, Vol. I, (1846), p. 214.

fields, a new coal deposit had been discovered on the French side to the west of the Nord coalfield, in the département of the Pas-de-Calais. Coal had been worked in the Nord, just across the frontier from the Belgian mines since the first half of the eighteenth century[7]. Attempts to trace these measures westwards from Douai, beneath the overlying newer rocks of the Pas-de-Calais, had proved unsuccessful until 1842, when a boring being made for water at Oignies accidentally encountered coal measures at a depth of 151 metres. The decisive discovery however came five years later at Escarpelle, when at a depth of 158 metres it was found that the coal measures did not continue in a south westerly direction, but turned sharply to the north[8]. The new field was discovered at a most opportune moment, as the demand for coal in France was beginning to rise steeply with the new mid-century developments in industry and transport[9]. Despite some problems of sinking through the water-logged chalk to the coal measures, which lay at depths varying from 300-700 feet beneath the surface[10], development got quickly under way during the 1850's, and by 1862 concessions had been granted to sink collieries as far west as Thérouanne, some 40 miles from Douai and less than 30 miles from Calais and the Channel coast[11]. By 1904 the new field was producing 15.8 million tons of coal per annum and giving employment to 70,250 work people[12].

7. Marcel Gillet, L'Age du Charbon et L'Essor du Bassin Houiller du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais (XIX^{e} - début du XX^{c}) in Louis Trénard (ed.), Charbon et Sciences Humaines (Paris 1966), p. 27.

8. Ibid., p. 32.

9. Ibid., p. 32.

10. Home Office Report on the Courrières Colliery Disaster, on 10th March 1906, P.P. 1906 (Cd. 3171) XIX, p. 805.

11. Gillet, op. cit., p. 24.

12. Home Office Report on the Courrières Colliery Disaster, op. cit., p. 806.

The Pas-de-Calais discovery added weight to the argument in favour of an east-west link. In 1852, for example, a leading French mining engineer, writing before the full western extent of the new coalfield was known, remarked that there was a great depression in the land area of Western Belgium and northern France, which continued underground across the Channel towards London, and that if further coal basins existed they might be found near to the southern border of this depression at Lille, from where they would continue westwards to join the coal measures that outcropped in England and Wales[13]. Three years later Professor R. A. C. Godwin-Austen, in a paper read to the Geological Society, argued even more persuasively for the possible existence of coal beneath the newer rocks of south-eastern England[14]. Taking the known geological map of Europe as his starting point, he showed that the coal measures of a large part of England, France and Belgium were once continuous, and that the existing coalfields were merely fragments, which had been preserved in hollows, of this great original deposit. He believed that these measures had been broken up by a main line of disturbance, which he called the "Axis of Artois", running in a general east west direction. The great upfold of the Ardennes, by which the Belgian coalfield to the north had been tilted upwards, and the Mendips, to the south of the Bristol and Somerset coalfield, were seen to be part of this axis, the rest of which he was convinced continued as an underground

13. M. Meugy, 'Essai de Géologie practique sur la Flandre Francais, 1852', p. 76, quoted in Royal Commission on Coal Trade 1871, P.P. 1871, (C. 435) XVIII, p. 148.

14. R. A. C. Godwin-Austen, 'On the Possible Extension of the Coal Measures beneath the South-Eastern Part of England', Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society, Vol. xii, 1856, pp. 38-73. Horace B. Woodward ('Life of R. A. C. Godwin-Austen' extracted from the Geological Magazine, January 1885, p. 5) described this paper as "the most important and suggestive philosophical essay which the Society has received." Another writer maintained that by this essay "it was manifest that geology was now entitled to take its place in the family of sciences." D.N.B., sub. Godwin-Austen (1808-1884).

ridge beneath southern England, where it was hidden by the mass of overlying secondary rocks. Godwin-Austen did not believe that the transverse folds cutting across the axis at Calais and to the east of the Bristol-Somerset field would have permanently affected the main line of disturbance, which would have folded the coal measures to the north (and possibly to the south) into basins, thereby protecting them from subsequent surface erosion. He reasoned therefore that the coal measures which thinned out near Thérouanne, probably set in again at or near Calais, where carboniferous rocks had been found in another boring, and then continued beneath the newer rocks of southern England in line with the Thames and Kennett valleys, before reappearing again as the Bristol coalfield.

Godwin-Austen however was not without his critics, the most formidable of whom was Sir Roderick Murchison, de la Bèche's successor as Director-General of the Geological Survey[15]. Murchison maintained that there were no valuable coalfields in south-eastern England, as the coal measures would have been eroded right down to their base before the newer rocks were deposited. In this case only small economically worthless deposits of coal might remain[16]. He cited in support of his assertion the gradual deterioration of the coal beds of Belgium and northern France as they approached the Channel, and argued that better conditions could not be looked for in southern England.

The possible presence of hidden coal resources became a matter of more practical concern when writers such as Stanley Jevons began to forecast that Britain's economic progress would be eventually curtailed for lack of coal[17]. These warnings were taken so seriously by the government that in

15. D.N.B., sub. Sir Roderick Impey Murchison (1792-1871).

16. Sir Roderick I. Murchison, 'On the parts of England and Wales in which Coal may and may not be looked for beyond the known Coal-fields', British Association, Nottingham Meeting 1866, Report. pp. 57-63.

17. W. S. Jevons, The Coal Question (1865). The whole book is concerned with this theme, but see particularly Chapter XI, 'Of our Consumption of Coal', pp. 204-19.

1866 it appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the exact state of the industry, including the extent of the country's coal reserves[18]. A number of leading geologists gave evidence to it, and with the exception of Sir Roderick Murchison the commissioners accepted the Godwin-Austen theory that concealed coal measures probably existed at workable depths in southern England[19]. Professor Joseph Prestwich, who summarised for his fellow commissioners the evidence collected by a sub-committee, came to the conclusion that coalfields of the same kind and value as those of both Somerset and northern France and Belgium did probably exist beneath the newer rocks of southern England[20]. He pointed out that both the red sandstone found under London, and the slatey strata discovered beneath Harwich, belonged to the rocks of the Mendips and the Ardennes. He repeated Godwin-Austen's contention that the division of the coal measures into separate basins appeared to be their normal condition along the main line of disturbance. The length of those portions of the axis between western Pembrokeshire and Frome in Somerset on the one hand, and between Calais and Dortmund in western Germany on the other, was 472 miles, and in this distance eight separate and distinct coalfields were to be found. The combined length of these eight coalfields was about 350 miles, nearly three quarters of the total distance, leaving only about 122 miles occupied by the intervening transverse tracts of older rocks. Prestwich considered therefore that a structure which was constant so far as the axis of disturbance could be traced above ground was in all probability continued underground in connection with the same line of disturbance, and he saw no reason why the coal strata should not occupy as great a proportionate length in the underground and unknown area of southern England, as in the

18. Royal Commission on Coal Trade, 1871, P.P. 1871 (C. 435) XVIII, p. 5.

19. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 12 and p. 20.

20. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 176-95.

above ground and explored area. The direction of the great underground coal trough was he thought, likely to be on a line passing through northern Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, then across Hertfordshire, southern Essex, the north-eastern extremity of Kent and on towards Calais. Alternatively, if the axis took a more southerly course, then coal basins should be looked for along a line passing from Radstock, through the vale of Pewsey, and along the north downs to Folkestone[21]. Writing a few years later on the question of a Channel Tunnel, Prestwich inferred that the crest of this underground ridge would in all probability be found somewhere near Folkestone[22], and advocated that any tunnel to France should be constructed through it[23].

The problem therefore became one of obtaining more information on which to base the precise location of these coal measures, for although they were thought to extend for the greater part of 150 miles, they were not expected to be more than two to eight miles wide (as in France and Belgium)[24]. The coal basins and the buried "Axis of Artois", on which their preservation was dependent could only be found if more were known about the rocks underlying southern England. With this end in view, and to mark its meeting at Brighton in 1872, the British Association formed a Sub-Wealden Exploration Committee to try and discover the nature of the underground rocks of the Weald by means of an experimental boring[25]. Its activities, which cost £6,122, were financed mainly by private subscription, but they included a grant of £900 from the Treasury[26]. The site chosen

21. Ibid., p. 162.

22. Joseph Prestwich 'On the Geological Conditions affecting the Construction of a Tunnel between England and France', Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Vol. XXXVII. 1873-74 Pt. I, p. 122.

23. Ibid., p. 135.

24. Report of J. Prestwich, Royal Commission on Coal Trade, 1871, P.P. 1871 (C. 435) XVIII, p. 195.

25. Henry Willett, The Record of the Sub-Wealden Exploration (Brighton 1878), pp. 5-9.

26. Ibid., 15th and Final Report, pp. 2-8.

for the boring was at Netherfield, about three miles south of Battle, in Sussex. It was decided to go down as far as 2,000 feet, unless coal measures, or rocks older than these, were struck first[27]. The work was carried on under considerable difficulty until in 1875 it had to be abandoned at 1,905 feet when the boring rods became jammed[28]. By this time only newer rocks had been encountered. Whether coal existed below these was therefore still conjectural. At the end of the venture Godwin-Austen made suggestions for further borings at Hythe and north of the North Downs, while Prestwich proposed Folkestone and the Thames Valley[29]. Both hoped that in these areas the covering of newer rocks would be much thinner than at Netherfield. But the British Association was not prepared to explore further.

Fresh evidence was discovered, however, in 1877, when a boring for water at Meux's Brewery in Tottenham Court Road showed that rocks of an earlier age than the coal measures occurred near the centre of London at a depth of less than 1,100 feet. Godwin-Austen inferred from this that London was just on the edge of a great coalfield, which probably lay to the north[30]. In the same year a similar boring made by the Metropolitan Board of Works at Crossness, on the south bank of the Thames below Blackwall, also reached what appeared to be older rocks at a depth of

27. _Ibid._, p. 9.

28. _Ibid._, p. 3.

29. _Ibid._, p. 7.

30. Robert A. C. Godwin-Austen, 'On the Geological Significance of the Boring at Messrs. Meux's Brewery London', _Geological Magazine_, 1877, Vol. IV, p. 475. (Read before the British Association at Plymouth. Section C).

1,000 feet[31]. As there was some uncertainty about the age of these strata, a suggestion to deepen the boring was made by one of London's leading daily newspapers[32]. In reply to this however, Major Fred. Beaumont, M.P., chairman of the Diamond Rock Boring Company that had completed most of the work at Netherfield[33], and now Honorary Secretary of the recently formed Kentish Exploration Committee, recommended instead a new boring either at Dover or in the Stour Valley near Canterbury[34]. Although Beaumont appealed to the landowners of northern Kent for the necessary funds, the response was insufficient and the scheme was abandoned[35].

In this same year M. Dewalque of Belgium thought that from the evidence already collected it would appear that the older rocks under London dipped southwards, and that coal formations may therefore have existed at workable depths to the south of the metropolis[36]. The following year, Godwin-Austen, drawing upon further evidence from a boring at Ware in Hertfordshire, twenty miles to the north of that at Tottenham Court Road, confirmed Dewalque's views[37]. The Ware boring, in which the older rocks existed at a depth of only 800 feet[38], indicated that these rose upwards

31. J. Prestwich, 'On the Section of Messrs. Meux & Co.'s Artesian Well in the Tottenham Court Road, with Notices of the Well at Crossness and of another at Shoreham, Kent; and on the probable Range of the Lower Greensand and Palaeozoic Rocks under London', Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society, Vol. XXXIV, 1878, pp. 902-13.

32. The Standard, early in 1878, cited in A. E. Ritchie, The Kent Coalfield: its Evolution and Development (1919), pp. 19-22.

33. Willet, op. cit., 12th Quarterly Report, p. 7.

34. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 22.

35. Ibid., pp. 22-24.

36. Ann.Soc.Géol.Belg., t.v. pp. lxv-lxvii (1878), cited in W. Whitaker, The Geology of London Vol. I: Memoirs of the Geological Survey (1889), p. 20.

37. R. A. C. Godwin-Austen, 'On some further Evidence as to the Range of the Palaeozoic Rocks beneath the South-East of England', Report of Meeting of the British Association, 1879, pp. 227-29.

38. Robert Etheridge, The Times, 19 May 1879, reprinted in The Geological Magazine, Vol. vi, June 1879, pp. 286-88.

to the north of London and were therefore not so likely to have protected the coal measures from erosion[39]. From these and other borings for water in the London area, it was becoming clear that a ridge of older rocks existed at depths varying from 800 feet at Ware to 1,289 feet at Richmond[40], and that this ridge was inclined at a high angle as in the case of similar rocks underlying the coalfields of Somerset and northern France and Belgium. So it was equally possible that coal troughs would have been preserved in the folds of these older rocks in the London area[41], especially as Godwin-Austen and others had predicted that a line of disturbance creating such east-west folds ran all the way from the Ardennes in Belgium to the Mendips in Somerset. (Godwin-Austen's famous "Axis of Artois"). The main difference with these other areas however, was that in southern England it was now thought that coal would most likely have been preserved not in the folds to the north of the ridge, but to the south of it[42]. It was becoming clear therefore that somewhere to the south of London, possibly in the line of the North Downs, was the desirable area for a second experiment[43]. Before explaining how such a boring came to take place in 1886 however, it is first necessary to examine the fortunes of the Channel Tunnel project.

39. W. Whitaker, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

40. Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, Final Report, 1905, P.P. 1905 (Cd. 2362) XVI, p. 271.

41. John W. Judd, 'The Possibility of Finding Workable Coal-Seams under the London Area', Nature (Vol. XXV), 2nd February 1882, pp. 311-13, and letter to the editor 16th February 1882, p. 361.

42. William Topley, The Geology of the Weald (Parts of the Counties of Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hants.): Memoirs of the Geological Survey (1875), p. 349; Edward Hull, The Coal-fields of Great Britain, (4th ed. 1881) p. 353.

43. Edward Hull, op. cit., pp. 355-56; Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, Final Report, 1905, P.P. 1905 (Cd. 2362) XVI, p. 271.

As has already been mentioned Channel Tunnel schemes were being seriously discussed in the 1870's and the advice of leading geologists, such as Prestwich, had been sought by a Channel Tunnel Company which had been formed in 1872[44]. This company, in which the London, Chatham and Dover Railway was strongly represented, proposed to construct, in conjunction with a French counterpart, a tunnel beneath the Straits of Dover linking France and England[45]. The site they chose for trial headings was to the north of Dover, at St. Margaret's Bay[46]. Two years later the South Eastern Railway, the great rival of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway, was permitted by Act of Parliament to carry out similar work to the south of Dover, next to their railway line at Shakespeare Cliff[47]. Little was actually done by the Channel Tunnel Company, but the South Eastern Railway started in 1880 to drive a pilot heading out under the Channel at an acute angle to the cliffs. On 1st April 1882 however, the government ordered the work to be stopped, as there was growing concern in military circles about the possibility of Continental armies using the tunnel for the invasion of Britain[48]. In this same year the South Eastern Railway sold the pilot heading and equipment to the Submarine Continental Railway Company which had been formed in the previous year by the South Eastern Railway's chairman, Sir Edward Watkin[49]. In 1886 the new company took over

44. P.R.O. B.T.31/1677/5952.

45. Correspondence with Reference to the Proposed Construction of a Channel Tunnel, P.P. 1882 (C. 3358) LIII, pp. 10-13.

46. Ibid., p. 13.

47. Ibid., p. 13.

48. Ibid., pp. 13-15; Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd ser., Vol. 271, col. 408, (26th June 1882).

49. Sir Edward Watkin, Channel Tunnel. Report of a meeting of the members of the Submarine Continental Railway Company (1882), p. 6 and p. 27.

the rival Channel Tunnel Company, whose name it then adopted[50].

At this juncture Professor William Boyd Dawkins, who had been associated with both the Netherfield boring and the proposed heading at St. Margaret's Bay, recommended to Sir Edward Watkin, who was now also chairman of the Channel Tunnel Company, that a boring to test for coal should be made in the neighbourhood of Dover. He thought that the Channel Tunnel works, where the necessary equipment was lying idle, offered the best site[51] particularly as there seemed no likelihood of the government reversing its decision on the scheme in the near future[52]. The same suggestion had been made to Watkin four years earlier by Francis Brady, the chief engineer to both the South Eastern Railway and the Channel Tunnel Company, but it had not been acted upon[53]. This time however the boring was begun, and under Brady's direction[54]. Altogether it lasted for six years, but early in 1890 it entered coal measures at a depth of 1,157 feet, and a seam of coal was met with 25 feet below[55]. Before the boring stopped in December 1892, at a depth of 2,325 feet, seven seams of two feet and over, aggregating 18 feet of coal had been proved[56]. The most

50. Channel Tunnel Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 16168; H. Slater and C. Barnett with the collaboration of R. H. Géneau, The Channel Tunnel (1957), pp. 77-8.

51. Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, 'The Search for Coal in the South of England', Royal Institution Notices of Proceedings, Vol. 13, 1890-92, p. 180.

52. H. Slater and C. Barnett, op. cit., pp. 74-5.

53. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

54. Boyd Dawkins, op. cit., (1890-92) p. 181; Brady claimed however that he was the instigator of the boring in 1886, see F. Brady, G. P.Simpson and Nath. R. Griffith, 'The Kent Coal-Field' Transactions of the Federated Institution of Mining Engineers, Vol. II, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1895-96), pp. 540-41. As it is impossible to resolve the disagreement between Boyd Dawkins and Brady it seems reasonable to accept the explanation given by Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

55. Boyd Dawkins, op. cit., (1890-92) p. 182.

56. W. Boyd Dawkins, 'On the South-Eastern Coalfield at Dover', Transactions of the Manchester Geological Society, Vol. 22 (Manchester 1895), p. 493; Brady, Simpson and Griffith, op. cit., p. 541.

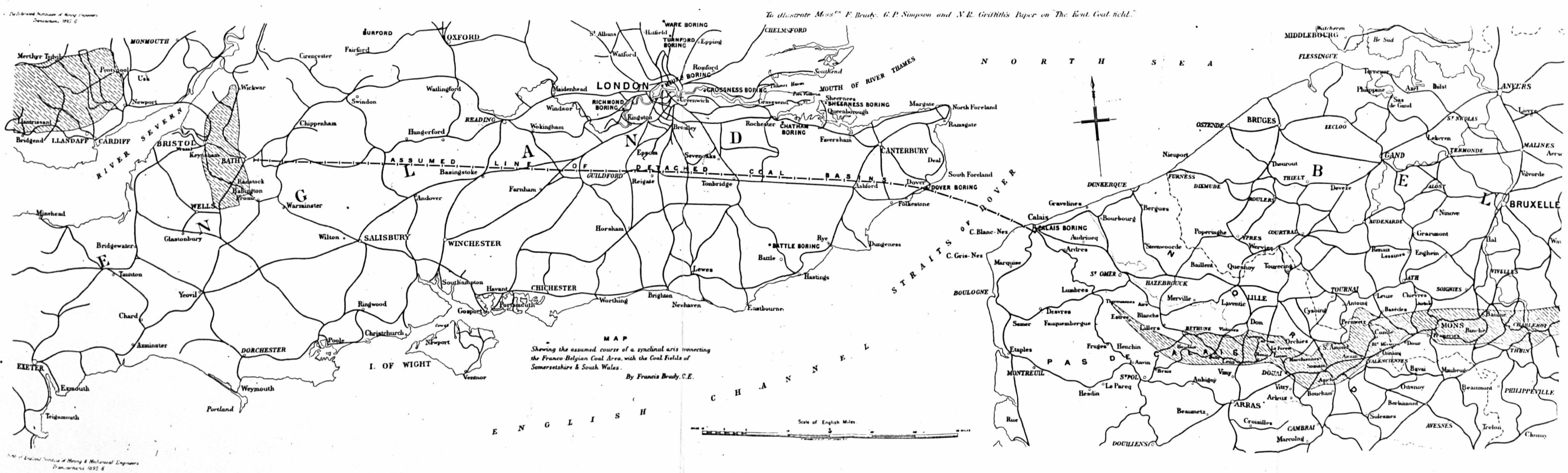
substantial of these was one of four feet in thickness at a depth of 2,221 feet[57].

According to Boyd Dawkins the further prosecution of the work was merely a question of sinking deeper, of testing the commercial value of the seams discovered and of practical mining[58]. Despite these pronouncements no companies were formed to try and work Kent coal until 1896.

57. Report of Professor Edward Hull, Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. B.T. 31/17393/83668, item 11.

58. Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, Final Report, 1905 P.P. 1905 (Cd. 2362) XVI, p. 272.

Fig. 1.1: Francis Brady's Map of 1895-96 Showing the Assumed Course of Synclinal Axis Connecting the Franco-Belgian Coal Area with the Coalfields of Somerset and South Wales



CHAPTER 2

INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT 1896-1920: THE YEARS OF THE SPECULATOR AND SMALL INVESTOR

The discovery at Shakespeare Cliff did not prove the existence of a workable coalfield. The seams found could easily have been part of just an isolated and economically worthless deposit of coal, such as Sir Roderick Murchison had asserted could exist beneath the newer rocks of southern England. To know whether a coalfield did in fact exist, it would have been necessary to carry out a systematic series of borings in other parts of Kent. Such borings however involved expense - the one at Dover had cost £10,000[1] - and the outcome was far from certain. Only investors prepared to take very great risks therefore, were willing to finance schemes to search further.

Even in established coalfields numerous geological complications often made investment somewhat hazardous, particularly once one stepped outside known areas. In 1888 for example, when Emerson Bainbridge acquired a lease over the Bolsover and Cresswell Coalfield in Derbyshire, which at the time was unproven, many colliery owners were inclined to believe that the enterprise would fail - and this was in an area in close proximity to others already being worked[2]. For Kent there were no precedents upon which potential investors could base their judgments. The Pas-de-Calais coalfield had been just a prolongation of the known and worked measures of the Départment du Nord, and in this respect resembled the development that was to take place in the concealed parts of the Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire

1. Annual Meeting of the South Eastern Railway Company, 23rd July, 1891, press report cited in A. E. Ritchie, <u>The Kent Coalfield: its Evolution and Development</u> (1919), p. 37.

2. J. E. Williams, <u>The Derbyshire Miners,</u> (1962), p. 176. Emerson Bainbridge, M.P., was one of the persons consulted by Brady after he had completed the boring at Shakespeare (Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 42).

coalfields in the early years of the present century. To try and develop a new coalfield in southern England, if one in fact existed, would therefore be an extremely risky business, but if it proved successful the returns were likely to be very great as the area was near to the expanding markets of London and the Continent, and would have transport cost advantages over existing British coalfields.

Sir Edward Watkin who had done so much to find the first coal deposit, was cautious about going further. At the annual meeting of the South Eastern Railway Company in 1891, he mentioned the prospects of a commercial revolution in the south of England, in which the company would greatly benefit, but he was not prepared to subscribe more than £1,000 towards the estimated £30,000 needed to sink a permanent shaft at Shakespeare, which it was hoped would finally settle the question of whether a coalfield existed in southern England[3]. Consequently it was not until 1896 that anyone came forward with a scheme to try and work the coal that had been discovered there. The promoters of this venture were not colliery proprietors from other areas - although one South Wales coalowner did play a small part[4] - but a group of businessmen whose connections were with the Stock Exchange and land conveyancing in southern England. Although others were involved, four men were particularly prominent in the early promotion schemes. These were: Arthur Burr, a land speculator of Lingfield in Surrey, who had also been in business as a lead merchant and as a colliery proprietor in North Wales[5]; Henry Thomas Potter, a London

3. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 37.

4. Sir Henry Beyer Robertson, a Merioneth coalowner, was a director of the Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd. (Ritchie, op. cit., p. 40); The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd. P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 6.

5. The Dover Express, 7 February 1913, p. 3; Obituary in The Times, 2 September 1919. Burr, who was aged 70 when he died, had first heard of Kent coal in 1895 when engaged in coal matters in North Wales. He had put down a boring on his own property in Surrey but this had not been successful.

stockbroker who lived at Dunstable[6]; Harcourt Willoughby Marley, a surveyor of East Molesley in Surrey[7]; and William James Cousins, who was described first as a chemist, but later as a London land agent[8].

The first company to be formed, the Kent Coalfields Syndicate in 1896[9], acquired the Shakespeare site from the Channel Tunnel Company and the South Eastern Railway[10], while a subsidiary firm, the Colliery and General Contract Company, was to be responsible for the actual sinking of a colliery there[11]. The following year the Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate was created to put down a boring at Penshurst on the estate of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley[12], the Kent Coal Exploration Company to search for coal generally,[13] and the Kent Coal Finance and Development Company to try and acquire the Broome Park Estate between Dover and Canterbury[14]. (See Fig. 2.1 and Appendix A).

6. The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 5; Mid Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7316/51795, item 5.

7. The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 5.

8. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 12; The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 5.

9. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 3.

10. Ibid., item 10; Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422, item 6.

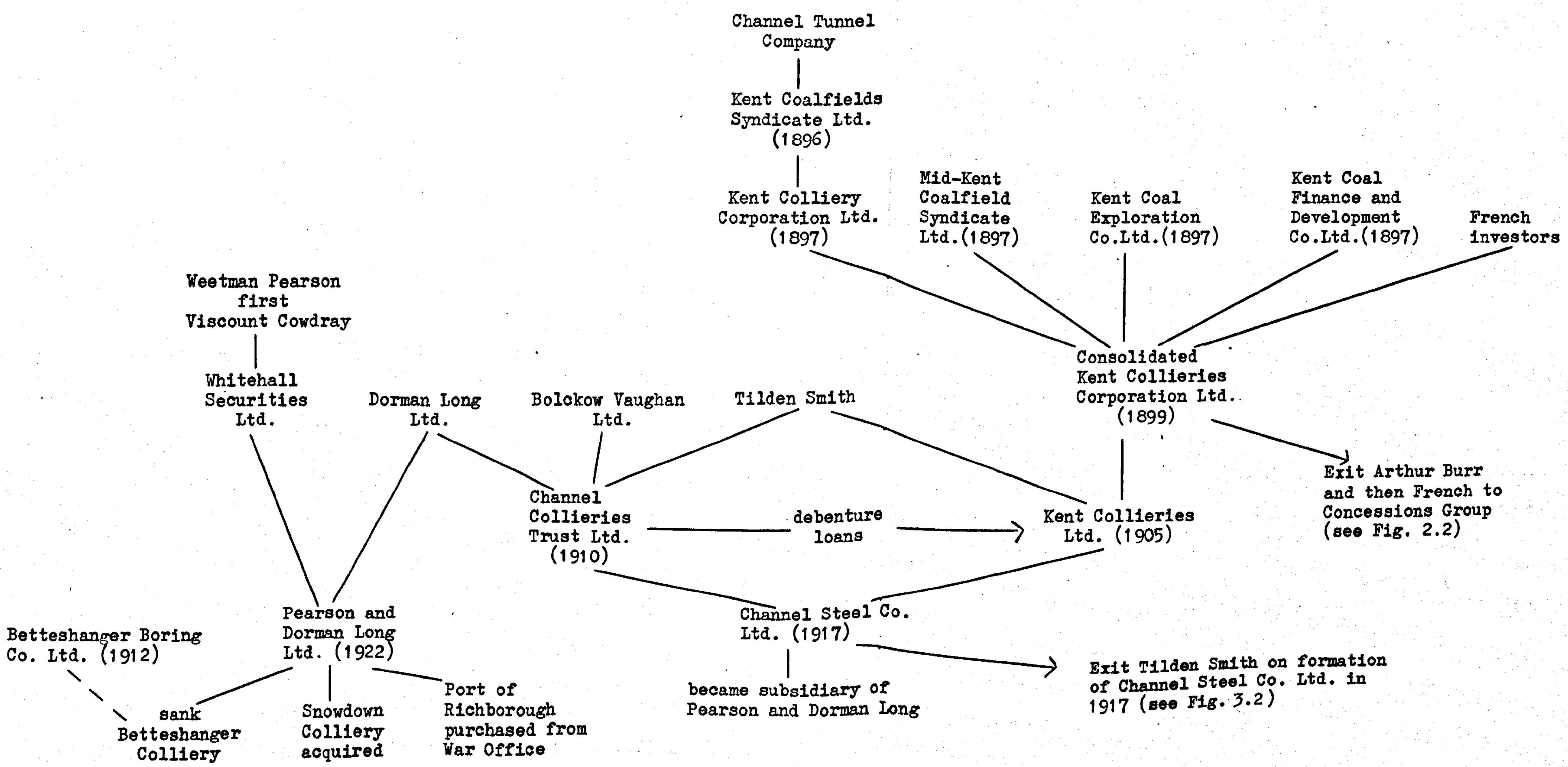
11. Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422, item 7; The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 2.

12. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 45; Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7316/51795, item 3.

13. The Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7376/52299, item 3.

14. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 46; The Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7437/52840, item 3. The West Kent Collieries Syndicate Ltd., incorporated in July 1897, is not included as it only had a called up capital of £341 and was inactive until its liquidation in 1901 (P.R.O. BT 31/7479/53228).

Fig. 2.1 Companies Owning the Dover (Shakespeare) Colliery and Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.



NOTE: For details of the exact relationship between companies see text.

At its inception the Kent Coalfields Syndicate, with a registered capital of £200,000, had entered into an agreement with Henry Thomas Potter and George James van Dadelszen, a London metal broker, to acquire 575 acres of land in return for £130,000 in fully paid shares of the company[15]. The property transferred was at Hougham Court and Wickham Bushes, which were one and five miles respectively to the north-west of the Shakespeare boring[16]. As no coal was known to exist beneath these areas it is not possible to equate the price paid with the proven value of this land[17]. At the Shakespeare site itself, the Colliery and General Contract Company, of which Cousins was managing director[18], agreed to equip two shafts complete with winding engines capable of raising 2,500 tons of coal per day from a depth of 1,800 feet, for £55,000 - three fifths of which was to be paid in shares of the Syndicate and two fifths in cash providing the work was completed within eighteen months[19]. The Contract Company had a capital of only £3,047[20], and payment to it was to be made by the Syndicate in monthly instalments at the rate of 85 per cent of the cost of the work done to date[21]. What with the shares issued to Potter and van Dadelszen for the 575 acres of land, and those issued to the Contract Company, the Syndicate at first raised very little of its capital in cash from the public, only

15. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate, P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 5.

16. In an agreement made 18th October 1897 between the Kent Coalfields Syndicate and the Kent Collieries Corporation, by which the whole of the Syndicate's assets were transferred to the Corporation, these were the only freehold lands listed as having been acquired by the Syndicate in 1896. (Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422, item 6).

17. It can only be assumed that Potter and van Dadelszen had purchased this land for purely speculative purposes, in the knowledge that they stood a good chance of subsequently selling it at an inflated price to one of the development companies in which they had an interest.

18. The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 5.

19. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 7.

20. The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634, item 7.

21. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 7.

£17,612 out of a total of £164,792[22]. But it was soon to do better.

The sinking of the Dover Colliery at Shakespeare began, somewhat surprisingly with inadequate equipment, and even after one inrush of underground water, no proper pumps were provided[23]. A similar occurrence in March 1897 resulted in the death of eight of the sinkers[24]. Meanwhile the Syndicate's £1 shares rose in value to a level of £4 to £5 each[25]. This was achieved by stockbrokers running speculative accounts[26], by bogus sales of shares, in which Burr, Potter and Marley were implicated[27], and by the Kent Coal Exploration Company acquiring substantial holdings in the Syndicate[28], which it was able to do as it had by September 1897 raised £109,834 of its share capital from the public in the form of cash[29]. Between May 1896 and June 1897 there was more than a 250 per cent turnover in ownership of the Syndicate's shares[30]. One observer estimated that in seven months dealings came to over £2 million, and yielded tremendous returns to brokers[31]. In October 1897 it was decided to reconstruct the Syndicate by selling its assets to a newly formed Kent Collieries Corporation

22. Ibid., item 12.

23. The Colliery Guardian, 30 October 1896, p. 834; Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for 1897, North and East Lancashire and Ireland District (No. 6), P.P. 1898 (C. 8819) XVII, p. 514.

24. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for 1897, op. cit., pp. 513-23.

25. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 45. In June 1897 the chairman of the company announced that the £7,000 of unissued preference shares could still be sold for about £40,000. (The Colliery Guardian, 11 June 1897, p. 1095).

26. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 40.

27. The Colliery Guardian, 1 March 1901, p. 474.

28. Ibid., p. 474.

29. The Kent Coal Exploration Company Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7376/52299, item 7.

30. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 12.

31. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

for £1,275,000-£775,000 of which was to be in cash and £500,000 in fully paid shares of the Corporation[32]. Holders of shares in the Syndicate however applied for £557,780 shares in the new company in lieu of cash[33].

For the next two years the four main companies - the Kent Collieries Corporation, the Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate, the Kent Coal Exploration Company, and the Kent Coal Finance and Development Company - continued their activities with little success. The Kent Collieries Corporation made very slow progress at the Shakespeare site, where because of further water problems, one of the two shafts being sunk had to be abandoned and a third started in its place[34]. By November 1898 a total of 54,170 gallons of water per hour were entering these workings mainly from underground sources[35]. In July of the following year, when one of two shafts had reached a depth of 600 feet, a twelve foot thick seam of iron ore was encountered, and there was optimistic talk of either working it locally or shipping it to Cleveland[36]. Meanwhile seven borings were made in Kent to look for further coal deposits[37]. (For details of Borings in Kent see Appendix B). All but one of these were made, on the advice of expert opinion, well to the west of Dover, in which direction it was thought that the coalfield if it existed would continue in a direct line towards

32. The Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422, item 6.

33. Ibid., item 7.

34. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 51.

35. The Colliery Guardian, 4 November 1898, p. 843.

36. The Colliery Guardian, 14 July 1899, p. 77 and 11 August 1899, p. 254.

37. Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, Final Report, 1905, P.P. 1905 (Cd. 2362) XVI, pp. 273-74.

Somerset and Bristol[38]. No coal was found, and the further westward they went, the thicker became the Purbeck-Wealden rocks that lay beneath the Chalk and Gault. Having been only 94 feet at Dover, they were 195 feet at Ottinge (near Folkestone), 612 feet at Hothfield (near Ashford), 808 feet Old Soar (near Tonbridge), and 1,114 feet at Penshurst (also near Tonbridge)[39]. The only boring made by the Kent Collieries Corporation however, at Brabourne near Ashford, proved the south-western limit of the coalfield, as it located a ridge of rocks at a depth of 1,921 feet that were older than the coal measures and were similar to those found beneath London. This indicated that Godwin-Austen's "Axis of Artois" ran north-westwards from the Folkestone area, and that the coal measures found at Dover were likely to continue along the north-western edge of this ridge, as in France and Belgium. Apart from the Penshurst boring of the Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate, the other five were made by the Kent Coal Exploration Company, of which only one - at Ropersole - was not made due west of Dover. In the Ropersole boring seven miles to the north-west of the Shakespeare

38. W. Boyd Dawkins, 'The Search for Coal in the South of England', Royal Institution Notices of Proceedings, Vol. 13, 1890-92, p. 182. (W. Boyd Dawkins was geological adviser to the Kent Coal Exploration Co., The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1899, pp. 25-26); F. Brady, G. P. Simpson and Nath. R. Griffith, 'The Kent Coalfield', Transactions of the Federated Institution of Mining Engineers, Vol. 11, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1895-96), p. 542 (Simpson was managing director of the Kent Coalfields Syndicate and of the Kent Collieries Corporation, and a director of the Kent Coal Exploration Company; Griffith was consulting engineer to the latter company); Robert Etheridge, 'On the Relation between the Dover and Franco-Belgian Coal Basins', British Association, Dover Meeting, 1899, Report, p. 731; The Colliery Guardian, 25 June 1897, p. 1174, (Etheridge advised the Kent Coalfields Syndicate to make the borings at Brabourne and Pluckley). One eminent authority on the country's coalfields maintained that there were "strong grounds for believing that a second and parallel trough exists below the wealden beds a few miles further south of the Dover coal trough". (Edward Hull, The Coal-Fields of Great Britain, (5th edn. revised, 1905), pp. 286-88).

39. Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, op. cit., pp. 273-75 and 277. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

site, twelve thin seams were encountered between 1,650 and 2,065 feet. This was further proof that the measures found at Dover continued in a north-westerly direction. But as the thickest seam, which was also the deepest, was only one foot three inches the results were not too encouraging.

By the summer of 1899 the four Kent companies had little to show for their efforts and were all in financial difficulty. Plans were made therefore for a merger of interests[40], and in July 1899, a new company, the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation, was formed to take over their assets[41]. The shareholders of the four companies were however greatly dissatisfied with the way affairs had been conducted. They dismissed the board of directors of the Kent Coal Finance and Development Company for having acquired large shareholdings in the Kent Collieries Corporation, which had subsequently greatly depreciated in value[42]; and the shareholders of the Kent Coal Exploration Company later sued its directors, who included Cousins, together with Burr, Potter and Marley for negligence and fraud[43]. Although these charges were subsequently withdrawn, proceedings of this kind were not likely to have inspired confidence in Kent coal undertakings. By October 1899 the Kent Collieries Corporation had, on paper, a paid up capital of £1,118,818 of which £676,313 was supposedly subscribed in cash[44], but in addition there were £85,000 of outstanding debentures, and £57,000 of other liabilities[45].

40. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 53; The Colliery Guardian, 11 August 1899, p. 263 and 29 September 1899, p. 599.

41. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 6.

42. The Colliery Guardian, 23 December 1898, p. 1164, and 6 October 1899, p. 647.

43. Ibid., 1 March 1901, p. 474.

44. The Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 34/1386/54422, Liquidator's accounts 11 October 1899 to 10 October 1900.

45. Ibid., Liquidator's accounts 10 April 1903 to 10 October 1903.

Only in the previous month the chairman had informed shareholders that resources were inadequate to continue sinking the colliery at Shakespeare[46].

The assets that the new Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation was to acquire were optimistically valued as follows[47]:

	£
Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd.	860,785
Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd.	4,632
Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd.	125,127
Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd.	74,851
	£1,065,395

A truer picture was given however in the directors' report and balance sheet of the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation made up to 31st October 1901, which showed that when the new company began business, the four amalgamating companies had, from the £510,000 cash received from the public, spent £90,000 on works and management, £40,000 on flotation expenses and had disbursed £95,000 to Burr, Potter, Marley and the Colliery and General Contract Company, none of which had been recovered[48]. In addition unpaid calls on their shares came to £297,000, of which two thirds was irrecoverable, debts amounted to over £200,000, and nearly half of the subscribed capital of the old companies had been spent in buying shares, mainly those of the Kent Coalfields Syndicate, and its successor the Kent Collieries Corporation. The debts that the new company inherited prevented it from ever becoming a financially sound organisation.

The capital for the four amalgamating companies had come mainly from middle class investors living in London and the home counties, few of whom

46. The Colliery Guardian, 29 September 1899, p. 599.

47. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 53; The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 8.

48. The Colliery Guardian, 13 December 1901, p. 1279.

had very large individual holdings. Although the Kent Collieries Corporation had issued 1,285,072 shares, each of £1, there were over 1,700 shareholders[49], and the greater part of these shares had been allotted as fully paid to investors in the Kent Coalfields Syndicate. In the Syndicate itself there had been, after April 1896, several hundred shareholders, few of whom had holdings of £1,000 or more[50], although these shares had of course been acquired at a premium. With the Kent Coal Exploration Company, over 1,200 investors held the £170,000 of capital, again with few holdings greater than £1,000[51], while the Kent Coal Finance and Development Company had a paid up capital of £71,832 and over 600 shareholders[52]. Even the small Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate with its capital of £7,208 had more than 170 investors[53]. With such a speculative venture as Kent coal it was not surprising that the capital came from middle-class London and home county investors, who were prepared to risk small sums in the hope of high returns. It was not until much later, when more was known about the coalfield, that northern industrialists were prepared to invest in the area.

The new consolidated company had a registered capital of £1,250,000, divided into 1,250,000 shares of £1[54]. Of these shares 1,211,824 were each credited with 17s. 7d. paid and issued in the agreed proportions to the four vendor companies in return for their assets[55]. The 2s. 5d. still

49. The Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422, item 11.

50. The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311, item 12.

51. The Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7376/52299, item 7.

52. The Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7437/52840, item 7.

53. The Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7316/51795, item 6.

54. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 9.

55. Ibid., items 6 and 8.

unpaid on each share would then have produced over £140,000 of fresh capital, but in addition £150,000 of 6 per cent debentures were created to cover the liabilities of the old companies[56]. The directors however soon found themselves faced with difficulty in connection with these liabilities, which as we have seen came to over £200,000. There was some doubt if the new company would be able to find sufficient investors, as not all the shareholders of the four vendor companies were prepared to take up shares in it, even at the paid up rate of 17s. 7d. each[57]. In February 1900 the directors informed the vendor companies that 700,000 shares was the minimum subscription which would justify allotting any shares at all. This total, without which the company would not have come fully into being, was only secured by finding new investors in France[58]. Being cautious these prospective shareholders first had reports made by two leading French mining engineers on the prospects of both the Corporation and the Kent Coalfield[59]. Although these were favourable, less than 170,000 £1 shares were then issued to some 600 French investors, each credited with 17s. 7d. paid[60]. The amount of cash raised could not therefore have been much above £20,000. It was not a new departure for the French to invest in foreign coalfields; they had done so in Belgium and the Ruhr during the previous century, and even in South Wales in the 1870's[61]. Arthur Burr claimed credit for introducing these investors[62],

56. The Colliery Guardian, 13 December 1901, p. 1279.

57. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 53-55.

58. Ibid., p. 55.

59. Ibid., pp. 55-56; The Colliery Guardian, 31 August 1900, p. 438.

60. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 73.

61. Rondo E. Cameron, France and the Economic Development of Europe 1800-1914 (1961), pp. 98, 332-3, 347-8, 365, 372-5 and 400.

62. The Colliery Guardian, 14 October 1904, p. 727.

most of whom were either from the professions or were traders and lived predominantly in the north-western coal producing areas of France[63]. Jean Leroy, a Calais merchant, with whom Burr was closely associated[64], was to represent the French investors on the new board of directors[65].

Besides French financial support, the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation also enlisted the aid of French mining engineers[66], with the result that between October 1900 and May 1901 rapid progress was made with sinking the colliery at Dover[67]. In the latter month however, when the No. 2 shaft was only 90 feet from the first seam of coal at 1,275 feet, a length of steel rope fell down the shaft and broke the pumping pipes thereby flooding the pit. By the time it was unwatered four months later the finances of the company were completely depleted[68]. In the accounts to the end of October 1901 the total cash resources of the company were given as £160,000, of which £114,000 had been spent on works and management, and the balance in payment of the old companies debts. These debts still totalled £130,000, and there were £23,000 of other liabilities. It was estimated that a further £150,000 would be needed to enable the colliery to become a large industrial concern, and the directors began to consider ways of raising fresh capital[69]. In the meantime, because of lack of finance, the company continued sinking with a 10 inch borehole, and managed to reach two seams of coal. Instead of creating a favourable

63. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/ 16237/62956, item 73.

64. The Colliery Guardian, 14 October 1904, p. 727.

65. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/ 16237/62956, item 17.

66. The Colliery Guardian, 18 July 1902, p. 138.

67. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 57.

68. Ibid., pp. 57-58; The Colliery Guardian, 13 December 1901, p. 1279.

69. The Colliery Guardian, 13 December 1901, p. 1279.

climate of opinion in which further capital could then be raised, the poor quality of the samples from these seams and the general financial position of the company resulted in a press campaign against it, with one newspaper actually accusing it of salting the mine[70]. To make matters worse the company's creditors had a receiver appointed who in December 1901 threatened to sell the colliery. This danger was removed however when an appeal to shareholders raised the £7,000 necessary to pay him[71]. To try and minimise the shareholders' losses, the directors proposed that a new company be formed with a capital of £350,000 in 5s. shares, with powers to issue £150,000 of 6 per cent convertible debentures. This company would then take over the £130,000 of inherited liabilities from the Consolidated Corporation, which would receive as purchase consideration 100,000 fully paid shares of 5s. each and £25,000 of the debentures[72]. At a meeting of the company on 27th January 1902, however, a French shareholder proposed an amended scheme, by which 1,250,000 preference shares of 5s. each would be issued by the existing company, such shares to be entitled to all the profits until the amount paid up on them had been repaid twice over in dividends, after which profits would be divided equally between the preference and ordinary shares. While accepting the need to issue £150,000 of debentures he called upon the directors to resign[73]. The amendment was narrowly carried by 405,854 votes to 400,446 and a new board took over on 11th February 1902[74], with Jean Leroy, the only previous

70. Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 58-59.

71. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 3 January 1902, p. 33.

72. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 24 January 1902, p. 191. This new company, called the Dover Collieries Ltd., was actually incorporated in January 1902. (The Dover Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/9735/72515). For reasons explained below it remained dormant for three years and was then dissolved.

73. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 31 January 1902, p. 243.

74. <u>Ibid.</u>, 14 February 1902, p. 349.

director to remain in office, as president of the company[75]. Of the five new directors two were French and three British[76]. The previous chairman, Sir Owen Slacke, did however rejoin the board in the following year[77]. Although the French proposals were then accepted[78] it was difficult to find investors, and only 783,746 of the preference shares were issued, of which over 200,000 were later forfeited for non-payment of calls, only an average of 1s. 5d. per share having been received by the company[79]. The French took only about a fifth of these preference shares[80].

The new directors found that claims against the Corporation exceeded £190,000, and that current expenditure at the Dover Colliery amounted to £1,000 per week, a large part of which was spent on pumping out the water[81]. In an attempt to try and cover these liabilities £91,400 of the newly created £150,000 of debentures were issued during the course of the year[82]. The affairs of the company were marginally better in 1903. To try and make progress through the water bearing strata it was decided to adopt the Kind-Chaudron process, which although well known on the Continent had not been used extensively in Britain[83]. By this method sinking through the water-logged strata was made by a large boring tool operated from the surface, the debris was then removed mechanically and the shafts lined with water-tight iron tubbing. Once the shaft entered dry ground the

75. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 31; The Colliery Guardian, 7 March 1902, p. 517; Ritchie, op. cit., p. 60.

76. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 31. (W. J. Cousins was one of the new directors).

77. Ibid., item 54.

78. The Colliery Guardian, 7 March 1902, p. 517.

79. Ibid., 7 October 1904, p. 680.

80. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 73.

81. The Colliery Guardian, 19 December 1902, p. 1353.

82. Ibid., 16 January 1903, p. 145.

83. Ibid., 25 September 1903, p. 662.

water was pumped out and sinking continued by normal methods[84]. The tubbing was supplied by a Dusseldorf firm, and the actual sinking was carried out by the Kind-Chaudron Company itself[85]. Expenditure at the colliery for the eleven months to the 30th September 1902 had been £31,973, but for the twelve months since then was only £16,832, and the old companies' liabilities not covered by the new issue of debentures was reduced from £36,000 to £10,000[86]. But more capital was still required to continue the sinking[87]. Although the directors had managed to re-issue about 120,000 of the 200,000 forfeited shares at 1s. 5d. paid on each, this was still insufficient, and it was proposed to raise a loan of £20,000 at 6 per cent interest on the security of the £50,000 of unissued debentures[88]. In this way it was hoped to reach the first workable seam of coal at a depth of 1,273 feet in about four months time. At this stage however, dissention, which had been growing inside the company, came to a head. For some time Leroy had not got on with his English colleagues, who included Cousins, and he opposed the proposed financial schemes as being but a repetition of the past policy which had ruined the credit of the company. He could not accept that £20,000 was anything like sufficient to cover the cost of reaching the coal seam at 1,273 feet. The English directors, however, claimed that the schism had been caused by Leroy associating with Arthur Burr, contrary to the pledges so often given by the directors that

84. Arnold Lupton, Mining (3rd ed. 1907), pp. 141-5.

85. The Colliery Guardian, 25 September 1903, p. 663.

86. Ibid., 18 December 1903, p. 1299.

87. Ibid., 8 January 1904, p. 83.

88. Ibid., 7 October 1904, p. 680. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source, except where otherwise indicated.

they would have nothing to do with him[89]. Burr denied having any influence on Leroy[90], but the day following Leroy's resignation, in protest, from the Corporation on 19th September 1904, he was made chairman of a new Kent coal company formed by Burr[91]. One of the other French directors also resigned with Leroy[92].

The directors' report to 30th September 1904 stated that in the previous nine months the sinking of the No. 2 pit by the Kind-Chaudron process had been successfully completed, and the shaft was, at 1,197 feet, just a short distance from the first two foot seam of coal, which it was expected to reach in January 1905. During the previous year expenditure at Dover had been £12,397, compared with £16,483 in the year before. Although sinking was being carried on more economically, the subscriptions to the £20,000 loan had not come in as quickly as expected and the situation was causing the directors anxiety[93]. Professor William Galloway, an eminent mining engineer from South Wales who had been appointed to the board in October 1904, felt certain that the second shaft could be sunk for about £80,000, after which the company would be able to produce 1,000 tons of coal a day[94]. In February 1905 over twelve tons of bituminous coal were raised from the first workable seam at 1,273 feet, which was

89. With the formation of the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation in 1899, it would appear that the new directors would have nothing to do with Burr (and presumably with Potter and Marley), who was held responsible for the doubtful financial practices of the Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd. and the four amalgamating companies. Cousins was presumably not implicated as he became a director of the new company in 1902.

90. The Colliery Guardian, 14 October 1904, p. 727.

91. Ibid., 21 October 1904, p. 771 and 28 October 1904, p. 816.

92. Ibid., 21 October 1904, p. 771.

93. Ibid., 30 December 1904, p. 1220.

94. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 62; The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1905, p. 32.

found, however, to be only 20 inches thick. Galloway, after visiting the mine, declared it to be a household coal, but suitable also for steam purposes. He added however that time would be needed to take the second shaft down to the coal[95]. In this same month the directors proposed to reconstruct the Corporation by transferring its assets and liabilities to yet another new company, the Kent Collieries Limited, which was to have a capital of £400,000 and powers to issue £150,000 of debentures[96]. Despite some opposition particularly from French shareholders[97], this scheme was finally approved in August 1905[98].

During the years 1900-1901 Arthur Burr's connections with the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation had been severed and, as we have seen, the directors gave repeated pledges to shareholders to have no further dealings with him. Burr did not, however, allow himself to be dismissed from the Kent coal scene, and from the time of his break with the Corporation until 1910 there were two distinct strands in the attempts to develop the coalfield. The new Kent Collieries Ltd. continued to try to establish a colliery at Shakespeare, while Burr directed his activities to the areas north of Dover, where the Ropersole boring had shown further coal deposits to exist. Burr's intention was to try to find workable measures in this direction and, by purchase or lease, to obtain control over as great an area of minerals as possible. The next stage was to induce new investors to establish collieries in the areas he controlled, from which he would then receive a royalty payment for each ton of coal extracted, together with a share in the profits. The continued work at

95. The Colliery Guardian, 10 February 1905, p. 256.

96. Ibid., 24 February 1905, p. 339.

97. Ibid., 3 March 1905, p. 382.

98. Ibid., 21 July 1905, p. 24 and 11 August 1905, p. 205.

Shakespeare was however no more successful than before, and this, together with the suspicions that Burr's earlier activities had aroused, was to affect the willingness of the public to invest in his new schemes. As a result he was forced to undertake colliery sinkings with inadequate capital, and like the owners of the Shakespeare Colliery, he encountered severe underground water problems, which in turn depleted the meagre financial resources at his disposal. The actual proving of the coalfield to the north of Dover did, however, encourage interest to be shown in the area by the Bolckow Vaughan and Dorman Long steel companies, and by large French firms, including Schneider et Cie, the armaments manufacturers, and the Forges de Chatillon, Commentry et Neuves Maisons steel company.

When the Kent Collieries Ltd. took over the assets and liabilities of the Consolidated Collieries Corporation, it found that the latter had a total capital of £1,391,676, of which only £330,106 had been paid in cash, together with outstanding debentures for £94,620[99]. As purchase price the corporation was given £37,500 in fully paid shares of the new company, together with an agreement to take over its debentures and pay other liabilities amounting to about £46,000, as well as to meet the cost of its liquidation[100].

The new company did not expect investors to be overwilling to come forward (though shareholders in the corporation were given preference in subscribing for its capital)[101], as it took the precaution of having 550,000 of its first issue of 1,200,000 5s. shares underwritten by the Share Guarantee Trust Limited, at a commission of ten per cent[102]. The

99. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 34/2892/62956, Liquidator's accounts 2 August 1905 to 4 August 1906.

100. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, items 11 and 18.

101. The Colliery Guardian, 24 February 1905, p. 339.

102. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 11.

underwriting company was owned by Richard Tilden Smith[103], the son of a Sussex banker, who had had experience of coal mining in Australia. After returning to England around the turn of the century Tilden Smith had embarked upon the business of company reconstruction, in which he proved remarkably successful. In his life time he reconstructed companies having total capital of about £200 million, and in the inter-war years played an even more important role in financing investment in the Kent Coalfield[104]. Before underwriting these shares, however, Tilden Smith had reports made on the prospects of the company by Professor Edward Hull, a leading authority on Britain's coalfields and a member of the 1905 Royal Commission on the Coal Industry, and by G. A. Stonier, a former Chief Inspector of Mines to the Indian Government[105]. Hull calculated that under the 13,851 acres controlled by the company there were 100 million tons of workable coal, and speaking from a sample seen from the No. 2 shaft, he declared it to be a good household coal. He expected profits per ton to be at least 6s., which even with an output of only 1,000 tons per day for 300 days would yield annual profits of £90,000. Stonier considered that the colliery, being next to both the railway and the sea, was in an excellent geographical position, and that coal from it should command the markets south of the River Thames, to which it could be sent either by rail or coastal barge. He expected a profit varying from 5s. to 9s. per ton, which on an output of 1,000 tons per day should produce a minimum profit of £75,000 per annum. He thought it would be difficult to find another

103. Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 14. The Share Guarantee Trust Ltd. was incorporated in October 1903 and was dissolved in March 1934. As a dissolved private limited liability company its file was destroyed by the Board of Trade in May 1963. (The Share Guarantee Trust Ltd., B.O.T. 78883).

104. Obituary in The Times, 19 December 1929, p. 16.

105. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 11.

colliery proposition so uniquely placed for speedy development and with so many features in its favour.

In April and May 1905, 860,021 5s. shares were allotted to some 2,750 shareholders[106]. Only 75,976 of these went however to French and other overseas investors. The Share Guarantee Trust did not, therefore, have to take up any of the shares it had underwritten. As in the earlier companies the British shareholders were predominantly middle class investors from London and the home counties. Sir Owen Slacke, with 61,216 shares was by far the largest individual holder, and became chairman of the new company[107]. The other directors included Professor Edward Hull, George William Lancaster, managing director of Lancaster Steam Collieries Ltd., and W. J. Horner, a chemical works proprietor, who like Slacke had been a member of the old board of directors[108]. They were soon joined by John Manger Fells, a consulting accountant, who was liquidator of the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation and a business associate of Tilden Smith[109].

By the end of 1906 the company had called up £131,687 of its share capital in cash[110], and early in 1907, the financial editor of the Daily Mail began to advise the purchase of its shares, but when the pumps broke down and the colliery became flooded for a fourth time he grew more

106. Ibid., item 15.

107. Ibid., item 11.

108. Ibid., item 11; The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 31.

109. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 11; The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 34/2892/62956. Tilden Smith and Fells had acted together as underwriters before Tilden Smith branched out on his own with the Share Guarantee Trust in 1903. As late as 1916, however, they were still close business associates. (Information supplied by Stanley Cooke, who joined the staff of Tilden Smith's companies in 1916 and subsequently became secretary of one of his main companies, London City Buildings Ltd.).

110. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 26.

sceptical[111]. The financial position of the company then began to cause great concern. It had by 25th September 1908 received £210,821 in cash from shareholders[112], but the balance sheet to the end of May 1908 showed debts totalling over £108,149, of which outstanding 8 per cent debentures came to £88,440. The purchase and costs incidental to acquiring the assets of the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation, to converting the debentures, and to paying the underwriting, formation and legal charges had come to £225,039. In addition £85,312 had been spent on work at the colliery, another £10,673 on general administration, and £17,940 on paying interest on the debentures[113]. The company was, therefore, in need of fresh capital.

The directors proposed to convert the 546,000 unissued 5s. shares into 136,500 preference shares of £1 each, and at the same time to create an additional 163,500 of such shares, making 300,000 in all. These shares were to be entitled to a preferential cumulative dividend of ten per cent per annum, and to 80 per cent of the remaining profits[114]. With this new capital it was proposed to start sinking at once to the 4 foot seam at a depth of 2,221 feet, as in the long run it was considered that this would be a more economical course of procedure than to just concentrate on the seams already reached[115]. The cost of sinking and properly equipping both shafts to a depth of 2,250 feet was estimated by Carl Hold, a prominent German mining engineer, at £81,500. Hold also estimated that with an output of only 1,000 tons per day the colliery should make an annual

111. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 66-7.

112. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 33.

113. Ibid., item 33.

114. Ibid., item 30.

115. Ibid., item 34. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

profit of from £50,000 to £60,000. At the time of his report, in October 1907, he recommended taking advantage of the existing depressed condition in the coal industry to purchase equipment at prices which were 20 to 30 per cent lower than in the previous two years. Since November 1907 sinking in the No. 2 shaft, which was 14 feet in diameter, had remained at a depth of 1,632 feet, and in the No. 3 shaft, which at 18 feet in diameter was to be the main winding shaft, at 674 feet.

To carry out these new policies the board was strengthened in November 1908 by bringing in three directors with great experience of the South Wales coal industry: Joseph Shaw, chairman of Powell Duffryn Steam Collieries Ltd.; John Glasbrook, of the Penrikyber Navigation Colliery; and E. M. Hann, general manager of the Powell Duffryn Company and a director of the Atlantic Merthyr Collieries Ltd.[116]. The new directors thought that it was useless to try to carry out the scheme unless £125,000 of the preference shares were applied for. As by the end of January 1909, there were firm applications for only £60,000[117], they resigned[118]. An additional complication was that the debenture holders, whose interest was six months overdue, had had a receiver appointed[119], who laid claim to the calls to be received from the issue of the preference shares. To prevent the subscribers losing their money in this way, however, the calls were returned[120].

116. Ibid., items 34 and 35.

117. The Colliery Guardian, 29 January 1909, p. 239.

118. Ibid., 26 February 1909, p. 440.

119. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, items 36, 37 and 39; The Colliery Guardian, 10 December 1909, p. 1204.

120. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 69. (Naturally the press took a pessimistic view of the enterprise, e.g. Financier and Bullionist, 17 February 1909, and Daily Mail, 20 February 1909. Shares dropped from 1s. 6d. to 3d. each.)

By December 1909 the company's debts had increased to £131,181[121] but the situation was saved in the following year by the Share Guarantee Trust entering into an agreement with a new company, the Collieries Trust Ltd. to underwrite the issue of £140,000 of the preference shares[122]. With the Channel Collieries Trust the north-eastern steel firms of Bolckow Vaughan and Dorman Long entered the Kent coal scene.

The new interest that began to be shown in the coalfield from 1910 to 1914 cannot be explained as a result of the efforts of the Kent Collieries Ltd. It came instead as a consequence of the activities of Arthur Burr and the group of companies created by him after 1904. Had Burr not proved a coalfield to exist to the north of Dover in the years 1905 to 1910, it is highly conceivable that the Kent Collieries Ltd. would have collapsed in the latter year, and with it the whole of the Kent coal enterprise. Already in the previous year the press had written off the Kent Coalfield as a complete failure[123].

The Ropersole boring in 1899 had, however, shown that coal was not confined to the Shakespeare area, and other borings had indicated that it was not to be found to the west of Dover. As we have already seen, the owners of the Shakespeare Colliery rarely had enough money for their sinking operations, and certainly had none to spare to make test borings elsewhere. In the years after 1900 such work was undertaken by a new group of companies created by Arthur Burr, and it was to these that initiative in developing the coalfield passed.

In 1901 Burr, with some of the personnel from the Shakespeare Colliery, including Cousins formed a new company - the Dover Coalfield

121. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 41.

122. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 3; Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, items 43 and 44; Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 71.

123. <u>Financier and Bullionist</u>, 17 February 1909, <u>Daily Mail</u>, 20 February 1909, cited in Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 69-70.

Extension Ltd. - to search for coal to the north of Dover[124]. Their boring at Ellinge, four miles north-west of the Shakespeare site, was however unsuccessful, and the company, with a paid up capital of £19,135, went into liquidation[125]. Its assets were acquired in 1904 by another company created by Burr, the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.[126], which was to be responsible for the first achievement of really practical results in the coalfield[127].

The programme of the new company was threefold: to acquire mining rights over selected areas in east Kent; to initiate borings and other explorations to prove the coal and other minerals under these areas; and to promote subsidiary companies to sink collieries to work the minerals when proved, or to sell sections of the proved areas to other investors wishing to establish collieries[128]. With success either at the Dover Colliery or by a subsidiary of its own, the Concessions Company would then see an appreciation in value of the areas over which it held mineral rights[129]. In this way the company itself, and not just local landowners, would benefit from the pioneering work of actually proving the coalfield. In addition to acquiring options over 7,000 acres of minerals from the Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd. it also entered into negotiations for a further 6,000 acres, and planned for these areas six collieries, each to cost about £150,000 and to produce an output of 1,500 tons of coal per

124. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 82; Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16626/69839, items 4, 8 and 11. (Ritchie was one of the promoters of this company and, together with Arthur Burr's son Malcolm, a leading shareholder).

125. Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16626/69839, items 24 and 25; The Colliery Guardian, 15 May 1903, p. 1071.

126. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 10.

127. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 86.

128. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44.

129. The Colliery Guardian, 28 October 1904, p. 814.

day[130]. Because of nearness to markets in the south-east, it was estimated that each colliery would, with a profit of 12s. per ton, be able to pay dividends of £240,000 per annum, of which the Concessions company would receive about a third[131].

For such an ambitious programme the Concessions company started with a capital of only £50,000, of which 20,000 £1 shares were allotted to the liquidator of the Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd. at 12s. 6d. paid, in order to acquire that company's assets[132]. Of the other shares £15,000 were underwritten by the Central Trust Ltd., which also received £4,000 to cover the cost of negotiations it had incurred on behalf of the company[133]. With William Boyd Dawkins as geological adviser, the Concessions company completed negotiations for minerals in the Waldershare and Denton areas, to the north of Dover[134]. It then entered into the second phase of its programme, the making of borings to prove the mineral value of its lands. This work was not undertaken directly but entrusted to a subsidiary company, the Sondage Syndicate Ltd., which was created for

130. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 10.

131. Report of Nath. Maurice Griffith, mining engineer, to the directors, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 10.

132. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 10.

133. Ibid., items 17 and 23. The Central Trust Ltd. was incorporated in 1888 and remained relatively inactive until 1902. Two years later Harcourt Willoughby Marley became a director, and, despite having a paid up capital of only £60, the company engaged in promoting both the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. in 1904, and the East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd. in 1907. (See below p.44). The company was, however, wound up in April 1908 as it could not continue because of its liabilities. Nevertheless the liquidator consented to the registration of a new company under the same name, which was incorporated in July 1908. This latter company was dissolved in 1938. (The Central Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/4230/27399 and BT 31/32295/156400).

134. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 17.

the purpose[135]. (See Fig. 2.2 and Appendix C). This company had a total issued capital of only £5,000, and had Arthur Burr as its life manager[136]. Its agreement with Kent Coal Concessions was one of no results, no payment[137]. The Sondage Syndicate was to make one boring per year at a site chosen by Concessions. If successful it would be paid twice the cost of the boring, together with ten per cent of the capital of any subsidiary colliery company formed to work the proved area, or ten per cent of the price received from the sale of such area. If the boring failed to prove coal there was to be no payment [138]. In this way the entire capital of the Concessions company could be devoted to acquiring mineral areas.

The first boring was started in January 1905 at Waldershare[139], 5½ miles to the north of Shakespeare, and by 1907 had proved five seams of coal over one foot in thickness at a depth of less than 2,372 feet, including one of 5 feet 2 inches[140]. (See Fig. 2.3 and Appendix B). These results were better than the Brady boring at Dover. In August 1905 a second boring was started at Fredville, three miles to the north-west of Waldershare[141]. From these borings it was found that the water-bearing Lower Greensands and Oolitic rocks that overlay the Coal Measures at Dover grew gradually thinner as they went inland, so it was thought that there would not be the same water problems in sinking collieries on Concessions' areas[142].

135. The Sondage Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17360/83161, item 4.

136. Ibid., items 5 and 20.

137. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44.

138. Ibid., item 44.

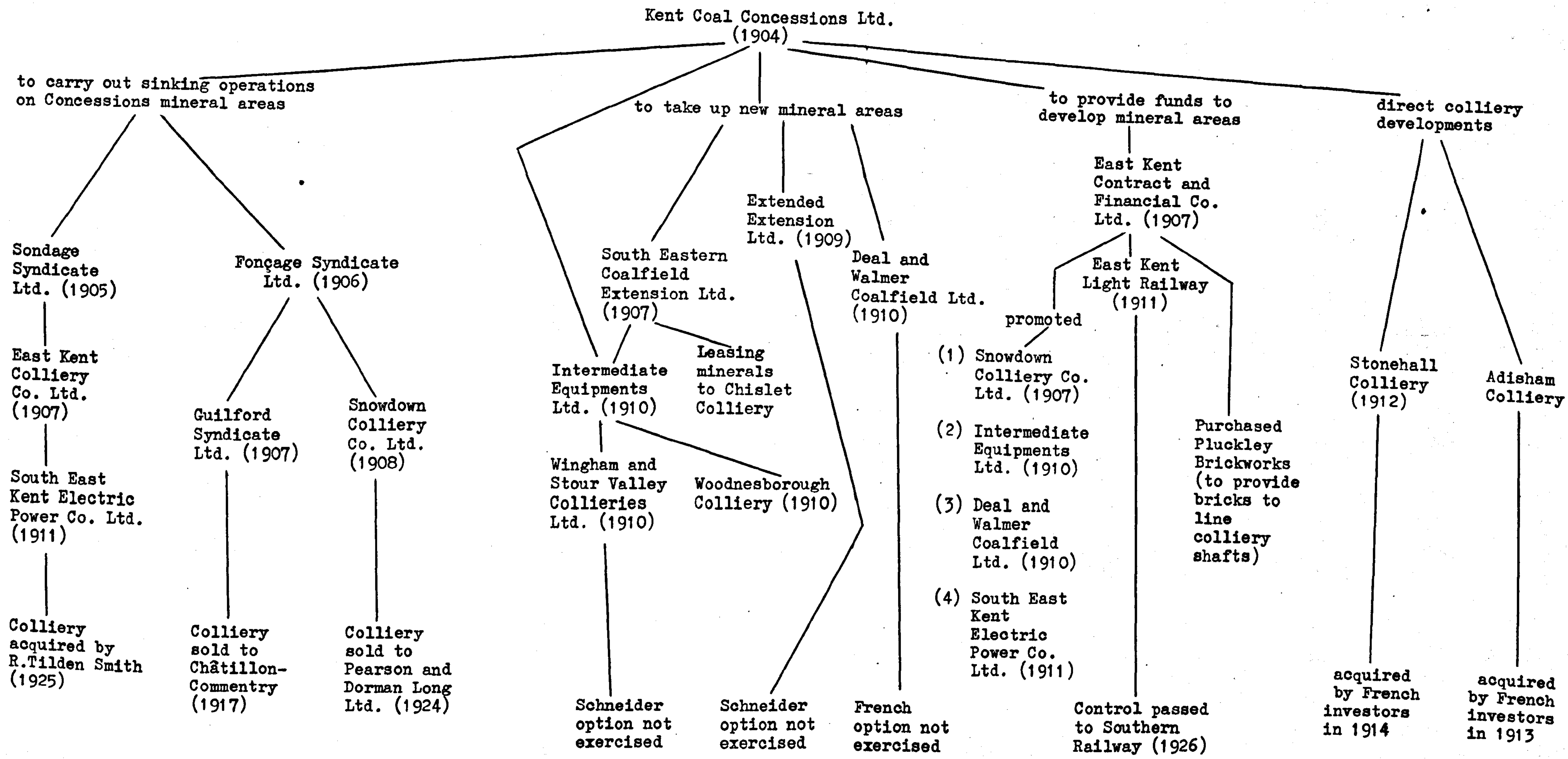
139. Ibid., item 44.

140. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 96-7.

141. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44.

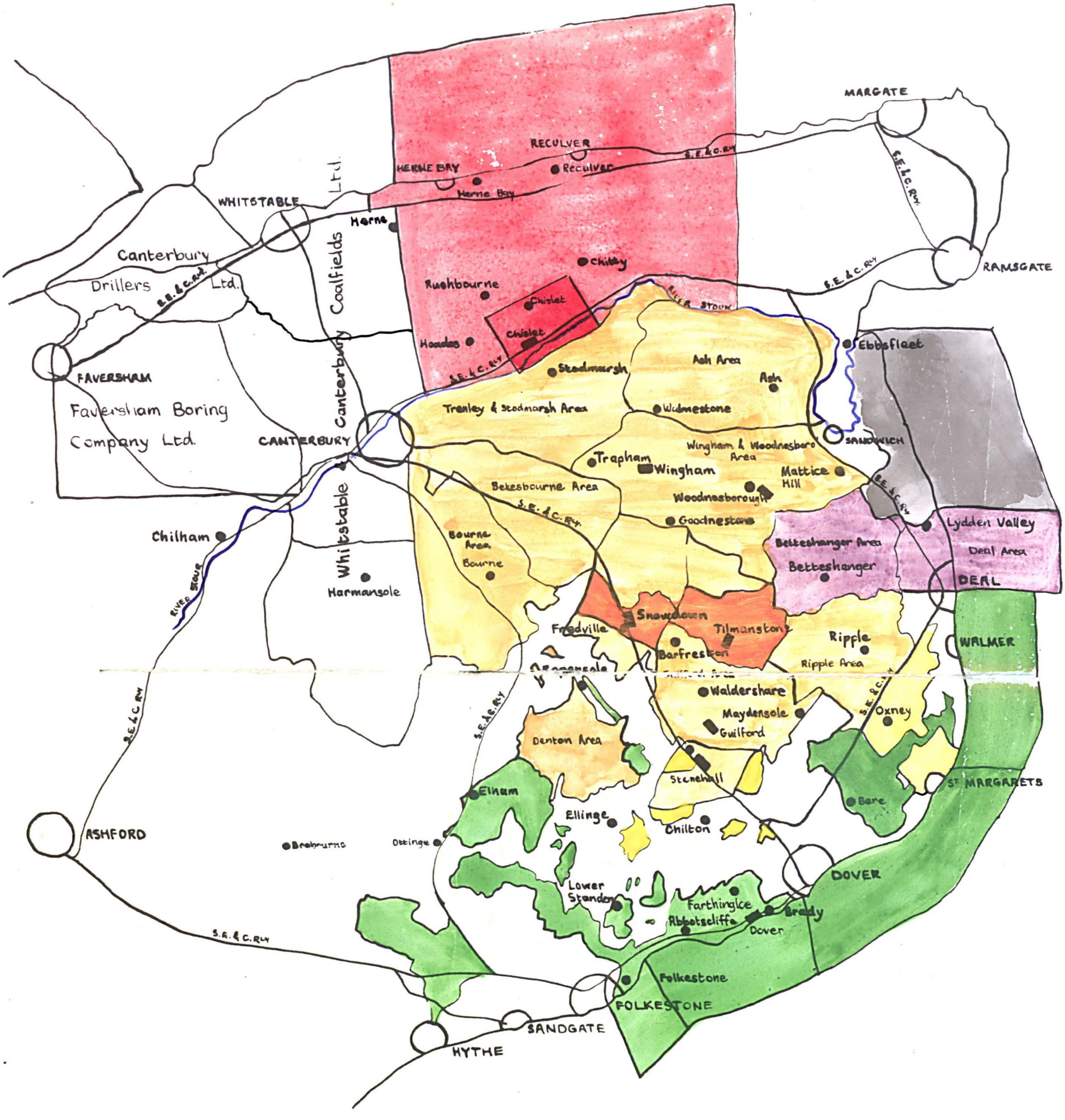
142. Reports of W. Boyd Dawkins and George H. Hollingsworth, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44.

Fig. 2.2 The Kent Coal Concessions Group



NOTE: For details of the exact relationship between companies see text.

Fig. 2.3: Sketch Map Showing Mineral Areas, Boreholes and Shaft Developments in East Kent in 1919



Source: Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown to Coal Industry Commission, Vol. III, Appendices, Charts and Indexes, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 361) XIII, p. 293, Plate 36A.

Mineral areas controlled by:
Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. and Allied Companies:
Snowdown and Tilmanstone colliery areas
Other areas
Possible extension of Stonehall Colliery area
Possible extension of Ripple area

Channel Steel Company Ltd.

Betteshanger Boring Company Ltd.

Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd.

North Kent Coalfield Ltd.

To try and attract the necessary investors to take up colliery areas, another subsidiary company, the Fonçage Syndicate, was formed in April 1906[143]. It was to start surface works and some sinking at Waldershare[144], and at Snowdown, near Fredville[145], while the Sondage Syndicate had started in July 1906 to sink a 14 foot shaft at Tilmanstone, to the north of Waldershare[146]. The sinking at Waldershare commenced before the boring had reached coal[147].

In the summer of 1906 the Kent Coal Concessions increased its capital from £50,000 to £100,000[148], and then pursued a policy of acquiring options over more areas. In this way any appreciation in the value of mineral rights in areas proved by the Sondage Syndicate would accrue to Kent Coal Concessions and not just to the local landowners. By October 1906 Concessions was claiming control of 20,000 acres, mostly within the proven area[149]. In December 1906 there was a further increase of capital to £150,000[150], and the shares were allotted throughout the following year[151]. In this same month the Sondage Syndicate started a third boring at Goodnestone, to the north of Snowdown[152], and in the following year a

143. The Fonçage Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17736/88435, item 5.

144. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44; <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 19 October 1906, p. 760.

145. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44; <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 11 January 1907, p. 88.

146. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 19 October 1906, p. 760.

147. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44.

148. <u>Ibid.</u>, items 27 and 29.

149. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 19 October 1906, p. 760.

150. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 41.

151. <u>Ibid.</u>, items 41, 43, 47, 49-54 and 56-68.

152. <u>Ibid.</u>, item 44.

fourth one at Barfrestone between Snowdown and Tilmanstone[153].

As the third stage in all this activity Burr established subsidiary colliery companies to work areas controlled by the Concessions company. The first of these was the East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., which started with very little capital[154] and acquired the site at Tilmanstone[155]. In return for this property it issued £167,500 in ordinary shares, fully paid, to the Central Trust Ltd., and £10,000 in vendors shares to the Kent Coal Concessions, the Sondage Syndicate and the Foncage Syndicate[156]. By the end of 1908 only £9,714 of capital had been raised in cash, which was increased by £11,831 in the following year[157]. As a result funds had to be provided by the issue of £5,000 of debentures in 1908, and a further £20,000 in 1909[158]. Loans were also advanced by Kent Coal Concessions and another of its subsidiaries, the East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., which in April 1910 totalled over £50,000[159]. Apart from financial problems, development work at the colliery was handicapped because of the problem of bringing supplies and equipment three miles by road from the nearest railway station at Shepherdswell[160]. When in July 1910 both shafts were at 1,140 feet, and within 30 feet of the coal measures, there was an inrush of water which flooded the No. 2 pit and brought work to a standstill[161]. As the No. 1 shaft was small, being only 14 feet in

153. Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, p. 717.

154. The Joint Stock Companies Journal, 5 November 1913, p. 554.

155. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, items 23 and 24.

156. Ibid., item 8.

157. Ibid., items 26 and 27.

158. Ibid., items 16, 26 and 27.

159. Ibid., item 26.

160. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 108.

161. Ibid., pp. 117 and 120.

diameter it was decided to start work on a third shaft[162].

As we have seen the Fonçage Syndicate had started to sink a shaft at Waldershare, which Lord Guilford allowed them to call the Guilford Colliery[163]. It was hoped to continue this work until it was possible to sell the undertaking at a substantial profit[164]. A scheme to float a colliery company to take over the works failed, however, and consequently the Guilford Syndicate was formed in August 1907 to carry on until such a company could be started[165]. Progress was slow, however, as the colliery was two miles by road from the railway, and to reach it vehicles had to climb a very steep hill[166]. Work was stopped in 1908[167] and remained so in 1909, pending progress at Tilmanstone[168]. By the end of 1910 only £29,272 of share capital had been raised in cash[169], and to meet the cost of sinking money was borrowed from other companies allied to the Kent Coal Concessions, particularly the East Kent Contract and Financial Company, which by 31 October 1911 had lent £43,087[170].

The Fonçage Syndicate had started a colliery at Snowdown, near the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, and by March 1908 had spent £16,460 on its development[171]. In this month Burr decided to create the Snowdown

162. Ibid., p. 121.

163. The Colliery Guardian, 29 June 1906, p. 1278.

164. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 149 and 151.

165. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 5.

166. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 149.

167. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for year 1908, P.P. 1909 (Cd. 4762) XXXIII, p. 901.

168. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for year 1909, P.P. 1910 (Cd. 5177) XLIII, p. 672.

169. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 16.

170. Ibid., item 17.

171. The Colliery Guardian, 20 March 1908, p. 559.

Colliery Limited, as a subsidiary company to take over the workings[172]. This company, like those at Tilmanstone and Guilford, had insufficient funds. By 30 April 1910 it had a called up capital in cash of £42,921 but it owed over £11,000 to allied companies[173]. It was proposed, therefore, not to issue any more shares until Tilmanstone was raising and selling coal, so that they could be sold at a premium[174]. By this time the two pits, each 18 feet in diameter, were at depths of 626 and 350 feet[175]. The first workable seam was at about 1,400 feet[176]. There had been some delay in sinking in 1907 when one shaft had to be abandoned because of water in the upper chalk[177], and a third shaft started to replace it[178]. Little work was done in the following year[179], however, as the company was awaiting success at Tilmanstone.

When it came to establishing the subsidiary colliery companies it was clear that there was a lack of adequate capital. To try and overcome this problem Burr created, in December 1907, the East Kent Contract and Financial Company[180]. This firm was to devote its services and capital entirely to financing and generally facilitating the operations of the Kent Coal Concessions and its allied companies[181]. The Contract company

172. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 5 and 12.

173. Ibid., item 24.

174. Ibid., item 23.

175. Ibid., item 23.

176. Ibid., item 23.

177. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for year 1907, P.P. 1908 (Cd. 4045) XIX, p. 581.

178. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for year 1908, P.P. 1909 (Cd. 4762) XXXIII, p. 901.

179. Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines for year 1909, P.P. 1910 (Cd. 5177) XLIII, p. 673.

180. The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18303/96059, items 4, 5 and 18.

181. Ibid., item 18. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

had by 30 September 1910 raised £53,977 of capital in cash, £19,239 of which was received as premiums on shares issued above par. It had borrowed £65,528 from allied companies to aid colliery sinkings, and had lent £15,355 to the Kent Coal Concessions and £78,519 to other allied companies. Profits by this time amounted to £36,118 and in 1910 a 40 per cent dividend was paid on the 33,607 £1 ordinary shares. In particular the company rendered service to the East Kent Colliery Company and the Kent Coal Concessions in respect of villages being built at Elvington and Stonehall, and by the purchase of Pluckley Brickworks, which guaranteed the regular supply of bricks for lining the pits. Because of the Contract company it was possible to carry on without incurring heavy debenture liabilities, and at the same time enabled the postponement of further share issues by the East Kent Colliery Company, and the flotation of the new Guilford company, until a more favourable moment.

French investors had begun to show an interest in the Kent Coal Concessions' areas as early as 1908, when A. Fonville came over to make a report on the coalfield[182]. Delays at Tilmanstone in the following year, however, made other would be entrants cautious and enabled the Concessions group to acquire additional mineral areas[183]. This was done not by Concessions itself but by two new companies created by Burr, the South Eastern Coalfield Extension[184] and the Extended Extension[185]. Both acquired minerals to the north of the Concessions area, but to the south of the River Stour, in the parishes of Littlebourne, Wickhambreux, Stodmarsh and Eastry[186]. By the end of 1910 the South Eastern Coalfield Extension

182. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 170.

183. Ibid., p. 192.

184. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, items 5, 24 and 32.

185. Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, items 7 and 15.

186. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, items 33 and 34; Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, item 18.

had a paid up capital in cash of £38,400[187], while that of the Extended Extension was £41,203[188].

Although there were, by the beginning of 1910, nine companies in the Concessions group, it can be seen from the annual returns to the Board of Trade, that the interests of shareholders were rarely confined to one company. The pattern of investors was similar to that of the Dover Colliery, with a large number of small middle-class investors. These came, however, from a much wider geographical area and were not so confined to London and the Home Counties as were those of the early Kent coal companies. With the expansion of the Concessions group by the addition of five more companies in the years 1910 and 1911, and with the existing ones increasing their capital, the pattern continued, and will be examined in more detail later[189]. To demonstrate the financial strength of the group, balance sheets to 30 April 1910 were published for the various companies. These showed that with a total issued capital of £721,657, £393,679 had been subscribed in cash, and dividends totalling £26,341 had been paid[190].

By 1910 it was clear that a coalfield existed in east Kent, and that the Concessions group had control of the greater part of it. With the further failures at the Dover Colliery, it is not unreasonable to assume that had this been the only activity in the Kent Coalfield then the whole venture would have come to an end. To Arthur Burr and the Concessions group, therefore, one must give credit for the work done in the years 1905-1910, without which it is inconceivable that the new interest shown in the coalfield in the few years before the outbreak of

188. Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, item 15.

189. See below p. 67-68.

190. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 205. Not all these balance sheets were submitted to the Board of Trade, so it is not possible to check exactly Ritchie's figures. From Appendix C, however, it is possible to see that his figures were probably correct.

the First World War would ever have taken place.

Between 1904 and 1913 the rise in coal prices was less than the increase in the general level of prices[191]. After 1903 profits per ton and real wages declined nationally[192]. Kent, however, a proved coalfield and near to the London and south-eastern markets in which it would have transport cost advantages over other areas, began in 1910 to attract other investors. These included the large iron and steel firms of Bolckow, Vaughan & Co. Ltd. and Dorman Long & Co. Ltd. in this country, and Schneider and Châtillon-Commentry in France. In addition other investors were prepared to put money into the Concessions group, and some even established their own companies to acquire mineral areas on which they then made borings. The most successful of the latter group was the company that started a colliery at Chislet in the very north of the coalfield.

Active work at the Dover Colliery restarted in June 1910[193], when a new scheme to raise share capital was approved by the holders of the £79,000 of debentures[194]. The £300,000 of preference shares were again offered to the public, but £140,000 were underwritten by the Share Guarantee Trust for a commission of 5 per cent[195]. The debenture holders agreed to a postponement of redemption from 1912 until 1919, and for interest to be reduced from 8 to 5 per cent[196]. The payment of interest for three years and of part of

191. Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. I P.P. 1926, (Cmd. 2600), XIV, pp. 128-29.

192. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 218.

193. The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1911, p. 38.

194. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 43.

195. Ibid., item 43; The Colliery Guardian, 3 June 1910, p. 1085.

196. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 43; The Colliery Guardian, 27 May 1910, p. 1031.

the arrears was to be payable out of profits[197]. It was anticipated that this minimum subscription would leave about £100,000 for development to the 4 foot seam and for working capital[198]. To facilitate the new arrangements Professor Hull and W. J. Horner retired from the board and were replaced by William Armstrong, an advisory mining engineer, and John Morison, a managing and consulting engineer, both from Newcastle-upon-Tyne[199]. Morison was to supervise the work at the colliery. In July 1910 the Share Guarantee Trust were allotted 96,377 of the preference shares, the remaining 43,623 having been allotted to some 550 smaller shareholders[200]. Before underwriting these shares, however, the Share Guarantee Trust had entered into an agreement with a newly created company, the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., to which it was to transfer the benefit of agreements it had entered into with the Kent Collieries Ltd., in return for a quarter of the divisible profits of the new company, and the right to subscribe at par for 125,000 of the new company's 500,000 £1 shares[201]. In December 1911 the Share Guarantee Trust transferred its preference shares to the Channel Collieries Trust[202]. Shareholders in this new company included Sir Hugh Bell and A. J. (later Sir Arthur) Dorman[203]. Arthur Dorman, a Kentish man from Ashford, was the founder of Dorman Long and Co. Ltd., which had grown from small beginnings in Middlebrough in the 1870's to become one of the country's leading iron and steel firms, while Sir Hugh

197. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 43.

198. Ibid., item 43; The Colliery Guardian, 24 June 1910, p. 1240

199. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 43; The Colliery Guardian, 24 June 1910, p. 1240.

200. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 44.

201. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, items 2 and 3.

202. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 49.

203. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 7.

Bell was the son of Sir (Isaac) Lowthian Bell, one of the most famous ironmasters of the nineteenth century, whose family firm, Bell Brothers, had become merged with Dorman Long two years before his death in 1904[204]. In 1912 Bell and Dorman became directors of the Channel Collieries Trust[205], and in the following year Dorman Long considerably increased its shareholdings in the company[206].

Progress at the colliery was not as great as anticipated due to a six week strike in 1912 and an overwinding accident in September of the same year, which killed two men and damaged the pumping and winding gear[207]. Consequently the capital raised by the preference share issue proved to be inadequate, and in 1913 and 1914 the company was forced to borrow £153,495 from the Channel Collieries Trust[208]. The latter company had by the end of 1914 raised £162,750 of capital in cash, but had also by 30 June 1914 borrowed £140,150[209]. The Dorman Long Group, consisting of Dorman, Bell, his son Maurice Lowthian Bell[210], and Dorman Long and Co. Ltd., were already important shareholders in the Trust, holding in August 1914 143,150 of the 275,000 allotted shares, and had lent it £70,000, when they made an agreement with Bolckow, Vaughan and Co. Ltd., whereby the latter company was to take up 50,000 £1 shares in the Trust over which Dorman Long held options, and

204. Charles Wilson, 'The History of Dorman Long: An Essay', reproduced from April 1957 issue of Steel Review; see also Asa Briggs, Victorian Cities (1963), p. 271.

205. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 17.

206. Ibid., item 24; The Colliery Guardian, 5 December 1913, p. 1162.

207. The Colliery Guardian, 3 January 1913, p. 40.

208. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 53.

209. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 29.

210. Sir Hugh Bell's eldest son was called Maurice Hugh Lowthian and one can only assume that he is the person named and not some other relative. (Whitaker's Peerage, Baronetage and Companionage for the Year 1911 (1910) p. 175).

to have the right to provide capital or loans up to £300,000[211]. Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan also agreed not to sell or transfer any shares in the Trust without first offering them to the other[212]. Before investing this money the Bolckow Vaughan Company had started to have a detailed report prepared on the Channel Collieries Trust, from which one can understand why it was prepared to join Dorman Long in financing the company, which controlled the Kent Collieries Ltd.[213]. The Trust had options for leases over 9,000 acres to the north of Hythe and Folkestone[214], 229 acres of freehold minerals in the Kingsdown area to the north of St. Margarets, and leases over 1,128 acres to the north-east of Dover near the railway line to Deal[215], including part of the railway from Martin Mill to the Eastern Docks at Dover, which had been built by Lord Cowdray's firm of S. Pearson and Son to carry the materials it needed for the building of the Admiralty Harbour at Dover[216]. It also had options from the government

211. A. J. Dorman and Others and Channel Collieries Trust Ltd. and Bolckow Vaughan & Co. Ltd., Agreement dated 5 August 1914 as to Provision of Capital, Dorman Long Records A16/73; Old papers belonging to Sir Arthur Dorman, (Relating to) Channel Collieries Trust and A. J. Dorman and Sir Hugh Bell, Dorman Long Records A16/- (i.e. they have no reference number but are filed with the rest of the A16 Records relating to Kent:Channel Collieries Trust, Channel Steel Co. Ltd., and Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.).

212. Indenture made 6 August 1914 between A. J. Dorman & Others (The Dorman Group) and Bolckow Vaughan & Co. Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/74.

213. Circa 1915, Kent - Notes discovered in old file of B.V. & Co. Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/3369. Although this report is dated circa 1915, on p. 42 the date is given as March 1914. Other indications are that the report was started in 1914 before Bolckow Vaughan invested their money, e.g. on p. 1 the list of directors of the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd. does not include Sir J. E. Johnson-Ferguson of Bolckow Vaughan, who joined the board in August 1914. (See The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 27).

214. Dorman Long Records A16/3369, op. cit., pp. 12-28.

215. Ibid., p. 31.

216. J. A. Spender, Weetman Pearson: First Viscount Cowdray 1856-1927 (1930), p. 132.

over the undersea minerals from Dover to Deal[217]. Freehold properties included over 350 acres to the nort-east of Dover, mainly in the Swingfield area, and a controlling interest in the 744 acres of the Dover Cliff Land Company[218] and in the Dover, St. Margaret's and Martin Mill Light Railway, which was to supersede the Pearson Railway in this area[219].

The Channel Collieries Trust controlled, therefore, not only the Dover Colliery but considerable areas to the north of Folkestone and to the north-east of Dover. Its interest in acquiring these new areas was due to the deposits of iron ore. It had made borings in 1913 at Dover, near the Shakespeare Colliery, where a 12 foot 6 inch seam of ironstore was found at a depth of 593 feet, at Abbotscliffe, near Folkestone, where only 7 feet 10 inches of ironstore were met at 741 feet 8 inches, at Bere Farm, to the north of Dover, where there was a 5 foot seam of ironstore at 1,241 feet, and in 1914 had started borings at Lower Standen[220] and Elham[221], to the north of Folkestone, and at Farthingloe, to the north of Shakespeare[222].

The Channel Collieries Trust had major plans for industrial development in east Kent, including the erection of iron and cement works, to which the Kent Collieries Ltd. undertook to supply 100,000 tons of small coal per annum for twenty years from July 1913[223]. The Trust also

217. Dorman Long Records A16/3369, op. cit., p. 35.

218. Ibid., pp. 42 and 46. The Channel Collieries Trust held 9,053 of the 12,947 £10 shares issued by the Dover Cliffe Land Company.

219. Ibid., pp. 42 and 53. The Channel Collieries Trust held 50 of the 79 £10 shares issued by the Dover, St. Margaret's and Martin Mill Light Railway. This railway was in fact never built. (G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584).

220. Dorman Long Records A16/3369, op. cit., pp. 58, 60, 64 and 67.

221. The Colliery Guardian, 12 June 1914, p. 1317.

222. Dorman Long Records A16/3369, op. cit., p. 67.

223. Ibid., pp. 42, 80-83, 85 and 87. The rest of the paragraph is based upon this source.

acquired from the colliery company the right to work for five years the iron ore and chalk on the latter's lands. Apart from the Dover Colliery, it planned to sink a second colliery between Dover and St. Margaret's, either on land belonging to the Dover Cliffe Land Company, or at Bere Farm, which belonged to the Trust. This colliery would work the undersea coal leased from the government, and would be served by the Dover, St. Margaret's and Martin Mill Light Railway. A third colliery would develop the undersea coal between St. Margaret's and Deal, and sink shafts on the Channel Collieries Trust's land at Kingsdown. It also would be served by a branch line of the Light Railway. A fourth colliery, covering 3,000 acres, was to work coal inland on the estate of Lord Guilford. One suggestion was that blast furnaces, cement works and steel works should be erected on the top of the cliffs at Shakespeare, and be connected to the Dover Colliery by means of a shaft 20 feet in diameter, itself connected to a 200 yard tunnel leading from the colliery. In May 1912 Morison, who was in charge of the colliery, had estimated the cost of this at £4,000. As early as November 1911 it was proposed to build a harbour near the colliery, and estimates of the cost of construction ranged from £93,261 to £140,000. It was thought that the capital could be raised in Belgium, particularly as the Belgian government might take an interest in it, so that it could be used by mail steamers to get better attention than they were already receiving.

By 1914 it was clear that Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan intended to co-operate in establishing an iron and steel industry in Kent. Although the British steel industry passed through four lean years after 1907[224], there was then an improvement and it became more prosperous[225]. As the ore supplies of many of the older fields declined after 1880[226], there was

224. J. C. Carr and W. Taplin, History of the British Steel Industry (1962), p. 232.

225. Ibid., p. 236.

226. G. C. Allen, British Industries and their Organization (3rd edn. 1957), p. 95.

a growth in ore supplies from abroad, over half of which came from foreign mines owned by British firms, particularly in Spain and Scandinavia[227]. There was some development also of iron-ore mining in Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire, but these were inland and away from the main iron and steel producing centres of the country[228]. By 1913 nearly a third of all ore used by the British iron and steel industry was imported[229].

The years from 1900 to 1914 were also ones in which there was a strong tendency towards consolidation in the British steel industry[230]. This was due to technical progress, which necessitated the modernization of plant on a scale that was beyond the financial resources of all but the largest firms; to the growth of imports, and the general increase in world competition; to the need to ensure an economic supply of raw materials and fuel, the prices of which had tended to fluctuate violently; and to enjoy the advantages of an assured outlet for their finished products, and the advantages of wider sales organisation, particularly in export markets. On the north-east coast this tendency towards the elimination of the small iron and steel firms was particularly strong. The Dorman Long Company, which had started in a small way in 1876 when the big firms in the area were Bolckow Vaughan and Bell Brothers, had by 1902 completely taken over the latter company[231]. So in less than thirty years it had come to rival its giant neighbour Bolckow Vaughan, which had in the meantime grown by internal expansion.

One of the weightiest criticisms advanced against the steel industry before 1914 was its failure to develop the Midland orefield, but the ores

227. Carr and Taplin, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 191.

228. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 191 and 230-31.

229. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 237. Imports were 7.4 million tons, home production 16.0 million.

230. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 263-66. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

231. It was to acquire Bolckow Vaughan in 1929. (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 449).

of this area were highly phosphoric and only twenty to not much over thirty per cent in iron ore content[232]. This was a slightly lower grade than the Kent ore[233]. In addition the Kent ore was near the coast, so the higher grade imported ores that would be needed to blend with it could easily be imported, and Kent coal was a good coking coal for use in blast furnaces[234]. By coming together to try and develop an iron and steel industry in Kent, Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan were doing no more than carrying a stage further developments that were already taking place in the British steel industry in the years before 1914.

For Arthur Burr and the Concessions group the four years before the outbreak of war in 1914 were initially ones of optimism. New interest was being shown in the coalfield, and in the years 1911 and 1912 over £350,000 was raised in new share issues by the Concessions group, the greater part of which - nearly £250,000 - was by the East Kent Colliery Company[235]. But even though these shares were issued for cash, they were usually offered at a discount. In the case of the East Kent Colliery Company this was as much as 20 per cent[236]. After 1912 share issues were rare, and from that year onwards it became the normal practice to raise new capital by the issue of debentures. From 1912 to 1914 over £700,000 was raised in this way, including £150,000 by the Kent Coal Concessions, £168,000 by the East Kent Colliery Company, £79,000 by the South Eastern Coalfield Extension, £80,000 by the Guilford Syndicate, £125,000 by the

232. Ibid., p. 289-90.

233. Dorman Long Records A16/3369, op. cit., pp. 58-66.

234. The Joint Stock Companies Journal, 26 October 1910, p. 517.

235. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 29; See also Appendix C.

236. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 32.

Snowdown Colliery Ltd., and £120,000 by the Intermediate Equipments[237]. As with the shares these were normally issued at a discount: 10 per cent in the case of Concessions[238], 12½ per cent (plus an underwriting commission of 5 per cent) in the case of Intermediate Equipments[239], the Snowdown discount was from 10 to 20 per cent[240], and the Guilford Syndicate 15 per cent[241], while the South Eastern Coalfield Extension issued its debentures with a premium of 20 per cent on repayment[242], and the East Kent Colliery offered a premium of 5 per cent[243]. The actual <u>cash</u> received for these share and debenture issues was, therefore, considerably less than their nominal value. Even with the investment of these reduced sums one might have expected more progress than was actually made by the Concessions group. The problems that faced these companies before 1910 continued, however, and hoped for solutions failed to materialise, By the summer of 1914 their funds were completely depleted and they were in a precarious financial position[244].

The policy of acquiring mineral areas had been continued, and by May 1911 the bulk of the 150 square miles of the new coalfield that had been proved by borings was controlled by the Concessions group[245].

237. See Appendix C.

238. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 92.

239. Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 21.

240. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 34 and 52.

241. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 27.

242. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 35.

243. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 55.

244. Letter from Concessions company to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, 23 April 1915, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 115.

245. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 98.

Additional areas were acquired by the South Eastern Coalfield Extension[246], the Deal and Walmer Coalfield, a newly created company that took up areas near Oxney,[247] and the Extended Extension company[248]. These new acquisitions increased the liability of paying dead rents to the local landowners, and thereby helped to deplete the funds of the Concessions group[249]. These rents were usually low in the first few years, when it was expected that borings would be made and collieries sunk, but then increased steeply, when it was anticipated that they would merge into a tonnage royalty payable to the owner for each ton of coal extracted from his land. If the colliery failed to develop, then the Concessions group was left paying the rent but had no revenue from coal sales with which to meet the obligation[250].

Further borings proved the value of the newly acquired areas. The five made by the South Eastern Coalfield Extension - at Walmestone, Woodnesborough, Mattice Hill (Sandwich), Stodmarsh and Trapham (Wingham) - determined the northern and north-western limits of the coalfield[251]. All proved coal and entered carboniferous limestone beneath the coal at depths from 2,051 to 2,775 feet, and showed that the secondary rocks in which the most serious water problems had occurred thinned out to the north of the coalfield[252]. The cost of these borings was from £4,000 to £10,000 each[253].

246. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 44.

247. The Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 109782, items 59 and 79.

248. Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, item 17. The company acquired interests in the Trenley Park Estate (Chislet) and in the Ripple Area (Ibid., item 93).

249. Letter from Concessions company to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies 23 April 1915, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 115.

250. Evidence of John Dewrance, chairman of the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360), XII, p. 706.

251. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 141; Dr. M. Burr, 'Ten Deep Borings in East Kent', The Colliery Guardian, 10 October 1913, p. 731.

252. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 141 and 146.

253. Dr. M. Burr, op. cit., p. 733.

The last two were carried out entirely by a German firm, the Internationale Bohrgesellschaft of Erkelenz, as the Concessions group found Continental contractors to be superior to British firms[254]. Other borings by the Deal and Walmer Coalfield at Oxney and Maydensole, by the Extended Extension company at Ripple, and by the Concessions company at Stonehall also found coal[255].

Although the Concessions group, with a total area of 60,000 acres, controlled the greater part of the coalfield[256], it was unable to develop it, as the capital raised by shares and debentures was spread too thinly over the whole enterprise. Burr fully realised this in 1913 when he informed The Joint Stock Companies Journal that:

> "We have done more than has ever been done before, and done it with a relatively small amount of capital. It has all gone into the coalfield. If we had been content with 5,000 or 10,000 acres, we should probably be paying 100 per cent on our capital by now, but we did not see why we should prove the field for other people. We spent £180,000 on boring alone. No coalfield in this country has ever been bored to the same extent, and it is surely evidence of the character of what we have got that the big Continental people, advised by the leading experts, are willing to pay such large premiums as have never before been heard of. If only the shareholders could afford to wait, and my policy were continued, with ample capital, there are no limits to the fortunes that are in it."[257]

Burr's own attempts to develop the field had by the end of 1913 been unsuccessful. The £400,000 cash raised by the group before 1910 and the £950,000, less premiums and discounts, raised after then, proved insufficient. Optimistic talk of sinking six collieries at a cost of £150,000 each in 1904 had by 1913 become more pessemistic, with cost assessments of £500,000 to £1,000,000 each[258]. Between 30 April 1910 and

254. Ibid., p. 731.

255. Ibid., p. 731; The Colliery Guardian, 27 February 1914, p. 474.

256. Interview with Arthur Burr, The Joint Stock Companies Journal, 5 November 1913, pp. 541-42.

257. Ibid., p. 542.

258. Ibid., p. 542.

30 April 1913 the East Kent Colliery Company spent a further £262,004 in taking the three shafts to the coal[259], in addition to the £91,489 it had spent before then[260]. The final results were disappointing, as the coal in the 5 foot 2 inch seam was not suitable for domestic purposes. So it was proposed to sink two of the three shafts to the lower seams[261], for which purpose the £168,000 of debentures were issued[262]. By the beginning of 1914 the colliery was producing 2,000 tons of coal per week[263]. In April, however, water found its way into the workings and mining was suspended[264]. Three months later the company was in considerable debt, and a receiver was appointed on behalf of the debenture holders[265]. And this was the colliery on which the Concessions group had pinned its hopes for success in the coalfield generally[266].

At the Snowdown and Guilford Collieries the results were equally disappointing. Arthur Burr informed a meeting of Snowdown shareholders in August 1912 that by June £103,000 had been spent on developing the colliery[267]. From July 1912 to December 1913 this expenditure was increased by a further £96,300[268]. The "Beresford" seam at 1,490 feet was not reached until January 1913[269]. The coal, however, was of poorer quality

259. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O. T. 92735, item 61.

260. Ibid., item 26.

261. The Colliery Guardian, 6 June 1913, p. 1209.

262. See above p. 56.

263. The Colliery Guardian, 9 January 1914, p. 95.

264. Ibid., 9 April 1914, p. 801 and 24 April 1914, p. 912.

265. Ibid., 3 July 1914, p. 41.

266. See above p. 46.

267. The Colliery Guardian, 9 August 1912, p. 300; The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 30.

268. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 59.

269. The Colliery Guardian, 7 February 1913, p. 295.

than at Tilmanstone, and was equally unsuitable as a household coal[270], being rather firable and producing a large amount of slack[271]. So the company decided to follow Tilmanstone's example of sinking to the next seam to try and find a domestic coal[272]. A hard bright 3 foot 7 inch seam was met with at 2,236 feet and was thought suitable for domestic purposes[273]. More capital was, therefore, required for this development[274], even though in 1913 £117,542 of debentures had been issued[275], as by July 1914 only £102,062 of the company's share capital had been raised in cash[276].

The Guilford Colliery even failed to get to the coal measures. After raising a further £10,652 of share capital in cash in 1911 and 1912, making a total of nearly £40,000, the Guilford Syndicate raised £80,000 in debentures in 1912 and 1913, but at a discount of 15 per cent[277]. Expenditure on the colliery sinking was already £98,341 by the end of 1912, and the company had only been able to continue by borrowing £34,578 from the East Kent Contract and Financial Company[278]. No sinking was done in 1912 as the company was awaiting the completion of a branch line of the East Kent Light Railway which would link it to the main South East and Chatham Railway at Shepherdswell[279]. This new light railway company had

270. Ibid., 6 June 1913, p. 1209.

271. Ibid., 26 June 1914, p. 1494.

272. Ibid., 13 February 1914, p. 366.

273. Ibid., 22 May 1914, p. 1139.

274. Ibid., 26 June 1914, p. 1494.

275. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 59.

276. Ibid., item 64.

277. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, items 16, 21, 26 and 27.

278. Ibid., item 26.

279. The Colliery Guardian, 12 January 1912, p. 94; See below p. 64.

been formed by the Concessions group[280], and the line reached the colliery early in 1913[281]. Before this link the colliery company had to face heavy claims from the local authorities for extraordinary traffic which damaged the roads[282]. Sinking was resumed in February 1913, but was discontinued early in the following year because of water problems[283]. In the meantime Burr had adopted a different policy, and instead of developing the colliery himself, decided to try and sell colliery areas to other investors, who could then carry out the development themselves[284]. The mineral royalties would, of course, be retained by the Concessions group. Attempts to sell the Guilford Colliery in 1913 were, however, unsuccessful[285], but in May 1914 a contract was made by the Syndicate and the Concessions company with a French steel firm, La Compagnie des Forges de Châtillon Commentry et Neuves Maisons[286]. By this agreement Concessions sold to the French company a large mineral area, including 1,500 acres that had been leased to the Syndicate, and the Syndicate disposed of its interest in the colliery, for a total purchase price of £150,000, the sum to be divided between the two companies. The purchase was not completed, however, due to the outbreak of war.

This policy of trying to sell areas also applied to the undeveloped northern parts of the coalfield, where some preparatory sinking was done by the Concessions group after 1910. To carry out this work yet another

280. Ibid., 24 June 1910, p. 1237.

281. Ibid., 7 February 1913, p. 295.

282. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 26.

283. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

284. Interview with Arthur Burr, The Joint Stock Companies Journal, 5 November 1913, p. 542.

285. The Colliery Guardian, 18 July 1913, p. 140; The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 26.

286. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 34. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

company, the Intermediate Equipments Ltd., had been formed in October 1910[287]. Between formation and December 1912 this company raised over £64,000 of share capital in cash[288], with which it acquired two mineral areas of 1,500 acres each at Wingham and Hammill (Woodnesborough) from the Kent Coal Concessions, the South Eastern Coalfield Extension and the Extended Extension[289]. On these it started to sink two collieries[290] with the intention of doing a certain amount of development work and then selling them at a profit[291]. The Concessions company then promoted another company, the Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd., to acquire the Wingham area[292]. This new company issued only £1,250 of shares for cash, and £50,000 as fully paid to both the Intermediate Equipments and to the East Kent Contract and Financial Company[293]. The cost of sinking both the Wingham and Hammill (Woodnesborough) collieries was paid for by the Intermediate Equipments. By 31 December 1912 it had spent £62,552 on the former and £67,025 on the latter, including the cost of the colliery areas, which had been fixed at a total of £98,000[294]. The extra capital required over the

287. Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 7.

288. Ibid., item 20.

289. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 99.

290. Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 18.

291. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 225.

292. Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19864/114142, items 8 and 9. Technically the company was promoted by the Mines Construction Co. Ltd., another Concessions subsidiary, but the agreements with the latter company were transferred to Intermediate Equipments, (Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19864/114142, item 9, and Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 18). The Mines Construction Company, of which A. E. Ritchie and H. W. Marley were directors, remained completely inactive until dissolved in 1932. (Mines Construction Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19687/112249).

293. Ibid., items 11 and 19.

294. Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, items 18 and 20.

£64,000 of share capital, came from the issue in 1913 of £120,000 of debentures[295]. The company also lent with no security £29,000 of this money to the East Kent Contract and Financial Company, and £3,000 to the Extended Extension[296]. Both these companies had shares in the Intermediate Equipments, the Finance Company holding about a quarter of the total[297]. Very little progress was made with the sinkings at Wingham and Woodnesborough, however, apart from the erection of surface plant[298].

To facilitate the sinkings at Tilmanstone and Guilford, and to try to develop the coalfield generally, the Concessions group had in 1910 promoted the East Kent Light Railway[299]. This was to run from Shepherdswell on the South East and Chatham Railway to Eastry (via Tilmanstone Colliery), there the line was to branch, one section going to the Woodnesborough and Wingham Collieries and then joining the South Eastern and Chatham Railway to the east of Canterbury, and the other going to the River Stour at Sandwich (see Fig. O.1). A short branch line was to run from the Shepherdswell-Tilmanstone section to the Guilford Colliery[300]. In preparation for these developments Concessions and the allied companies bought 70 acres of land with river frontage on the Stour at Sandwich, so that they could load barges which could then take freight to London for only 1s. 9d. per ton[301]. By February 1913 the line had been completed from Shepherdswell to the Tilmanstone and Guilford Collieries[302], and by

295. Ibid., item 21. The discount on these was 12½ per cent and over.
296. Ibid., item 33.
297. Ibid., item 23.
298. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 225-26.
299. The Colliery Guardian, 24 June 1910, p. 1237.
300. Ibid., 24 June 1910, p. 1237.
301. Ibid., 19 May 1911, p. 1013.
302. Ibid., 7 February 1913, p. 295.

July had reached those at Wingham and Woodnesborough[303]. The line was expensive to build and was a further factor in forcing the Concessions group into virtual bankruptcy by the summer of 1914. The total expenditure on the line by 31 December 1913 was £221,456, and a further £13,740 was spent in 1914[304]. By December 1920 a total of 18 miles 27 chains had been completed at a total cost of £256,028[305]. The average cost per mile of the line was, therefore, £13,962, which was considerably higher than that for any other standard gauge line built under the Light Railways Act of 1896[306]. The reasons for this were that the E.K.L.R. was more substantially constructed than other light railways[307], and had the expense of putting a 500 yard tunnel through Golgotha Hill between Shepherdswell and Tilmanstone colliery. This tunnel was intended to take two-way traffic, but the second line was never completed[308]. Responsibility for the construction of the railway lay with the East Kent Contract and Financial Company[309], which had been formed in 1907 to raise capital to make loans to other companies in the group[310]. Whereas its activities had been reasonably successful before 1912, after that date it got into increasing difficulties[311]. By June 1914 it had raised some £49,947 of

303. Ibid., 11 July 1913, p. 90.

304. East Kent Light Railways Company B.O.T. 763 R, items 1 and 2.

305. Ibid., item 5.

306. W. J. K. Davies, Light Railways (1964), pp. 62-65. The average cost for lines opened between 1897 and 1912 was only £5,802 per mile.

307. Ibid., pp. 64-65. Its weight of rail and permitted axle-loads being higher than for other light railways.

308. P. Ransome-Wallis, On Railways at Home and Abroad (1951), p. 65.

309. The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18303/96059, item 26.

310. See above p. 46.

311. The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18303/96059, item 37. The company made substantial profits to 31 December 1912, but losses thereafter. To the end of 1912 it had paid a total of 110% on the ordinary shares and 150% on the deferred. (Ibid., item 26).

share capital in cash, and a further £33,183 on share premium account, but it had also borrowed £63,859 from various allied companies and lent £166,550 to others, including the East Kent, Snowdown and Guilford colliery companies[312]. In addition £190,660 had been spent on the construction of the East Kent Light Railway, which was expected to cost a total of £420,000[313]. By June 1914 the Contract Company had lost £35,429 on reselling shares and debentures in the Railway Company[314]. Burr had appreciated the dangers of carrying out the railway construction, which would require large cash resources, and he knew that any attempt to dispose of large quantities of the railway company's shares could only be done at a loss. Consequently he hoped to devise a scheme of "temporary finance"[315], which meant one of borrowing. By the summer of 1914 the accounts of the Contract Company were in a complete muddle[316], and the company decided to bring action against Burr for improper and/or fraudulent misapplication of its funds[317]. The claims against him came to £45,000. As no shareholders lists survive for the East Kent Light Railway it is not known who purchased the shares from the East Kent Contract and Financial Company. One can only assume that those who invested generally in the Concessions group between 1904 and 1914 were prepared to invest also in the railway.

Another venture that Burr engaged in at this time was the formation in 1911 of the South East Kent Electric Power Company, which obtained powers to supply electricity over a large part of east Kent, excluding

312. Ibid., item 37.
313. Ibid., items 26 and 37.
314. Ibid., item 37.
315. Ibid., item 26.
316. Ibid., item 37. Report of auditors to the shareholders, 8 July 1916.
317. Ibid., item 37. Directors' report to the shareholders.

the Isle of Thanet, Sandwich and Canterbury[318]. A power station was erected at Tilmanstone but it only ever supplied the colliery at rates that were considered by some members of the Tilmanstone board to be extravagant. So in 1916 the East Kent Colliery Company acquired the station in return for discharging a debt of £37,354 owed by the Power Company to Kent Coal Concessions[319]. The Power Company then remained dormant until it was acquired in 1923 by the County of London Electric Supply Company[320].

By 1914 the Kent Coal Concessions' £233,000 of share capital was held by some 3,000 investors[321], which made the average holding less than £100. The largest shareholder held no more than £4,406 and only twenty-one persons had investments of £1,000 or more. Most of the shareholders were private investors, and a large proportion of these lived in London and the home counties, although geographically they were much less concentrated in these areas than had been the investors in the earlier Kent companies. The larger shareholders included Sir John Dewrance, the chairman of the engineering firm of Babcocks and Wilcox[322], and, until his death in 1913, Francis Beresford Wright, a leading Derbyshire colliery proprietor and chairman of the Butterley Company[323], after whom the "Beresford" seam had been named at the Snowdown and Tilmanstone Collieries[324].

318. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 228-29; South East Kent Electric Power Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 115,638, items 3, 6, 13, 15, 25 and 33. The rest of the paragraph is based on these sources.

319. A further debt of over £5,000 with the East Kent Contract Company remained.

320. The Power Company subsequently obtained supply from Betteshanger Colliery near Deal. (See below Chapter 4, p. 231).

321. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 116. A clearer return made in 1915 gave the number of shareholders as 3,400. (Ibid., item 117).

322. Ibid., items 116 and 121.

323. Ibid., item 116; The Colliery Guardian, 12 August 1910, p. 313.

324. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 100.

A similar pattern of shareholders prevailed in the three other mineral companies - the South Eastern Coalfield Extension[325], Extended Extension[326] and the Deal and Walmer Coalfield[327]. With the development companies - the East Kent Contract and Financial Company and Intermediate Equipments - the same pattern prevailed, with the average shareholding being one of about £100[328]. Of the colliery companies, the East Kent had in 1913 £482,249 of share capital and about 5,000 shareholders[329], and Snowdown had £212,331 of shares and over 1,300 investors, but £97,113 of these were held by the Fonçage Syndicate[330], whose £20,000 of capital was held by 350 shareholders[331]. While the Guilford Syndicate's £40,000 of capital was owned by over 550 shareholders[332]. As a large number of investors held shares in several of the companies, it seems reasonable to assume that they also probably invested in the East Kent Light Railway Company.

325. £65,262 of capital and 740 shareholders, South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 61.

326. £43,815 of capital and 516 shareholders, Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, item 40.

327. £40,382 of capital and 378 shareholders, The Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 109782, item 35.

328. The East Kent Contract and Financial Company had £49,942 of share capital in 1912 and over 600 shareholders, The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18303/96059, item 26; Intermediate Equipments had £67,623 of share capital and 650 shareholders, Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 29.

329. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 61. Lord Merthyr (formerly Sir William Thomas Lewis), who upon his death was described by The Colliery Guardian (editorial 4 September 1914, p. 524) as "the most notable figure in the British mining industry in our times", held 9,000 5s. shares in the company. (B.O.T. 92735, items 52 and 61). Although his committment, presumably in the form of unsecured loans, would, according to The Colliery Guardian (11 September 1914, p. 576), appear to have been greater.

330. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 64.

331. The Fonçage Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17736/88435, item 24.

332. The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 26.

In the early part of 1914 some of the larger shareholders became dissatisfied with the way Arthur Burr was administering the Concessions group. So they formed themselves into a committee, and in August 1914 removed him from office[333]. In the preceding two years Burr appears to have pursued any policy that would keep him in control of the empire he had built. He tried to sell the undeveloped parts of the coalfield to a new company that he created, the United Coalfields of Kent[334], to promote an amalgamation of the four mineral companies of the Concessions group[335], and to sell further colliery areas to French investors[336]. The proposed acquisition of the undeveloped parts of the coalfield failed to materialise[337], and the amalgamation scheme came to nothing as Burr was reluctant to relinquish control[338]. The policy of selling colliery areas to French investors did, however, meet with some success, for, in addition to Guilford Colliery, agreements were reached for the sale of two other areas, at Adisham[339] and at Stonehall[340]. The purchase price for the latter was £150,000, and it was intended that the entire output of the proposed colliery should be shipped to France[341]. The 40 cottages erected by the

333. Letter from Concessions company to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, 23 April 1915, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 115.

334. The Colliery Guardian, 21 June 1912, p. 1258.

335. Ibid., 18 July 1913, p. 140.

336. The Colliery Guardian, 11 July 1913, p. 90 and 27 February 1914, p. 474.

337. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 247.

338. Ibid., pp. 255-56 and 260.

339. The Colliery Guardian, 11 July 1913, p. 90.

340. Ibid., 27 February 1914, p. 474, 20 March 1914, p. 642, and 27 March 1914, p. 695.

341. Ibid., 27 February 1914, p. 474.

Concessions company at Stonehall were not, however, included in the sale[342]. Although companies were formed to acquire the Adisham and Stonehall areas, payments, which were to be finalised on reaching workable coal, were delayed by the outbreak of war[343]. Both companies were owned by Jules Bernard and Mathieu Goudchaux, who were Parisian bankers[344], and had on their board of directors Arthur Capel, an English coal merchant with interests in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Hull, South Wales and London[345]. In June 1914 the President of the Board of Trade, in reply to a question in the House, informed Parliament that foreign companies or syndicates had acquired 16,000 acres of the Kent coalfield[346].

It might appear that the war disrupted the Concessions group's plans for becoming a profitable concern, but this was not the case. The companies were in fact saved from complete collapse by the war, as they persuaded their debenture holders to postpone interest, and landowners to postpone dead rent payments for their minerals until six months after the end of hostilities[347]. Despite its failures the Concessions group had been sufficiently active to encourage other competitors into the coalfield in the years after 1910. Although these were small by comparison, one of the new companies was to play an important part in developing the coalfield in the years after the war.

342. Ibid., 27 March 1914, p. 695. By February 1913 £50,000 had been spent by the Concessions group on three mining villages at Elvington, Woolage and Stonehall. (Ibid., 7 February 1913, p. 295).

343. Letter from Concessions Company to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies. 23 April 1915, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 115; Stonehall Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21588/130032, item 20.

344. The Adisham Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21543/129705, item 8. The Stonehall Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21588/130032, item 8.

345. The Adisham Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21543/129705, items 6, 8 and 18; The Stonehall Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21588/130032, items 6, 8 and 19.

346. The Colliery Guardian, 3 July 1914, p. 35.

347. See below p. 86.

In 1911 Arthur Burr had declared the "closing of the book" as far as the acquisition of further minerals was concerned[348]. By this time the Concessions companies controlled the greater part of the coalfield in east Kent. The only areas they did not possess were the coastal strip from Folkestone to Deal, the Betteshanger area to the west of Deal and the Ebbsfleet area between Sandwich and the coast[349]. Apart from these, Concessions and its allied companies controlled all the minerals in the area to the east of the Dover-Canterbury road and to the south of the River Stour.

Until 1909 there were only two undertakings in the coalfield - the Kent Collieries Ltd. at Shakespeare and the Concessions group in the areas already mentioned. In that year, however, the first of a new series of independent companies was formed - the Medway Coal Exploration Syndicate[350]. Ritchie believed that this company was formed as the Concessions group was expected to collapse, and that the landowners in Kent, therefore, sought another source of revenue to replace the one they feared they were about to lose[351]. The moving spirit of the company was Lord Harris[352], chairman of the Consolidated Coalfields of South Africa Ltd., and the company included other millionaires such as Welwyn Achille de Rothschild and Sigmund Neuman[353]. But the Concessions group did not collapse, and the Syndicate, with William Boyd Dawkins as its geological adviser[354], was

348. Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 223.

349. See Fig. 2.3.

350. The Medway Coal Exploration Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/12828/10348, item 4.

351. Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 214.

352. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 214-15.

353. <u>Daily Express</u>, 10 October 1910, cited in Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 215.

354. The Medway Coal Exploration Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/12828/10348, item 7.

forced to look westward for its coal. After making unsuccessful borings at Chilham and Bobbing (near Sittingbourne)[355] for a total cost of £35,000[356], the company, with a paid up capital of only £15,825[357], went into voluntary liquidation in 1912[358]. Meanwhile the areas where coal was more likely to exist, at Ebbsfleet and Betteshanger, had been acquired by other companies.

The Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate, which was formed in 1910[359], was the first company, apart from the Dover Colliery and the Concessions' group, to acquire worthwhile mineral areas in east Kent[360]. The promoters of the company were the St. Augustine's Links Ltd.[361], which had been formed in 1907 for the purpose of establishing a golf course in the area[362]. After 1902 there had been a considerable development of golf courses in this part of Kent[363]. The Ebbsfleet company purchased the freehold minerals under 777 acres of land near Ebbsfleet, abutting on Sandwich Haven[364]. As soon as the depths and thicknesses of the seams were ascertained, it was proposed that the coal should be sub-let to one or more colliery companies

355. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 215-16.

356. Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360), XII, p. 717.

357. The Medway Coal Exploration Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/12828/10348, item 17.

358. Ibid., item 19.

359. Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19653/111802, item 5.

360. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 216.

361. Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19653/111802, item 9.

362. St. Augustine's Links Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18278/95736, items 4 and 5.

363. Evidence of G. C. Solley, Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 733, q. 585. (Solley was a director of the Links company and the Ebbsfleet Syndicate).

364. Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19653/111802, item 9.

that the Syndicate would create[365]. The promoters of the Ebbsfleet company were three of the directors of the Links company - Ernest E. Wastall, J.P., a merchant of Wickhambreux (near Wingham), George E. Solley, a Richborough land agent, and George F. Vye, a Ramsgate merchant[366]. The Syndicate brought in as chairman Mark Robinson, an engineer from London[367]. By September 1914 it had a total issued capital of £20,590, and had made two borings - one at Ebbsfleet, and a second jointly with the Betteshanger Boring Company at Lydden Valley (Deal)[368].

After receiving a report from the geologist William Whitaker that coal measures would be found at Ebbsfleet at a depth of a little over 1,000 feet, the new company was naturally optimistic and expected to make very high profits[369]. Although the boring did find coal it was only a one foot seam at a depth of 1,100 feet, and indicated the north-eastern boundary of

365. Ibid., item 9.

366. Ibid., items 7 and 9.

367. Ibid., item 10. The same group, with G. C. Solley particularly prominent, also formed:

The Sandwich Haven Wharves Syndicate Ltd. in 1911, which was owned by St. Augustine's Links and had a capital of only £597 by the end of 1917. The company was dissolved in 1923. (P.R.O. BT 31/20100/116543);

The A Development Syndicate Ltd. in 1912, which was associated with the Ebbsfleet and Sandwich Haven companies, and was to acquire mineral options and engage in mining. It had a capital of only £1,381 by the end of 1918, and was dissolved in 1932 after ceasing to carry on any business for a number of years.(P.R.O. BT 31/20938/124411); and

Sandwich Freeholds Ltd. in 1913, to acquire freehold properties in the neighbourhood of Sandwich, as this was considered to be one of the towns most likely to expand as a consequence of the development of the coalfield. By the beginning of 1915 the capital totalled £3,000, with just over half in cash. The company was inactive for years and was dissolved in 1931. (P.R.O. BT 31/21715/131132).

368. Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19653/111802, item 33.

369. Ibid., item 9.

the coalfield[370]. The Syndicate decided, therefore, to turn its attention further south towards Deal, and this brought it close to Lord Northbourne's estate, whose minerals Kent Coal Concessions had long tried in vain to secure[371]. Successful borings by Concessions to the north (at Mattice Hill and Woodnesborough), to the west (at Tilmanstone), and to the south (at Ripple) had already established the value of the minerals under this land, and in 1912 the Betteshanger Boring Company had been formed to work them[372]. The new company was promoted by the Canterbury Drillers Ltd.[373], which had itself been formed in the previous year by Archibald Grove, a director of colliery and coal boring companies in Yorkshire, Henry Cawood Embleton, a Tyneside coalowner and Noel Philip Wentworth Brady, a London solicitor[374]. These three were soon joined as directors by Albert Farquhar, a mining engineer from Darlington, and by the Hon. Walter John James[375], the eldest son of Lord Northbourne[376], who was later replaced by his brother the Hon. Robert James, who was a director of coal and steel companies in Yorkshire, Durham and Barrow[377]. The Canterbury Drillers had by the end of 1914 raised only £2,550 of capital and had made no borings[378]. The Betteshanger Boring Company, with the same directors as the Canterbury Drillers[379], had by September 1914 raised £20,072 in share

370. Ritchie, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 218.

371. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 219.

372. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 248.

373. The Betteshanger Boring Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20904/124075, item 7.

374. Canterbury Drillers Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20339/118968, items 5, 6 and 25. (The original name of this company had been Chatham Drillers and Contractors Ltd.).

375. <u>Ibid.</u>, item 11.

376. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 4 October 1912, p. 687.

377. Canterbury Drillers Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20339/118968, item 25.

378. <u>Ibid.</u>, item 23.

379. The Betteshanger Boring Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20904/124075, item 2.

capital[380] and had completed two borings, one at Betteshanger (for £7,118), and the other jointly with the Ebbsfleet Syndicate at Lydden Valley (for £2,966)[381]. The Lydden Valley boring proved five coal seams of workable thickness, aggregating 20 feet 8 inches[382], while the one at Betteshanger penetrated coal measures at a depth of 1,100 feet, and proved a number of substantial seams of good quality before reaching 2,640 feet[383]. By January 1914 the Betteshanger Company had acquired 10,000 acres of minerals, including coal under the sea[384], and there was talk of establishing a colliery at West Street, near Finglesham, about half a mile north of the successful Betteshanger boring. Meanwhile the Ebbsfleet Syndicate was considering sinking its own colliery in the Lydden Valley, to the north-east of Betteshanger. The two companies' areas were to adjoin, and each was to work minerals under the sea to the north of Deal[385]. These proposals did not materialise, however, because of the outbreak of war[386].

The only other company to obtain a productive coal area in Kent before the First World War was the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coal Syndicate. This company was promoted in 1911 by Willi Peritz, a German merchant living

380. Shareholders included, apart from the directors, Arthur F. Pease, a Darlington coalowner, Lord Northbourne, the Ebbsfleet Syndicate and Herbert C. Hoover, who later became President of the United States. (Ibid., item 25).

381. Ibid., item 29.

382. The Colliery Guardian, 2 January 1914, p. 42.

383. Twelve of the seams exceeded 2 feet in thickness, and the total amount of coal aggregated 51 feet, 40 feet 7 inches of which was in the twelve main seams. Boring at Betteshanger Kent, Papers in the possession of Lord Northbourne.

384. The Colliery Guardian, 2 January 1914, p. 42.

385. Ibid., 30 January 1914, p. 259. This proposed site for the Betteshanger Colliery at West Street was about half a mile north-west of where the colliery was finally located.

386. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 221 and 249.

in London[387]. He and Sir John Lister Kaye, who had carried out negotiations with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at the request of Peritz[388], made the the benefit of these negotiations available to the new company. In addition Peritz procured the services of the Allgemeine Tiefbohr und Schachtbau Akteingesellschaft of Dusseldorf to make borings[389], and he found subscribers for £7,493 of shares in the new company[390]. In return Peritz and Kaye received 7,500 fully paid £1 shares[391]. The lease from the Ecclesiastical Commissoners was for 3,220 acres for 60 years, but by 1913 the company controlled a total area of 55,000 acres, 17,000 of which were under the sea, and 10,000 were held jointly with the Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd.[392]

Three borings made by the Anglo-Westphalian Syndicate - at Chislet Park, Chitty and Little Rushbourne - proved 26 feet of workable coal at depths of between 1,000 and 1,500 feet over an area of at least 7,000 acres[393]. As a result of these borings the Syndicate's mining advisers - Professor Krush of Berlin and Mr. Meacham - said that it would be justified in starting a colliery in the neighbourhood of Chislet[394]. The Syndicate

387. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, items 2 and 6. The company was called the Anglo Westphalian Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd. until April 1913, when it became the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield Ltd. Its name was subsequently changed to the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. in November 1914. (Ibid., items 27 and 34).

388. Ibid., item 13.

389. A British company, The General Deep Boring and Shafting Co. Ltd. (P.R.O. BT 31/20447/120023) was incorporated in 1912 and had Carl Seitz, managing director of the Allgemeine Tiefbohr, and Peritz as directors. The company, however, had a capital of only £2 and was dissolved in 1918.

390. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, items 8 and 13.

391. Ibid., item 8.

392. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 27 February 1913.

393. Ibid., 5 March 1912, 12 September 1912, and 27 February 1913.

394. Ibid., 24 May 1913.

decided, therefore, to form a subsidiary company, but as it had a subscribed capital of only £25,000[395], other investors had to be found[396]. Negotiations intended to raise the company's capital to £200,000 were concluded with the Austin Guarantee and Investment Company, a firm of underwriters that had backing from the Internationale en Koloniale Handelsbank of Amsterdam and, it was suggested, from banks in Germany[397]. The underwriting company also assisted in the formation of the subsidiary colliery company, which was to have a capital of £350,000, and in which it was intended that the Anglo-Westphalian company should have a large, if not controlling, interest[398]. The Syndicate then changed its name to the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield Ltd.[399] and issued £35,000 of its share capital to the Austin Guarantee and Investment Company for £63,000[400], a third of the shares being retained by that company and the rest divided evenly between Harcourt Sword Middleton, a London stockbroker, and the Internationale en Koloniale Handelsbank. By January 1914 the company had a total share capital of £62,000, with over 160 shareholders - the Austin Guarantee and Investment Company, Middleton and the Internationale Bank each holding about £10,000[401].

395. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 21.

396. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 27 February 1913.

397. Ibid., extraordinary general meeting, 7 March 1913; the North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 29. The Austin Guarantee and Investment Company which had a subscribed capital of only £50,000, also secured the right to appoint two directors to the Board of the Syndicate. This private limited liability company was formed in 1911 and dissolved in 1955. Its file was destroyed by the Board of Trade in 1963. (Austin Guarantee and Investment Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 115,150).

398. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, extraordinary general meeting, 7 March 1913.

399. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 26.

400. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes. 7 and 14 March 1913.

401. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 30. The position was unchanged in July 1914. (Ibid., item 33).

The Anglo-Westphalian (Chislet Kent) Colliery Ltd. was formed in November 1913, with the assistance of the Agency Assets Company, Harcourt Sword Middleton and another London stockbroker Athol Thorne[402]. The Agency Assets also agreed to underwrite £120,000 of the shares for a commission of 10 per cent payable in shares of the new company[403]. Joseph Shaw, the chairman of Powell Duffryn, who had fleetingly been a member of the Kent Collieries board in 1908-09, became the company's chairman[404]. The other directors included C.B.O.Clarke, a coal factor and member of the firm of Stephenson Clarke, William Mewburn, a director of the South Eastern Railway Company, Peritz, and Arthur Woolley-Hart, managing director of Glass Houghton Collieries in Yorkshire[405]. The colliery company acquired via the Agency Assets the lease of the Anglo-Westphalian Coalfield's 3,220 acres from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, together with 1,187 acres from the Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd.[406]. This latter company, which had been formed in 1912[407] to acquire freehold areas in Kent and to lease them to the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield,

402. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 16 and 37; The Chislet Colliery Ltd. Minutes, 10 December 1913, The company was called the Anglo-Westphalian (Chislet Kent) Colliery Ltd. until November 1914. The file of the Agency Assets Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 116154, cannot be traced at either the Board of Trade or at the Public Record Office.

403. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 22.

404. The Chislet Colliery Ltd. Minutes, 13 November 1913.

405. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 2, 4 and 6. Under an agreement dated 13 November 1913 the Agency Assets Company had the right to nominate two directors. (Ibid., item 31).

406. Ibid., item 16.

407. Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20729/122561, item 4.

soon came under the control of Sir John Reeves Ellerman, the shipowner[408]. It had as directors Woolley-Hart and Peritz, together with Carl Seitz, a German mining engineer, who was managing director of the Allgemeine Tiefbohr and of the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield company[409]. The Chislet company purchased the mineral rights from the Agency Assets for 36,000 fully paid £1 shares[410]. After these allotments 168,000 shares of £1 each had been taken up in the colliery company, including 120,000 for cash, on which £42,186 had been received by April 1915. The main shareholders in the company were then the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield (63,000), the Venture Trust (17,737)[411], the Austin Guarantee and Investment Company (17,270), the owners of Pelton Colliery Ltd. (11,000), and the Bulawayo & General Exploration Company (1906) Ltd. (7,453). The remaining 51,500 shares were held by over 170 other investors[412]. In addition to any profit on the colliery shares the Anglo-Westphalian Coalfield was to receive a royalty of 1d. per ton on the entire output of the undertaking[413].

408. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 239. By 30 June 1914 the Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd. had raised £14,159 of capital in cash - half of which was German - and, by means of raising mortgages on its property totalling £32,150, it had spent £45,798 on purchasing freehold land and buildings. The chief mortgagee of the company was Sir John Reeves Ellerman, the shipowner who held over two-thirds of the mortgages, the rest being held by Lloyds Bank. Nearly half the share capital was held by Germans, but with the outbreak of war this passed into the hands of Ellerman, who after the war controlled just over half the equity. (Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20729/122561, items 17, 20-22, 26-28, 31 and 39).

409. Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20729/122561, items 6 and 13.

410. The Agency Assets had acquired these minerals from the Anglo-Westphalian Kent Coalfield by promising payment to them of 30,000 of these shares. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 30, 31 and 35).

411. Harcourt Middleton was a director of the Venture Trust Ltd. (P.R.O. BT 31/21137/126286), which had been formed in 1913 and had a paid up capital of nearly £200,000 subscribed by a large number of shareholders. Another director was Col. Sir Howard Melliss, who joined the Chislet Board in 1915. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 5 January 1915).

412. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 37.

413. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 22 December 1913 (Second O.G.M.).

Preparatory work for the sinking of the colliery was started by the Allgemeine Tiefbohr in April 1914[414], but was suspended four months later on the outbreak of war[415]. The presence of the German sinkers together with the name Anglo-Westphalian (Chislet Kent) Colliery Ltd., and Peritz's presence in Canterbury, led the local press, not unnaturally, to assume that the Chislet Colliery was a German firm. Consequently, wild rumours spread that the concrete foundations put down for the boilers and heavy winding engines were in fact gun emplacements for Germans to shell Canterbury Cathedral[416]. The situation was finally resolved by Peritz and Seitz, who were German citizens, resigning their directorship[417], by the names of both the colliery company and its parent company being changed to the Chislet Colliery Ltd.[418] and the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. respectively[419], and by Joseph Shaw informing the press of the small extent of German involvement in the two companies[420].

Seven other companies were formed in the years 1912 to 1914 to search for coal in Kent, and all were forced to look in areas on the periphery of those of the Kent Coal Concessions. Five of them did nothing, or at the most very little, and went out of existence either during or soon after

414. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 6 April 1914.

415. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 14 June 1915.

416. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 October 1914 (Extraordinary G.M.); see also J. R. Raynes, Coal and Its Conflicts (1928), p. 142.

417. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 6 October 1914 and 1 December 1914; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 1 September 1914.

418. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 6 October 1914.

419. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 6 October 1914.

420. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 October 1914 (Extraordinary G.M.). Shaw declared that there was only one German shareholder, namely Peritz, in the Chislet company and but a few German shareholders in the North Kent Coalfield Ltd.

the war[421]. The Canterbury Coal Co. Ltd. however, initiated, in conjunction with Arthur Burr, a boring at Chilton on the Alkham-Folkestone road, a mile west of the Dover-Canterbury road and 1¼ miles south east of the Stonehall boring[422]. Coal was found but the ground was greatly faulted. The seventh company, the Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd., was the largest of this group and had a capital of £11,232[423]. It made one boring at Harmansole (Lower Hardres), which did not prove coal[424]. Some of these companies did reflect the growing interest being shown in Kent by industrialists from other areas. The Whitstable company, for example, had the Hon. Robert James, Arthur Woolley-Hart and Albert Farquhar as directors[425], all of whom were associated with other coal companies in Kent, Yorkshire and the north-east of England. While of the other six, the Kent Central Coal Estates had on its board T. H. Good, who was also managing director of the South Derwent Coal Company[426]. The Faversham Boring Company, which acquired options over land between Canterbury and Faversham, had Viscount Curzon as one of its directors, and its chief shareholders - with a total capital of less than £1,000 - were West Hartlepool shipowners[427].

421. Kent Outcrop Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20071/116280; The Chatham and Sittingbourne Exploration Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/13789/119454; The Kent Central Coal Estates Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20643/121785; Kent Coal Development Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/14075/127578; and Faversham Boring Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/22419/136903.

422. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 284-85.

423. Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21553/130009, item 16.

424. The Colliery Guardian, 7 August 1914, p. 326.

425. Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21553/130009, item 6.

426. The Colliery Guardian, 9 August 1912, p. 299.

427. Faversham Boring Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/22419/136903, items 3, 14, 15 and 17.

The outbreak of war in 1914 brought development work in the coalfield to an end. By this time two collieries, Tilmanstone and Snowdown, were producing coal for the market, but the Dover Colliery, after eighteen years of sinking operations, had still not reached this stage. For a year, however, work continued at the latter colliery, for which purpose a further loan of £315,000 was raised from the Channel Collieries Trust, at a discount of 10 per cent[428]. But as the water problem was still persisting, with even further quantities being encountered in a borehole put down from the shaft bottom, and as labour was scarce, it was decided, on the advice of the Channel Collieries Trust, to suspend attempts at coal getting and to devote attention instead to the ironstone. The watertight tubbing in the No. 3 shaft was, therefore, cut at the 600 foot level,and a road was driven into the 16 foot thick seam of ironstone, connecting it with the No. 2 shaft. After raising 2,350 tons of ore for testing, the Channel Collieries Trust considered it desirable to suspend operations till after the war. It agreed, however, to provide the funds necessary to keep the property intact by calling up the remaining 10s. on each of its £1 shares, thereby doubling its capital of £162,750[429]. Discussions then took place for the amalgamation of the Trust and the Kent Collieries[430], with the result that a merger of the two firms took place in 1917, when a new Channel Steel Company was formed to acquire their assets[431]. Shareholders of the two vendor companies received 545,610 fully paid £1 shares and 150,000 fully

428. Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668, item 61.

429. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343, item 33.

430. Ibid., item 63. The Trust held 72,514 of the Kent Collieries 139,923 £1 preference shares, but none of the 962,456 5s. ordinary shares.

431. Ibid., item 65; The Channel Steel Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 148537.

paid 1s. shares in the new company[432], and a further £50,000 was to be raised by Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan, in the ratio of three to one, to provide working capital[433]. Before the amalgamation scheme was completed the Share Guarantee Trust released the Channel Collieries Trust from its obligation to pay it a quarter of the total profits, in return for £5,000 of fully paid shares in the Channel Collieries Trust, and Tilden Smith resigned as a director of the Trust[434].

Having decided to concentrate on the iron ore at Dover, Dorman Long next sought to establish a colliery in the area. An attempt by the Channel Collieries Trust in 1915 to acquire the Tilmanstone Colliery, in the hope that the working of the iron-ore at Shakespeare could be started straight away, was unsuccessful[435]. Two years later, however, in December 1917, Dorman Long acquired mining rights over 2,870 acres of the Betteshanger area from the Betteshanger Boring Company for £30,000, with obligations to pay a super royalty of 1½d. per ton, less a 5 per cent allowance for coal used at the colliery[436]. Early in the new year, Sir Hugh Bell, who had become chairman of the Channel Steel company, informed shareholders that they had to open out the coalfield and deal with the ironstone, which was

432. G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584. Kent Collieries Ltd. received 429,655 £1 preferred ordinary shares and 129,374 1s. deferred ordinary shares, while the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd. received 113,500 of the preferred shares and 20,626 of the deferred. Other investors received 2,455 preferred shares.

433. Indenture made 19 June 1917 between the Dorman Group (A. J. Dorman, Sir Hugh Bell, Maurice Hugh Lowthian Bell and Dorman Long & Co. Ltd.) and Bolckow Vaughan & Co. Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/75.

434. The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., BT 31/19534/110343, items 39 and 41.

435. The Colliery Guardian, 7 May 1915, p. 977; see below p. 89.

436. Indenture made 31 December 1917 between the Betteshanger Boring Company and Dorman Long Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/1647.

the chief reason why Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan had joined the enterprise. It would be necessary, therefore, to erect steel works, and although it was really a speculative enterprise, in which they could all lose their money, he thought it had a reasonable chance of success[437]. Soon after the end of the war plans were made for sinking a colliery at Betteshanger to produce an output of 1¼ million tons of coal per year[438], which would be used to smelt the iron-ore raised at Dover[439]. This development did not take place in 1919, however, because of the reports of the Coal Industry Commission, in which a majority of the members, including its chairman Lord Sankey, came out in favour of the nationalisation of the coal industry[440]. Sir Arthur Dorman, presiding at the annual general meeting of Dorman Long Ltd. in December 1919, explained that they would have started the active development of their holdings during the past year, but for the uncertainty brought about by the Commission's findings, together with the absence of any defined government policy on the coal question. Although there was a reasonable prospect of obtaining a return upon capital commensurate with the risks involved, he did not feel justified in initiating any policy until the position was clearer. The whole matter had been put before the Coal Controller, in the hope of ascertaining whether they could secure an adequate guarantee from the government to justify investing the large capital sums involved, but they had been unsuccessful[441]. Even at this stage plans were not clearly defined, and Sir Hugh Bell was not certain how the steel industry would actually be developed in east Kent, although he thought it would depend much more on

437. The Colliery Guardian, 11 January 1918, p. 84.

438. Ibid., 30 May 1919, p. 1294.

439. Ibid., 14 March 1919, p. 612.

440. Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, pp. 4 and 13-14.

441. The Colliery Guardian, 24 December 1919, p. 1726.

imported ore than did other areas[442]. The general uncertainty continued throughout 1920 and no further developments were initiated for the time being by Dorman Long or the Channel Steel Company[443].

By the summer of 1914 the finances of the Concessions group had been completely depleted. To save the companies it was proposed to raise £90,000 in bonds to cover administrative expenses till after the war, and to sink one of the existing shafts on the coalfield right through the coal measures to prove conclusively the existence and quality of the coal. In this way it was hoped to interest English colliery proprietors and financiers, who were too cautious to accept just the evidence of the boreholes[444]. Maurice Deacon, the chairman of the Sheepbridge Coal and Iron Company, was in favour of this proposed deep sinking, as it was apparent to him that the investing public required stronger evidence of the commercial value of the coalfield than was available at the time, and, in view of the probable resumption of more normal conditions and of a revival in the coal trade after the war, he was strongly of the opinion that the intervening period could be wisely utilised in demonstrating beyond doubt the real commercial value of the coalfield[445]. After years when Burr was not sure whether to pursue a policy of trying to keep everything in his own control or to let independent companies acquire mineral areas and establish collieries, with the Concessions group just retaining mineral royalties, the new directors definitely embarked upon a policy trying to dispose of areas to outside investors.

442. Ibid., 2 January 1920, p. 47.

443. Ibid., 17 December 1920, pp. 1768-69.

444. Letter from Concessions company to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, 23 April 1915, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 115.

445. The Colliery Guardian, 29 January 1915, p. 242.

The Concessions group also reduced expenditure on administration[446] and persuaded creditors and debenture holders to allow them to postpone interest and repayment until six months after the war, and landowners to allow them to postpone payment of dead rents on minerals for the same period[447]. To obtain further funds three of the companies - the Kent Coal Concessions, the South Eastern Coalfield Extension and Extended Extension - raised £23,150 on mortgage from Sir John Dewrance, and sold surface lands, while retaining the mineral rights. With the proceeds they then bought minerals beneath other areas in order to acquire larger holdings to sell to prospective investors[448]. Any hopes of augmenting funds by recovering money from Arthur Burr were not realised. After bringing a successful action against him and being awarded £16,681, plus costs, the South Eastern Coalfield Extension had him declared a bankrupt for the non-payment of this sum[449]. Consequently the East Kent Contract and Financial Company dropped their claim alleging improper and/or fraudulent misapplication of over £45,000 of their assets[450], and the Concessions Company decided to take no action with their claims[451]. Burr died in 1919 at the age of 70[452], and although his business practices left much to be desired, it is extremely unlikely that without his efforts the coalfield would have been developed at all. Only a few years earlier Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a prominent shareholder in the Concessions companies, had written of Burr that:

446. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 118.

447. The Colliery Guardian, 29 January 1915, p. 242.

448. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 125 and 126.

449. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, items 66 and 67.

450. The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18303/96059, items 37 and 39.

451. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 118.

452. The Times, 2 September 1919, p. 13.

> "When the commercial history of this age comes to be written, his name will, I believe, take a high place as being the prime mover in a development which is destined to shift the whole industrial centre of gravity of England."[453]

Such hopes were not to be realised, although in the years after the First World War they were to be revived on a scale equal to the aspirations of Burr.

The £90,000 needed by the Concessions group to continue activities till the end of the war was raised in bonds by the four parent companies in the following proportions: Concessions 50 per cent, South Eastern Coalfield 23 per cent, Extended Extension 18 per cent, and the Deal and Walmer Coalfield 9 per cent[454]. The consent of the landowners, debenture holders and creditors to postpone claims till six months after the war had been conditional upon this loan being raised, otherwise the debenture holders would have exercised their claims to the assets of the various companies[455]. It was decided to make the sinking to the deeper seams, which was expected to cost £40,000, at the Snowdown Colliery[456], and work started there in April 1915[457]. The Snowdown company had agreed to pay the four parent companies for the cost of sinking to the Snowdown Hard seam at a depth of 2,240 feet by alloting to them prior lien bonds in the colliery at par. The rest of the sinking beyond that depth was, however, to be met by the parent companies at their own expense[458]. By March 1917 the No. 2 shaft was taken from a depth of 1,744 feet[459] to a seam 4 feet

453. Letter to The Joint Stock Companies Journal, 5 November 1913, p. 544.

454. The Colliery Guardian, 9 April 1915, p. 770.

455. Ibid., 29 January 1915, p. 242.

456. Ibid., 29 January 1915, p. 242.

457. Ibid., 1 April 1915, p. 719.

458. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 66 and 70.

459. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 118.

5 inches thick at 3,007 feet, when it was decided to stop the sinking[460]. The new seam was harder than the Beresford, but not as hard as Midlands coal. It was, however, a good coking coal[461]. Straightaway the colliery started to open up the Snowdown Hard seam, which had been reached by the colliery's other shaft just before the outbreak of war[462]. An attempt then, however, to sink the second shaft to the seam by raising £50,000 from share and debenture holders by issuing the prior lien bonds had proved unsuccessful[463].

In March 1916 Snowdown became the first Kent colliery to show a trading profit[464], the net amount for the year, before charging interest on debentures at prior lien bonds, being £8,999[465]. The profit was down in the following year[466], after which losses were made[467]. Some of these losses were, however, offset by payments from the Coal Controller, as after collieries were placed under government control in 1917[468], they were guaranteed in 1920 a return of 9 per cent on the capital they employed[469].

The Tilmanstone colliery also made profits during and just after the

460. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 70.

461. The Colliery Guardian, 27 April 1917, p. 820.

462. Ibid., 23 October 1914, p. 885.

463. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 66; The Colliery Guardian, 30 October 1914, p. 937 and 13 August 1915, p. 337.

464. The Colliery Guardian, 1 September 1916, p. 417.

465. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 68. After charging interest on the debentures and prior lien bonds the loss for the year was £10,837.

466. Ibid., item 70.

467. Ibid., items 72, 76 and 78.

468. The Colliery Guardian, 23 February 1917, p. 398.

469. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 76.

war. The receiver who had been appointed in September 1914 remained in charge of the colliery until December 1915, when the directors again took control[470]. An attempt to try and sell the colliery to the government on the grounds that it would provide good steam coal for the Admiralty's ships using Dover Harbour had been unsuccessful[471], and in December 1914 it was closed[472]. The following year was spent in trying to find a means of raising the necessary capital to restart the colliery on terms acceptable to existing share and debenture holders. An attempt by the Channel Collieries Trust to purchase the colliery was unsuccessful, as it only offered debenture holders £100,000 of 'B' debentures, or 65 per cent of the par value of their existing holdings, in a new company that would acquire the colliery. The opposition to the scheme was led by two local directors of the colliery, Arthur Wells, a Canterbury tailor, and George Thomas, a Dover ironmonger[473]. Efforts by the Trust to acquire the colliery by then taking the matter to the Court of Chancery were no more successful[474]. Led by Wells and Thomas the company decided to try itself to raise the necessary funds to re-open, and as a first step the share and debenture holders responded to an appeal to raise £1,500 for pumping operations to keep the colliery free from water[475]. The debenture holders then agreed to a reduction in their rate of interest to 6 per cent, to a cancellation of all payments due to them before 21 May 1915, and to the immediate issue by the company of £75,000 of second mortgage debentures,

470. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, items 64 and 67.

471. The Colliery Guardian, 4 September 1914, p. 533 and 9 October 1914, p. 784.

472. Ibid., 4 December 1914, p. 1185.

473. Ibid., 26 March 1915, p. 667 and 1 April 1915, p. 719; East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 69.

474. The Colliery Guardian, 21 May 1915, p. 1082.

475. Ibid., 26 March 1915, p. 667 and 1 April 1915, pp. 770-71.

with the right to issue a further £75,000 later[476]. On the first issue, however, only £50,000 was actually raised from existing share and debenture holders, but this was regarded as sufficient[477], and the directors resumed control of the colliery in December 1915[478]. Three new headings were started and efforts were made to get production back to normal[479], with the result that in 1917 the colliery began to show a net profit[480]. The following year Schneider et Compagnie, the French armaments manufacturers of Le Creusot, were granted a two months option over the remaining £75,000 of debentures, which would have enabled the colliery to follow Snowdown and sink its shafts to the 'Hard' seam[481]. But after having an inspection made of the colliery Schneider decided not to take it up[482].

The Schneider company was also keen to acquire control over minerals in other parts of the coalfield. It made an approach to Concessions and the allied companies for an option over 7,500 to 8,500 acres, including the Wingham and Stour Valley collieries, in which area they proposed to establish two collieries larger than those originally planned[483]. The agreement was, however, subject to certain modifications being made in the leases with the various landlords[484]. The terms were: £40 per acre

476. Ibid., 14 May 1915, pp. 1033-34.

477. Ibid., 9 July 1915, p. 83.

478. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 67.

479. Ibid., item 67.

480. Ibid., item 71. The net profit for the year 1917 was £2,848.

481. Ibid., item 71; The Colliery Guardian, 10 May 1918, p. 955, 24 May 1918, p. 1059, 31 May 1918, p. 1106, and 26 July 1918, p. 187.

482. The Colliery Guardian, 16 August 1918, p. 348.

483. Ibid., 12 July 1918, p. 84.

484. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 122.

freehold, £21 leasehold, with 80 per cent of the payment to come after the war. The manager of the Concessions group gave figures showing what would happen if all the companies' properties were sold on similar terms:[485]

	Assets	Liabilities	Surplus
	£	£	£
South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.	525,485	221,243	304,242
Extended Extension Ltd.	232,944	91,692	141,212
Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.	513,183	444,150	69,033

If the interest of the Dorman Long and the French groups in the Concessions companies' assets materialised, it looked as if some return would at last come to their shareholders.

French iron and steel firms had already shown an interest in Kent coal before the war and, with the German occupation of the steel producing areas of Lorraine and the coalfields of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais, this interest increased. Before 1914 the French iron and steel industry had been very dependent for coking coal on the Ruhr, and to a lesser extent upon England[486]. The only significant source of coking coal in France was in the Nord and the Pas-de-Calais, but it was worked by mining companies over which the iron and steel concerns could exercise relatively little control[487]. The result was a certain unevenness in supply of fuel, and the French firms believed, with some justification, that they were being discriminated against by German coal producers, who were to some extent, controlled by German iron and steel interests[488]. Already, before Schneider, three of France's largest iron and steel companies - Châtillon-Commentry, Marine et Homécourt and Pont-à-Mousson -

485. The Colliery Guardian, 19 July 1918, p. 135.

486. N. J. G. Pounds and W. N. Parker, Coal and Steel in Western Europe (no date), p. 157.

487. Ibid., pp. 204-05.

488. Ibid., p. 205.

had shown an interest in Kent coal[489]. During the war the occupation of France's main coalfields in the north induced an extensive search for coal by state engineers in the rest of France, but with very meagre results[490].

Iron ore in France was mined and smelted mainly in Lorraine[491], although some steel works had been established on the coast to facilitate the use of imported ores[492]. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, however, the iron ore deposits of Normandy attracted attention, and a small export trade developed through the port of Caen[493]. A large part of the initiative and capital for developing this trade came from the German industrialist, August Thyssen[494]. In 1913 340,000 tons of this ore was exported to Germany and 144,000 tons to Britain[495]. Thyssen also proposed to smelt the local ore with imported fuel and in 1910 formed the Société des Hauts Fourneaux de Caen, a company that had both German and French capital, and was pledged to exchange its Normandy ore for Ruhr coal, and to establish steel works near the ore field. The blast furnaces were erected soon afterwards at Colombelles on the Orne estuary, between Caen and the coast, and came into production in 1916, by which time however the war had severed the link with the Ruhr[496]. During the war Schneider played

489. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, item 13. Schneider was also amongst the eight largest iron and steel firms in France. (Duncan Burn, The Economic History of Steelmaking 1867-1939 (Cambridge 1961), p. 424).

490. Annales des Mines, ser. 11, XI, pp. 379-80, cited in Pounds and Parker, op. cit., p. 256.

491. Pounds and Parker, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

492. Ibid., p. 155.

493. Ibid., pp. 166-67.

494. Ibid., p. 167; Department of Overseas Trade, Report on Economic Conditions in France (1923), p. 72.

495. Department of Overseas Trade, op. cit., p. 72.

496. Pounds and Parker, op. cit., p. 167.

a leading part in taking over the Hautes Fourneaux de Caen, and Kent was one of the areas it looked to for obtaining coal supplies[497]. With the German occupation of Lorraine the ore deposits of Normandy became of even greater importance to the French steel industry[498]. After the war the proposed manufacture of iron and steel in Kent by Dorman Long and Bolckow Vaughan would, as we have seen, have created a demand for imported ore, some of which could have come from Normandy and Brittany. The vessels bringing this ore could then have taken Kent coal as a return cargo to French ports and thereby gained important economies in sea-freight[499]. Other works on the Atlantic coast included Les Dunes, near Dunkirk, which had been built in 1913 by the Forges et Acieries de Firmany, one of the five steel companies that formed the Guilford Waldershare company to acquire the Guilford Colliery[500]. A proposal to build a steel works at Rouen was prevented by the outbreak of war[501]. Nevertheless the managing director of the Société des Hautes Fourneaux de Rouen was also on the board of the Guilford Waldershare company[502]. The co-operation of the French steel companies over the Guilford Company was one example of the greater co-operation that was taking place generally amongst French steel firms in the years before 1914. In France interlocking directorates and

497. Department of Overseas Trade, _op. cit._, p. 92.

498. Pounds and Parker, _op. cit._, p. 167.

499. Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission,P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, p. 717. Forster Brown had been negotiating with Concessions on behalf of Schneider. (Evidence of John Dewrance, chairman of Concessions, _ibid._, p. 708, q. 17, 305).

500. Department of Overseas Trade, _op. cit._, p. 94; Pounds and Parker, _op. cit._, p. 172; Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, item 13.

501. Pounds and Parker, _op. cit._, p. 155.

502. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, item 14.

family connections amongst officials of different firms were clearly evident, as were the existence of cartels, although these were weaker than their German counterparts[503]. This greater consolidation of companies increased during and after the war[504].

The problem for the French steel industry after the war was still expected to be one of obtaining an ample supply of coking coal. French capital was invested in the new Campine coalfield of Belgium, with the Schneider, Pont-à-Mousson, Micheville and Marine companies having interests in collieries there. Pending repairs to collieries in northern France it was expected that coal imports from Britain would continue at their pre-war level[505]. Because of the destruction of mining districts in France and Belgium post-war development was expected in the Kent Coalfield[506], particularly as there was a great similarity between the Kent coal and that of northern French collieries, which would enable it to be used easily in France, as furnaces and other equipment would not have to be adapted[507].

The purchase of the Guilford area by Châtillon-Commentry was completed in February 1919, when the first instalment of the £150,000 purchase price was paid[508] to the Guilford Syndicate and the Concessions company, which were to divide the money equally between them[509]. To take over the running of the colliery, the Guilford and Waldershare Colliery

503. Pounds and Parker, op. cit., pp. 320 and 329-30.

504. Department of Overseas Trade, op. cit., p. 41; Pounds and Parker, op. cit., p. 336.

505. The Colliery Guardian, editorial, 9 May 1919, pp. 1091-92.

506. Ibid., 1 September 1916, p. 417.

507. Ibid., 27 July 1917, p. 170.

508. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 125; The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18177/94456, item 34.

509. The Colliery Guardian, 19 December 1919, p. 1658.

Company had been formed in June 1917[510] with a capital of £240,000, which was held in equal proportions by seven French coal, iron and steel companies - Anonyme des Hantes Fourneaux et Fondries de Pont à Mousson, Société Anonyme des Acieries de Micheville, Compagnie des Forges de Châtillon, Commentry et Neuves Maisons, Compagnie des Mines de Fer Magnétique de Mokta-el-Hadid, Compagnie des Forges et Acieries de la Marine et Homécourt, Compagnie des Forges et Acieries de Firminy, and Compagnie des Mines de Noeux[511]. Leon Levy, the general manager of the Châtillon Commentry, became president of the Guilford Waldershare company[512]. The unwatering of the Guilford pits was started by Châtillon in February 1919 and was completed the following month[513]. Sinking was then resumed by using the cementation process[514]. Although this work continued throughout 1919, development elsewhere in the coalfield was held up because of the threat of nationalisation[515].

The Concessions group was depending on the Schneider option going through, but there was initial delay with the Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries' area over the obtaining of a standard lease from the hundred landowners concerned[516]. The offer was never finally completed because of the uncertainty created by the government control of the mines, to which were added the depreciation of the franc and the fact that the company was able to find greater facilities elsewhere[517], presumably in the Campine

510. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/ 147701, item 7.

511. Ibid., item 13.

512. Ibid., item 14.

513. The Colliery Guardian, 21 February 1919, p. 439 and 14 March 1919, p. 612.

514. Ibid., 2 May 1919, p. 1034.

515. Ibid., 11 July 1919, p. 110.

516. Ibid., 3 January 1919, p. 37.

517. Ibid., 10 December 1920, p. 1697.

coalfield of Belgium. The allied victory had placed Schneider in the front rank of French and allied industrialists, and it was some indication of the standing of the company after the war that the head of the firm, Eugene Schneider, became in 1918 the first foreigner to be elected president of the British Iron and Steel Institute[518].

The Coal Commission was also held responsible for the failure of plans the Snowdown company was making in 1919 to sell its colliery to an un-named French group, which may have been Schneider[519]. In addition no further attempts were made after the war to develop the Stonehall and Adisham collieries, both of which areas had been acquired in 1913-14 by French investors[520].

After the failure of Schneider to take up the option on £75,000 of its debentures, the East Kent Colliery Company did not take any steps in 1919 towards procuring the necessary funds to enable it to sink two of the three Tilmanstone shafts to the lower seams, again because of the uncertainty over government policy towards the ownership of mines and minerals[521]. The company was precluded by its agreement with the debenture holders from using current revenue for the sinking[522], so before

518. Joseph-Antoine Roy, <u>Histoire de la Famille Schneider et du Creusot</u> (Paris, 1962), p. 105.

519. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 72; <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 3 January 1919, p. 40 and 2 January 1920, p. 47.

520. See above p. 69; Christopher Buckingham, <u>Lydden: A Parish History</u> (Dover 1967), p. 75; H. G. Dines, 'The Sequence and Structure of the Kent Coalfield', <u>Summary of Progress of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and the Museum of Practical Geology for the Year 1932</u>, Part II (1933), p. 43. A borehole was, however, put down after the war at Adisham for Schneider under the supervision of E. O. Forster Brown. (See E. O. Forster Brown, 'On Waters in the Kent Coal-Field and their Incidence in Mining Development', <u>Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers</u>, Vol. CCXV, Session 1922-1923, Part i (1923), p. 67.

521. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 73; <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 28 November 1919, p. 1446.

522. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 28 November 1919, p. 1446.

trying to embark on further development work it decided to first raise output and build houses for its employees[523].

The fear of nationalisation was not made any easier in Kent by the publication in 1919 of A. E. Ritchie's The Kent Coalfield: its Evolution and Development. After giving very fair treatment to Arthur Burr - "the man to whom more than any other the coalfield owes its existence"[524] - Ritchie was critical of the "magnates of the coal industry", who failed to exhibit to any marked degree that "spirit of private enterprise upon which so much stress was laid during the recent Coal Inquiry before Mr. Justice Sankey," He added that "so far as concerns Kent, they had no part nor lot in its discovery, nor, until quite recently, in its development"[525]. After criticising the ignorance of these "coal kings" on all matters concerning Kent, he concluded that:

> "... as private enterprise has proved so inadequate, and notwithstanding that I am opposed to the principle of nationalisation being applied to the old-established coal-fields, I believe that the experiment might well be made in Kent."[526]

Ritchie had, of course, been involved in the promotion of the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation in 1899[527] and of the Concessions group after 1901[528], and was in 1919 a director of the Snowdown Colliery[529]. However justified were his criticisms about lack of enterprise in developing the coalfield before 1920, they were not applicable in the

523. Ibid., 20 September 1918, p. 611.

524. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 86.

525. Ibid., p. 286.

526. Ibid., p. 297.

527. The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956, item 19.

528. Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16626/69839, item 8.

529. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 51 and 76.

subsequent years.

Of the various companies formed before 1914 that were independent of the Concessions or Shakespeare groups none, apart from the Chislet and North Kent Coalfield companies, engaged in any activities during or after the war[530]. At Chislet the sinking continued but with increasing difficulty, because of a shortage of men, and the cost of materials rising very considerably, which meant that the work could not be carried out for the amount originally estimated[531]. The original estimate had been £120,000, but already by May 1916 this had risen to over £158,000[532]. Three years later it was reckoned that the wartime delays had cost well over £50,000, some items of plant had by the previous year risen from 90 to 200 per cent since the beginning of war[533]. By May 1919 over £250,000 had been spent on the colliery, which was, however, then producing coal[534]. Financing this extra expenditure in wartime was not easy. By May 1918 the company had called up £114,891 of share capital in cash and had debts of over £46,000[535], £21,750 of this had been borrowed on short term notes[536], which carried 7 per cent interest and were to be repaid in five years at a 10 per cent premium[537]. In the following year it was decided to increase

530. Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19653/111802, items 40 and 41; Canterbury Drillers Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/20339/118968, item 29; Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/21553/130009, items 17, 22 and 30; Faversham Boring Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/22419/136903, items 17 and 23.

531. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 30 March 1915. (First A.G.M.).

532. Ibid., 2 May 1916. (Second A.G.M.).

533. Ibid., 14 May 1918. (Fourth O.G.M.).

534. Ibid., 6 May 1919. (Fifth O.G.M.).

535. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 41.

536. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 1 August 1916, and 1 May 1917. (Third A.G.M.).

537. Ibid., 30 May 1916.

capital by £120,000, and all the shares, which were raised through the Austin Guarantee and Investment Company, were allotted for cash[538]. This, however, was not enough and, with plans to erect 400 houses at Sturry and to build a 'new village' of 800 houses, it became necessary to issue £250,000 of 8 per cent debentures[539], on which £120,297 had been called up by June 1920[540], when it was decided to increase share capital by a further £100,000, making a total of £450,000[541].

In order to meet various liabilities, the North Kent Coalfield was forced to sell Chislet shares, and between May 1917 and June 1919 it reduced its holding from £58,500 to £42,300[542]. The North Kent company increased its own capital to £103,000, however, by issuing 41,000 £1 shares, and later in 1919 acquired over £32,000 more Chislet shares, to take its holding to 76,963 out of a total of 334,000[543].

Apart from financial difficulties the sinking was also interrupted by very severe weather in the winter of 1916-17[544], and then by government intervention, when in 1917 the Coal Controller ordered work to be stopped[545].

538. _Ibid._, 8 and 16 April 1919; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 44 and 47. 30,000 shares were allotted to Athol Thorne, 16,000 to Robert William Hudson, and 13,150 to the North Kent Coalfield. Hudson had been a member of the soap manufacturing firm of R. S. Hudson of Liverpool and West Bromwich, which had been acquired by Lever Bros. Ltd. for £1 million in 1907-08. (For details of this acquisition see Charles Wilson, _The History of Unilever_, Vol. I, (1954), p. 120. Further information supplied by Mr. G. J. Davies, Secretary of the Chislet Colliery Ltd., 1926-46).

539. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., _Minutes_, 28 May 1920.

540. _Ibid._, 25 June 1920.

541. _Ibid._, 25 June 1920. (Sixth A.G.M.).

542. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., _Minutes_, 1 May 1917, 17 June 1919. (Eigth A.G.M.) and 31 May 1917.

543. _Ibid._, 17 June 1919 (Eigth A.G.M.) and 25 June 1920 (Ninth A.G.M.); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 61.

544. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., _Minutes_, 1 May 1917. (Third A.G.M.).

545. _Ibid._, 1 May 1917 (Third A.G.M.), and 6 November 1917.

Permission was given to resume operations, however, early in 1918[546]. The method of sinking used was a modification of the dropshaft system, as the freezing of the quicksand and upper water bearing strata was considered too expensive. Cement was pumped in under pressure to consolidate the first 225 feet of ground by filling up the fissures through which water might penetrate[547]. Despite these difficulties the North pit reached the 7 foot seam at a depth of 1,432 feet in December 1917, and coal winding started in August of the following year[548]. Of the colliery companies existing in Kent in 1920, Chislet was the only one to survive the further setbacks of the next few years.

546. Ibid., 12 February 1918.

547. The Colliery Guardian, 29 October 1915, p. 893.

548. Ibid., 20 February 1920, pp. 517-19.

CHAPTER 3

INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, 1921-46: THE INDUSTRIALISTS' TAKEOVER OF THE COALFIELD

At the end of the First World War the coal mining industry was booming. Within two years, however, it had entered upon a period of contraction which was to last for the greater part of the inter-war years. The period of expansion and prosperity that had helped to bring the Kent Coalfield into existence was, therefore, at an end. In this less favourable economic climate the Kent Coal Concessions and its allied companies, with their meagre financial resources already overstretched, stood little chance of attracting the further capital that was essential if they were to continue in business and develop the coalfield themselves. The small investor had already lost heavily in Kent coal enterprises and he was not prepared to risk his funds further. The coalfield was saved from decline only because the large industrialists, who had already appeared on the Kent coal scene, were prepared to come forward at this stage to invest the very large sums necessary for further development. Already after 1919, once the prospect of nationalisation following the Sankey Report had passed, Dorman Long Ltd. had started to increase its Kent interests beyond the Shakespeare Colliery and Channel Steel Company areas, and in 1922 it was to form an alliance with Weetman Pearson, First Viscount Cowdray, one of the world's leading civil engineers and contractors, to acquire control over the greater part of the coalfield[1]. Their ambitions did not stop there, however, as they also planned to erect steel works in the area. Although these steel plans were not to materialise, their new company, Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., was the giant which was to dominate the coalfield before nationalisation. Its only rivals were

1. Including the Snowdown Colliery.

Richard Tilden Smith, who, newly enriched from wartime industrial activities, was to actively re-emerge onto the Kent coal scene in 1925 to obtain control of the Tilmanstone Colliery[2], and the Chislet Colliery Ltd., which was to experience serious financial difficulty until 1929, when it was taken over by its chief creditor and sales agents, Stephenson Clarke Ltd. By this time Stephenson Clarke had itself become part of the Powell Duffryn group of coal companies.

During the war difficulties in the production and distribution of coal had led to all mines being placed under government control in February 1917[3]. At the same time the general increase in prices had led the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to press for cost of living wage increases, which after government control had been granted at the same fixed rate for all districts[4]. At the end of the war there had been a further wages claim, this time for a 30 per cent increase, linked to a demand for a reduction in the working day from eight to six hours, the full maintenance at trade union rates of wages for all mineworkers unemployed through demobilisation, and the nationalisation of the mines[5]. The government decided to appoint a commission of enquiry, on which the

2. He had left it in 1917 when the Channel Steel Company was formed to take over the assets of the Kent Collieries Ltd. and the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd. (See above Chapter 2, pp. 82-83). Although he still retained a sizeable holding of debentures in the East Kent Colliery Company, which owned the Tilmanstone Colliery before 1925. (See below p. 154).

3. Sir R. A. S. Redmayne, The British Coal Mining Industry during the War (Oxford 1923), p. 93.

4. R. Page Arnot, The Miners: Years of Struggle (1953), pp. 162-63 and 171; J. R. Raynes, Coal and Its Conflicts (1928), pp. 159-61; Finlay A. Gibson, A Compilation of Statistics (Technological, Commercial, and General) of the Coal Mining Industry of the United Kingdom, the Various Coalfields thereof, and the Principal Foreign Countries of the World (Cardiff, 1922), p. 146.

5. J. R. Raynes, op. cit., pp. 160-61.

M.F.G.B. and the coalowners would be represented, to report on these matters, and to inquire into the position of the coal industry generally[6].

This Commission, in its interim report in March 1919, was in favour of an increase in wages and a reduction in hours, and all members of the Commission, except the three representatives of the coalowners, were highly critical of the existing system of ownership. While the six commissioners nominated by and in consultation with the M.F.G.B. favoured nationalisation of the mines, even Mr. Justice Sankey, the Commission's chairman, and the three government nominees condemned the existing ownership and working of the industry, and recommended substituting some other system, either nationalisation or a method of unification by national purchase and/or by joint control[7]. As a result of this report an advance of 2s. per day in wages was granted, and hours per day were reduced from eight to seven[8].

As we have seen already, the uncertainty resulting from this report had an inhibiting effect upon capital investment in Kent[9], as well as in other coalfields[10]. When the Commission entered the second phase of its investigation it began to take evidence relating to the Kent Coalfield. According to one witness total investment in the area up to the end of 1918 had come to just over £3,500,000. As a result of this expenditure 40 borings had been made, totalling 90,000 feet, which, together with seven colliery sinkings totalling 19,000 feet, had proved a coalfield of some 250 square

6. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 217.

7. Coal Industry Commission, Vol. I, Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the First Stage of the Inquiry, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 359) XI, pp. 379-80, 385 and 393-95. (Hereafter referred to in text as the Sankey Commission).

8. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 218.

9. See above Chapter 2, pp. 84 and 95-97.

10. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 231; I. Lubin and H. Everett, The British Coal Dilemma (1927), p. 42; J. E. Williams, The Derbyshire Miners (1962), pp. 549-50.

miles - 105 of which contained some 1,370 million tons of coal - and iron ore deposits estimated at 120 million tons. In addition two collieries were in production and a third was operating from one shaft[11]. As John Dewrance, the chairman of Kent Coal Concessions, informed the Commission:

> 'Pioneer work is the very opposite of a mature industry. It is of an exploratory and intensely speculative character. Its success, in the present state of development of the coal industry, wholly and fundamentally depends on the special knowledge and courage of the adventurers, their readiness to risk always, and frequently to lose capital and face vicissitudes, often in the face of discouragement and scepticism from experts in the industry.'[12]

Of the 40 boreholes put down in Kent, 7 had proved to be outside the coalfield, 16 had been successful, and, of the remainder, 13 had proved seams of secondary importance, while 4 had not reached the coal measures. The boreholes which had given negative results represented large sums of unproductive expenditure. Dewrance added that:

> 'Even after payable coal has been proved the pioneer frequently has to wait a considerable period before a colliery company is forthcoming to undertake the sinking and establish a colliery. In the meantime where minimum rents are payable the pioneer company has to bear these, also the cost of administration, the maintenance of its options, and leases, and the loss of interest on capital, which in every case extends over a considerable period of years, and in the event of failure a total loss of capital.'

In Kent the pioneer companies had leased 60,000 acres on which up to

11. Evidence of Edward Otto Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence on the Second Stage of the Inquiry, P.P. 1919, (Cmd. 360) XII, pp. 715, 717, 718D, qq. 17, 693-6.

    Similar pioneering work had taken place in the concealed coalfields of South Yorkshire and Northern Nottinghamshire in the years after 1905. In the former 18 borings costing £167,000 had proved 300 square miles of coal, equal to about 40 per cent of the proved Yorkshire field in 1905; while in the latter £170,000 spent on 18 borings had disclosed 100 square miles of hidden coalfield. (Evidence of John Dewrance, ibid., pp. 705-06).

12. Evidence of John Dewrance, ibid., pp. 705-06.

£2 per acre per annum, totalling £120,000, was payable as dead rent[13]. Although a large majority of the several hundred landlords had agreed to forgo these dead rents during and for three months after the war, they were only held in abeyance and the companies were still liable to pay the arrears, which were a debt over the company[14].

With the uncertainty resulting from the Commission's interim report both Dewrance and an eminent consulting engineer, E. O. Forster Brown, emphasised the problem in Kent of not having the proven areas taken up as quickly as possible by companies such as Schneider, Châtillon-Commentry, and Dorman Long, which were prepared to acquire minerals from the pioneer companies and establish collieries but were first awaiting the Commission's final report[15].

The final reports could not have been worse for the immediate development of the Kent coalfield. The six M.F.G.B. representatives advocated public ownership of the collieries, which was accepted in principle by the chairman's report[16]. These, together with the three government and the three coalowners' representatives, all recommended the nationalisation of mining royalties[17]. On 18 August 1919, however, the prime minister informed Parliament that the government accepted the policy of state purchase of mineral rights in coal, but not of nationalisation of

13. Ibid., p. 707, qq. 17,283-90. As Dewrance was appearing on behalf of all the Kent boring companies and the Channel Steel Company, it would appear that the 60,000 acres referred to not just the Concessions group.

14. Ibid., p. 707, q. 17,294; p. 714, qq. 17,538, 17,540-1, 17,545, 17,547, 17,553.

15. Ibid., p. 708, q. 17,324; p. 714, q. 17,547; Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown, who was consulting engineer to Dorman Long, Bolckow Vaughan, the Channel Steel Company, and Schneider (Ibid., pp. 715-17).

16. Ibid., pp. 4 and 13-14.

17. Ibid., pp. 4, 13-14, 20 and 25.

the collieries[18]. Despite this pronouncement nothing was done to acquire mineral royalties for nearly twenty years.

Although wartime coal prices had been high, post-war ones, in the boom conditions that followed the end of hostilities, were even more so[19]. By the terms of the legislation placing the mines under government control, however, standard profits, based upon pre-war experience, had been guaranteed to the colliery owners[20]. Of any surplus above this standard, 80 per cent was to be paid to the government, 15 per cent was to be paid to the Coal Controller to constitute a pool from which to meet any deficiencies in the guaranteed profits of other companies, and 5 per cent was to be retained by the colliery owner[21]. In 1920, the year in which the post-war boom reached its peak, the government decided that the powers of the Coal Controller should be transferred to the newly created Mines Department at the Board of Trade, and that control of the industry should cease altogether on 31 August 1921[22]. Towards the end of 1920 the

18. Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 119, col. 2001, (18 August 1919).

19. For details of coal prices in the years 1913 to 1926 see below Chapter 4, Table 4.3. The rise in export prices was even more stagerring: from 13s. 6d. f.o.b. in 1914 to 30s. 3d. in 1918, 47s. 3d. in 1919, and 79s. 11d. in 1920. (Gibson, op. cit., pp. 157-58).

20. R. H. Tawney, 'The Abolition of Economic Controls, 1917-21', Economic History Review, XIII (1943), pp. 20-21. Under the Munitions of War Act businesses were allowed to calculate their pre-war standard profits by selecting the best two out of the three years preceding the war. Because of the abnormal prosperity of the coal trade before the war, this arrangement worked out very well for the owners. Colliery companies not earning profits at the pre-war rate were entitled to receive a statutory minimum return of 9 per cent on capital invested. (Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 64-66; G. D. H. Cole, Labour in the Coal Mining Industry (1914-1921), (Oxford, 1923), p. 54).

21. Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 94-95. A slight modification had been made by the Coal Mines Control Agreement (Confirmation) Act of 1918 in that certain reductions were to be made if output fell below the pre-war standard level.

22. Tawney, op. cit., pp. 8 and 12.

coal trade began to become depressed[23] and by January 1921 the industry was beginning to incur losses that the government was obliged to make good[24]. So instead of continuing control of the mines to the pre-arranged date the government returned them to the owners five months early on 31 March 1921. The colliery companies reacted to the situation by making sharp reductions in wages that precipitated a national coal strike, which lasted from April till July 1921[25]. The dispute was finally settled by a national wage agreement that providèd machinery to automatically adjust wages in line with trading profits[26]. The worst of the depression that overtook other heavy industries after 1920 was, however, temporarily avoided by the coal industry as a result of a series of accidents. For the second half of 1921 the industry was busy making good the arrears of demand resulting from the three month stoppage. The following year export orders increased because of a major coal strike in the United States, and in 1923 because of the reduction in German output resulting from the French occupation of the Ruhr. So it was only in the second half of 1924 that the true post-war position of the industry began to be seen[27].

With the removal of the threat of nationalisation and the ending of government control, one of the constraints on further capital investment

23. Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. I, P.P. 1926, (Cmd. 2600) XIV, p. 3. (Hereafter referred to as Royal Commission of 1925 or Samuel Commission).

24. Tawney, _op. cit._, pp. 22-23.

25. Page Arnot, _op. cit._, Chapter X.

26. Mines Department, _Second Annual Report of the Secretary for Mines for year ending 31st December 1922 and the Annual Report of H.M. Inspector of Mines_, p. 6. (Hereafter referred to as Mines Department, _Annual Report 1922_, etc.).

27. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, p. 4.
The year 1923 was in fact an extremely prosperous one for the coal industry. (_Ibid._, p. 218).

in the Kent Coalfield was removed. Once again investment depended solely on the question of whether the prospective rates of return were sufficiently attractive to induce investors, both corporate and individual, to risk their savings. We have seen that the true post-war position of the coal industry was not revealed until 1924, while the extremely prosperous wartime years had, despite the high levels of taxation, enabled many colliery companies to accumulate a considerable volume of funds, for which they were seeking suitable investment outlets. The profits in 1915 and 1916, for example, had easily surpassed the average for the years immediately preceeding the war, which had been the most prosperous in the whole history of the coal trade[28]. (See Table 3.1). Another important factor in favour of the coalowners was that the terms of the Coal Mines Agreement (Confirmation) Act of 1918, by which the wartime financial arrangements were continued, did not apply to subsidiary undertakings such as coke ovens and blast furnaces carried on in conjunction with collieries, as these had been specifically excluded by an amendment passed during the committee stage of the Bill. Consequently the very high profits made during the remainder of the control period on the working of these subsidiary enterprises, estimated at £6 million per annum, continued to be retained by the coalowners in addition to the standard profits under the Act[29]. The vastness of the sums realised as profits in the coal industry during the war years had, needless to say, loomed large throughout the Sankey Inquiry[30]. Once the danger of nationalisation stemming from this Inquiry had passed, however, their re-investment in the industry began to occur, and Kent was one of the coalfields that benefitted.

28. Cole, op. cit., p. 52.

29. Cole, op. cit., pp. 53-54 and 83-84.

30. Ibid., p. 83.

Table 3.1: Profits of Colliery Working in Great Britain, 1910-20

Year	Total Profits excluding royalties (1)	Total Profits at 1911-13 Prices (2)
	£m	£m
1910	10.0	10.5
1911	9.3	9.3
1912	15.2	15.2
1913	22.0	22.0
1914	15.5	14.8
1915	21.4	17.0
1916	37.8	25.6
1917	27.7 (3)	15.5
1918	29.5 (3)	14.4
1919	30.4 (3)	13.7
1920	35.0 (3)	13.9

Notes: (1) In the five years ending 1913, after deducting depreciation direct before charging royalties and interest, profits were £19m. Deducting royalties of £6m. a profit of £13m. remained, equivalent to just under 1s. per ton on 270m. tons raised. (Evidence of Arthur Lowes Dickinson, Financial Advisor to the Coal Controller, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. I, Reports and Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 359) XI, p. 299, qq. 47 and 49).

(2) Index of Retail Prices, years 1911-13 inclusive.

(3) These years do not include profits on coke ovens and by-products, estimated to be a further £6m. per annum. (Cole, op. cit., pp. 83-84).

Sources: Cole, op. cit., p. 245. Figures for 1910-17 are based on evidence submitted by Mines Department to Coal Commission, 1919; figures for 1918-20 are estimates made by Finlay Gibson.

Index of Retail Prices: London and Cambridge Economic Service, The British Economy: Key Statistics 1900-1964, Table C, p. 8.

The two companies operating in the coal industry that were to play important roles in the development of the Kent Coalfield from 1921 onwards, Dorman Long & Co. Ltd. and the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. Ltd., had been extremely prosperous during the war years. As was the case with many other colliery owning companies these two firms used the profits they had made for re-investment in other concerns. The developments in Kent must therefore be seen against this new post-war wave of amalgamation in the British coal industry[31]. Owing to strict control during the war and to the fixed profits of the entrepreneurs there was no special incentive to carry out extensive amalgamations. But immediately after the war when prices, and chiefly export prices, began to soar higher and higher, many concentrations took place in the industry. These were proceeding steadily up to 1921, to the moment when prices suddenly collapsed. After this the concentration movement was greatly retarded.[32] Exceptions to this trend were the advance of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. in Kent and the absorption of the Windsor Coal Company by Powell Duffryn[33]. The latter company also extended its activities in the Kent Coalfield. The next wave of

31. The first wave of combination had taken place between the years 1864 and 1873, when prices generally, and coal prices in particular, were rising. These circumstances had facilitated the formation of new companies and the amalgamation of existing ones. After this very profitable period declining prices had resulted in a stopping of the amalgamation movement for nearly fifteen years. These early amalgamations had developed at first within the boundaries of one valley or one district. The second great wave of concentration had come about at the turn of the century, but even then there was still a strong tendency towards the combination of undertakings within the same district. Although some interests did outgrow the boundaries of a district, these had been the exception rather than the rule. Just before the war had come another short spell of amalgamation, which had consisted mainly of the consolidation of already existing units, and the further absorption of small companies by the larger. The amalgamations of the giants came later. (A. M. Neuman, Economic Organization of the British Coal Industry (1934), pp. 149-51).

32. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 2, Minutes of Evidence, p. 972, q. 15,896, cited in Neuman, op. cit., p. 151.

33. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 151-52.

concentration was to come in the years 1927-30, partly as a result of the emphasis laid upon amalgamation by the Samuel Commission of 1925[34]. Among the new concerns then formed was the Powell Duffryn Colliery Co. Ltd., which secured 36 pits employing 25,100 men, and united the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Company, the Great Western Colliery Company, the Lewis Merthyr Consolidated Colliery Company, the Cardiff Collieries Company, and the Taff Rhondda Navigation Steam Coal Company[35]. The district was still, as in the past, the dominant boundary for amalgamation and was exceeded only in exceptional circumstances. In all districts leading companies controlled a large proportion of the total output, but usually these firms had few interests in other areas. On the other hand, the biggest concerns in the various districts were often connected by means of interlocking directorates, which were usually the effect of the penetration of capital coming from one source into several coalfields[36].

As we have seen the financial difficulties of the two collieries working coal on the areas of the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. and its allied companies, together with the growing debt burden of unpaid interest on debenture stock and unpaid dead rents to landlords, were forcing the Concessions group to dispose of its areas to any company or companies that would seek to work them. Although the options held by Schneider had not been exercised the group was not unduly pessimistic. To sell options and leases, however, it was first necessary to modify the terms of existing leases in favour of the lessees, particularly with regard to dead rents, as the leases had originally been granted on very

34. Ibid., p. 152.

35. Ibid., p. 153.

36. Ibid., pp. 155-56.

onerous terms[37]. No prospective developer would have wanted to acquire these leases from the Concessions group with the obligation to make back-payment of several years' dead rents. So the group had entered into negotiations with the hundreds of landowners involved in east Kent to modify their terms. Although the majority of landowners were prepared to accept terms more likely to secure development, some were not. As a result the directors, on behalf of the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., the South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., and the Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., were advised to present a Bill in Parliament giving power to the allied companies, in default of agreement with the lessors, to apply to the Board of Trade to have the terms of the leases varied[38]. Negotiations with the landlords must have improved, however, as they decided to postpone proceeding with the Bill[39].

Towards the end of 1921 the allied companies entered into a provisional agreement with the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. to transfer to the latter the benefit of colliery leases and options comprising over 14,000 acres in the areas of Stodmarsh, Woodnesborough, Wingham, Walmestone and Canterbury. (See Fig. 3.1). These areas were in close proximity to, and in places interlaced, those of the North Kent Coalfield at Chislet Colliery[40]. The following year, however, these negotiations fell through because of the weak financial position of the North Kent company[41].

37. The Colliery Guardian, 16 December 1921, p. 1681. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source unless otherwise stated.

38. The Colliery Guardian, 25 November 1921, p. 1487 and 16 December 1921, p. 1681; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 127; Intermediate Equipments Ltd., B.O.T. 112108, item 37.

39. The Colliery Guardian, 24 February 1922, p. 485.

40. The Colliery Guardian, 16 December 1921, p. 1681 and 23 December 1921, p. 1745. Included in the negotiations was the granting of leases underlying 2,350 acres of the allied companies' freehold lands.

41. The Colliery Guardian, 6 October 1922, p. 848; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 129; The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 27 June 1923 (Twelfth O.G.M.).

Fig. 3.1: Mineral Areas, Boreholes and Colliery Development in Kent, 1925

Fig. 3.1 continued:

Note: The Betteshanger Colliery (sinking) is incorrectly shown and should be half a mile S.S.W. of the site indicated.

Source: Evidence of T. H. Bailey, on behalf of Pioneer Companies, to Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendix No. 13, Plan No. 3.

No sooner had the negotiations with the North Kent Coalfield come to an end than new ones were entered into with Dorman Long & Co. Ltd. These were successfully concluded in June 1922[42] and approved by the shareholders of the allied companies four months later[43]. At a time when the coal industry appeared to be fully recovering from the 1921 depression, Dorman Long agreed to acquire from the Concessions group some 17,466 acres of leasehold and 2,374 acres of freehold minerals in the northern part of the coalfield between Canterbury and Sandwich. In addition to transferring their own mineral areas the allied companies were to assist Dorman Long in acquiring a further 6,248 acres of minerals from other vendors, including the North Kent Coalfield and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, so that the whole area of 26,089 acres could be divided into six sub areas, each of which was capable of making an effective colliery site. The six areas were Woodnesborough, Wingham, Walmestone, Stodmarsh, Canterbury and Fleet (see Fig. 3.1), and Dorman Long was bound to purchase each as soon as the vendors were able to deliver the leases in the agreed form, except that the obligation to take the Canterbury and Walmestone areas did not become operative until two other areas had first been acquired[44]. Within three years of purchase of an area Dorman Long was obliged to sink a pair of shafts in it. To help procure the leases a joint committee of the vendor companies and Dorman Long was formed. The cost of acquiring these areas from the Concessions group was to be £75,798, £2. 10s. being paid for each

42. Agreement 30 June 1922 between Kent Coal Concessions & Others and Dorman Long & Co. Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/136; The Colliery Guardian, 6 October 1922, p. 848. The rest of the paragraph is based on these sources unless otherwise stated.

43. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 129.

44. The Stodmarsh and Canterbury areas were subsequently allocated to Chislet. Agreement 31 December 1924 supplemental to Agreement 30 June 1922 between Kent Coal Concessions & Others and Dorman Long & Co. Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/277.

acre of leasehold land transferred and £1 for each acre of freehold[45]. This payment was in monetary terms about the same as the total expenditure of the allied companies in acquiring and proving these areas:

	£	s.	d.
Cost of acquisition of leaseholds	29,420	4	6
Proportion of overhead and boring expenses for freeholds and leaseholds	14,880	15	0
Dead rents paid and recoupable	30,269	18	11
	£74,570	18	5

The profit was to be made by the Concessions group obtaining a royalty of 7½d. per ton on coal mined from the freehold areas and 1½d. per ton on that from the leasehold areas. It is important to note that this 1½d. per ton - referred to in Kent as a 'super royalty' - was payable to the Concessions companies even though they would no longer have any property rights in the land from which the coal was extracted[46]. After this agreement the position of the allied companies was as follows:

45. Except in the Fleet area where the payment on leasehold land was to be £3, while there were provisions placing the Canterbury area in a different category.

46. The complexity of these Kent mining leases was to cause subsequent difficulties to the drafters of the legislation for the nationalisation of mineral rights in 1938. It proved impossible to nationalise the right to 'super royalty' payment as it did not depend on ownership of any minerals. Even after the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1946 'super royalties' continued to be paid for a while by the National Coal Board to the holders of such rights. (See below Chapter 6).

	Areas Sold		Cash to be paid by Dorman Long	Remaining Areas	
	freehold	leasehold		freehold	leasehold
	acres	acres	£	acres	acres
K. C. Concessions	844	2,876	20,720	2,446	4,753
S. E. Coalfield	1,149	13,307	46,574	955	3,623
Extended Extension	341	1,140	7,990	1,461	2,369
Deal and Walmer	-	141	514	617	1,352
	2,334*	17,464*	£75,798	5,479	12,097

* These figures differ slightly from the ones given earlier.

After these agreements the Concessions group ceased to play an important role in the development of the coalfield.

Dorman Long had also entered into an agreement in 1917 with the Betteshanger Boring Company to acquire for £30,000 some 2,870 acres of leasehold minerals in the Betteshanger area, the greater part of which belonged to Lord Northbourne and his son[47]. This agreement entitled the Betteshanger Boring Company to a super royalty of 1½d. per ton on all coal extracted from these areas and a further super royalty of ½d. per ton on foreign coal - i.e. coal extracted from other areas but brought to the surface via those previously controlled by the Betteshanger Company[48]. Four years later, in 1921, Dorman Long had also agreed to purchase the mineral interests of the Betteshanger Boring Company in the sea coal area east of Sholden for £17,750 plus 2d. per ton super royalty. This agreement had made the total area transferred by the Betteshanger Boring Company to

47. See above Chapter 2, p. 83.

48. Lord Northbourne and his son were also entitled to the coal royalty as owners of the minerals under 2,230 of these 2,870 acres.

Dorman Long 4,732 acres[49].

At the time of concluding the agreement with the Concessions group Dorman Long entered into another with the Whitehall Securities Corporation Ltd. to form a new company to develop the Kent coalfield on an extensive scale[50]. Whitehall Securities was the main holding company of Weetman Pearson, Viscount Cowdray[51], whose contracting firm of S. Pearson & Son had built Dover Harbour for the Admiralty at the turn of the century[52]. The initial moves in the formation of this alliance had come from Sir Hugh Bell and Sir Arthur Dorman approaching Lord Cowdray and asking him to join them[53]. Sir Hugh Bell and Lord Cowdray knew each other well not only through their enterprises in Kent[54] but also through the Liberal Party, of which they were both prominent members[55], while Sir Arthur Dorman

49. Indenture made 19 April 1921 between Betteshanger Boring Co. (Vendors) and Dorman Long (Purchasers), Dorman Long Records A16/1648.

50. Agreement made 13 July 1922 between Dorman Long and Whitehall Securities Corporation, Dorman Long Records A16/69.

51. J. A. Spender, Weetman Pearson, First Viscount Cowdray, 1856-1927 (1930), pp. 242 and 248; Desmond Young, Member for Mexico: a Biography of Weetman Pearson, First Viscount Cowdray (1966), p. 239.

52. Spender, op. cit., Chap. XII. For further details on Lord Cowdray see below p.122-24.

53. The Kentish Observer, 22 May 1924, p.8.

54. Apart from building Dover Harbour S. Pearson & Son had regularly undertaken other contracting work in the Dover area. (Spender, op. cit., pp. 288-90). Also before the war Cowdray had sold to the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., which was controlled by Dorman Long, his sizeable holdings in the Dover Cliffe Land Co. Ltd. and the Dover, St. Margaret's and Martin Mill Light Railway in order to enable the Trust to gain control of these two companies. (Report made by Bolckow Vaughan on the Kent Coalfield in 1914, pp. 42, 46-7, 53, Dorman Long Records A16/3369). No subsequent development of the Dover Cliffe Land Company's 744 acres ever took place, however, and the Dover, St. Margaret's and Martin Mill Railway was never constructed over this land. (G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584).

55. The Kentish Observer, 22 May 1924, p. 8; also information supplied by Mr. Cecil Reed, who was private secretary to Lord Cowdray from 1903 to 1927.

was by origin a Kent man[56]. It was intended that the new company, which was to be called Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., would develop not only the coal but also the ironstone near Dover and would establish in the area 'a thoroughly modern Iron and Steel Plant with a capacity up to five hundred thousand tons of finished steel per annum'[57]. It was estimated that this scheme would cost not less than £6 million, and the two parties were to provide the first half of this sum in equal proportions. The new company was to purchase from Dorman Long for £457,000 its freehold areas and minerals, leases and options to take leases in Kent, and a controlling interest in the Channel Steel Company, which had acquired the Shakespeare site in 1917[58]. From the Whitehall Securities Corporation it was to obtain for £46,000 further shares in the Channel Steel Company[59]. No development of the latter company's assets had taken place, however, since 1917[60].

The overall plans of Pearson and Dorman Long were summarised in a

56. Sir Arthur Dorman had been born at Ashford in 1848 and had gone as a youth with £1,500 of capital to work in a small iron plant at Stockton-on-Tees. (<u>The Kentish Observer</u>, 22 May 1924, p. 8; Charles Wilson, 'The History of Dorman Long: An Essay', reproduced from April 1957 issue of <u>Steel Review</u>; Asa Briggs, Victorian Cities (1963), p. 271).

57. Agreement made 13 July 1922 between Dorman Long and Whitehall Securities Corporation, Dorman Long Records A16/69. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source unless otherwise stated.

58. The latter depended on Bolckow Vaughan being willing to forgo their option on them. Dorman Long already held a controlling interest in the Channel Steel Company with 262,441 preferred ordinary shares of £1 each fully paid and a further 37,493 on which 9s. 6d. had been paid, together with 640,130 deferred ordinary shares of 1s. each fully paid. The total share capital of the Channel Steel Company consisted of 545,610 preferred ordinary shares of £1 each and 3,000,000 deferred ordinary shares of 1s. each. All these shares were fully paid apart from the 37,493 already mentioned. With the takeover of Bolckow Vaughan in 1929 Dorman Long acquired a further sizeable interest in the company. (G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584).

59. 20,504 preferred ordinary shares of £1 each and 78,743 deferred shares of 1s. each.

60. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 22 December 1922, p. 1547.

memorandum prepared by Lord Cowdray in May 1922[61]:

> 'Messrs. Dorman, Long & Co. and the Whitehall Securities Corporation have entered into an equal partnership for the purpose of creating a great coal, iron and steel industry in Kent, and that such undertaking or undertakings shall be at least as completely self-contained as Messrs. Dorman, Long's own existing business is, or as any other company in the same business may be, such as, for example, the Consett Iron Co.
>
> The broad idea is that the partnership, when its undertakings are finally developed, shall consist, *inter alia*, of the following branches:
>
> 1. The ownership or control of collieries producing 4,500,000 tons of coal per annum if sufficient coal areas can be obtained by purchase or under lease on reasonable terms to produce that output for a period of, say, 75 years.
>
> 2. The requisite coke works with their by-products, plants, chalk quarries, brickworks, etc.
>
> 3. Blast furnaces for an output of 500,000 tons of pig iron or its equivalent per annum.
>
> 4. Steel works and mills for rolling plates and sections of a capacity that will take and turn out as finished products the iron produced by the blast furnace.
>
> 5. Such railways, rolling stock, wagon constructing and repair shops as may be needed.
>
> 6. Such foundry or foundries as are required for the purposes of their own company and for absorbing and turning into marketable costings such of their surplus pig iron as can be most profitably turned into saleable products. For instance, Kent might produce cast-iron pipes and a lot of the cast-iron building fittings used by London and the surrounding country. Also the segments for the Channel Tunnel and the underground railways could be turned out in Kent as well as anywhere.
>
> The partnership should be in a position to take contracts if necessary for the erection of part of the structural steel it produces.
>
> 7. An interest in or the ownership of such foreign iron ore companies as may be thought desirable with a

61. Spender, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-43.

view to supplying their own ore required for mixing with Kent ore.

8. The housing of the work-people and employees of the company and the amenities required in connexion with the various villages and townships.

9. The construction or interest in a shipping port or ports and also in shipping.'

At first both Dorman Long and Lord Cowdray were favourably placed to provide the new company with a major part of the initial capital it required. As we have seen Dorman Long had shared in the general prosperity of the war years. The high coal prices that prevailed during and just after the war, however, had made the dependence of the iron and steel companies on coal a source of considerable financial embarrassment. So the companies had begun to acquire their own collieries, with the result that by the end of 1920 there was not a single important iron and steel group which did not own collieries[62]. In many ways the coal industry became to an increasing extent an auxiliary of the iron and steel industry[63]. By the early 1920's Dorman Long was a company of enormous size. Although its chief assets were to be found in Yorkshire and Durham, particularly in the Middlesbrough area, it also had extensive connections overseas[64]. As we have seen already Dorman Long had found it necessary near the turn of the century to acquire control of sources of raw materials and had started a policy of amalgamation[65]. It was not until the post war years, however, that it entered upon an extremely rapid period of expansion, using wartime profits for investment in other companies in

62. D. J. Williams, Capitalist Combination in the Coal Industry (1924), pp. 87-88.

63. Ibid., pp. 97-98.

64. Ibid., p. 120.

65. See above Chapter 2, pp. 54-55.

order to acquire control over them. Until 1922 its investments in other companies steadily outpaced the increase in its own works, despite encouragement to expand the latter by direct subsidy from the government[66]. The company's progress in the decade 1913 to 1923 was as follows:[67]

Year	Capital and Reserves (including debenture capital)	Own Collieries Plant etc.	Investments in other companies
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
1913	2,079	871	695
1918	4,035	1,802	2,406
1919	5,531	2,534	2,610
1920	7,519	3,127	3,619
1921	8,915	3,491	4,601
1922	9,130	3,377	5,022
1923	12,619	9,462*	776*

* In 1923 Dorman Long completely absorbed four subsidiary undertakings: Bell Brothers Ltd., the Carlton Iron Company, Sir B. Samuelson & Co. Ltd., and the North Eastern Steel Company[68].

These figures, however, included some 'watering' or over inflation of capital. In 1920, for example, Dorman Long had acquired the Carlton Iron Company for £950,000 at a time when the latter had a capital of only £400,000[69]. There was also over capitalisation by the issue of 26 per cent of bonus shares in the years 1917 to 1920[70]. In the coal mining

66. D. J. Williams, op. cit., pp. 121 and 144.

67. Neuman, op. cit., p. 65; D. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 144. Neuman's sources are: The Statist, The Stock Exchange Year Book, and The Stock Exchange Gazette.

68. D. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 121.

69. Ibid., p. 158.

70. Ibid., p. 160.

industry generally the high profits of the war and immediate post war period were used not to reconstruct and reorganise the technical structure of the industry, but to extend the power of the large companies by the acquisition of subsidiary undertakings at over inflated prices[71]. As a result of these developments Dorman Long had by 1923 an annual coal output of about two million tons, one ninth of the country's total steel producing capacity, and extensive iron reserves estimated at 53 million tons[72].

Dorman Long's partner in the new company, Viscount Cowdray, was head of the engineering firm of S. Pearson & Son. Cowdray, who was born in 1856, had taken over control of the family firm in 1884[73], and by the turn of the century he had become recognised as the leading contractor in the world[74]. From 1899 onwards an important part of this contracting work had become concentrated in Mexico, where the company's activities had included the construction of the Grand Canal to drain Mexico City, the building of Vera Cruz and Salina Cruz Harbours, and the laying of the Tehuantepec Railway linking the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards of Mexico[75]. These achievements had made Pearson a public figure in Mexico and in 1901 acting for the first, and perhaps only, time on impulse he had decided to diversify his activities in the country by entering the dangerous field

71. Neuman, op. cit., p. 149; D. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 162.

72. D. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 122.

73. Spender, op. cit., pp. 2 and 13.

74. Young, op. cit., p. 2. His firm had constructed railways, tunnels, docks, harbours and reservoirs throughout the world and had been responsible for many important schemes for drainage and water supply, while during the war it had extended its activities into building munitions factories in Britain and France and providing sea and land defences on the east coast of England. (A list of all contracts carried out by S. Pearson & Son between 1854 and 1926 is given in Spender, op.cit., Appendix I, pp. 286-90).

75. Spender, op. cit., pp. 84-123.

of oil prospecting[76]. The gamble had paid off and Pearson's business skill had even enabled him to defeat a subsidiary of Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company in a bitter oil war lasting for ten years[77]. By the end of 1913 Cowdray, who had been raised to the peerage in 1910, had £12 million of investments in Mexico, of which £8 million was in the oilfields and the rest in ships and distribution[78]. After playing a major role in supplying the British navy with oil during the war, Cowdray had decided early in 1919 to sell a controlling interest in his Mexican Eagle Oil Company to the Royal Dutch Group[79]. Then in 1922 he made up his mind to close down the contracting side of his business[80]. His reasons were partly ones of sentiment - S. Pearson & Son, Contractors was his own creation and he did not wish to see the name associated with enterprises not under his direction[81] - and partly he was far sighted enough to see that the days of the individual roving contractor were numbered because of increasing political constraints with the growth of nationalism in developing countries, and with the extension of United States influence in Latin America[82].

76. Young, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 3; Spender, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 149.

77. Spender, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 163-71.

78. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 202-03.

79. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 221, 203-04.

80. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 270.

81. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 270-71.

82. Young, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 237. Cowdray was also of the opinion that contracting was a one-man job and was aware that few contractors had founded dynasties. Of his own sons Harold preferred another form of life, being at heart a countryman who preferred polo to office work, while Clive would have plenty to do in controlling the huge investment trust which would be needed to look after the family interests and remaining enterprises. Cowdray's younger brother, Sir Edward Pearson, was a trained engineer and a man of exceptional ability in his own right, who had been knighted during the war for his role in organising the building of a cordite factory and new town at Gretna on the border of Dumfriesshire and Cumberland. He was, however, in failing health, and died of a heart attack in 1925 at the early age of fifty-one. (Young, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp. 218, 221-23, 228, 233 and 237-38; Spender, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 221-25).

Cowdray decided that any future contracting would be on his own properties only, such as those he had just acquired with Dorman Long in the Kent Coalfield[83]. In moving out of contracting Cowdray diversified his interests very considerably. He acquired an equal interest with the French House of Lazard Frères in the great London firm of merchant bankers Lazard Brothers & Company[84], he extended his interests in the field of newspaper ownership[85], and as we have seen, was prepared to invest £1.5 million in Kent coal, which was exactly the amount of capital that twenty years earlier he had declared to be the limit of his investment in oil in Mexico[86]. The attempt to develop the Kent Coalfield was the last of Lord Cowdray's industrial ventures[87]. When working on Dover Harbour he had satisfied himself that both coal and iron ore were there in abundance and saw no reason why the 'Garden of England' should not be developed into a great industrial area, without destroying the countryside[88]. Hence the formation in 1922 of the alliance with Dorman Long.

The new company of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. was incorporated on 6 October 1922[89], although its acquisition of Dorman Long's assets and obligations in the Kent Coalfield were to have effect from 30 April of the same year[90]. Sir Hugh Bell of Dorman Long was to be chairman for five years and there were to be on the board four directors from each parent

83. Spender, op. cit., p. 271.

84. Spender, op. cit., p. 249; Young, op. cit., p. 240; T. A. Wise, 'Lazard - financiers to the free world', in The Times, 19 August 1968, p. 17.

85. Spender, op. cit., pp. 244-47.

86. Ibid., p. 244.

87. Young, op. cit., pp. 239-40.

88. Spender, op. cit., pp. 241-44; Young, op. cit., p. 239.

89. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 4.

90. Agreement made 13 July 1922 between Dorman Long and Whitehall Securities Corporation, Dorman Long Records A16/69.

company[91]. Cowdray's younger brother, Sir Edward Pearson, himself a distinguished engineer, and Colonel Frederick Joseph Byrne, a Dorman Long director, were made joint managing directors[92]. Soon after the formation of the new company preparatory work commenced at Betteshanger[93], where for a sum of £140,000 S. Pearson & Son contracted to build, over a three year period, railway sidings, a track linking the colliery to Southern Railway line between Deal and Sandwich, and various colliery buildings[94]. The share capital was not considered sufficient, however, to carry out all the proposed schemes of the new company, for on 13 October 1922 it entered into an agreement with its two parent companies for the creation and issue of £5 million of 5 per cent debentures. These securities were to be issued at 50 per cent of their face value, and the parent companies agreed to purchase them in equal portions[95]. These debentures were not issued, however, and up to 12 March 1926 £1,450,000 was raised in share capital[96].

With this capital Pearson and Dorman Long pushed ahead with its policy of extensively developing the coalfield. As a result of the acquisition of the Dorman Long options, it purchased from the Concessions Group at the end of 1923 the Wingham Colliery area of 4,000 acres[97], which

91. Ibid.

92. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 6 and letter to Registrar of Companies dated 7 February 1924, filed between items 8 and 9. The other five directors were Sir Arthur Dorman, Arthur Dorman, Lord Cowdray, Sir Clarendon Golding Hyde, and Hon. Bernard Clive Pearson.

93. The Colliery Guardian, 6 April 1923, p. 824.

94. Spender, op. cit., p. 290.

95. Agreement made 13 October 1922 between (1) Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., (2) Dorman Long Ltd. and (3) Whitehall Securities Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/70.

96. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 22A. Prior to February 1926 the company was a private limited liability company and details of share capital raised before March were not submitted to the Board of Trade. (Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 17).

97. The Colliery Guardian, 21 December 1923, p. 1570.

was the most important area to be transferred under the agreement of 26 June 1922[98]. By May 1924 the company had acquired altogether control or options over sixty of the eighty most valuable square miles of the coalfield[99]. In order to rationalise arrangements in the north of the coalfield, however, Pearson and Dorman Long agreed to allocate the Stodmarsh and Canterbury areas to the Chislet Company. The northern part of Stodmarsh was to be worked from the Chislet Colliery and the rest from new pits that were to be sunk[100]. In return the North Kent Coalfield transferred an area leased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at Stourmouth to Pearson and Dorman Long[101]. The following year, however, the Canterbury area, which was outside the coalfield and therefore of no value, was removed from the agreement between the Concessions Group and Pearson and Dorman Long[102]. In January 1924 Pearson and Dorman Long also acquired Snowdown Colliery for a sum of £25,200[103]. But Snowdown needed reconstructing and the new owners did not intend to start sinking the No. 3 pit from its existing depth of 2,260 feet to the seam at 3,011 feet until

98. See below p. 135.

99. The Colliery Guardian, 23 May 1924, pp. 1314-15; Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., Betteshanger Colliery Kent (1924), p. 6. (This programme for the opening ceremony on 19 May 1924 is amongst papers in the possession of Lord Northbourne); Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 20. In October 1925 freehold and leasehold minerals totalled 24,055 acres and the company was arranging to acquire a further 15,000 acres. (Letter of 8 October 1925 from Pearson and Dorman Long to the Trade Facilities Advisory Committee, Dorman Long Records A16/808).

100. Agreement made 31 December 1924 between (1) Pearson and Dorman Long (2) Dorman Long (3) Chislet Colliery Ltd. and (4) North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Dorman Long Records A16/277.

101. Agreement made 31 December 1924, memorandum to main agreement of same date, Dorman Long Records A16/278.

102. Agreement made 31 December 1925 between (1) Kent Coal Concessions and Allied Companies, (2) Dorman Long and (3) Pearson and Dorman Long, Dorman Long Records A16/803.

103. The Colliery Guardian, 25 January 1924, p. 231 and 28 November 1924, p. 1393.

the whole surface and pumping equipment had been reorganised[104].

We have already seen that in 1916 Snowdown had become the first Kent colliery to make a trading profit and that, although a similar result had been achieved in the following year, thereafter losses had been incurred[105]. These losses, however, had been largely offset by the arrangement under the Mining Industry Act of 1920 whereby the company was guaranteed a return of 9 per cent per annum on the capital employed[106]. With the ending of government control of the industry in March 1921 this source of relief was no longer available and net losses had started to accumulate[107]. The national coal strike of October 1920 had had a detrimental effect on the colliery's financial position, which was then considerably worsened by the thirteen week strike that followed in March 1921[108]. With the depression in the coal trade throughout 1921 sales in small coal, which was the colliery's chief production, had become almost paralysed[109]. As there was thus no improvement in the financial position, the colliery had to be closed for over two months early in the following year[110]. For the rest of 1922 and throughout 1923 it had been kept going only to prevent its becoming waterlogged, so that it might either be sold as a going concern, or that the company might be able to raise the £200,000 necessary to sink the second shaft to the deep seam and carry out the necessary re-equipment

104. Letter dated 8 October 1925 from Pearson and Dorman Long to the Trade Facilities Act Advisory Committee, Dorman Long Records A16/808; The Colliery Guardian, 17 October 1924, p. 1006.

105. See above Chapter 2, p. 88.

106. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 77, 78, 79 and 82.

107. Ibid., item 82.

108. Ibid., item 78.

109. Ibid., item 78.

110. The Colliery Guardian, 13 January 1922, p. 112 and 31 March 1922, p. 796.

of the colliery[111]. Attempts in May 1922 to borrow this money under the Trade Facilities Acts had proved unsuccessful because of the stringent conditions required[112]. Efforts to sell the undertaking outright as a going concern had also failed[113]. Early in 1923 it had become necessary to postpone further the payment of interest due on the debenture stock until the end of the year[114]. A net loss of £13,994 at 30 September 1921 had increased by the end of March 1923 to £88,206[115]. In addition the outstanding liabilities had risen to £304,539[116]. The company had, however, managed to redeem £35,000 of the £50,000 of Prior Lien Bonds[117]. Later in the year with losses running at £600 a week the company's resources were gradually becoming totally depleted[118]. Had this happened the mine would have become waterlogged and the assets destroyed. The debenture holders were afraid of their security becoming in jeopardy and, led by the South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., they had applied to the Chancery Court in August 1923 to have a receiver appointed[119]. The receiver, who it was

111. The Colliery Guardian, 7 December 1923, p. 1441.

112. Ibid., also 28 November 1924, p. 1393.

113. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 82.

114. The Colliery Guardian, 26 January 1923, p. 224. As with other companies in the Concessions group, interest on debentures had been postponed till six months after the end of the war. (The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 66).

115. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 82.

116. Ibid.,

117. Ibid., item 80. £30,000 of these were held by the four parent companies of the Concession Group in payment for sinking the No. 2 shaft to the Snowdown Hard Seam (see above Chapter 2, p. 87), and £20,000 were held by the Capital and Counties Bank as security for a loan. (Ibid., item 68).

118. The Colliery Guardian, 2 November 1923, p. 1117 and 7 December 1923, p. 1441. The rest of the paragraph is based on these sources unless otherwise stated.

119. There were £122,955 of outstanding debentures, on which the accrued interest was £112,112. (The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 82).

felt would be in a better position to negotiate for the sale of the colliery, was appointed in October 1923[120]. When he took over the cash resources of the company had been about £7,000. So although the receiver was able to keep the colliery pumped it was thought unlikely that he would be able to sell the colliery for a sum more than sufficient to redeem the debentures and prior lien bonds. In the circumstances, after providing for the expense of keeping the shafts unwatered during the period of negotiation for the sale and for sundry debits and liquidation expenses, the £25,200 received from Pearson and Dorman Long was barely sufficient to pay the full amount owing to the prior lien bondholders[121].

At Snowdown Pearson and Dorman Long decided first to reorganise the whole of the surface and pumping equipment before starting to sink the No. 3 pit from its existing depth of 2,260 feet to the seam at 3,011 feet[122]. Steps were also taken to supply the colliery permanently with electrical power from the Betteshanger Colliery[123]. S. Pearson and Son entered into a contract with Pearson and Dorman Long to complete the surface plant at Snowdown for £66,000, work on which extended from 1924 to 1926[124]. The Betteshanger Colliery was situated on Lord Northbourne's estate near the

120. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 81.

121. The Colliery Guardian, 28 November 1924, p. 1393. The Snowdown Colliery Company was dissolved in 1925. (The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 83). The holders of the £210,831 of paid up share capital together with the holders of £122,805 of First Mortgage Debentures lost every penny they had invested in the company. The largest single shareholder, with £91,805, was the Fonçage Syndicate Ltd. Of the other 1,300 investors none held more than £1,450. (Ibid., item 82). £100,000 of Snowdown capital had been issued as purchase consideration to the Fonçage Syndicate (Ibid., item 25), while the rest had been issued at a discount of from 10 to 20 per cent. (See above Chapter 2, pp. 56-57). The Fonçage Syndicate Ltd., with a capital of £20,000, had over 350 shareholders. (See above Chapter 2, p. 68).

122. The Colliery Guardian, 17 October 1924, p. 1006.

123. Ibid., 29 August 1924, p. 564 and 28 November 1924, p. 1393.

124. Spender, op. cit., p. 290.

village of Northbourne, some two miles west of Deal[125]. The colliery taking was comprised of 4,700 acres and it was planned in the first instance to sink two shafts of 22 feet diameter to a depth of 2,598 feet and to work a seam of about 3 feet 10 inches thickness at a depth of 2,148 feet and to develop the colliery for an output of 750,000 tons per annum[126]. It was officially opened and sinking officially started by the Archbishop of Canterbury on 19 May 1924[127]. On that day a special train of seven Pullman coaches brought some two hundred distinguished guests to the ceremony, including Emanuel Shinwell, the Minister of Mines[128]. Already a considerable part of the surface work had been completed and a two mile branch line connected the colliery with the Southern Railway at a point between Deal and Sandwich[129]. Most of this surface work had been completed under a £140,000 contract entered into with S. Pearson & Son[130]. It was intended that the colliery should provide employment for 3,000 men and it was estimated that housing for about 8,000 persons would be required in the neighbourhood[131].

Besides gaining control of the greater part of the coal and iron ore deposits in east Kent, Pearson and Dorman Long also acquired in 1925

125. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., Betteshanger Colliery Kent (1924), p. 6.

126. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

127. The Kentish Observer, 22 May 1924, p. 8.

128. Ibid.

129. The Kentish Observer, 22 May 1924, p. 8; Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., Betteshanger Colliery Kent (1924), pp. 6-7.

130. Spender, op. cit., p. 290.

131. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., Betteshanger Colliery Kent (1924), p. 7.

the Port of Richborough from the government for £200,000[132]. The harbour was on the banks of the Stour two miles down river from Sandwich[133]. It had first been used in 1897 when S. Pearson & Son had carried on the construction of the blocks for Dover Harbour[134]. Major development did not take place, however, until the First World War, when because of congestion at Dover the War Office had developed Richborough for the assembling and dispatching of barges for use by British troops on French and Belgian waterways[135]. The barge depot had developed into a stores depot[136], and then with the German submarine campaign large quantities of

132. Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (114) IV, pp. 497-663. The sum of money Pearson and Dorman Long agreed to pay was deliberately not stated in the agreement in case the transaction failed to go through. (Report of Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, pp. 686-87). The figure of £200,000 was provided by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham, who joined Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. as its accountant in 1922, having previously been with S. Pearson & Son. In 1938 Mr. Fotheringham became secretary of Pearson and Dorman Long and played a major role in presenting the Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association to the Central Valuation Board under the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act of 1946. (See below Chapter 6, p.344). That the figure was of this magnitude can be checked from existing financial data, namely Pearson and Dorman Long's annual accounts and Dorman Long's Records. Between 31 July 1925 and 31 December 1928 capital expenditure on the Snowdown and Betteshanger Collieries, mineral areas, Richborough and administration increased by £875,000 from £1,405,000 to £2,279,770 and thereafter it did not increase further. In July 1925 it was estimated that a further £660,000 to £755,000 would need to be spent on the two collieries on <u>equipping</u> Richborough and providing wages. If one takes the <u>lower</u> of these two estimates as being the more likely this leaves £215,000 of expenditure not accounted for. This must therefore be approximately the sum spent on <u>acquiring</u> the Port of Richborough.

133. See Fig. 0.1.

134. Evidence of George Christopher Solley, chairman of the Haven Committee of the Sandwich Town Council, Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 733, q. 583.

135. Edwin A. Pratt, <u>British Railways and the Great War</u>, Volume II (1921), pp. 1106-1114. All references to the Port of Richborough during the First World War are based on this source unless otherwise stated. The actual wartime construction work at Richborough was undertaken by the Royal Engineers.

136. The barge and stores depot was known as "the Port of Richborough", although port status was not granted until Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. acquired the property in 1925. Part of the agreement of this sale was that Pearson and Dorman Long were to be granted equal representation with the Sandwich Corporation on the Board of Management of the Harbour. (Report of Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 687).

war supplies had been sent by barge to inland depots in France. By making use of French waterways these cargoes did not require transhipment at French ports and were delivered as near to the fighting line as possible. Barge assembling had given way to barge building and Richborough had seen a steady expansion of its engineering works, while the repairing of railway wagons had become another important activity. In addition to the outward cargoes the barges had brought back war-salvage or materials needing repair, and the port had become a base workshop for wharves and waterways in all theatres of war. It had also seen the first development in February 1918 of Cross-Channel train ferries, which had led to a further great saving of labour at the ports, and a special terminal had been constructed for the ferry steamers. The area eventually brought under government control was 2,200 acres. Workshops and shipyards covered 47 acres, including 4½ acres of covered buildings. The camp hutments were also capable of housing nearly 20,000 men. The total amount of railway track both within the port area and linking it to Minster on the South Eastern and Chatham line between Ramsgate and Canterbury was about 65 miles. Altogether the government spent over £2 million in constructing this port[137], Pearson and Dorman Long acquired the entire port area and depot[138] for just one tenth of that sum, but only after it had been extensively advertised[139], and after negotiations with the only other prospective buyer, the Queenborough Development Company Ltd., had proved

137. Evidence of Sir Daniel Neylan of the Surplus Stores Liquidation Department of the Treasury, Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 704, q. 8.

138. To be more exact 2,076 acres of freehold surface but only 587 acres of freehold minerals. (Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 23).

139. Evidence of Sir Daniel Neylan, op. cit., p. 704, q. 8.

abortive because of the unsatisfactory financial state of that company[140]. As there had been no other enquiries the chances of selling the property as a going concern to anybody other than Pearson and Dorman Long were considered extremely remote[141]. The company's reasons for buying Richborough were that Dover, the nearest deep water port, was badly placed, being at the most distant point of the possible ports from the coalfield[142]. Dover was also too cramped between the cliffs and the sea and had too little space for wharves and new approaches by rail[143]. The disadvantages of Dover had therefore induced the company to examine other alternatives[144]. It ultimately concentrated attention on Richborough as it was within a mile and a quarter of the nearest possible colliery, and within six miles of the most distant colliery, excluding Snowdown[145]. The main disadvantage that was seen with Richborough was its shallowness, as only vessels of 12 feet draught could use the port[146]. The company planned to utilise the stores yard of the port for a central repair depot and as a central store, particularly as it had its own power station[147]. It was further hoped to develop Richborough as a coal shipping port[148], with supplies coming from

140. Ibid., p. 704, qq. 16-22. Litigation followed as regards the sale of craft after the Treasury decided to rescind the agreement for the sale of the port to the Queenborough Company, which then went into liquidation. (Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, pp. 685-86).

141. Evidence of Sir Daniel Neylan, op. cit., p. 705, q. 43.

142. Evidence of Col. Frederick Byrne, joint managing director of Pearson and Dorman Long, Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 725, qq. 416 and 418.

143. Spender, op. cit., p. 137. Spender considers that such a harbour would not have been built at Dover except for naval necessities.

144. Evidence of Col. Frederick Byrne, op. cit., p. 725, q. 419.

145. Ibid., pp. 725-26, qq. 419-20.

146. Ibid., p. 726, qq. 422-23 and p. 729, q. 521.

147. Ibid., p. 726, q. 433.

148. Ibid., p. 729, q. 515.

Betteshanger, Tilmanstone (which was connected to it by the East Kent Light Railway), Chislet and from the company's proposed collieries at Fleet and Woodnesborough (which was on a branch line of the East Kent Light Railway)[149]. Only small quantities of coal were expected to come from Snowdown[150]. It was intended that the south western portion of the port area should be the location of the company's iron and steel works[151]. In this respect the flat open site at Richborough had distinct advantages over Dover. Iron ore from the deposits lying near Dover, together with ore from the Continent coming as return cargoes in the barges exporting coal, would add to the port's trade[152]. It was hoped that total traffic, including that other than Pearson and Dorman Long's, would run to two or three million tons a year[153]. The port was to be under a Board of Management on which Pearson and Dorman Long were to have equal representation with the Sandwich Corporation[154].

Leaving aside the plans for iron and steel, the development work at the Snowdown and Betteshanger Collieries and the acquisition of Richborough were already in 1925 making it essential that Pearson and Dorman Long should raise further capital. Already by 31 July 1925 the greater part of the £1,450,000 already raised in share capital by the company had been spent as follows:[155]

149. Ibid., p. 727, qq. 446 and 450-51, and p. 729, qq. 510 and 512-13.

150. Ibid., p. 727, q. 446.

151. Ibid., p. 727, q. 460 and p. 729, q. 516.

152. Ibid., p. 725, q. 414, p. 726, q. 443, and p. 727, q. 445.

153. Ibid., p. 726, q. 442, and p. 727, qq. 526 and 528.

154. Select Committee on the Sandwich Port and Haven Bill, P.P. 1924-25 (111) VIII, p. 687. It having been decided that the Corporation of Sandwich, the Port Authority under the Act of 1847, was confined in its sole jurisdiction to the Town Wharf. (Ibid., p. 684).

155. Copy of letter of 8 October 1925 from Pearson and Dorman Long to the Trade Facilities Act Advisory Committee, Dorman Long Records A16/808. (Figures are rounded to the nearest £).

	£	£
Betteshanger Colliery	484,965	
Snowdown Colliery	168,257	
		653,222
Cost of mineral areas, surface lands, buildings etc. in:		
Betteshanger and Deal areas	72,809	
Wingham area	22,555	
Woodnesborough and Walmestone areas	8,997	
Stodmarsh area (to be sold to Chislet Colliery)	9,306	
Fleet area	11,313	
Canterbury area	166	
Mongeham area	5,848	
Snowdown area	11,282	
		142,276
Minerals and other rights, represented by shares in allied companies etc.		434,235
Richborough Port and Depot, including deposit for conditional purchase		27,078
Administration and other expenditure, balance at bank etc.		148,190
		£1,405,000

Of the two parent companies Dorman Long was by this time in some difficulty over the question of raising further funds for these schemes. Up to 1923 the company had, as we have seen, made considerable progress by the re-investment of high wartime profits. In the four years immediately following the armistice the iron and steel industry had gone through the hectic experience of boom and slump[156]. The boom had begun

156. J. C. Carr and W. Taplin, History of the British Steel Industry (1962), pp. 346-47.

with the early removal of government control on 30 April 1919[157], but by the end of 1920 it had become clear that steel makers had been wrong in their assessment of both future demand and foreign competition[158]. During the boom Dorman Long had not only increased its investments in other companies but had also undertaken an ambitious programme of extension and modernisation of its own various works[159]. Having issued bonus shares during the war[160], the company had also created 3,000,000 ordinary shares of £1 each in March 1920[161]. Although not all these shares had been taken up, and those that had been had fallen in value within a few months, Arthur Dorman had assured shareholders that the depression would be short and that given normal working conditions the company could earn profits to pay a fair dividend on the increased capital[162]. During the two years of continuous decline in 1921 and 1922 the high hopes of the first months of peace had flickered from time to time, but by the end of 1922 they were dead in the industry generally[163]. Sir Arthur Dorman, however, had differed from most of the opinion in the steel industry[164]. At the annual general meeting of Dorman Long in December 1922 he had asserted that the slump would not last long once wages had been forced down from their artificially high levels and confusions in foreign exchange had been cleared up[165]. It was, however, in this year that Dorman Long, in common

157. Ibid., p. 353.

158. D. L. Burn, The Economic History of Steelmaking, 1867-1939 (Cambridge, 1940), p. 392.

159. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 358.

160. Burn, op. cit., p. 390.

161. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 359.

162. Meeting reported in The Economist, 18 December 1920, cited in Burn, op. cit., pp. 386-87.

163. Carr and Taplin, op.cit., p. 346.

164. Ibid., p. 362.

165. Ibid., p. 362.

with many other leading steel firms, paid their last dividend on ordinary shares for ten years[166]. At this same meeting Sir Arthur Dorman had explicitly stated that it was the policy of his company to integrate vertically, extending backwards to control the sources of raw materials and forward to secure the absorbtion of their final product[167]. The following year British steel producers, like British coal producers, had benefitted from the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr, which had lasted from January to August 1923 and had sharply reduced the output of iron and steel in Germany[168]. This miniature boom was shortlived, however, and the middle twenties were a time when much of the steel industry had to adjust itself to the fact that little or no profit could be made, or seemed likely to be made for a number of years[169]. As Continental production recovered 1924 had seen a flood of cheap iron and steel imports into Britain, which had particularly affected the northern districts[170]. It was in these years that firms found the financial commitments undertaken in the boom of 1919-20 to have become a millstone round their necks. By the mid-twenties most steel companies were too pre-occupied with the difficulty of servicing their existing capital to be able to face with any confidence the possibility of raising more[171]. Sir Arthur Dorman, at Dorman Long's general meeting in December 1925, advocated rationalisation as a way out of the company's difficulties, as he believed that amalgamation and grouping could to some extent reduce costs of production and increase efficiency. He did not, however, think this would be the

166. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 365.

167. The Economist, 16 December 1922, cited in Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 382.

168. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 367.

169. Ibid., p. 369.

170. Ibid., pp. 369-70.

171. Ibid., p. 372.

final solution to the industry's problems, as he saw the real evils to be the lack of demand and the disparity between conditions in the U.K. and on the Continent[172]. Dorman Long's share and loan capital still stood at £12 million and Sir Arthur Dorman assured shareholders that the company's works were not overvalued[173]. Unfortunately for the company, however, expenditure in Kent had helped to create a bank overdraft for the year ended 30 September 1925[174]. At this same meeting in December 1925, Sir Arthur Dorman also informed shareholders that very properly the firm's bankers did not take the same view with regard to the financing of a permanent development, such as a colliery enterprise, as they did with regard to the temporary financing of the firm's bridge contracts, and that the directors had, therefore, decided to sell the £500,000 of debentures hitherto unissued and to devote the proceeds towards repayment of sums already advanced by the bankers on account of expenditure in Kent. The chairman also announced that satisfactory arrangements were being made by Pearson and Dorman Long for expenditure which would make future calls on Dorman Long small. This was the first public indication of the agreement made between Pearson and Dorman Long and the Treasury under the Trade Facilities Acts[175]. These Acts of 1921-25, as amended in 1926, permitted the Treasury to guarantee loans, as to both principal and interest, raised by industrial firms up to a total of £75 million, on condition (1) that the loans were used for capital investment using British manufactured goods purchased at the lowest possible prices on a competitive basis and (2) providing that such investment was calculated

172. Ibid., p. 387.

173. Ibid., p. 449. The company's capital was not reconstructed until 1934.

174. The Colliery Guardian, 4 December 1925, p. 1359.

175. Ibid., 19 February 1926, p. 444.

to promote employment in the U.K. In making these guarantees the Treasury followed the advice of an impartial Advisory Committee[176].

Although no further capital was available from Dorman Long, there is no evidence to suggest that Lord Cowdray's Whitehall Securities Corporation could not have raised its half of the £3 million that had originally been agreed between the two parent companies[177]. The raising of debenture capital with a Treasury guarantee was an acceptable alternative for the companies concerned. Not only did it mean that there would be no difficulty in obtaining the loan[178] but also that the firm could obtain it in the capital market at a rate of 5 per cent instead of at one closer to 8 per cent[179]. The Advisory Committee recommended to the Treasury on 25 November 1925 that a guarantee of £2 million be given to Pearson and Dorman Long to develop the Kent Coalfield[180], and the

176. Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 192, cols. 73-74, 158-60 and 195-96 (22 February 1926); cols. 1273-75 (2 March 1926). Explanations of the Acts as given by Ronald McNeill, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

177. By persuading Lord Cowdray in 1919 to acquire an equal interest with the French House of Lazard Frères in the London House of Lazard Brothers and Company, Sir Robert Kindersley had sought to give Lazard intimate ties to the vast Pearson fortune. Twice, in 1919 and again in 1924, Lazard had helped the French government to rescue the franc from speculators' raids, which would hardly seem to indicate that Lord Cowdray could not for his part have raised a further £1 million for the Kent Coalfield. (Spender, op. cit., p. 249; T. A. Wise, op. cit., p. 17).

178. It was one of the general instructions inter alia to the Advisory Committee under the Trade Facilities Act to satisfy themselves that the undertaking would not be financed without the assistance of the government. (Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 192, col. 1923 (8 March 1926). Explanation of R. McNeill, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury).

179. Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 192, col. 2454 (10 March 1926), explanation of R. McNeill; ibid., col. 2455, comments of W. Runciman (President of the Board of Trade 1914-16); and ibid., col. 2448, comments of Hugh Dalton.

180. Ibid., col. 346 (23 February 1926). Written answer from R. McNeill, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

agreement with the Treasury was finalised on 15 February 1926[181]. In October 1925 Pearson and Dorman Long informed the Trades Facilities Act Advisory Committee that it estimated that £1,250,000 would be needed to complete their programme. By February 1926, however, this had been increased to £2 million with the inclusion of £750,000 for the sinking of a new colliery. In detail the two estimates were[182]:

	October 1925 (£'000s)	February 1926 (£'000s)
Completion of Betteshanger Colliery	270	310
Completion of Snowdown Colliery	200	230
Equipment of Richborough Port	50	55
Housing subsidy (cost of houses estimated at £50 each)	175	200
Wagons	140	160
Coke ovens and by-product plant	100	110
Administration	125	-
Interest during construction	275	270
Contingencies	75	75
	1,410	1,410
Less estimated trading profit up to 31 December 1930	160	160
		1,250
The sinking of shafts for and the equipment of a new colliery in East Kent	-	750
TOTALS	1,250	2,000

181. Draft Copy of Agreement with Treasury, Dorman Long Records A16/808. (By an agreement of 18 February 1926 Whitehall Securities and Dorman Long gave an undertaking to the Treasury that they would hold sufficient shares in Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. to give them a majority of votes).

182. Ibid.

Pearson and Dorman Long also informed the Trades Facilities Act Advisory Committee that when Snowdown Colliery was fully developed they intended to form it into a separate company, retain the deferred shares in it, but dispose of the ordinary shares to provide funds for the later development of the company's other areas. Richborough, in addition to shipping coal to the Continent and the Thames, was to provide the repair shops, stores and power station to meet all the requirements of a group of collieries. It was, however, no part of their contemplated programme at this stage to proceed with the development of the iron ore in Kent by erecting blast furnaces and steel works[183].

By the terms of the agreement both the principal and the interest on the £2 million loan were guaranteed by the Treasury for a period of 30 years.[184] When the Trade Facilities Acts came up for their annual renewal in the early months of 1926, however, they met with strong opposition from the Labour Party. The guarantee to Pearson and Dorman Long was particularly singled out for attack, especially by Members of Parliament representing mining constituencies elsewhere in the country. The Opposition felt that in the absence of any increase in the demand for coal this expenditure would increase the employment of miners in Kent but reduce that of miners in other coal producing areas, particularly in the North East and the Midlands which would lose some of their markets. The net result, it was argued, would be no reduction whatsoever in the total of 200,000 unemployed miners[185]. There was in fact even a danger that the development of Kent would <u>increase</u> the volume of unemployed miners in

183. Copy of letter of 8 October 1925 to the Trades Facility Act Advisory Committee, Dorman Long Records A16/808.

184. Trade Facilities Acts, P.P. 1926 (14) XVI, p. 419.

185. Hansard, <u>House of Commons Debates</u>, 5th ser., vol. 192, cols. 247-48 (22 February 1926), Rt. Hon. J. Wedgwood, M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme; <u>ibid.</u>, col. 1306 (2 March 1926), T. I. Mardy Jones, M.P. for Pontypool.

the country, because although skilled men had been taken from other coal-mining districts, the unskilled labour had come from the surrounding areas in Kent, from the land and from local industries[186]. Consequently the government was asked for some guarantee that the men who were to be employed in the Kent mines would be brought from coalfields where miners were thrown out of work because of the increased output of Kent, and that the required labour would not be raised from unskilled workers either in Kent or anywhere else[187]. There was even a suspicion from one South Wales M.P. that the Kent Coalfield was being developed not wholly on its merits but for ulterior motives[188]. Another M.P. calculated that the lower rate at which Pearson and Dorman Long would be able to borrow the £2 million was equivalent to receiving a subsidy of at least £50,000 a year[189], and there was a demand that further guarantees should entail the participation of the public in the value of the assets created[190].

186. Ibid., cols. 2464 and 2471 (10 March 1926), J. J. Lawson, M.P. for Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham. R. McNeill, who was also M.P. for Canterbury accepted this as inevitable (ibid., col. 2471).

187. Ibid., col. 2478 (10 March 1926), T. I. Mardy Jones. Under the terms of the Agreement with the Treasury Pearson and Dorman Long were in fact required when engaging miners "to employ suitable miners who have been thrown out of work through other pits closing down." In addition the Mining Industry Act, 1926 (section 18) had the effect of giving such a guarantee more widely than Kent by restricting the engagement of adult workers in the industry to men who were employed in the industry prior to April 1926 by the operation of an undertaking given by the industry to the Ministry of Labour. (Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946, Central Valuation Board, Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, p. 6, Whitehall Securities Records 584). For the effects of this agreement and legislation in imposing a major constraint on recruiting miners to Kent, see below Chapter 4, pp. 232 and 234.

188. Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 192, col. 2478 (10 March 1926), T. I. Mardy Jones, M.P. for Pontypool.

189. Ibid., col. 2468 (10 March 1926), S. Roberts, M.P. for Hereford.

190. Ibid., cols. 2401-02 (10 March 1926), Hugh Dalton; col. 1311 (2 March 1926), T. I. Mardy Jones, who also recommended that the government should take over the running of the Kent Coalfield; col. 1282 (2 March 1926), W. Graham, former Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

The debentures were issued in March 1926 and were fully subscribed for by the public before the end of June[191]. By the terms of the agreement with the Treasury no dividends were to be paid until 31 December 1930 and all profits were to be spent on development[192]. The prospectus for the debentures, issued by the Bank of England on 13 March 1926, indicated that Betteshanger planned to produce an output of ¾ million tons per year and Snowdown ½ million tons, while it was intended to sink a further six collieries. The proceeds of the issue were to be devoted exclusively to the completion of Betteshanger and Snowdown, the sinking of a third colliery, the equipment of Richborough, the erection of houses for the workers, the construction of coke-oven and by-product plant, and the purchase of wagons. All plant, machinery and minerals to be purchased, except for raw materials that had to be imported, were to be of wholly British manufacture[193].

Over the next fourteen years the total share capital issued by Pearson and Dorman Long was increased from £1,450,000 to £2,500,000, at which figure it remained until nationalisation, while from 1931 onwards repayments started on the debentures[194]. At the time of nationalisation in 1946 nearly half of the debentures had been repaid[195]. Despite this large volume of expenditure Pearson and Dorman Long made profits only in

191. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, items 20 and 25. No list of debenture holders now exists in the Whitehall Securities Records. According to Mr. G. M. Fotheringham, however, the subscription came from a very wide range of the public.

192. Ibid., item 20.

193. Ibid.

194. Ibid., items 25-70.

195. Ibid., item 70. In March 1942 the £1,404,400 of debentures still outstanding were converted from 5 per cent to 3 per cent, again the principal and interest were guaranteed by the Treasury, this time under the Finance Act, 1934. (Ibid., item 63).

the years 1941 and 1946[196].

Snowdown Colliery started to produce coal again in 1927[197], and Betteshanger began to operate on a limited scale in 1929[198]. The third colliery never materialised, however, nor did the proposed steel industry for east Kent, and as a result the Port of Richborough also failed to develop. The problem of having to recruit miners from those unemployed in other areas was not the only government imposed constraint on the development of the coalfield in these years. The Coal Mines Act, 1930, with its imposition of quota restrictions on all coalfields also necessitated modifications in the development programme for the area[199]. The steel plans were abandoned for a variety of reasons[200], which included: shortage of capital[201], doubt as to whether the ore could be mined economically[202], differences of opinion regarding the most suitable

196. Ibid., items 61 and 70.

197. Ibid., item 31; Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946, Central Valuation Board, Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, p. 6, Whitehall Securities Records 584.

198. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 33.

199. Ibid., item 45; also see below Chapter 4, pp. 241-44.

200. G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source unless otherwise stated.

201. After formation and acquisition of the assets from its predecessors, the only cash available to the Channel Steel Company was the calls which could be made on the new capital of £50,000 which had been issued to the Dorman Long group.

202. It would have been necessary to leave unworked from 25 to 50 per cent of the ore in the form of pillars to support the roof and prevent subsidence which might expose the workings to the danger of flooding from the Greensands and Hastings beds. It was even questionable whether the shafts at Shakespeare were situated in the best position for working the ore. The site was restricted and the ore would have had to have been transported to blast furnaces at a more convenient site. There was, in fact, a scheme to drive an 8,000 yard long tunnel from Shakespeare around Dover Harbour to the company's lands on the opposite side of the Harbour, where blast furnaces might then have been erected.

process for converting the low grade ore, the economic depression in the steel and other heavy industries up to 1935, and the heavy financial commitments of the parent company in developing its collieries at Betteshanger and Snowdown. The parent company also accummulated losses which by the end of 1932 came to over £500,000, had risen to nearly £750,000 in 1935, and to over £1 million before the end of 1937[203]. Meanwhile Dorman Long itself, which held 12 per cent of the equity in Channel Steel compared with Pearson and Dorman Long's 48 per cent[204], was itself undergoing a period of adjustment in the 1930s.

After merging with Bolckow Vaughan in 1929 Dorman Long had a total share and loan capital of £17 million, even after the nominal value of Bolckow's assets had been heavily written down[205]. As trade worsened in the following year, however, it was forced to close down some of its plant and the situation improved little until after the industry received tariff protection in 1932[206]. With the death of its chairman, Sir Arthur Dorman in 1930 at the age of 82, and then of his successor, Sir Hugh Bell, in the following year at the age of 87[207], the company lost its two pioneering links with the Kent Coalfield[208]. Although in the 1920s and

203. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, items 42, 50 and 54. For a full analysis of the profitability of the company see below Chapter 6, Table 6.4.

204. Dorman Long presumably acquired these shares from Bolckow Vaughan, when it took over that company in 1929, as all its original shares in Channel Steel had been transferred to Pearson and Dorman Long in 1922.

205. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 449. Bolckow Vaughan was forced to merge with Dorman Long by Barclay's Bank, which made it a condition of renewing the company's £1 million overdraft.

206. Ibid., pp. 449, 470, 472, 478, 483-84.

207. Wilson, op. cit.

208. Two other important pioneering figures in the Kent Coalfield had died just before them: Lord Cowdray in 1927 (Spender, op. cit., p. 272), and Tilden Smith, their former business associate in the Channel Collieries Trust days (1910-17), in 1929 (see below pp. 156 and 159).

early 1930s the company had lacked the finance to weld its various works on the north east coast, which were of differing ages and efficiency, into one coherent balanced whole, the tariff and trade revival provided a new opportunity and a start was made in 1934[209]. As a necessary first step there was in 1934 a complete capital reconstruction of the company, which involved a lightening of the burden of debenture interest and a writing down of the share capital from £11¼ millions to £2 millions, with the face value of ordinary shares being cut from £1 to 2s. each. After this the company went on to demolish and clear much of its older plant and to streamline its operations, with the result that by 1939 Dorman Long was amongst the largest integrated iron and steel firms in the U.K.

It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the report on the Channel Steel Company's prospects made on behalf of Pearson and Dorman Long in 1949, concluded that:

> "Up to the outbreak of war (1939) the general prospects, including the methods of working and converting the ore, were never sufficiently good to warrant the raising of the necessary capital to meet the heavy expenditure which would be involved."[210]

Pearson and Dorman Long were not the only company to have a grand design for developing the Kent Coalfield in the inter-war years. Richard Tilden Smith, the former business associate of Sir Hugh Bell and Sir Arthur Dorman in the Channel Collieries Trust[211] had not given up his ambitions to acquire a major interest in the industrial development of

209. Carr and Taplin, op. cit., p. 531; Wilson, op. cit. The rest of the paragraph is based on these sources.

210. 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' by G. M. Fotheringham (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records 584.

211. See above Cahpter 2, pp. 50-51.

the area. After the war, however, he was better placed financially than he had been before it to realise these aims.

We have already seen that before the war Tilden Smith had played an important role in underwriting the shares of the Kent Collieries Ltd. and had had a hand in persuading Dorman Long to start investing in the company[212] (see Fig. 3.2). As can be seen from the terms of these agreements, underwriting shares and reconstructing mining companies could be a very lucrative business, and Tilden Smith, operating through his Share Guarantee Trust, became something of an internationally acknowledged expert in the field[213]. Before his death in December 1929 Tilden Smith is reputed to have reconstructed numerous companies whose capital totalled altogether about £200 million[214].

With the outbreak of war in 1914 the opportunities for underwriting had lapsed[215] and Tilden Smith decided to increasingly diversify his activities by going into manufacturing and into actually controlling and operating mines[216]. Before the war he had already begun to move in this direction with the acquisition in 1907 of a colliery in South Wales that

212. See above Chapter 2, pp. 32-33, 37 and 49-51.

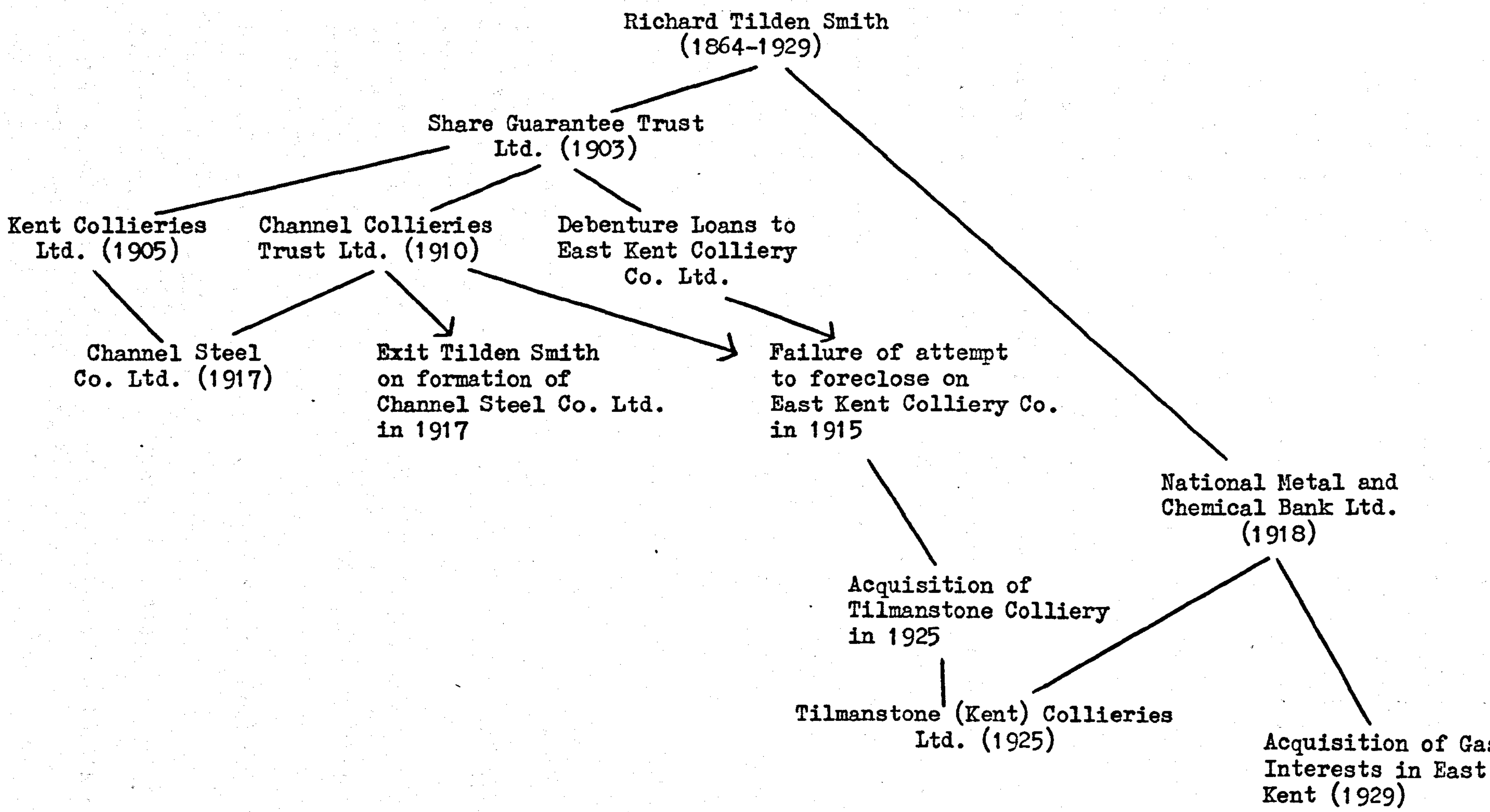
213. W. S. Robinson, If I Remember Rightly (The Memoirs of W. S. Robinson 1876-1963, edited by Geoffrey Blainey)(Melbourne 1967), pp. 121-22. The Share Guarantee Trust Ltd. was a private limited liability company which was incorporated in October 1903 and dissolved in March 1934. Its file of statutory returns to the government was destroyed by the Board of Trade in May 1963. (Share Guarantee Trust Ltd., B.O.T. 78883).

214. Obituary in The Times, 19 December 1929, p. 16. Even a small percentage commission for reconstructing these companies and then guaranteeing new share issues would have yielded several millions of pounds.

215. The government steadily tightened its control over capital issues as the war went on. (E. Victor Morgan and W. A. Thomas, The Stock Exchange: Its History and Functions (1962), p. 220).

216. Information supplied by Mr. Stanley Cooke, who joined the staff of Tilden Smith's companies in 1916 and subsequently became secretary of one of his main enterprises, London City Buildings Ltd.

Fig. 3.2 Richard Tilden Smith's Interests in the Kent Coalfield



NOTE: For details of the exact relationship between companies see text. (See also Fig. 2.1).

supplied the Swansea Vale Spelter Works with coal[217]. In this way Tilden Smith had started on a path that led to his becoming a dominant figure in the British zinc industry during the next two decades. His next step in 1908 had been to join Herbert Clarke Hoover, the future United States President, in his venture to re-open the old lead, zinc and silver mines at Namtu in Burma[218]. When in 1918 Hoover had become increasingly absorbed with relief work in Europe and had decided to sell his interest in the Burma mines[219], his shares had been purchased by Tilden Smith[220]. Meanwhile at home he had also acquired a major interest in the smelting side of the zinc industry. As supplies were no longer available from Germany and Belgium, and as the government did not wish to rely so heavily on United States imports, it had decided to develop a large scale zinc smelting industry in Britain[221]. The district around Swansea was one of the few places in the country where zinc had been smelted before the war[222], and the Swansea Vale Spelter Company had been the most successful firm in the area[223]. Tilden Smith had not been slow to appreciate the changed situation and in 1915 he had gained control of the Swansea Vale Company from its German owners, Aran Hirsch & Sohn of

217. Copper Pit Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 94387. This company was incorporated in July 1907 and dissolved in October 1932. As it was a private limited liability company its file was destroyed by the Board of Trade in May 1963. Information on Copper Pit Collieries was therefore supplied by Mr. Stanley Cooke.

218. Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: Years of Adventure 1874-1920 (New York, 1952), pp. 90-96; E. J. Cocks and B. Walters, A History of the Zinc Smelting Industry in Britain (1968), p. 204.

219. Hoover, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

220. Cocks and Walters, op. cit., p. 45; Robinson, op. cit., p. 132.

221. Cocks and Walters, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

222. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 77-78; Cocks and Walters, op. cit., p. 34.

223. Cocks and Walters, op. cit., pp. 13-15. Before the 1930's zinc was known as 'spelter'. (Ibid., p. 2).

Halberstadt, who, despite the provisions of the Trading with the Enemy Amendment Act, were left holding all the non-voting preference shares[224]. His next coup in the zinc world had been to take advantage of the government's desire to develop Britain's own smelting industry by establishing another works at Avonmouth, with the aid of a government loan of £500,000 and with extensive financial backing from Lloyds Bank[225]. This enterprise at Avonmouth was not a success, however, and after the war the prospects of the National Smelting Corporation, which had been formed to develop the works, looked bleak[226]. Despite an expenditure of over £840,000 no zinc had been produced, and in 1922 the government decided to write off the £500,000 loan and to extend no further help[227]. Lloyds Bank had then become concerned with the whole state of Tilden Smith's business affairs and had insisted on completely reorganising them so that its very extensive loans could be repaid[228]. The Bank had therefore sponsored a takeover of his zinc interests and his holding of nearly one-third of the shares in the Burma Corporation. After negotiations these were acquired by a consortium consisting of W. S. Robinson's Anglo-Australian zinc group, the Zinc Corporation, the British Metal Corporation and the steel firm of Baldwin's[229]. Tilden Smith would not agree to a straight sale of Avonmouth, Swansea and the Burma shares but wanted a formula which would safeguard Lloyds Bank and

224. Ibid., pp. 17, 23-24. The Share Guarantee Trust became the sole owners of the issued ordinary share capital.

225. Ibid., pp. 24 and 44-45; Oliver Lyttelton, Viscount Chandos, The Memoirs of Lord Chandos (1962), p. 130; The National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 12.

226. Cocks and Walters, op. cit., pp. 38 and 41-42.

227. The National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 29; Cocks and Walters, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

228. Cocks and Walters, op. cit., p. 48; Robinson, op. cit., p. 122.

229. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 122-23.

yet guarantee himself dividends from the Burma enterprise if in future years it proved to be successful[230]. The agreement which was eventually hammered out was a complicated one[231].

The properties of the Swansea Vale Spelter Company and four million fully paid shares of ten rupees each in the Burma Corporation were to be transferred by Tilden Smith and his companies to the National Smelting Company, which owned the Avonmouth works, for a consideration worth £2,235,000. This sum was to consist of £1,535,000 in cash, and the remainder of an allotment to the Intercontinental Trust (1913) Ltd. (a Tilden Smith subsidiary) or its nominees of 650,000 8 per cent cumulative preference shares of £1 each and 1,000,000 non-voting deferred shares of 1s. each to be created as part of the increased capital of the National Smelting Company[232]. When these shares were allotted in March and April 1924 all the preference shares and 625,000 of the 1,000,000 deferred shares were placed in the name of Lloyds Bank City Office Nominees Ltd. Of the remaining deferred shares 349,843 went to the companies in the consortium taking over control of the National Smelting Corporation and only 25,157 were actually allotted to Tilden Smith[233]. It would seem that Lloyds Bank held its shares as security for Tilden Smith's overdraft[234]. Within two years, however, all but 12,800 of the preference shares had been sold, which presumably helped to pay off the overdraft because the

230. Cocks and Walters, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 49. The Burma mines paid their first dividend in 1923. (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 204).

231. The National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 37. Details of the agreement are based on this source unless otherwise stated.

232. <u>Ibid.</u>, items 32 and 33. The deferred shares carried "peculiar and important" rights. (Cocks and Walters, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 49).

233. The National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, items 38 and 41.

234. Cocks and Walters, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 49-50.

625,000 deferred shares were transferred back from Lloyds to the Intercontinental Trust Ltd., the Tilden Smith holding company[235]. In order to honour this agreement the issued capital of the National Smelting Company was increased from £500,000 to £1,700,000[236], and £1,500,000 was raised on debentures, which were underwritten by Lloyds Bank[237]. At least £625,000 of the £2,235,000 consideration received by Tilden Smith appears to have been used by him to repay his overdraft with Lloyds Bank. What is not certain is how much of the £1,535,000 of cash was used for the same purpose[238]. All one can say is that sufficient of it remained to enable Tilden Smith to embark upon his last great business ventures, the development of part of the Kent Coalfield and the building of Adelaide House next to London Bridge on the north bank of the Thames[239].

235. National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 47. In addition Tilden Smith also disposed of 259,000 of his 498,497 ordinary shares of £1 each. Cocks and Walters make the mistake of thinking that the 625,000 deferred shares, which carried important rights of ultimate control over the company (including the right of liquidation) remained in the hands of Lloyds Bank until 1929, when for the most part they were transferred to the consortium that had taken over the management of the firm in 1924. As the records of Lloyds Bank City Nominees Ltd. were destroyed in the war they had no way of checking their earlier error and put forward various suggestions about who actually had these important powers of ultimate control, not realising that Tilden Smith still held them until November 1929. (See Cocks and Walters, op. cit., pp. 49-50). For a likely explanation of why Tilden Smith relinquished control in 1929 see below p. 159.

236. National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, items 33 and 43.

237. Ibid., item 39; Cocks and Walters, op. cit., p. 52; Robinson, op. cit., pp. 123-24.

238. National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 43. At least £225,000 went to pay the remaining 9s. due on his holding of 500,000 ordinary shares of £1 each (see ibid., items 19 and 43; Cocks and Walters, op. cit., p. 52). Although Tilden Smith then sold 259,000 of these shares, presumably to recoup his cash balance. (National Smelting Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 147115, item 47).

239. Wickham Steed, 'Where Business is Pleasure', Review of Reviews, October 15 - November 15, 1927, pp. 323-28. The building, which was designed by Sir John Burnet and partners, cost £750,000 and was erected in three years. The construction and running of Adelaide House was entrusted to London City Buildings Ltd., a company formed by Tilden Smith in 1923. (London City Buildings Ltd., B.O.T. 185667).

With Pearson and Dorman Long gaining control of most of the coalfield south of the River Stour and with Stephenson Clarke increasing their hold on Chislet Colliery to the north[240], the scope remaining to Tilden Smith was becoming severely restricted. The only areas left to him were those of Tilmanstone and Guilford. We have already seen how the directors of the East Kent Colliery Company, the owners of Tilmanstone, had overcome various difficulties at the beginning of the war and had gone on to see their mine make a net profit in 1917[241]. In the following three years small net profits had again been made and after the war some sinking to the lower seams was continued, but the prevailing uncertainty in 1919 because of the fear of nationalisation had prevented the company from raising any outside capital for this purpose[242]. This period of comparative prosperity had come to a sudden end, however, at the close of 1920 and had been succeeded by one of unparalleled depression[243]. The colliery's output in 1921 was only about half of what it had been in the previous year, and even that had to be sold at unremunerative prices, which resulted in heavy losses for the company[244]. The situation had improved in 1922, despite a severe inburst of water into the workings in August which had stopped coal winding for over a fortnight[245]. The water problem had made it inadvisable to mine any more coal on the rise side of the Beresford seam and operations had had to be concentrated on the dip side, where unfortunately a large fault interfered with workings for more

240. See below pp. 172-73.

241. See above Chapter 2, pp. 89-90.

242. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, items 73, 74 and 76.

243. Ibid., item 77.

244. Ibid., item 77.

245. Ibid., items 77 and 79. A gross loss in 1922 was offset by tax recovered from the government and by awards from the Coal Controller.

than nine months. The result was that in 1923 the company had again made a severe loss[246]. The position was made even more precarious by a month long strike in July and August 1924 by which the miners succeeded in forcing up wages to a level that the company could hardly afford to pay[247]. The added failure of output to rise to a level sufficient to make ends meet[248] enabled Tilden Smith's Share Guarantee Trust, acting on behalf of itself and other holders of first mortgage debentures in the colliery, to have a receiver appointed by the Chancery Court in February 1925[249]. Making the most of his opportunity to acquire a major holding in the coalfield, Tilden Smith put forward proposals for a reconstruction of the company. The Chancery Court decided, however, that the receiver should continue to manage the mine for a further three months pending a valuation being carried out by E. O. Forster Brown[250]. At the end of this time the reconstruction scheme, which had received the support of the first mortgage debenture holders, was approved by the Court[251]. By the terms of this settlement a new company, Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited, acquired the assets of the East Kent Colliery Company[252]. The issued

246. Ibid., item 79.

247. The Colliery Guardian, 8 August 1924, p. 372.

248. Ibid., 29 August 1924, p. 560.

249. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 81; The Colliery Guardian, 20 February 1925, p. 472.

250. The Colliery Guardian, 24 April 1925, p. 1021. The reconstruction scheme was put forward in the name of Mr. F. D. Mottram, who was Tilden Smith's private secretary (1920-29) and then secretary of the reconstructed Tilmanstone company (1930-52).

251. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 3. It is almost certain that a majority of these first mortgage debentures were controlled by the Share Guarantee Trust as A. O. Cautley, one of the trustees for the debenture holders, was Tilden Smith's mining engineer (information supplied by Mr. F. D. Mottram), and after the new company had taken over these debentures more than half of them were in the control of Tilden Smith. (The Colliery Guardian, 29 July 1927, p. 289).

252. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 8. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source unless otherwise stated.

capital of the old company had been:

	£
First Mortgage Debentures	122,710
Second Mortgage Debentures and Income Bonds	203,871
Shares	490,583
TOTAL	817,164

Its assets, however, were to be acquired for £139,667[253]. The new company was to have a share capital of £350,000 (divided into 3,500,000 shares of 2s. each) and to create £125,000 6 per cent first mortgage debenture stock repayable in 30 years[254]. £122,710 of the first mortgage debentures were to be credited as fully paid and exchanged for the first mortgage debentures of the old company. The second mortgage debenture stockholders, income bondholders and shareholders of the old company, who were to lose every penny they had originally invested in the Tilmanstone Colliery[255], were to be offered prior right to subscribe for the shares of the new company at par. Only 400,000 of these shares were offered to the public and were underwritten by Tilden Smith for a commission of 10 per cent. The previous investors in the colliery hardly subscribed for any of these shares, however, and 389,142 were taken up by the Share Guarantee Trust[256].

253. Ibid., item 16.

254. The trustees of this stock were also empowered to create a further £300,000 of prior lien mortgage debentures at a rate of 7 per cent interest. If and when these were issued the rate of interest on the first mortgage debentures would also be increased to 7 per cent.

255. The Colliery Guardian, 24 July 1926, p. 226. The £490,583 of share capital was owned by 5,000 investors, by far the largest of whom, with £15,791, was Barclay's Bank Ltd. There were then seven other investors with holdings of between £2,500 and £4,854. (East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, items 78-79).

256. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 12. The issued share capital of the Share Guarantee Trust was at this time £40,007.

The share capital of the Tilmanstone company remained at £40,000 until February 1938[257]. Further capital for colliery development was raised by issuing more debenture stock, which by the end of 1935 totalled £678,145[258]. Of this stock 93 per cent was held by two companies created by Tilden Smith, the National Metal and Industrial Finance Company Ltd. and, its wholly owned subsidiary, the London Mortgage Trust Ltd.[259]. From 1935 until 1946, when its coal assets were nationalised, no additional outside capital came into the company.

From the takeover of Tilmanstone in 1925 right up until his death in December 1929 Tilden Smith devoted a considerable amount of his time and energies into trying to develop his interests in the Kent Coalfield[260]. He considered that industrial success dependdd upon the efficient combination of labour, raw materials and transport[261]. With the implementation of the reorganisation scheme Tilden Smith had acquired the raw materials, and from then until 31 December 1930 a total of £429,045 was spent on developing the colliery, including the original purchase price of £139,667[262]. This contrasts with the period after 1930 when

257. Ibid., item 49.

258. Ibid., item 44. The original £122,710 of first mortgage debenture stock.

259. Ibid., item 49. The National Metal and Chemical Bank, which had a total subscribed share capital of £1 million, had been formed by Tilden Smith in 1918 and became his main holding company. It changed its name to the National Metal and Industrial Finance Co. Ltd. in 1934. As a private limited liability company it did not submit annual balance sheets to the Board of Trade and there is therefore little detailed information on its operations. It would appear, however, that it was used mainly to finance operations in the Kent Coalfield, both directly and through the London Mortgage Trust. (National Metal and Chemical Bank Ltd., B.O.T. 149959; London Mortgage Trust Ltd., B.O.T. 120033).

260. The Times, 19 December 1929, p. 16.

261. 'Mr. Tilden Smith's Address to Employees' in Walter Haydon (ed)., Russia as Seen by Two Tilmanstone Miners: A Record of a Tour to the Donetz Basin in Aug.-Sept. 1929 (Dover 1929), p. 29.

262. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 16, 20, 21, 27 and 31.

annual expenditure on colliery development was never more than a few thousand pounds per year, so that by December 1946 the total, allowing for some sales of assets, was no more than £477,955[263]. When, however, allowance is made for £201,580 of depreciation net colliery assets in 1946 came to only £276,376[264]. The period of major development was therefore in the first five years of the new company and came to an end with the death of Tilden Smith in December 1929.

The year after Tilden Smith acquired the colliery there was a prolonged strike starting with the beginning of the general strike on 1st May and lasting till 18th November[265]. The company took advantage of this stoppage to press ahead with improvements, including the installation of additional electrical generating plant, new pumping, winding and haulage gear, and new boilers which used pulverized fuel[266]. Even during this strike Tilden Smith embarked upon what was to prove a successful policy of trying to improve industrial relations at the colliery, which had never been good under the previous owners[267]. When the strike ended in November 1926 plans went ahead to improve the social amenity of the labour force by developing the village of Elvington, which was near to the colliery[268]. An agreement between the Tilmanstone company, the Eastry Rural District Council and a joint subsidiary company, Elvington Tenants Ltd., provided for the financing of the scheme, and when completed the

263. Ibid., items 34, 36, 38, 42, 44, 46, 51, 54, 58, 60-65, and 68.

264. Ibid.

265. Ibid., item 18.

266. Ibid., item 18; The Colliery Guardian, 27 August 1926, p. 477, 3 September 1926, p. 531, and 3 December 1926, p. 1239.

267. See below Chapter 7, pp. 388 and 390-91.

268. The Kentish Observer, 16 December 1926.

houses were to be leased to the colliery company for renting to its employees[269].

Having successfully embarked upon improving industrial relations Tilden Smith then became increasingly concerned with the marketing side of the company's affairs. He particularly wished to reduce the cost of putting the colliery's coal on board ship at Dover so that sales could be increased to Continental markets[270]. According to Tilden Smith it cost 8s. 6d. a ton to bring Tilmanstone coal to London, but as much as 5s. 9d. to take it by rail to Dover[271]. He proposed to cut the costs to Dover by at least 4s. a ton by applying to the Railway and Canal Commission Court to erect a 6½ mile aerial ropeway from the colliery direct to Dover Harbour[272]. The application, which was opposed by the Southern Railway Company, led in 1927 to a celebrated legal struggle that finally resulted in the Court of Appeal upholding the sanction of the Railway and Canal Commission for the erection of the ropeway[273]. The ropeway when completed was over 7 miles long and cost the colliery company £75,000, in addition to which the Dover Harbour Board invested £25,000 towards the provision of a bunker and coal handling plant at the end of the Eastern Arm of the Harbour[274]. The whole project was completed in January 1930 and the first

269. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52; also see below Chapter 8.

270. Ibid., item 18.

271. The Colliery Guardian, 24 December 1926, p. 1416.

272. The Colliery Guardian, 24 December 1926, p. 1416 and 18 February 1927, p. 406.

273. F. A. Enver, The Coal Act, 1938 with the Coal (Registration of Ownership) Act, 1937 (1938), p. 314; Mines Department, Annual Report 1927, pp. 28-30; The Colliery Guardian, 23 December 1927, p. 1656. Also see below Chapter 5.

274. 'Along the Ropeway' in Kencole: the Official Organ of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited & its Associated Activities, No. 4, Christmas 1929, pp. 27-30.

coal was shipped from Dover in the following month[275].

Tilden Smith, however, saw the problem of marketing in a much wider context than just outlets. During the period of the general strike he had tried in vain to persuade the government to creat a coal board and to amalgamate compulsorily all the collieries in the country, while afterwards he correctly prophesied that the voluntary marketing schemes such as the Five Counties and Scottish schemes would break down[276]. After these failures new legislation was proposed for the coal industry, imposing a quota restriction on output and making provision for compulsory amalgamation. It was while visiting friends at the House of Commons in December 1929 to argue the case for compulsory amalgamation that Tilden Smith was taken ill suddenly and died[277]. Just a few months earlier he had embarked upon a policy of trying to secure outlets for Tilmanstone coal by obtaining a controlling interest in various east Kent gas works[278]. Apparently his intention was to develop one central gas station at East Langdon, which was to the north of Dover on the route of the aerial

275. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 27.

276. Obituary in The Times, 21 December 1929, p. 15; see also below Chapter 4.

277. Ibid.

278. The Kentish Observer, 15 August 1929; R. Tilden Smith, 'Progress 1928-29' in Kencole: the Official Organ of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited & its Allied Activities, No. 4, Christmas 1929, pp. 3-4; 'Mr. Tilden Smith's Address to Employees' in Walter Haydon (ed.), op. cit., pp. 31-32. In the latter report Tilden Smith informed his employees that he had already secured a controlling interest in the Folkestone, Deal and East Kent gas works. Tilden Smith acquired control of the East Kent Gas Co. Ltd. in October 1929. This company was formed in 1923 with powers to supply a large area of east Kent outside the main towns, and it had a paid up capital of £234,261. It controlled the Whitstable Gas & Coke Co. Ltd. (holding £74,819 of shares), and had a sizeable holding of £72,714 in the Deal and Walmer Gas Company. (East Kent Gas Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 191983, items 48 and 50). It is quite likely that Tilden Smith disposed of his deferred shares in the National Smelting Company at this time in order to provide the necessary funds for these investments. (See above p. 152).

ropeway from Tilmanstone Colliery. In the same vicinity he also planned to establish cement works, carbonisation and briquetting plants and an electrical generating station[279].

Following Tilden Smith's death the company continued to examine the question of sinking to the lower coal seams[280], but the onset of depression in the industry in 1930 led once again to the postponement of this scheme. The company did, however, in 1930 acquire the leases of the adjoining Guilford and Waldershare Colliery, which increased Tilmanstone's mineral area to 7,956 acres, of which 1,706 were freehold[281]. The Guilford and Waldershare Colliery had been acquired by Châtillon-Commentry in February 1919 and sinking had been resumed almost straight away[282]. This work had been suspended in 1921, however, because of the state of the coal trade and the depreciation of the franc in terms of sterling, before the shafts had even entered the coal measures[283]. No further development work took place at the colliery and after selling its mineral

279. Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins, who was at the time Tilden Smith's accountant at Tilmanstone Colliery. A company called the Dover Coal, Gas and Power Co. Ltd. was formed by Tilden Smith in October 1929, presumably with the intention of co-ordinating these various activities. Following Tilden Smith's death two months later, however, the company remained dormant until it was dissolved in 1953. (Dover Coal, Gas and Power Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 243027).

280. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 21 and 27.

281. Ibid., item 27. The freehold of 1,070 acres previously leased had been acquired in 1929, together with the area upon which the company's pits, plant and buildings were erected. Before acquiring the freehold of this land the company had again taken proceedings before the Railway and Canal Commission Court, this time to try and get the royalties and minimum rent reduced and the period of lease extended. (Mines Department, Annual Report 1929, p. 32).

282. See above Chapter 2, pp. 94-95.

283. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, item 24; Mines Department, List of Mines for 1921, entry for Guilford Colliery; E. O. Forster Brown, 'Underground Waters in the Kent Coal-field and their Incidence in Mining Development', Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Vol. CCXV, session 1922-1923, part i (London 1923), p. 40.

leases and surface equipment to Tilmanstone in 1930 the company went into voluntary liquidation early in the following year[284]. After meeting liabilities the shareholders, namely the six French firms, received only 4½d. in the pound on their £240,000 investment[285].

Tilden Smith's will placed his estate in a Trust for his family. As it was his special wish to carry on developments at Tilmanstone the Chancery Court granted special permission to use Trust money for a period of seven years[286]. Heavy death duties, together with the general legal requirements of trustee investments, prevented the recently acquired gas interests remaining in the hands of the Trust, and they were sold to the South Metropolitan Gas Company[287].

By the end of 1930 some £429,045 had been spent on development at the colliery[288]. Every year thereafter depreciation was always greater than new capital investment[289]. In the early years this was attributable to the changed financial circumstances following Tilden Smith's death, but as the capital was not available to sink to the lower seams, and as demand was declining for the small coal being mined from the Beresford seam, it became necessary in the years 1931 to 1934 to pursue a policy contrary to that of the other mines in Kent and to contract the scale of

284. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, items 33-36.

285. Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 34/4227/147701.

286. Information supplied by Mr. F. D. Mottram, Tilden Smith's personal secretary, who was appointed Secretary of the Tilmanstone Company by the Trustees in 1930.

287. Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins, who was the accountant at Tilmanstone Colliery from 1927 to 1947. Control of the East Kent Gas Co. Ltd. passed in 1933 to the South Eastern Gas Corporation Ltd. (East Kent Gas Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 191983, item 63).

288. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 31.

289. Ibid., annual returns 1931-46.

operations[290]. As a further measure to improve the colliery's financial position and prevent closure, the Tilmanstone Branch of the Kent Mine Workers' Association agreed to a scale of voluntary wage reductions, which were as high as 5 per cent for coal face workers. It was part of the agreement that no profits would be distributed until these cuts had been restored[291]. To try and overcome this problem of small coal a briquetting plant and presses were installed to make 'coaloids' and 'coal bricks' and every effort was made to popularise the sale of these products in the south-east of England[292]. Such was the general state of the world coal trade that in the years 1933 and 1934 there was a considerable reduction in the coal carried over the ropeway and shipped at Dover[293]. Thereafter the situation improved and sales increased[294].

One undertaking that was seriously affected by the opening of the ropeway and enjoyed no subsequent recovery was the East Kent Light Railway. Originally part of Arthur Burr's Concessions Group the company had welcomed the proposed development of the Port of Richborough by Pearson and Dorman Long, and in 1923 had considered raising capital to extend its line by 3½ miles from the terminus at Sandwich Road (Woodnesborough) to the Port, which would have provided a direct outlet for Tilmanstone coal[295]. The only financier that could be found for the scheme had been the Southern

290. Ibid., item 36; also see below Chapter 4, p. 236.

291. Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins and Mr. W. Newman, who was secretary of the Tilmanstone Branch of the Kent Mine Workers' Association at the time. Also see below Chapter 7 , pp. 390-91.

292. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 31, 34, 36 and 38. The coaloids and bricks were made by binding the small coal with pitch. (See below Chapter 5, pp. 279 and 298-99).

293. Ibid., items 38 and 42.

294. Ibid., items 44 and 46.

295. British Transport Commission Records, EKL 1/1, East Kent Light Railway Company, Minute Book, 16 January, 15 February and 12 April 1923.

Railway, which in return for providing the necessary capital had acquired complete control over the company in 1926[296]. The extra $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of track were finally opened in 1929, a year before Tilmanstone's aerial ropeway to Dover. As the failure of other collieries to develop on its route meant that the E.K.L.R. was almost entirely dependent for its revenue on transporting Tilmanstone coal[297], the 650,000 tons carried by the ropeway between 1930 and its closure in 1939 represented a serious loss to the railway[298]. Despite the ropeway, the E.K.L.R. still carried between 210,000 and 250,000 tons a year of Tilmanstone coal, mostly from the colliery to its junction with the Southern Railway at Shepherdswell[299]. The railway even managed to make occasional operating surpluses, which went, however, towards paying interest on outstanding debentures. No dividend was ever paid by the company, which was placed under government control in 1939 and nationalised in 1947[300].

After the seven years that the Tilden Smith Trust was permitted to operate Tilmanstone had elapsed, a controlling interest in the colliery was acquired by the Harley Drayton group of companies[301]. Drayton, who controlled the British Electric Traction Company[302] wished to extend his activities by taking over the former Tilden Smith interests[303]. Already

296. Ibid., 29 March 1926.

297. East Kent Light Railway Company, B.O.T. 763R, annual returns 1922-38.

298. Estimated tonnage based on figures given in Directors' Reports 1930-40, Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409.

299. East Kent Light Railways Company, B.O.T. 763R, annual returns 1930-38.

300. Ibid., annual returns 1930-47.

301. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 50; information supplied by Mr. F. D. Mottram.

302. Obituary in The Times, 9 April 1966.

303. Information supplied by Mr. F. D. Mottram.

in July 1937 Drayton had gained control of the National Metal & Industrial Finance Company, which had been Tilden Smith's main holding company[304]. As we have seen the share capital of the Tilmanstone company remained at only £40,000 until February 1938 and further capital was raised by issuing £678,145 of debentures. As 97 per cent of this share capital was owned by the London Mortgage Trust Ltd., itself a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Metal & Industrial Finance Company, control of the Tilmanstone company passed to the Drayton group at the same time[305]. As a result Thomas Richard Edridge, Tilden Smith's son-in-law, resigned as chairman of the Tilmanstone company and was replaced by Leonard Aldridge, the chairman and managing director of Drayton's Anglo-French Consolidated Investment Corporation[306].

The Drayton group also acquired with the National Metal and London Mortgage companies a 93 per cent holding in the £678,145 of mortgage debentures in Tilmanstone. With Court permission these debentures, on which £273,730 of outstanding interest had been waived in December 1936, were converted in February 1938 into share capital[307]. The two Drayton companies received £261,283 of fully paid shares (approximately 8s. 4d. in the pound on the principal amounts of their debentures), while the other holders received £23,718 in shares (a rate of 10s. 0d. in the pound)[308]. The majority of these shares were then transferred to a wide range of other investors, who were particularly connected with both the original Drayton group and with its new, former Tilden Smith acquisitions[309].

304. National Metal & Industrial Finance Co. Ltd. (formerly the National Metal and Chemical Bank Ltd.), B.O.T. 149959, item 47.

305. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 49.

306. Ibid., item 45.

307. Ibid., items 46 and 49.

308. Ibid., item 49.

309. Ibid., item 50.

The purpose behind this conversion was to place the colliery company in a better financial position to sink its shafts to the lower coal seams[310]. Some development work did take place in 1938, in which year the company made its first profit[311]. No dividend was paid, however, because the agreement with the miners' union would have meant also restoring the earlier wage cuts.[312]

Although the outbreak of war in September 1939 necessitated the closing of the aerial ropeway[313], the wartime demand for coal resulted in increased profitability for the company, which in 1946, the last year of private ownership of the colliery, made a record net profit of £65,610[314]. These wartime profits were retained with the intention of developing the lower seams[315].

Profitability had come to the Tilmanstone company only in the last years before nationalisation and had, apart from the years 1941 and 1946, eluded Pearson and Dorman Long altogether. The most successful of the three companies whose mining assets were nationalised in 1946 was, however, the Chislet Colliery Ltd.

As we have seen, because of the wartime and post-war price rises the Chislet company had been forced to increase its share capital from £168,000 in December 1918 to £338,000 in December 1920, while to provide further

310. Ibid., item 49.

311. Ibid., item 54.

312. Information supplied by Mr. F. D. Mottram.

313. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 57. The ropeway was never reopened and was later dismantled by the National Coal Board.

314. Ibid., item 68.

315. Ibid., items 58 and 60-65.

funds for colliery and housing development it had been necessary to raise £209,558 by means of debentures[316]. The North Kent Coalfield with 75,449 of the 338,800 shares of £1 was still by far the largest single shareholder in the company, although Sir John Ellerman, the shipowner, had begun to acquire a significant holding, which by 1922 came to 7½ per cent of the equity[317]. Unfortunately for the Chislet company the terms on which the debentures had been raised were somewhat onerous and to save the colliery from liquidation the greater part had had to be provided by the directors. The main subscribers had been two groups: the first, and by far the most important, was centred around the Stephenson Clarke and Powell Duffryn companies, and the second around Sir John Ellerman[318]. This debenture issue set the pattern for the 1920s, for during those years it was only the financial assistance of the Stephenson Clarke company that prevented the Chislet Colliery from becoming insolvent. At the end of this decade the Powell Duffryn Company took over Stephenson Clarke, in order to co-ordinate its own selling policy with that of this old established firm of coal merchants with which for many years it had had the closest of business links. At this juncture the Chislet Colliery became one of the Powell Duffryn group of companies[319]. (See Fig. 3.3).

The Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Company had been incorporated in 1864 following the death of its founder and owner, Thomas Powell. Originally

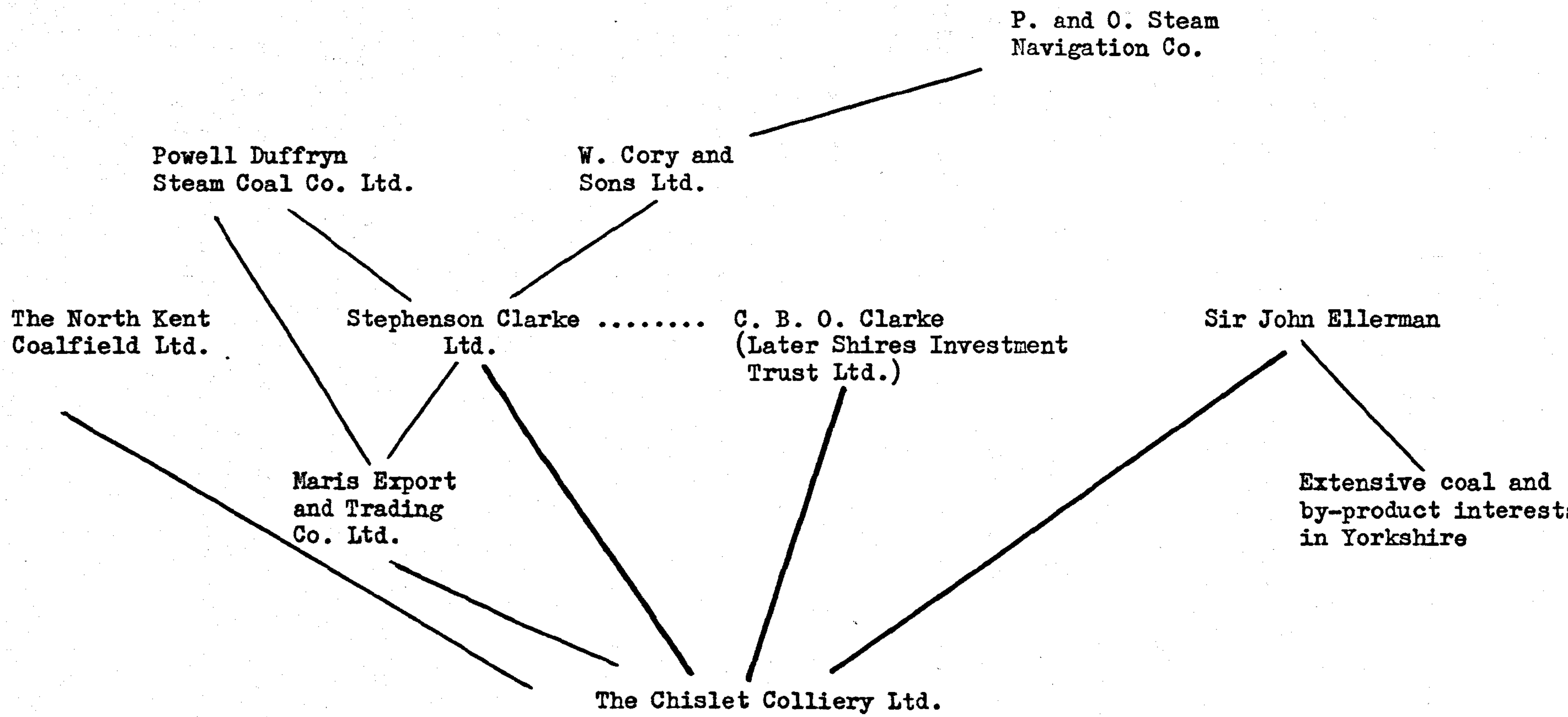
316. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 48 and 74; also see above Chapter 2, pp. 98-99.

317. Ibid., items 47, 48, 61, 74 and 77. Immediately following the First World War Ellerman had also acquired a 7 per cent shareholding in the North Kent Coalfield. (The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, items 44 and 49).

318. Ibid., items 111 and 112; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 25 June 1920 (Sixth O.G.M.), 7 June 1921 (Seventh O.G.M.), 25 May 1922 (Eighth O.G.M.).

319. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 41; Neuman, op. cit., p. 140.

Fig. 3.3 The Chislet Colliery Ltd.



NOTE: For details of the exact relationship between companies see text.

a Newport timber merchant, Powell had begun his connection with the South Wales coal trade in about 1810, and the operation of his own coal mines, together with his own coastal vessels, had made him a dominating figure in this trade. Following his death the new company had vigorously pursued the Powell policy of extending its colliery ownership during what has been described as the first wave of capitalist combination the the British coal industry[320]. Although a lean period, with no cash profits, had followed from 1873 to 1888, during which time the company might have gone into liquidation[321], it recovered its former vigour and by the years 1904-10 its profits on capital had been averaging 8½ per cent per annum, equivalent to 1s. 9d. on each ton of coal produced[322]. The company had steadily increased its capital from the original £500,000 in 1864 to £2,316,000 by 1913, and then with the post-war period of expansion it had risen rapidly from £2,916,000 in 1919 to £5,604,000 in 1923[323]. The effects of the war and post-war boom in stimulating concentration and combination is clearly seen in the case of Powell Duffryn. Before the war, although the company had steadily expanded, it had not acquired any subsidiary undertakings. The post-war period of boom, however, gave it the opportunity to do so, with its accumulated wartime profits providing the initial capital[324]. Between 1913 and 1923 it had increased investments in its own collieries and plant from £1,938,000 to £3,663,000 and those in

320. J. H. Morris and L. J. Williams, The South Wales Coal Industry, 1841-1875 (Cardiff 1958), pp. 13, 106-07, 125-26, 140, 151-52, 159-60 and 164; A. H. John, The Industrial Development of South Wales (Cardiff 1950), p. 40; Neuman, op. cit., p. 149.

321. Evidence of Joseph Shaw, chairman of Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. Ltd., Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence on the Second Stage of the Inquiry, P.P. 1919 XII (Cmd. 360), p. 983.

322. Neuman, op. cit., p. 455.

323. Ibid., p. 65.

324. D. J. Williams, op. cit., pp. 108-110.

other companies from £32,000 to £1,666,000[325]. Despite the steady absorption of other companies Powell Duffryn remained basically a horizontal combine that mined and shipped coal[326], although after the war it did begin to expand into the field of coal by-products with interests in the manufacture of coal-tar and ammonia[327]. Its links with the Stephenson Clarke company became very close from 1920 onwards when the two companies formed the Maris Export and Trading Company with a jointly held capital of £250,000[328], while those between Powell Duffryn and Stephenson Clarke on the one hand and the Chislet Colliery on the other had been close from the very beginning of the latter company. Joseph Shaw, the chairman of Powell Duffryn, was the first chairman of the Chislet company, an office he held until his retirement in 1929, while Charles Clarke of Stephenson Clarke served on the Chislet board from 1913 until his death in 1935, and was the company's acting chairman during the years of Shaw's illness from 1924 to 1929[329]. The Stephenson Clarke company had also entered into an agreement with Chislet in 1914 to act as sales agents for the colliery's coal[330].

Sir John Ellerman's interest in the Kent Coalfield had originated with loans of £20,000 in 1913 to Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd., one of unsuccessful pioneer companies whose assets he finally acquired in

325. Neuman, op. cit., p. 65.

326. Ibid., p. 148.

327. Evidence of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, pp. 121, 127 and 129; D. J. Williams, op. cit., pp. 109-111.

328. Evidence of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, p. 129; D. J. Williams, op. cit., p. 110. For a detailed picture of the Powell Duffryn combine at the end of the inter-war period see M. Heinemann, Britain's Coal (1944), pp. 109 and 178-79.

329. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 2, 16 and 41; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 13 November 1913, 11 November 1924, 15 August 1929, and 5 April 1935.

330. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 October 1914.

1923-24[331]. His main link with Chislet had come through Arthur Woolley-Hart, who in addition to being a director of that company and chairman of both the Kent Freehold and Minerals and the North Kent Coalfield was also managing director of the Glass Houghton and Castleford Collieries Ltd., in which Ellerman was the largest shareholder[332]. Ellerman's interests in the coal industry did not stop there. He also had a substantial shareholding in John Brown and Company, the steel and shipbuilding firm of Sheffield and Glasgow, which had since 1864 been closely associated with the Sheepbridge-Staveley group of coal and iron companies, and owned with these subsidiary colliery undertakings in Yorkshire[333]. Before nationalisation the Staveley-Sheepbridge and the Powell Duffryn groups were by far the two largest colliery combines in Britain[334].

Having apparently overcome the obstacles to development brought about by the war the Chislet company found that further troubles lay ahead. The new post-war issues of shares and debentures had barely been made when the company was overtaken by the national coal strike which stopped the colliery from 1 April to 1 July 1921[335]. There had already

331. See above Chapter 2, pp. 78-79.

332. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 6 and 41; Evidence of M.F.G.B., Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, pp. 142-43.

333. Evidence of M.F.G.B., _op. cit._, p. 142; Sir Allan Grant, _Steel & Ships: the History of John Brown's_ (1950), pp. 27 and 62; J. E. Williams, _The Derbyshire Miners_ (1962), pp. 202 and 571-73; Neuman, _op. cit._, p. 147.

334. Heinemann, _op. cit._, pp. 178-80. In 1942 the Staveley-Sheepbridge combine had an output of 19,650,000 tons of coal, followed by the Powell Duffryn group with 15,000,000 tons, and third, but a long way behind, the Bolsover Colliery with 6,000,000 tons.

335. G. J. Davies, 'The Chislet Colliery Limited: Outline of History 1913 to 1945', p. 4. (This extensive memorandum was prepared for the directors of the Chislet Colliery by Mr. Davies, who was secretary of the company from 1926 to 1946, to assist them with the presentation of the company's claim for compensation under the provisions of the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946. This document, which is in the possession of Mr. Davies, is hereafter referred to as: Davies, _Chislet Memorandum_).

been other strikes at the colliery: for one week in 1919 and for three weeks in October and November 1920. In the five years following the 1921 stoppage there was a three weeks strike in November 1923, a strike of the entire coalfield organised by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain from 4 July to 15 December 1924, and the national coal stoppage from 1 May to 26 October 1926[336]. The 1924 dispute was particularly disastrous for Chislet because as a result of the protracted stoppage the floor had risen and the roof had collapsed thereby blocking all the roadways[337]. Some of the damage was not even rectified by the time of the General Strike and as it was not possible to re-open all the old coal faces there was a consequent restriction of output[338]. The cumulative effect of these periodic stoppages was that the proceeds of the debentures instead of being available for colliery development and housing had to be diverted to the repeated rehabilitation of the workings and to covering the company's trading losses in these years[339]. Although these deficits were partly offset by payments from the Mines Department of £70,000 in 1922 and £13,194 in 1924 as settlement under the terms of wartime control of the colliery by the government, and by £13,737 received from the government subvention given to the coal industry between January and April 1926, still by the end of 1926 accumulated losses totalled £26,276[340]. These results affected the value of the company's shares and consequently the possibility

336. Ibid., p. 5.

337. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 24 June 1924 (Tenth O.G.M.), 25 June 1925 (Eleventh O.G.M.).

338. Ibid., 25 June 1925 (Eleventh O.G.M.), 29 June 1926 (Twelfth O.G.M.), 15 June 1927 (Thirteenth O.G.M.).

339. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 5.

340. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 14 March 1922, 14 October 1924, 15 June 1927 (Thirteenth O.G.M.); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 88 and 95.

of raising further capital by public subscription[341]. Under these circumstances the colliery was only able to continue by turning for financial assistance to its sales agents, Stephenson Clarke, to its two most important directors, Joseph Shaw and Charles Clarke, and to Sir John Ellerman. The first loan, one of £25,000 for seven years, came in September 1920 from the Normandy Shipping Company, of which Shaw was chairman and Clarke a director, on condition that Chislet supplied it at current market prices with any coal it had available for export[342]. As further loans were required following the national coal strike of 1921, £9,500 was supplied against coal assignments by the Stephenson Clarke company and £20,000 was provided by Joseph Shaw[343]. Although Shaw was repaid the next year, following the settlement of Chislet's claim with the Mines Department, further temporary loans soon became necessary[344]. Despite this assistance, together with a loan of £25,000 from Lloyds Bank, the company at the beginning of 1924 still needed a further £50,000 to meet its outlays[345]. Not surprisingly at this time, in view of the material assistance Stephenson Clarke had been to the company, it was decided to renew the agreement for the sales agency for a further fifteen years[346]. Shaw made additional advances until the time of his illness in

341. The company's £1 ordinary shares, which had stood at 12s. 6d. early in 1923, fell to 2s. 9d. in 1924 and 1s. 9d. in 1925. (The Colliery Guardian, weekly share quotations).

342. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 14 September 1920, 12 October 1920, 10 May 1921; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 41. In 1925 this loan was transferred to the Maris Export and Trading Company. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 17 November 1925).

343. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 12 July 1921 and 9 August 1921.

344. Ibid., 14 February 1922, 14 March 1922, 24 March 1922, 13 July 1922, 12 December 1922, 8 January 1924, and 12 February 1924.

345. Ibid., 26 June 1923, and 12 February 1924.

346. Ibid., 12 February 1924, and 18 March 1924.

1925, after which the acting chairman Clarke lent money, particularly on mortgage[347]. By June 1927 the company's debts included £64,045 of secured loans and £27,550 of mortgages in addition to its £209,680 of debenture stock, on which the amount of unpaid interest totalled £40,396[348]. Of the £91,595 of non-debenture debt £25,840 was held by Shaw, £18,205 by Clarke, £10,000 by the Stephenson Clarke company, £15,000 by the Maris Export and Trading Company, and £3,650 by the Ellerman Property Trust[349]. At the same time the greater part of the £209,680 of debenture stock was in the same hands, with Charles Clarke controlling 24 per cent of the total, Joseph Shaw 22 per cent, Stephenson Clarke and the Maris Export and Trading Company 8 per cent each, and Sir John Ellerman 7 per cent[350].

In the early part of 1927 there was a temporary improvement in the company's financial position as coal prices were above normal due to the 1926 strike. These price levels could not be maintained, however, and there was a steady decline, which appears to have been accelerated by a policy of price cutting in the coalfield[351]. So although at the end of the year a net profit of £93 was made, the failure of output to rise in the following year made it necessary for the company to continue to try to reduce costs[352]. Wages had been reduced following the strike in 1926

347. Ibid., 8 April 1924, 9 September 1924, 14 October 1924, 12 May 1925, 17 November 1925, 17 December 1925, 15 January 1926, 18 February 1926, 16 April 1926, 14 October 1926 and 16 November 1926. In June 1926 a small amount was also lent on mortgage by Ellerman. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 92).

348. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 95; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 15 June 1927 (Thirteenth O.G.M.).

349. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 95. Of the remainder Lloyds Bank held £9,000.

350. Ibid., item 111. These were the proportions of preferential and participating shares allocated by the Chislet Company pro rata to the debenture holders in 1930 to discharge fully the amounts owed to them by the company.

351. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 13 June 1928 (Fourteenth O.G.M.).

352. Ibid., 21 February 1928.

and although further cuts were considered no action was taken, presumably for fear of provoking yet another stoppage[353]. Instead the directors decided to reduce by ten per cent the salaries of the office and outside staff at the colliery, and at the same time they reduced their own fees, which had not in any event been paid since 1921, to one quarter of the amount prescribed in the company's articles[354]. Already in 1925-26 administrative costs had been reduced by moving the company's offices from London to Chislet and by dismissing the company secretary, who was replaced without further increase to staff[355]. Housing costs also had already been substantially reduced. The company had in 1919 entered into agreements to lease 256 houses in Ramsgate for its employees and to build a village of up to 800 houses near the colliery[356]. The Ramsgate houses had proved to be a serious drain on the company's finances and the leases had been determined at various dates between 1922 and March 1926[357]. Meanwhile lack of finance had delayed a start being made on the proposed village, and when the first 56 houses were completed in 1925 they had to be mortgaged straight away, together with 12 cottages owned in neighbouring villages, in order to provide money for carrying on the colliery[358]. Expenditure on housing increased in 1929, when a loan of £38,000 for 30 years from the Blean Rural District Council enabled a further hundred

353. Ibid., 16 November 1926, and 21 February 1928.

354. Ibid., 19 March 1928, 13 June 1928 (Fourteenth O.G.M.).

355. Ibid., 13 July 1925, 14 October 1926, and 16 November 1926.

356. Ibid., 17 June 1919, 14 October 1919, and 10 May 1921. For details of housing developments in connection with Chislet Colliery see below Chapter 8.

357. Ibid., 10 May 1921, 12 June 1923, 11 November 1924, 9 December 1924, 13 January 1925, 11 March 1925, 20 March 1925, 30 March 1925, and 16 June 1925.

358. Ibid., 12 May 1925, 29 June 1925, 17 November 1925, 23 January 1926, and 12 June 1926 (Twelfth O.G.M.); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 83, 86, 90 and 91.

houses to be built in the new village next to the colliery, which was also at this time given the name of "Hersden"[359]. These additions raised the total expenditure on housing from £74,238 at the end of 1928 to £113,977 by 31 March 1930[360]. Some saving had also been made by determining unwanted mineral leases and persuading landlords of areas that would be required in the future to accept reduced minimum rents[361]. Despite these various measures the company's financial situation did not improve, partly because output at the colliery increased less than was expected. It had taken the colliery over five years to raise the annual output of 223,732 tons in 1923, after which total production had declined. It did not reach this figure again until 1927 and exceeded it by only 40,000 tons in the following year[362]. As a consequence trading losses began to increase in 1928, and before the end of the year, at the same time as Stephenson Clarke was being reorganised as part of the Powell Duffryn group, the directors began to consider reorganising the company's capital[363].

By the end of 1928, after fourteen years of effort, the company, which then employed 948 men, had spent £560,148 on sinking and equipping the colliery and £74,238 on cottages, it had paid no dividends to shareholders, no directors' fees, and no interest to debenture holders or creditors since January 1925. With total losses amounting to £49,143 the company had completely exhausted its capital[364]. Under the circumstances

359. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 23 May 1928, 17 July 1928, 3 August 1928, 10 September 1928, 11 December 1928, 29 January 1931, and 27 February 1931; The Kentish Observer, 15 August 1929; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 98 and 118.

360. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 6 and Statement No. 2.

361. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 12 October 1920, 14 December 1920, 14 March 1923, 11 March 1925, 7 April 1925, and 22 July 1926.

362. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, pp. 3 and 5, and Statement No. 1. Output did increase further in 1929, but only to 284,249 tons.

363. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 22 November 1928, and 16 January 1929.

364. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, pp. 5-6.

not only did the company's desire to raise a further £90,000 in loans for colliery development not look good[365], but there was even a danger that it might be forced into having a receiver appointed[366]. The directors therefore asked E. O. Forster Brown to assess the company's needs and, after receiving his report in May 1929, they then entered into negotiations with Charles Clarke, Stephenson Clarke and Sir John Ellerman, who agreed to consider acting as guarantors for the reorganisation of the company's capital and for the provision of further funds[367]. Negotiations continued until October and the scheme insisted on by the three guarantors was fairly drastic. It provided for:

1. A reduction in value by 16 shillings of each of the 338,800 ordinary shares of £1[368].

2. The creation of 200,000 preference and participating shares of £1 each, which carried a 7 per cent non-cumulative preferential dividend together with the right to 80 per cent of any balance of profits[369].

3. The cancellation of £258,910 of old debenture stock and the interest thereon[370].

4. The creation of £80,000 of new debenture stock, of which £65,000 was to be offered for subscription at par on a pro rata basis to the holders of the old stock[371].

365. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 11 December 1928, and 11 January 1929.

366. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 26 November 1929.

367. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 111; Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 7; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 February 1936.

368. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 101.

369. Ibid.

370. Ibid., items 111 and 112.

371. Ibid., item 111. This new stock was underwritten in equal portions by the company's three guarantors.

5. The holders of the new stock being given a bonus of 73,125 out of a total of 189,635 preference and participating shares of £1 each credited as fully paid[372].

6. The issuing of the remaining 116,510 preference and participating shares on a pro rata basis to the holders of the old debenture stock[373].

7. The cancellation of all arrears of directors' fees and sweeping changes in the board of directors, so that the three guarantors could each nominate a director to represent their interests[374].

As a result of this reorganisation the value of the company's assets was reduced from £824,660 to £364,750, and the £459,228 written off in this way included accumulated losses totalling £109,036[375]. The value of the colliery was reduced from £560,148 to £289,750 and the cottages from £113,977 to £75,000[376]. The biggest losers by this reorganisation were the ordinary shareholders, who saw their investments written down from £338,800 to only £67,760. The North Kent Coalfield with 54,649 shares suffered more than any other investor[377]. The company had held 75,449 of these shares in 1920[378], but it had gradually reduced this holding in 1924 and 1925 as its fortunes had declined along with those of the colliery[379]. Since 1912 the North Kent Coalfield's payments of

372. Ibid.

373. Ibid.

374. Ibid., items 99 and 100; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 15 August 1929, 10 October 1929, and 5 April 1935. The Agency Assets Company, which had originally promoted the company and underwritten share issues, also lost its right to nominate two directors.

375. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 7 and Statement No. 2; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 102 and 121. There is a discrepancy of £682 in these figures due to an accounting error.

376. Ibid.

377. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 102 and 117.

378. Ibid., item 74.

379. Ibid., items 82 and 88.

minimum rents and royalties to landowners had been greater than those received from the Chislet Colliery, which resulted by the end of 1926 in the company having accumulated losses totalling £18,408[380]. These adverse trading figures led to the value of the company's £1 shares falling from 10s. 7½d. in 1922 to 7s. 6d. in 1923 and down to 1s. 3d. in 1927, at which price they remained throughout the following year[381]. The loss in value of its Chislet investments, which on paper represented nearly half the company's assets[382] was, however, only part of the extent to which the North Kent Coalfield was affected by the Chislet reorganisation of 1929. The company was also forced to make reductions for a period of five years of between ½d. and 1d. per ton in the super-royalties charged for certain coal areas worked by the colliery, in return for which it received 500 of the new Chislet preference shares[383]. In turn, however, concessions were granted by Sir John Ellerman and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on minerals they leased to the North Kent company but which were not sub-leased to the colliery[384]. After the North Kent Coalfield the largest shareholder in Chislet was Charles Clarke, who in the years 1924-25 increased his holding from 3,900 to 50,500 by acquiring all but a few of R. W. Hudson's 43,000 shares, and in 1928 he held 27,000 shares in his own name and 27,000 jointly with other members of his family[385]. Meanwhile the Stephenson Clarke company had increased its holding from 4,400 shares

380. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 73.

381. The Colliery Guardian, weekly share quotations. See for example, 22 September 1922, p. 720, 13 July 1923, p. 98, 8 July 1927, p. 100, and 19 October 1928, p. 1570.

382. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501, item 80.

383. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 12 November 1929, and 26 November 1929 (A.G.M.).

384. Ibid., 12 November 1929, and 7 October 1932 (Twenty-first O.G.M.).

385. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 82, 88 and 96.

in 1919 to 7,150 in 1920 and in 1928 held 8,250 shares[386].

With the conclusion of the scheme of reorganisation Stephenson Clarke's control of Chislet was complete and the North Kent Coalfield, the colliery's original parent company, lost virtually all influence in its affairs. As subscribers respectively for 38 per cent, 25 per cent, 23 per cent and 8 per cent of the £65,000 of new debenture stock, Charles Clarke, Stephenson Clarke, Ellerman and the Maris Export and Trading Company received proportionate amounts of the 73,113 preference shares allocated to such subscribers under the scheme of reorganisation[387]. The agreement that each of the three guarantors should be represented on the board resulted in a complete change in the directors of the Chislet company. Apart from Clarke all the other directors resigned[388] and were replaced by Major G. M. Palmer, a director of Stephenson Clarke, who became chairman[389], J. H. W. Laverick, who as a director of the Barnsley Main Colliery had been associated with Ellerman and Woolley-Hart in promoting coal by-product firms in Yorkshire[390] and had also been consulting engineer to Chislet since 1925[391], N. P. W. Viner Brady, the solicitor who had assisted with the reorganisation scheme[392], and E. O. Forster Brown, who was to take over

386. Ibid., items 48, 61 and 96.

387. Ibid., item 111.

388. Ibid., items 99 and 100.

389. Ibid., item 100; Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, p. 127.

390. Ibid., pp. 142-43.

391. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 25 September 1925, 21 February 1928, and 13 November 1928. Laverick's appointment as consulting engineer in September 1925 immediately followed Woolley-Hart's resignation as director because of pressure of other commitments. It would appear therefore that Ellerman and Woolley-Hart were safeguarding their interests in the colliery by Laverick's appointment. (Ibid., 11 August 1925 and 1September 1925).

392. Ibid., 22 November 1928.

the role of consulting engineer to the company[393]. As a result of these changes the North Kent Coalfield was no longer represented on the Chislet board[394].

Altogether only a little over £100,000 of fresh capital was provided after reorganisation, £80,000 of which was by the issue of the new debenture stock[395]. As these funds started to become available early in 1930 they enabled the programme of development, rehabilitation and equipment laid down under the technical supervision of Forster Brown to proceed without interruption[396]. Despite the restrictions imposed on production by the Coal Mines Act of 1930, output, which had been 284,249 tons in 1929, increased steadily and reached a peak of 488,587 tons in 1936, at which level it remained until the war[397]. Over the same years the rate of increase in manpower was much less, from just under 1,000 to around 1,500[398].

These developments, reinforced by improved coal prices after 1935, had their effects on the profitability of the company. In the first year after reorganisation the colliery made a loss of £8,321 but thereafter until nationalisation it became the most successful company in the history of the Kent Coalfield and made gross profits totalling well over £750,000[399].

393. Ibid., 15 August 1929.

394. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 11 November 1930 (Ninteenth O.G.M.).

395. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, pp. 9 and 12-13; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 114, 120 and 127. The extra £15,000 of debenture capital was provided by the three guarantors. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 1 May 1931 and 24 July 1931).

396. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 10.

397. Ibid., p. 17.

398. Ibid., p. 16.

399. Ibid., p. 10 and Statement No. 4; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 154 and 157.

The achievement of these results enabled the colliery to redeem half its debenture stock by July 1935 and the rest in stages between then and May 1943[400]. At the same time, with the reinvestment of profits, £164,380 was spent on colliery development during the fifteen years 1931-45[401]. Chislet alone of the three pre-nationalisation colliery companies paid a dividend to its shareholders. They were paid in every year from 1936 until nationalisation. In the first year only the holders of the 7 per cent preferential shares received a return on their investment, but from the following year the ordinary shareholders did so as well[402]. The aggregate net amount of dividends paid on the preference shares between 1936 and March 1947 was £171,304 and on the ordinary shares £18,648[403].

The one area in which no further progress was made after reorganisation was in the provision of housing. The Blean R.D.C., together with various building societies, was unresponsive in 1933 when the company wanted to obtain funds to add a further 70 to 100 houses to the new village of Hersden[404]. The local council maintained the same position in the following year[405] and again in 1937[406]. Throughout the

400. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., <u>Minutes</u>, 26 July 1935 (Twenty-first O.G.M.); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 136 and 146.

401. Davies, <u>Chislet Memorandum</u>, p. 13 and Statement No. 5.

402. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 10-11 and 13; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 154 and 157; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., <u>Minutes</u>, 17 July 1936 (Twenty-second A.G.M.), and 30 July 1937 (Twenty-third A.G.M.).

403. Davies, <u>Chislet Memorandum</u>, p. 13; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 136-40, 143-44, 146, 149, 153-54 and 157; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., <u>Minutes</u>, 30 July 1937 (Twenty-third O.G.M.), and 29 July 1938 (Twenty-fourth O.G.M.).

404. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., <u>Minutes</u>, 6 January 1933, 27 March 1933, and 27 October 1933.

405. <u>Ibid.</u>, 27 February 1935.

406. <u>Ibid.</u>, 27 January 1937, and 17 December 1937.

post reorganisation years the company's 180 houses provided accommodation for about a quarter of its employees[407].

Chislet owed a large part of its post reorganisation success to E. O. Forster Brown[408], who in 1932 was promoted to the position of managing director of the company[409]. When Major Palmer died in the following year Forster Brown was also made chairman pending the appointment of a new director by Stephenson Clarke[410]. Stephenson Clarke must have been well satisfied with Forster Brown because firstly they took well over a year to name E. W. Ganderton in Palmer's place[411] and then, having got the Chislet Board to agree that the chairman be elected annually upon a formal motion by the director representing Stephenson Clarke, re-elected Forster Brown chairman every year until his death in May 1941[412]. Forster Brown was succeeded as chairman by John P. Stephenson Clarke, who had been elected to the board in 1935 following the death of his uncle Charles Clarke[413], while the vacant seat on the board was filled by J. A. Price, who had recently retired from a senior management position with Powell Duffryn[414]. Both J. P. Stephenson Clarke and Ganderton were directors of Stephenson Clarke, Powell Duffryn and the Shires Investment

407. Ibid., 29 July 1938 (Twenty-fourth A.G.M.). In 1938 the colliery employed 1,560 men. (Mines Department, List of Mines and Quarries for 1938, entry for Chislet Colliery).

408. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 143.

409. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 5 August 1932. At the same time, however, he had to sever his long standing consultancy agreement with Pearson and Dorman Long.

410. Ibid., 6 July 1933, and 25 August 1933.

411. Ibid., 14 December 1934.

412. Ibid., 21 July 1939 (Twenty-fifth A.G.M.); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 141.

413. Ibid., item 143; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 5 April 1935, and 9 May 1935.

414. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 143 and 149.

Company Ltd.[415]. It was to the latter company, which they now owned, that the Clarke family, as executors, transferred Charles Clarke's shares following his death, thereby making it the largest single holder of Chislet equity with 41,000 ordinary and 56,056 preference shares[416]. Although Sir John Ellerman had died in 1933, Laverick continued to represent the Ellerman family interests until April 1944, when he resigned and was replaced by Harry Watson Smith, who was manager of the Hardwick Colliery Company[417]. Before the end of the year Watson Smith, who had experience of the more capital intensive methods of coal mining in the United States, became a member of the Technical Advisory Committee on the Coal Industry set up by the Ministry of Fuel and Power[418]. This committee's report, known as the Reid Report, was the most comprehensive technical inquiry that had ever been publicly undertaken into a major British industry[419]. After completing his work on this committee Watson Smith drew up a scheme for the reorganisation and development of the Chislet Colliery, which was accepted as long term policy by his fellow directors[420]. The company never got the opportunity to try and implement these plans, however, as on 1 January 1947 its assets, along with those of the other two Kent colliery companies, were nationalised and vested in the National Coal Board.

415. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 14 December 1934, and 19 April 1940; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 130 and 133. The Shires Investment Co. Ltd. had been incorporated as an unlimited company in 1929, and Charles Clarke held all except two of the company's £370,000 of share capital. On his death these shares passed to members of the Clarke family (Shires Investment Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 386561, items 3, 10 and 21).

416. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 136. The Shires Investment Company had already obtained 27,958 preference shares in 1930. (Ibid., item 117).

417. Ibid., item 147; W. H. B. Court, Coal (H.M.S.O. 1951), p. 290.

418. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 24; Court, op. cit., p. 290.

419. Court, op. cit., p. 290.

420. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 24.

We have seen that the Kent Coalfield had one main advantage and many disadvantages when it came to the question of its extensive development. Its main attraction to investors was its nearness to the markets of the south-east compared with other coalfields in Britain. Although they were somewhat disappointed when its coal turned out not to be a household variety and therefore capable of fetching the highest prices in the region. What really restricted the coalfield's development, however, were geological conditions, particularly the problem of underground water at great depth. Had these difficulties not existed then the secondary problem of not being able to attract sufficient labour would not have been so great[421], and the levels of capital invested would have been adequate for successful development. To explain therefore why investors did not experience the returns on their capital that they had anticipated we need to examine the production problems of the coalfield and see how market conditions were not as favourable as might have first been expected.

421. See below Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

PRODUCTION

In terms of production the development of the Kent Coalfield before nationalisation falls into three definite periods:

(1) 1913-26

(2) 1927-35

(3) 1936-46

(1) 1913-26

Of the four collieries, Snowdown and Tilmanstone commenced production in 1913, Chislet in 1918 and Betteshanger in 1929. The Shakespeare Colliery managed in its long history to raise only a thousand tons of coal in the years 1911-12.

The first period, when the scene was dominated by the Kent Coal Concessions and the Snowdown and Tilmanstone colliery companies that it had formed, was one of slow growth culminating in the collapse of the Concessions group. There followed the middle years of rapid expansion when the dominant role in the coalfield passed to the Pearson and Dorman Long Co. Ltd., while the Tilmanstone and Chislet collieries were taken over and put on a fully operational basis by Tilden Smith and Stephenson Clarke Ltd. and its associates respectively. The final stage was one of relative stagnation and decline due firstly to production difficulties at the Pearson and Dorman Long collieries of Betteshanger and Snowdown, and then to the Second World War. The pattern of production in the years between 1927 and 1939 ran therefore in an exactly contrary direction to the coal industry in the rest of the country, which experienced first a slump and then a recovery in output.

The fundamental reason for this pattern of development was that although the geographical position of the coalfield favoured rapid development, its geological conditions did much to prevent it. We have seen that there were times when it was difficult to raise capital because of ill-fated ventures, such as the Shakespeare Colliery, creating strong prejudices against the coalfield as a whole. The arrival on the scene of large-scale industrialists in the 1920's should, under more favourable geological conditions, have made Kent, because of its nearness to the London and south-eastern markets, one of the most prosperous coalfields in the country. In contrast, however, to the pre-1914 boom conditions that had largely contributed to calling Kent into existence as a coalfield, there was in the inter-war years a declining market for Britain's coal both at home and abroad, which also added to the coalfield's difficulties, as did the problem of recruiting labour, particularly after 1935. These, however, both compounded and were directly related to the difficulties already existing through the geological conditions. These conditions had spelt financial disaster for most of the optimistic investors in the Kent Coalfield from the time of the Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd. onwards, and it is to a brief description of them that we must now turn in order to explain the production problems and the consequential heavy financial losses that characterised the greater part of the coalfield's history[1].

The coalfield was proved by the various borings and shafts to cover some 190 square miles (inclusive of the sea-coal areas), and to be confined to that part of Kent which lies south of the latitude of Ramsgate and east of the longitude of Sturry, two miles east of

1. Not only before 1946 but also in the post-nationalisation period.

Canterbury[2]. (See Fig. 4.1). North of the latitude of Dover the floor of the coalfield is a basin consisting mainly of Carboniferous Limestone with its maximum depth, of 3,850 feet below the Ordnance Datum, near Waldershare. The basin is elongated somewhat in a north-west and south-east direction. The floor rises in all directions from around Waldershare and is at about 1,100 feet below O.D. along the northern margin of the field[3]. The Coal Measures, which rest unconformably on the Carboniferous Limestone, are foled into synclinal form, and the various geological horizons throughout their thickness are roughly parallel with the floor of the basin, indicating that folding mainly, but not entirely, post-dated the deposition of the coal-bearing strata[4]. (See Figs. 4.2 and 4.3). These measures also, therefore, are in the form of an elongated basin or trough with the axis running north-west to south-east and passing about midway between Dover and Deal. The seams crop out beneath the cover of newer Mesozoic rocks in lines of roughly concentric horseshoe form, with the higher seams covering a smaller area than the lower ones[5]. In addition the measures are slightly tilted in the same north-west to south-east direction and run out under the Channel at the very moderate average gradient of about 1 in 37. The gradients towards the north-eastern and south-western flanks are somewhat steeper, being up to about 1 in 10. In general, therefore, the Kent Coalfield is flat, though not quite so flat

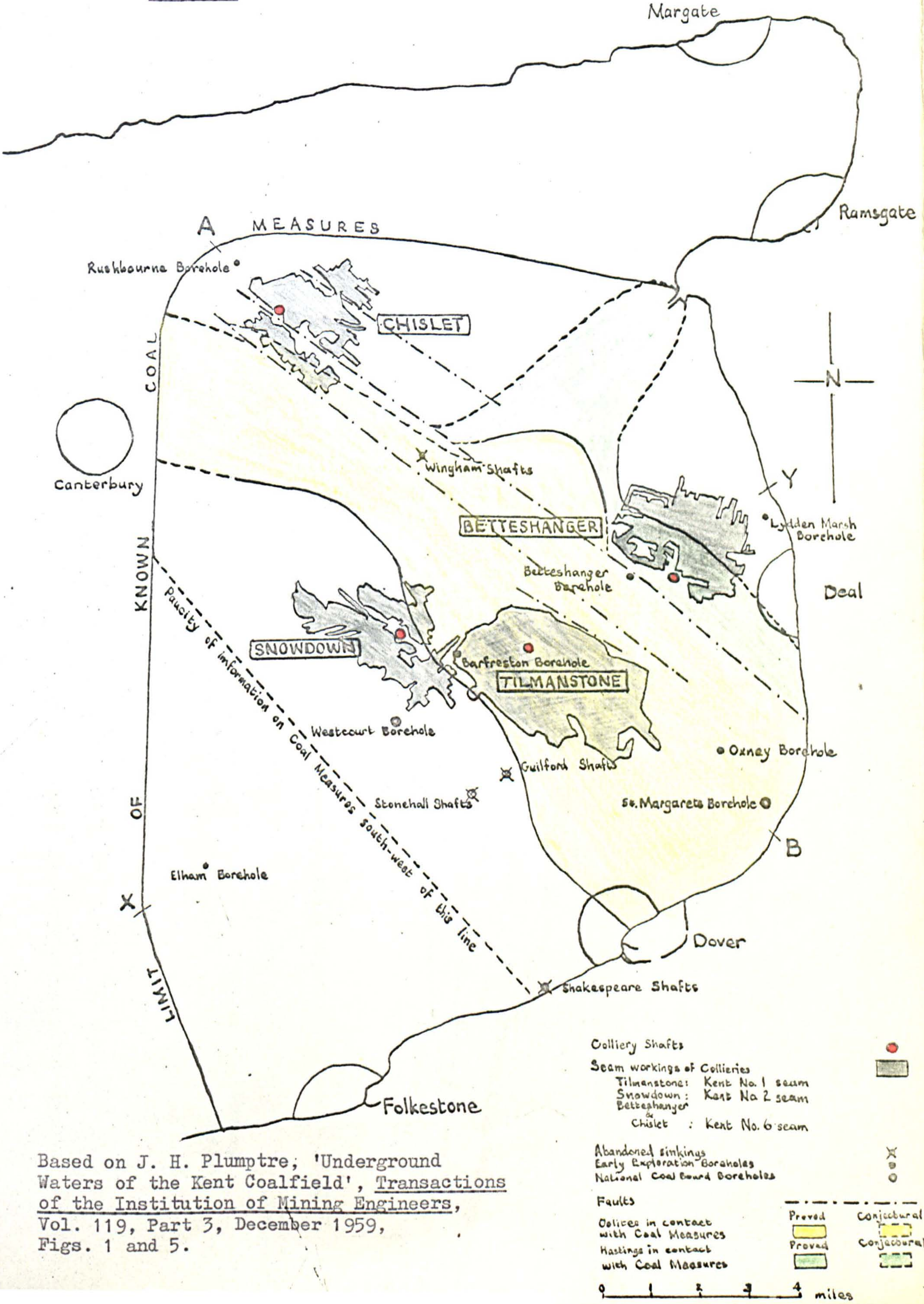
2. H. G. Dines, 'The Sequence and Structure of the Kent Coalfield' in Summary of Progress of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and the Museum of Practical Geology for the Year 1932: Part II, (H.M.S.O. 1933), p. 15. (Hereafter referred to as H. G. Dines (1933)); Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 5.

3. H. G. Dines (1933), pp. 19-21.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 21 and 24.

5. H. G. Dines, 'Report of the Geological Survey' in Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 11. (Hereafter referred to as H. G. Dines (1945)).

Fig. 4.1: The Kent Coalfield: Areas of Seam Workings at Collieries and Areas where Water-bearing Beds are in contact with the Coal Measures



Based on J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters of the Kent Coalfield', Transactions of the Institution of Mining Engineers, Vol. 119, Part 3, December 1959, Figs. 1 and 5.

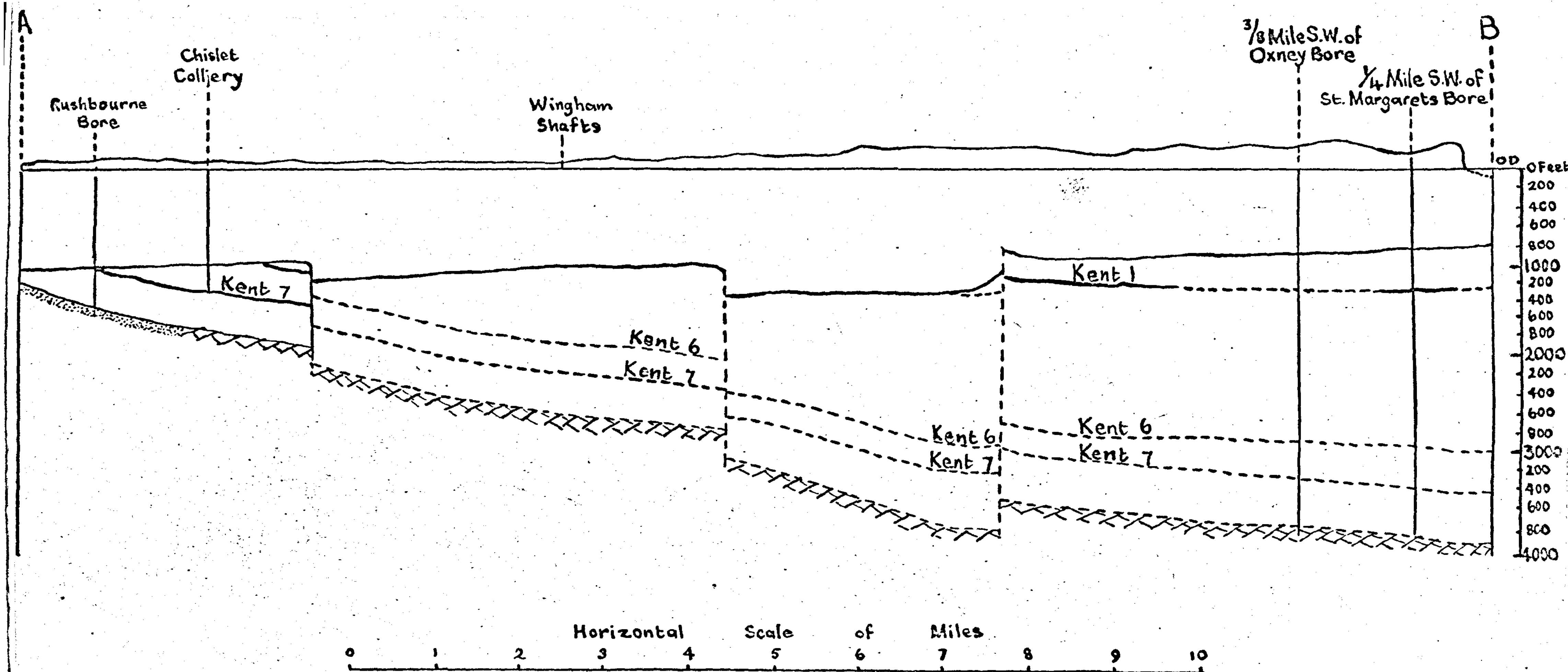


Fig. 4.2: Section on Line A-B in Fig. 4.1

Fig. 4.2: continued

Source: J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters of the Kent Coalfield', Fig. 2.

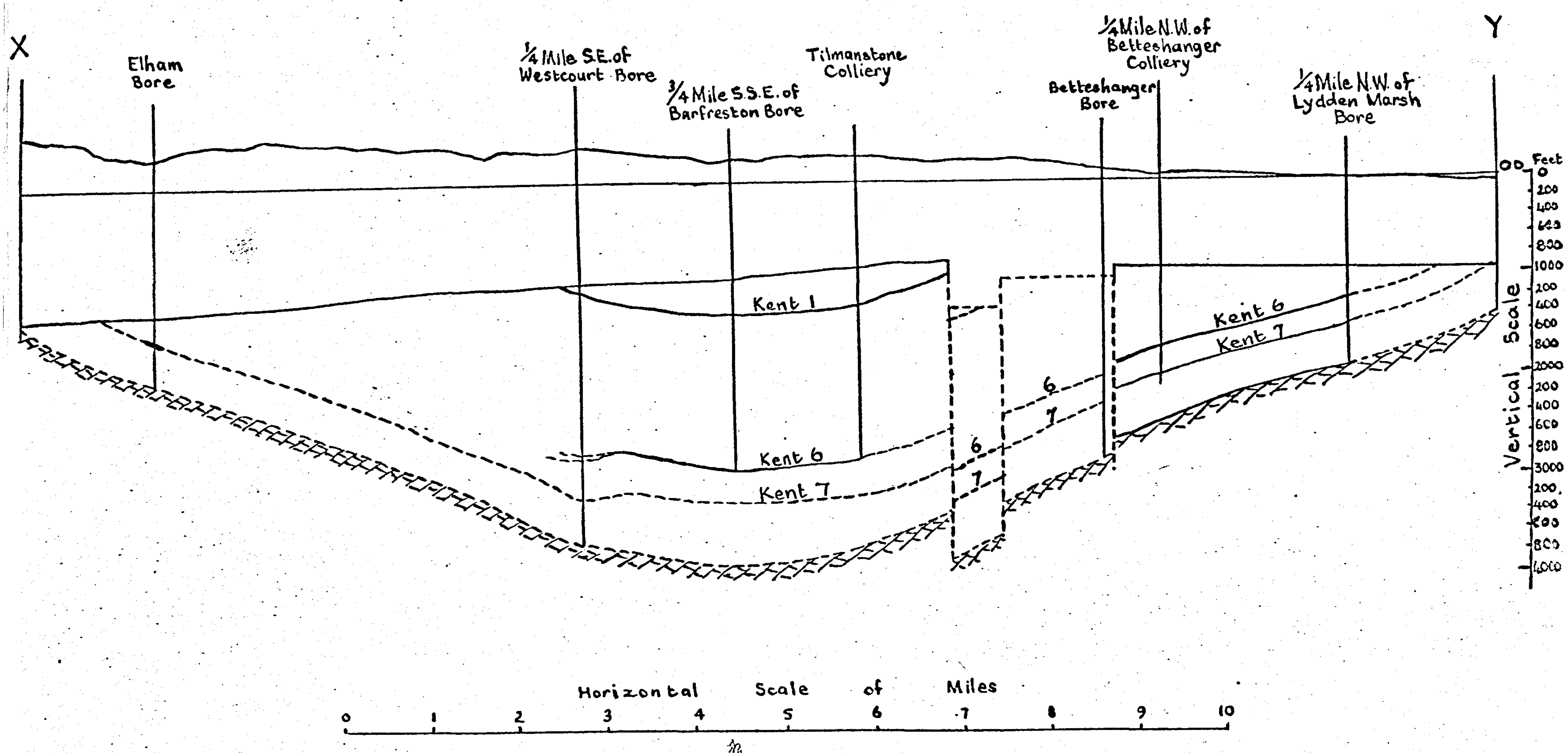


Fig. 4.3: Section on Line X-Y in Fig. 4.1

Fig. 4.3 continued:

Source: J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters of the Kent Coalfield', Fig. 3.

as parts of the East Midlands. There are in addition a series of major faults running roughly N.W. - S.E. which have the effect of imposing a trough structure on the basin[6]. (See Fig. 4.1). The peculiar feature of the coalfield so far as the gradient is concerned is the frequent occurrence of small local "swillies" and changes in gradient. Unpredictable gradients of this kind make coal extraction more difficult than a uniformly steep gradient of even up to 1 in 5. The "swillies" are also often associated with temporary changes in seam section or thickness, and are particularly troublesome in the Kent mines as water tends to be encountered spasmodically throughout the workings and collects in them. It is not unusual, for example, for a seam to change suddenly from 2 ft. to 7 ft. in thickness on one coal face 100 yards long[7].

The Coal Measures themselves have been divided into a Lower or Shale Division of some 700 ft. thickness which has eight correlateable seams and an Upper or Sandstone Division, some 2,100 ft. thick at the centre of the basin with six seams. These fourteen seams are designated in downward succession by numbers, as only a few of the seams were given local names, and of these only one, the Beresford or No. 1 Seam, is known by the same name over its full extent. Of these seams only Nos. 1, 6, 7,

6. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', Minutes of Proceedings of the National Association of Colliery Managers, Vol. LVI, 1959, p. 58. (Presidential address delivered on 3rd October 1959. Hereafter referred to as J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield'); J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters of the Kent Coalfield', Transactions of the Institution of Mining Engineers, Vol. 119 Part 3, December 1959, p. 156. (Hereafter referred to as J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters').

7. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 58. "Swillies" or "swilleys" are areas of comparatively thick coal, of small width but great length possibly caused by the activities of streams traversing the forest swamps; they are generally adjacent to areas of thin coal, where the bedding in the coal abuts in places against humps or rolls in the floor of the stream. (See National Environment Research Council: Memoirs of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, Geology of the Country around Canterbury and Folkestone (H.M.S.O. 1966) pp. 22-23).

8 and 9 have been systematically worked at one or more of the collieries. The average thickness of these seams is about 4 ft., and they contain few dirtbands, so little tonnage was lost on this score. In addition the excellent roof conditions meant not only that falls during normal working operations were rare but also that roadways could be made and maintained at low cost[8]. A few of the remaining nine seams, notably No. 3 (the Snowdown Hard), were tried but with little success[9]. As the Coal Measures are overlain by between 950 and 1,200 feet of newer, secondary rocks and as the workable coal seams are generally the lower ones, Kent is one of the deepest coalfields in the country, coming second only to the Doncaster area of Yorkshire[10].

Coupled with the difficulties of having to mine the coal from a great depth was the perpetual water problem. We have seen how this disrupted the sinkings at Shakespeare, Guilford and Tilmanstone, and twice partially flooded the latter colliery, but it was also present, although to a lesser extent, at the other three collieries that were finally sunk. Some indication of the size of the problem is given by the following figures, compiled in 1945[11]:

8. Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946: Central Valuation Board: Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, p. 21. (This record is in the possession of the Whitehall Securities Corporation Ltd., Document numbered 584: hereafter referred to as K.C.O.A. Claim).

9. H. G. Dines (1945), p. 11.

10. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 58. When coal started to be mined from the Millyard seam at Tilmanstone in 1960 Kent became the deepest area in the country in terms of weighted average winding depth.

11. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 29.

Colliery	Gallons pumped per minute
Betteshanger	600
Snowdown	350
Chislet	500
Tilmanstone	2,000
	3,450

These same collieries in 1958 pumped 7,866,000 tons of water from a weighted average depth of 1,787 feet, which was a ratio of 4.9 tons of water raised to every saleable ton of coal and constituted a far higher pumping burden than in any other coalfield in the country[12]. It has been estimated that in 1930 this cost, which in total did not vary substantially with output, was as much as 9¼d. per ton. Although with the development of the mines this charge was reduced progressively to 5½d. per ton in 1935[13].

Such water problems were totally unexpected by the geologists, mining engineers, and company promoters who took part in pioneering the development of the coalfield[14]. From the borings and shaft sinkings made by these pioneers the Coal Measures were found to be overlain by from 880 to 1,660 feet of newer rocks, which in descending order consist of[15]:

12. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 58.

13. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 9. (Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham).

14. Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, 'Report on the Kent Coal Concessions', 26th October 1903, and Report of M. N. Griffith to the Directors, 15th December 1903, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 10; Reports of W. Boyd Dawkins and G. M. Hollingworth, The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 44; W. Boyd Dawkins, 'The Discovery of the South-Eastern Coalfield', Society of Arts Journal, vol. 55, 1906-07, p. 46. (Comments made on the paper by G. H. Hollingworth).

15. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', p. 156 and Figure 4, Plate 8.

Cretaceous	Chalk*	
	Gault	
	Folkestone Beds*	Lower Greensand Formation
	Sandgate Beds	
	Atherfield Clay	
	Weald Clay	
	Hastings Beds*	
Jurassic	Kimmeridge Clay	
	Corallian	
	Oxford Clay	
	Kellaways, Cornbrash and Forest Marble	
	Lower Oolites*	
	Lias (in the south-western part of the Coalfield only).	

In these measures it was also found that there are four major water bearing horizons, namely the Chalk, Folkestone Beds, Hastings Beds and Lower Oolites[16]. Some water in the Chalk could be anticipated, and it was not too surprising to find some also in the Folkestone (Greensand) Beds, which as their name indicates outcrop near Folkestone, and in the Hastings Beds, which outcrop over the greater part of the county of Sussex, and are at one point only 15 miles from the coalfield[17]. Water was,

16. Ibid., E. O. Forster Brown, 'Underground Waters in the Kent Coalfield and their Incidence in Mining Development', Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Vol. CCXV, Session 1922-1923, Part I, pp. 28 and 37. Forster Brown also draws attention to the water-bearing Eocene Formation which overlies the Chalk in the north of the coalfield to a maximum depth of about 250 feet. The only shafts to be sunk through this were at Chislet Colliery, where the drop-shaft method of sinking was successfully employed. (See above Chapter 2,

17. E. O. Forster Brown, op. cit., pp. 32-36.

however, the last thing that the geologists and mining engineers expected to find in the Oolites, which outcropped in the Midlands and Wiltshire, and it was even more surprising to them that these sands should, from a mining point of view, constitute the most important water-bearing horizon overlying the Kent Coalfield[18]. A further problem they encountered was that the intervening layer of impervious Lias does not extend beyond the south-western part of the coalfield, so although it is present at the Snowdown shafts it does not exist at Tilmanstone and Guilford, where the Oolites rest directly on top of the Coal Measures. (See Fig. 4.1). As the upper part of the Coal Measures consists of exceptionally porous and fissured sandstones the water is then able to find its way down to considerable depths and even into the higher coal seams. Further to the north-west, however, before reaching the Chislet and Betteshanger shafts, the Oolites come to an end. At the Betteshanger shafts all the Jurassic formations were found to be absent and it is the Hastings Beds that lie immediately above the Coal Measures[19]. As to the origins of this water in the Oolites recent research suggests that it comes from the outcrops of the Folkestone, Sandgate and Hastings Beds and finds its way down to the Oolites through faults that extend upwards from the Coal Measures into the newer Mesozoic rocks[20].

Although there were setbacks during the early colliery sinkings, the full extent of these geological difficulties only became apparent during the first phase of development between 1913 and 1926 and were a major contributor to the financial plight that various companies found themselves in towards the end of this period. In terms of coal production

18. Ibid., pp. 36-37, 48, 84 and 90.

19. Ibid., pp. 36-37 and Fig. 4; J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', pp. 156-57, 160 and 168, Plates 5 and 8.

20. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', pp. 160 and 168.

this period was one of slow growth with output rising from 59,203 tons in 1913 to 488,195 tons in 1923 and then declining to 367,589 tons in 1925. (See Table 4.1).

Production in the coal industry depends upon geological factors, inputs of capital and labour, and the efficiency with which these inputs are combined. In the first phase of development of the Kent Coalfield, from 1913 to 1926, not only did the geological factors cause an exceptional amount of difficulty but, as we have seen, there was also a shortage of capital and labour.

Arthur Burr's Concessions group had put its limited capital into acquiring mineral areas and had started sinking the Tilmanstone and Snowdown Collieries on shoestring budgets only because other investors had not been forthcoming[21]. After 1912 capital for these collieries had to be raised by issuing debentures at a discount, a policy which imposed increasing financial burdens on the companies[22]. On paper, by the end of 1923 the amount spent on colliery development, less depreciation, was £715,708 in the case of Tilmanstone and £367,159 for Snowdown[23]. Meanwhile the Chislet company between 1914 and the end of 1926 spent £611,126, less depreciation, on its colliery. By the mid-twenties the true capital value of these assets was not, however, £1,693,993 but a very much lower sum. As we have seen, in 1925 the Tilmanstone Colliery was valued at only £139,667[24], and Snowdown was acquired by Pearson and Dorman Long for as little as £25,200[25], while four years later Chislet's colliery assets

21. See above Chapter 2, pp. 43-44.

22. See above Chapter 2, pp. 56-57.

23. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 79; The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 82.

24. See above Chapter 3, p. 155.

25. See above Chapter 3, p. 126.

Table 4.1: Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised in the Kent Coalfield, 1911-26

Year	Output of Collieries			Total Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised
	Tilmanstone	Snowdown	Chislet	
	tons	tons	tons	tons
1911	-	-	-	150*
1912	-	-	-	1,099*
1913	40,055	27,919	-	59,205
1914	80,000	49,000	-	130,440
1915	n.a.	n.a.	-	158,389
1916	n.a.	n.a.	-	208,623
1917	n.a.	n.a.	-	255,583
1918	136,000	95,000	4,796	235,819
1919	124,000	132,000	22,282	277,829
1920	171,000	114,000	93,469	378,205
1921	96,000	59,000	104,922	259,613
1922	168,000	25,000	210,653	403,911
1923	220,103	44,000	223,733	488,195
1924	204,000	-	125,805	330,197
1925	239,000	-	128,814	367,589
1926	128,000	-	85,954	213,969

Note: * Output produced by the Dover (Shakespeare) Colliery.

Sources: For total quantities: Home Office, Mines Inspectors' Reports, 1911-19; Mines Department, Annual Reports 1920-26, Statistical Appendices.

For Chislet: Davies, Chislet Memorandum, Statement No. 1; For Tilmanstone: 1913, The Colliery Guardian, 23 January 1914, p. 207; 1923, East Kent Colliery Company, Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 79; 1914, difference between Snowdown output and Total output; 1918-22, calculated from tonnage of coal originating on the East Kent Light Railway, The Colliery Guardian, 12 September 1919, p. 712 and East Kent Light Railway Company, B.O.T. 763R, Annual Returns 1919-22 (as in 1923 209,944 tons originated in this way and Colliery output was 220,103, all E.K.L.R. figures have been multiplied by 1.05 and rounded to nearest thousand tons); 1924-26, difference between Chislet output and Total Output; For Snowdown: 1913-14, The Colliery Guardian, 23 January 1914, p. 207 and 27 August 1915, p. 436; 1918-23, difference between sum of Chislet and Tilmanstone figures and Total output, rounded to nearest thousand tons.

were written down from £674,125 to £364,750[26]. As Burr had calculated in 1913 that it would cost between £500,000 and £1,000,000 to sink and fully equip a colliery in the coalfield[27], and as Dorman Long had estimated this figure in 1926 to be between £750,000 and £800,000[28], one can see that in terms of real values the coalfield at this time barely had sufficient capital to operate three collieries efficiently. As it was, in the years from 1913 to 1926 the colliery companies stumbled from crisis to crisis before two of them ended up in the hands of a receiver, and the third in possession of its sales agents and creditors.

The total capital invested in the British coal industry has been estimated at only £135 m. in 1913, which was equivalent to only ten shillings per ton produced[29]. As we can see from the figures above, capital expenditure in Kent per ton produced was very much higher than this national average. Despite this the collieries in Kent were not very advanced technologically, as the high level of expenditure reflected the high costs of sinking to deep seams through difficult geological conditions. Although there is no separate data on coal cut or conveyed mechanically in the coalfield, it was extremely low, while the increased use of electricity from an aggregate 4,046 horse power in 1921 to 8,390 in 1925 was mainly to handle the problem of pumping water from the mine shafts[30]. Kent was, however, in 1924 the first coalfield to dispense with

26. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, Statement No. 2.

27. See above Chapter 2, p. 59.

28. See above Chapter 3, pp. 135 and 140. Retail prices were, however, over 70 per cent higher in 1926 than they had been in 1913. (London and Cambridge Economic Service, The British Economy: Key Statistics 1900-1964, Table C, p. 8).

29. J. W. F. Rowe, Wages in the Coal Industry (1923), p. 119.

30. Mines Department, Annual Reports of the Secretary for Mines 1921-25, Statistical Appendices. (Hereafter referred to as Mines Department, Annual Reports).

the use of ponies below ground. The techniques of mining were not, therefore, terribly advanced. The Tilmanstone Colliery, for example, where the water problem was particularly severe, operated on the pillar and stall method and continued to do so until 1960[31]. The 5 ft. Beresford seam at 1,500 ft. was at the beginning actually opened out on the longwall system, but as this gave rise to a heavy feeder of water in the roof amounting to 50 gallons per minute, it was decided for reasons of safety to resort to pillar and stall working. Although these stalls were at first opened up to a width of 20 yards, a heavy inrush of water in 1914, that amounted to 850 gallons per minute, flooded the whole of the workings. After unwatering not only was it necessary to incur heavy expenditure on pumping but also to adopt a method of pillar and stall working whereby only 25 per cent of the seam was extracted[32]. Subsequently it was decided to put dams in the four roads leading to the district in which the inrush occurred. These were completed in 1917 but they could only control the 850 gallon feeder and not shut it off, as it was found that water pressure built up not only behind the dams but also rose to dangerous levels on the tubbing in the shafts at the Oolite level[33]. Despite these precautions another serious inrush occurred in August 1922, which flooded the workings to the dip side of the shafts[34]. As we have seen, this inrush made it inadvisable to work coal on the rise side of

31. Information supplied by Mr. B. Whitaker, who was manager of the colliery from 1929 to 1960.

32. E. O. Forster Brown, 'Underground Waters in the Kent Coal-field and their Incidence in Mining Development', Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Vol. CCXV, session 1922-23, Part i, pp. 43-45. In addition to the effects of these restrictions on production costs, it was already in 1914 estimated that the cost of pumping water from the mine was about £15,000 per annum. (Ibid., p. 76).

33. Ibid., pp. 44-45; J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', p. 158.

34. E. O. Forster Brown, op. cit., p. 66; J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', p. 159.

the seam and necessitated operations being concentrated on the dip side, where a large fault interfered with workings for over nine months[35]. Consequently no further attempts were made to completely dam back the water either at the Oolite level in the shaft or in the Beresford seam workings, and the colliery had to continue to bear the heavy cost of pumping, although it did become possible later to extract 40 per cent of the coal[36].

Although mining the same seam as Tilmanstone, at Snowdown Colliery the workings were opened out on the longwall system. The Oolites at this colliery appeared to be dry as no inrushes of water had occurred[37]. Unfortunately for Snowdown, however, the poor quality of the coal and the lack of capital to sink the second shaft to the higher grade Millyard seam forced the company into liquidation in 1923[38]. Although the water problem was less severe at Snowdown, this colliery together with Tilmanstone raised some 2 to 2½ million gallons of water per day during the years 1913-22[39].

At the Chislet Colliery there were no Oolites overlying the Coal Measures[40] but, although the water problem was not serious, spasmodic

35. See above Chapter 3, pp. 153-54.

36. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', pp. 158 and 168. In the late 1950's 1,800 gallons per minute were pumped from the mine, of which 1,500 g.p.m. were made either in the shafts or in connection with the point at which the inrushes occurred.

37. E. O. Forster Brown, op. cit., pp. 53-54, 57-58, 96 and 110. It appeared that the colliery was sheltered to the north-east by the Tilmanstone fault and to the south-west by the Guilford fault, thus making the water-bearing Oolitic sands at these two collieries in contact with the higher impervious rocks at Snowdown and so preventing supplies of water reaching the Oolitic rocks overlying the Coal Measures. Forster Brown considered working longwall at Snowdown to be potentially highly dangerous.

38. See above Chapter 3, pp. 127-29.

39. E. O. Forster Brown, op. cit., p. 58.

40. Ibid., p. 47.

makes of water were more common at this colliery than at any other in Kent[41]. The water reached a peak of 150 gallons per minute in the 1930s. The coal faces were originally laid out for longwall working, but the stoppages and reopening of workings led to improvisation in the management with the result that the faces in 1925 came to be worked on a mixture of the longwall and short stall systems[42]. Also a fault on the west side of the shafts prevented work continuing in that direction[43], With lack of capital for any extensive development[44], the main haulage roads were almost invariably small and were mainly supported by timber, while ventilation in the colliery was poor[45].

Generally, therefore, the coalfield, for a new district, had a low level of capital equipment and was far more labour intensive in its operation than might have been expected.

The supply of labour is measured by the number of man hours worked per year. The factors affecting this supply are the size of the labour force, the length of the shift, and the number of shifts worked by each man. The second factor was in this period subject to Parliamentary regulation, while the last one was affected by industrial relations, absenteeism and the geological conditions in the coalfield.

The men on the collieries' books were classifiable under three headings: (1) the face workers and other piece-rate workers employed below ground, (2) the day-wage workers below ground, and (3) the surface

41. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', pp. 159 and 169. These makes of water occurred as the seam was developed to the dip side of the shaft.

42. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 5.

43. Ibid., p. 8.

44. See above Chapter 3, p. 171.

45. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 8.

workers; all of which had different wage levels, status and prestige[46]. The skilled miners tended to be those working at the coal face, and it was this group that had to be recruited from other coal producing areas. The unskilled labour came from the local area, from agriculture, from local industries, and by the recruitment of school leavers[47]. The experienced miners who worked from the very beginning at Snowdown and Tilmanstone came mostly from the north of England and the Midlands[48], presumably having been attracted to Kent by the higher wages paid in the coalfield[49]. During the first stage of development the size and distribution of the labour force was as shown in Table 4.2.

The First World War resulted in the coalfield being deprived of experienced workers at a crucial stage of its development. As can be seen from Table 4.2 the size of the labour force declined in 1914 and 1915 as a result of the war just when the collieries were wishing to recruit more men. Not only were a number of the men at Snowdown and Tilmanstone called up as they were reservists and territorials[50], but many more volunteered thereby making the percentage of miners joining the armed forces from Kent higher than any other coalfield of England and Wales[51]. By July 1916 over 350 men had left the coalfield for active

46. F. Zweig, Men in the Pits (1948), p. 23; Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, p. 312. (Non-Parliamentary Paper).

47. Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 2, Minutes of Evidence, p. 213 (statistics prepared by the Mines Department for the Royal Commission); also see above Chapter 3, p. 142.

48. The Colliery Guardian, 27 August 1915, p. 436.

49. H. S. Jevons, The British Coal Trade (1915), p. 624.

50. The Colliery Guardian, 4 September 1914, p. 533.

51. Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to Inquire into the Conditions Prevailing in the Coalmining Industry Due to the War, P.P. 1914-16 (Cd. 7939) XXVIII, pp. 6-7 and 322. The figures were: July 1914 to August 1915 257 miners or 37.3 per cent.

Table 4.2: Labour Force Employed in the Kent Coalfield, 1913-26

Year	Snowdown Colliery	Chislet Colliery	Tilmanstone Colliery	On Development Work at Other Collieries (1)	Total Labour Force
1913	310	-	397	427	1,134
1914	412	20	324	355	1,111
1915	519	85	266	95	965
1916	610	116	400	2	1,128
1917	577	41	478	2	1,098
1918	606	201	476	16	1,299
1919	715	570	601	68	1,954
1920	792	686	808	119	2,405
1921	558	688	692	39	1,977
1922	188	921	690	2	1,801
1923	242	939	750	185	2,116
1924	130	1,029	793	207	2,159
1925	264	714	854	212	2,044
1926	557	669	901	246	2,373

Note: (1) Other collieries include Dover (till 1921), Guilford (till 1922 and in 1925), Goodnestone & Woodnesborough (till 1915 and in 1919), Wingham & Stour Valley (till 1914 and in 1919), Stonehall (till 1915 and in 1921), and Betteshanger (1923-26). The total number of men employed on development work started at 120 in 1896, fell to 58 in 1903 and then rose steadily to 780 in 1912.

Source: Home Office, List of Mines and Quarries, 1896-1920; Mines Department, List of Mines and Quarries, 1921-26.

service[52]. The re-opening of Tilmanstone in July 1915, following its closure seven months earlier, added to the labour difficulties, as most of the skilled colliers had left the area and had proceeded north, mostly to Yorkshire, to obtain other jobs. Only a few had remained in the hope of the colliery re-opening[53]. As skilled men were no longer available in the Midlands and north of England, the Snowdown and Tilmanstone collieries tried to overcome their problems by engaging some 60 men from the Bristol and Somerset Coalfield[54], which was an area of low wages and, from 1910, of declining output[55]. In addition there was an influx of local men with no previous mining experience into the Kent pits[56], which did help prevent the labour force declining in terms of actual numbers. (See Table 4.2). At a time when the colliery companies in Kent were contending that no more of their employees ought to be recruited[57], the government, to try and check the fall in the country's coal output, agreed from November 1915 to

52. The Colliery Guardian, 1 January 1916, p. 38 and 21 July 1916, p. 129. In detail these included from Snowdown 217 men, Tilmanstone 101, and Chislet 30.

53. Ibid., 11 December 1914, p. 1236, 9 July 1915, p. 83 and 21 September 1917, p. 556. Also see above Chapter 2, pp. 60 and 89. The receiver had dismissed about two-thirds of the men previously employed.

54. The Colliery Guardian, 27 August 1915, p. 436, 3 March 1916, p. 425 and 21 July 1916, p. 129.

55. H. S. Jevons, op. cit., pp. 79-80; J. W. F. Rowe, Wages in the Coal Industry (1923), pp. 29, 72, 85 and 95-96.

56. Papers in the possession of Mr. W. Newman, who was secretary of the Tilmanstone Branch of the Kent Mine Workers' Association from 1920 to 1945, include a list of 32 men of military age who started work at Tilmanstone Colliery between the outbreak of war and June 1917, and who had not been employed in the mining industry prior to their engagement. Although it is not clear if this is a complete list of such men, it is evident from details of their previous employment that few if any could have had much experience of mining. This list naturally excludes any local men over military age together with boys under 18 years of age who started work at the colliery.

57. The Colliery Guardian, 12 November 1915, p. 993.

restrict the recruiting of miners[58]. To advise the recruiting officers which of those men who had volunteered for service could be spared from the pits, the coalfields were divided into 23 recruiting districts each of which had a tribunal consisting of a mines inspector and two assessors, one representing the employers and one the workmen[59]. With the introduction of conscription in 1916 the tribunals became colliery recruiting courts[60]. The placing of the collieries under government control in 1917 was expected to be helpful from the point of view of obtaining labour[61], but in practice it made no difference[62]. There were further calls on colliery labour and early in 1918 the Kent miners even voted in favour of 50,000 men being "combed-out" of the mines for military service, although the majority of members of the Miners' Federation were opposed to such a policy[63]. It was expected that Kent would have to provide 90 men[64]. Although some men left agriculture and other local employment to work in the mines this resulted in complaints being made to the area recruiting officers[65], presumably on the grounds that these men were making the move to try and avoid conscription[66]; while attempts to recruit miners from other districts were made difficult

58. Sir R. A. S. Redmayne, <u>The British Coal Mining Industry during the War</u> (Oxford 1923), pp. 49-51.

59. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 51.

60. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 52-53.

61. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 23 February 1917, p. 398.

62. <u>Ibid.</u>, 5 October 1917, p. 657 and 19 October 1917, p. 751.

63. <u>Ibid.</u>, 23 March 1918, p. 600; Redmayne, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 192-93.

64. <u>The Colliery Guardian</u>, 15 March 1918, p. 547.

65. <u>Ibid.</u>, 14 July 1916, p. 76.

66. Redmayne, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 54. Between August 1914 and March 1916 160,000 persons entered the mines and numerous complaints were made as to their motives.

by the housing shortage, which prevented these men bringing their families with them[67]. Not only was increasing pressure put on housing accommodation in Dover by persons engaged in military operations[68], but as miners joined the armed forces their homes remained in the occupation of their families and so were not available for possible re-allocation to men coming into the area[69]. Following the Armistice in November 1918 the situation quickly improved as the Coal Controller was able to get the demobilisation of miners expedited because of the shortage of coal supplies both for home and allied consumption[70]. Men started to arrive back at the pits from the army in December 1918[71]. The situation continued to improve throughout 1919, particularly with the return of skilled men[72], and during the course of the year the labour force increased by 50 per cent[73]. As the supply of houses became more plentiful in Dover because workers previously engaged on military operations left the area[74], it became possible also to employ men from other districts[75]. As a result the labour force increased in 1920 to 2,405, which was its highest level in this first phase of the coalfield's development. In 1921 and 1922 there was a sharp decline in the number of men employed and from then until 1927 the supply

67. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 70 and 72; East Kent Colliery Company Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 71; The Colliery Guardian, 3 November 1916, pp. 869-70 and 15 December 1916, p. 1176.

68. The Colliery Guardian, 31 December 1920, p. 1913.

69. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 72.

70. J. R. Raynes, Coal and Its Conflicts (1928), p. 160.

71. The Colliery Guardian, 13 December 1918, p. 1254.

72. Ibid., 31 January 1919, p. 262, 17 April 1919, p. 910 and 9 January 1920, p. 119.

73. Reports of H.M. Inspector of Mines for 1919, P.P. 1920 (Cmd. 925) L, Midland and Southern Division, p. 911.

74. The Colliery Guardian, 31 December 1920, p. 1913.

75. Ibid., 29 July 1921, p. 325.

of miners was no longer a constraint on the coalfield's output. There was in fact over the next few years unemployment amongst the Kent miners[76].

The length of the working day in the coal industry was from 1909 onwards limited by the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1908 to a maximum of eight hours. From as early as 1863 miners had seen the eight-hour day as a means of restricting output and thereby maintaining or even improving wages[77], and the legislation of 1908 was the culmination of twenty years of persistent struggle by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain[78]. The miners did not fully gain their demands, however, as the eight hours covered only the time from the last man down to the first man up, thereby making the average time spent underground about 8½ hours[79]. In Kent, however, the working day at the three collieries before 1919 was only 7½ hours[80], indicating that a three-shift system was worked in the coalfield from its earliest days[81]. When, therefore, in July 1919, following the

76. Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, pp. 12-13 and 15. Monthly figures from July 1923 to July 1925 show that the proportion unemployed never fell below 3 per cent of the labour force.

77. B. McCormick and J. E. Williams, 'The Miners and the Eight-Hour Day, 1863-1910', Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. XII (1959-60), No. 2, p. 223.

78. R. Page Arnot, The Miners (1949), pp. 335-36.

79. Mines Department, Annual Report 1926, p. 14; R. Page Arnot, The Miners: Years of Struggle (1953), p. 468; Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. I, P.P. 1926 (Cmd. 2600) XIV, p. 170. (Hereafter referred to as Royal Commission of 1925 or the Samuel Commission).

80. The Colliery Guardian, 18 July 1919, p. 174.

81. G. D. H. Cole, Labour in the Coal Mining Industry (1914-21) (Oxford 1923), p. 106. The Royal Commission of 1925 makes reference to three shifts being worked at one Kent colliery in November 1925 (Vol. 3, p. 315), which from the details must have been Tilmanstone; while the Kent Miners' Association Minutes (1 October 1918 and 18 January 1919) mention morning, afternoon and night shifts being worked at Chislet, even though at the time the labour force there was small, and afternoon and night shifts at Snowdown and Tilmanstone (11 May 1918). Two coaling shifts and one repairs shift were definitely in operation at Chislet in February 1920. (The Colliery Guardian, 20 February 1920, p. 519).

recommendations outlined in the Sankey Commission's Reports, the length of the working day was reduced by the government to 7 hours, the change was less substantial in Kent than in many other coalfields[82]. Reducing the hours of work for each individual increased the costs of labour. Assuming that owners wished to maintain profits, there were three ways in which they could cover these extra costs of production: (1) by reducing time-rate wages and keeping piece rates more or less as before, (2) by raising coal prices, and (3) by reducing costs through more efficient methods of mining. There was the added problem that any working at under-capacity brought about by the restriction of hours would increase the burden of overhead costs. The heavier these overhead costs, the greater would be the incentive to keep the colliery as fully employed as possible. As for output this is affected more than proportionately by changes in the length of the shift since it takes time both to wind the miners down the shaft and for the hewers to get to their place of work at the coal face. Except within certain margins it is not possible to say by exactly how much the hours worked at the coal face will be affected by a change in the statutory working day. As the statutory number of hours for a shift only covered the time from the last man down to the first man up, it corresponded to the maximum time available for coal winding. The time that it was possible for the average hewer to work at the coal face can be calculated by the formula:

$$Ph = Sh + Mw - 2T,$$

Ph = the possible number of hours the average hewer can work at the coal face,

Sh = the statutory maximum number of hours permitted for a shift under the Mines Acts,

Mw = the total time it takes to wind all men down (or up) the pit shaft,

82. Cole, op. cit., pp. 106-107; The Colliery Guardian, 25 July 1919, p. 241 and 15 August 1919, p. 441.

T = the average time taken to travel from the bottom of the pit shaft to the coal face.

Except, however, with the operation of a three shift system, when:

$$3Cw + 3Mw \leq 24 \text{ hours},$$

Cw = the coal winding time.

So given 3 shifts of equal length and no legal restrictions:

$$\text{Maximum possible } Cw = (8 - Mw) \text{ hours.}$$

With legal restrictions, however, Cw could not be greater than Sh.

The only figures available for Mw and T at this time in the Kent Coalfield are for Tilmanstone Colliery in October 1925, when they were 28 and 25 minutes respectively[83].

So in October 1925 Sh = 7 hours

$$\therefore \; Ph = Sh + Mw - 2T$$
$$= 6 \text{ hrs. } 38 \text{ mins.}$$

Had, however, the statutory working day then been 7½ hours instead of 7, we would have had:

$$Cw = 7 \text{ hrs. } 32 \text{ mins.}$$

But as Cw > assumed Sh

$$\therefore \; Ph = Sh + Mw - 2T$$
$$= 7 \text{ hrs. } 8 \text{ mins.}$$

The time the average hewer could have worked at the coal face would, therefore, have been increased by 30 minutes. In July 1919, however, both Mw and T would have been smaller, as workings were nearer the pit bottom and the labour force was only 601 men compared with 854 in 1925. Had in 1919 Mw been only 20 minutes and T 12½ minutes, then:

83. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, pp. 314-15. Although the colliery is not named it could only have been either Tilmanstone or Chislet, and the details of the average working place being from 1½ to 1¾ miles from the pit bottom confirm that it is the former.

With Sh = $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours:

$Cw = 7$ hrs. 40 mins. $>$ Sh

$\therefore$ $Ph = Sh + Mw - 2T$

$= 7$ hrs. 25 mins.

With Sh = 7 hours:

$Cw = 7$ hrs. 40 mins $>$ Sh

$\therefore$ $Ph = Sh + Mw - 2T$

$= 6$ hrs. 55 mins.

The Samuel Commission's calculations were that with the 7 Hours Act average working time underground was $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours and the net working time at the face only 5 hrs. 50 mins., while with the 8 Hours Act the average shift underground was 8 hrs. 20 mins. with a working time at the face of 6 hrs. 40 mins.[84]. At Tilmanstone's stage of development in 1919 one would, therefore, have expected the reduction in the length of the statutory working day to have adversely affected output per manshift at the colliery. Instead with the same number of men output per week was raised by nearly a thousand tons, for which there is no satisfactory explanation[85]. In other districts also hewers appeared to produce almost as much in 7 hours as they had done in 8[86].

As Kent coal was mined from a small number of large collieries there was bound to be a tendency for both Mw and T to increase at any given colliery, which together with the operation of the three shift system (with coal getting taking place on two of the three shifts) meant that the difference between operating with statutory hours of either $7\frac{1}{2}$

84. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, pp. 166-67 and 268-70.

85. The Colliery Guardian, 2 January 1920, p. 47.

86. Rowe, op. cit., p. 101.

or 7 hours would gradually diminish overtime, once the average time to wind men one way increased beyond 30 minutes. Conversely the restoration of the 8 hour day in 1926 was likely to make less difference to Kent than to coalfields where only a two-shift system operated[87] or where the average size of collieries was smaller. In 1919, however, after making allowance for meal times one would have expected the reduction in hours from 7½ to 7 to have shortened the time worked at the coal face by at least 7 per cent.

The number of shifts worked by each man, like the supply of labour coming into the pits, depended partly on rates of pay, which in turn were a reflection of the level of demand for coal in relation to its supply. In time when trade was good and wages were high there had always been a tendency for miners to work fewer shifts and increase their leisure[88]. Voluntary absenteeism had been a national problem during the war[89], and Kent like other areas had been affected[90]. From data relating to 1924 Kent appears to have had a better than average record on absenteeism, but the lengthy local strike in that year makes it difficult to draw any definite conclusion on this point[91]. The fall in the price of coal from 1920 onwards necessitated a reduction in wage rates, which both made voluntary absenteeism less attractive for men wishing to maintain earnings, and at the same time provoked a series of defensive strikes against wage cuts, culminating in the major stoppage of 1926[92].

87. A two-shift system in the sense that coal was got on only one shift.

88. McCormick and Williams, op. cit., p. 224; J. E. Williams, The Derbyshire Miners (1962), p. 60.

89. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 16; Raynes, op. cit., p. 149.

90. Kent Mine Workers'Association, Minutes, 2 September 1916, 22 October 1916, and 22 June 1918. (Hereafter referred to as K.M.W.A., Minutes).

91. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, p. 180.

92. For details of industrial relations in the coalfield see below Chapter 7.

As a result of these various factors the growth of output in the years 1913 to 1926 was not impressive; costs in relation to revenue were high, and profits after the war years were almost non-existent. Far from being a technically efficient new coalfield, Kent by 1926 gave the appearance of being run-down and backward. This relative stagnation is clearly reflected in the figures for total quantity of saleable coal raised in the coalfield during these early years. (See above Table 4.1). This situation came about as a result of changes in the demand for coal after 1920, which forced down prices below the level to which it was found possible to reduce costs of production. As Kent never produced more than one per cent of Britain's total coal output, colliery companies in the area found themselves in the position of price takers facing a horizontal demand curve for the grades of coal they raised. Because of nearness to markets Kent producers could, however, retain a higher proportion of the delivered price than suppliers from more distant coalfields[93]. This tends to be reflected in a comparison of the average pithead prices of coal per ton for Kent and for the country as a whole in these years from 1913 to 1926. (See Table 4.3).

The domestic price of coal was controlled by the government from July 1915 to March 1921, and the high figure for Great Britain in the years 1919-20 is a reflection of the extremely high prices charged to foreigners for exports[94]. With the collapse of export markets in 1921 the foreign buyer was no longer available to subsidise home prices, and the industry found domestic prices too low to cover existing costs of production[95]. In the years 1923-24 Kent prices again fell below the

93. See below Chapter 5, p. 271.

94. A. M. Neuman, Economic Organization of the British Coal Industry (1934), p. 19.

95. Ibid., p. 19.

Table 4.3: Price of Coal per Ton, 1913-26 (rounded to nearest penny)

Year	Kent	Great Britain
	s. d.	s. d.
1913	11. 11.	10. 2.
1914	11. 3.	10. 0.
1915	14. 3.	12. 6.
1916	16. 1.	15. 7.
1917	18. 6.	16. 9.
1918	21. 10.	20. 11.
1919	25. 3.	27. 4.
1920	n.a.	34. 7.
1921	27. 8.	26. 2.
1922	17. 9.	17. 8.
1923	17. 8.	18. 10.
1924	18. 2.	18. 11.
1925	18. 9.	16. 4.
1926	25. 2.	19. 7.

Sources: H.M. Mines Inspectors Reports, 1913-19; Mines Department, Annual Reports of the Secretary for Mines and Mines Inspectors' Reports 1921-26.

national average, but this time it was chiefly because of the low price obtained for the small coal, which was the chief production of the Snowdown Colliery[96]. Tilmanstone coal was also small and suffered in the same way[97].

The mining industry from 1921 to 1926 was faced, therefore, with the problem of having a cost structure that was too high to maintain profitability under the conditions of falling world demand for coal. As some two-thirds of total costs consisted of wages, the problem was essentially one of trying to maintain a wage level above what would have occurred had wages automatically followed prices, as they did under the pre-war sliding scale. Fixed costs were relatively small in the coal industry; even so, working at under capacity emphasised overhead costs, and the heavier were these costs per ton the greater was the pressure to keep as fully employed as possible[98]. Royalty payments also were higher in Kent than in the country generally. In 1925, for example, Kent collieries paid on average 6.25d. per ton compared with a national average of 5.69d.[99]. The figure for Kent, however, did not include payments of 1d. to 1½d. per ton super-royalty[100]. Because of the dead rent element, however, total royalty payments between 1921 and 1926 varied

96. See above Chapter 3, p. 127. Snowdown Colliery had already been forced to close for a time in the early months of 1922 because of the depression in the coal trade. (The Colliery Guardian, 13 January 1922, p. 112 and 31 March 1922, p. 796).

97. See below Chapter 5, pp. 277 and 287.

98. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 328 and 340-41.

99. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, Appendix 18, Table 17, p. 236. These leases were all long leases not expiring till between 1960 and 1976, (Ibid., Table 18, p. 237) and indicates that the common 60 year lease prevailed in Kent.

100. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 2 (Part B), Minutes of Evidence, Evidence of Thomas Henry Bailey on Behalf of the Pioneer Companies, pp. 504 and 506, qq. 9273 and 9352.

from between 6.91d. and 1s. 7.56d. per ton[101]. It was the dead rent per acre merging as it did into future royalty payments per ton that made royalties more of a fixed than a variable cost. Another virtually fixed cost was the expenditure on pumping in the coalfield. With intermediate products (raw materials) being a fairly negligible item[102], the main variable cost was wages. As about two-thirds of total costs were labour costs there had always been a close relationship between wages and prices. If prices fell, the coalowner could not substantially reduce his costs without reducing wages[103]. Before 1917 wages were formally regulated almost solely by the selling price of coal, either directly with a sliding scale or indirectly through conciliation boards, which tended to base their awards on coal prices[104]. Wage payments actually took the form of percentage additions to the rates existing in a particular district at a certain date. At that date wages were said to be "at standard" and the rates then paid were called "basis"[105]. The basis rates for Kent were fixed in 1911[106], and in the early years the percentage additions were specifically fixed at the same rates as those prevailing in South

101. Output, Costs of Production, Proceeds and Profits, 1921-26. These Mines Department quarterly figures were published as Command Papers and reprinted in The Colliery Guardian, 10 March 1922, p. 616, 28 July 1922, p. 276, 4 August 1922, p. 285, 27 October 1922, p. 1035, 2 February 1923, p. 286, 27 April 1923, p. 1026, 7 September 1923, p. 590, 2 November 1923, p. 1112, 15 February 1924, p. 426, 25 April 1924, p. 1074, 28 November 1924, p. 1388, 12 December 1924, p. 1514, 16 January 1925, p. 158, 8 May 1925, p. 1148, 19 June 1925, p. 1513, 11 September 1925, p. 632, 8 January 1926, p. 98, 1 April 1926, p. 805, 25 June 1926, p. 1406, and 26 August 1927, p. 530.

102. Rowe, op. cit., p. 119.

103. Ibid., p. 120.

104. Ibid., pp. 47 and 120; J. H. Porter, 'Wage Bargaining under Conciliation Agreements, 1860-1914', Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. XXIII, No. 3 (December 1970), pp. 470 and 473.

105. Rowe, op. cit., p. 46.

106. Mines Department, Annual Report 1921, Statistical Appendix.

Yorkshire[107], which was a newly developing and extremely prosperous mining area that paid the highest wages in the country[108]. Whereas the basis rate was fixed on the spot for the particular work that the particular miner had to do, and could be either a piece rate or a day rate, the percentage addition was determined for a large area, and was commonly determined automatically by reference to the selling price of some standard quality of coal[109]. A modification to this system was made by the 1912 Minimum Wage Act, which sanctioned the fixing of minimum rates for all grades by joint district boards appointed for the purpose[110]. A strike in South Yorkshire in 1914 resulted in provision being made for the minimum to be regarded as a standard rate to which the current percentage was applied[111]. Minimum wages in Kent were decided on the basis prevailing at the time in South Yorkshire[112]. This method of wages regulation, which operated entirely at the district level, was changed with the advent of government control in 1917, when it was decided to give equal advances in all districts in the form of flat-rate additions, which represented the equal cost to all of the rising cost of living[113]. The first war wage in September 1917 amounted to an advance

107. Tilmanstone Colliery, Price List for the Five Feet Seam, 1 September 1913; Snowdown Colliery, Price List for Working the Beresford Seam, 1 March 1917; Price List for Chislet Colliery 5 ft. Seam, 30 January 1920. (These documents are in the possession of the author).

108. Rowe, op. cit., pp. 74-75, 95-96, 99 and 106.

109. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, pp. 131-32. The system did not in practice operate quite so mechanically as there were changes in the differential rates of pay between different classes of miners. (See Rowe, op. cit., pp. 81-83).

110. Rowe, op. cit., p. 104.

111. Ibid., p. 105. All districts except Scotland gradually followed this principle (Ibid., p. 109).

112. Snowdown Colliery, Price List for Working the Beresford Seam, 1 March 1917.

113. Rowe, op. cit., pp. 46-47; Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 56 and 155.

of 1s. 6d. per day for men and 9d. for youths under 16 years of age, and was equivalent to a 20 per cent increase[114]. The next increase in June 1918 was for the same amounts[115]. To pay for these increases the government merely increased the price of coal each time by 2s. 6d. per ton[116]. As we have already seen, in 1919 the government, as a result of the Sankey Commission's recommendations, increased wages by a further 2s. per day and reduced hours per day from eight to seven[117]. To meet the deficiencies created by this wage advance and the decrease in output expected to result from the reduction of working time, it was found necessary to increase coal prices by 6s. per ton[118]. It was also agreed between the Miners Federation of Great Britain and the government that day-work rates should not be reduced in consequence of the reduction of hours, and that piece-work prices should be readjusted to enable previous earnings to be maintained[119]. Negotiations were left to the owners and miners in the separate districts. An attempt by the Coal Controller to get piece rate adjustments resulting from the reduction in hours limited to a maximum in any district of 12½ per cent, on condition that the average increase in the whole country did not exceed 10 per cent, provoked in July 1919 a strike of the South Yorkshire miners, who were then joined by their colleagues in Kent[120]. The South Yorkshire miners had succeeded in negotiating a 14.3 per cent increase before the Controller's directive, and as they, like Kent, worked a system of three

114. Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 155-57.

115. Ibid., p. 181.

116. Ibid., pp. 156 and 181.

117. See above Chapter 3, p. 103.

118. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 226.

119. Cole, op. cit., p. 105.

120. Ibid., pp. 105-111.

$7\frac{1}{2}$ hour shifts, they maintained that a larger advance than one-seventh was necessary because the long walking time reduced hewing time more proportionately than the straight reduction in hours. In Kent a compromise was reached after a couple of weeks[121]. Two further increases in wages occurred in 1920. The first, in March, was an advance of 20 per cent on the wages paid prior to September 1917, i.e. exclusive of the war wage and Sankey wage, with a minimum of 2s. per shift for all adults[122]. The second, in November, followed a three week national strike, and wages were to be uniformly advanced or reduced in accordance with variations in the size and value of the total output of the mines[123], with the result that the additional wage per shift was 2s. till the end of December 1920, 3s. 6d. in January 1921, 1s. 6d. in February, and nothing in March[124]. Even though home prices were controlled till 1921, the unparalleled profits from exports enabled the government to guarantee profits to owners, and, as we have seen, the sums recouped by the Kent colliery companies from the Controller of Mines enabled them to make profits in the years 1917-21[125]. The collapse of export prices early in 1921 led to a drain on the Treasury, so the government decided in February to end its control of the industry on 31 March 1921, five months earlier than the

121. The Colliery Guardian, 18 July 1919, p. 174, 25 July 1919, p. 241, and 1 August 1919, p. 309. The Kent miners had been demanding a reduction in hours from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ but they settled for 7 hours with 20 minutes for lunch.

122. Rowe, op. cit., pp. 91-92; Finlay A. Gibson, A Compilation of Statistics (Technological, Commercial, and General) of the Coal Mining Industry of the United Kingdom, the Various Coalfields thereof, and the Principal Foreign Countries of the World (Cardiff 1922), p. 146; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 13 May 1920.

123. Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 241-42; Rowe, op. cit., p. 132; I. Lubin & H. Everett, The British Coal Dilemma (1927), pp. 42-43.

124. Gibson, op. cit., p. 146.

125. See above Chapter 2, pp. 88 and 90, and Chapter 3, pp. 127 and 153.

date originally planned[126]. The wages offered by the owners to the miners from 1st April were, not surprisingly, lower than under the Coal Controller in all districts, except South Yorkshire[127]. The failure of negotiations resulted in a national coal strike, which was finally settled with government assistance at the beginning of July[128]. The Terms of Settlement, which were negotiated nationally between the Mining Association of Great Britain and the M.F.G.B., provided for the ascertainment district by district of the actual gross proceeds of the industry in a given period and of the costs of production other than wages, such as timber, stores and materials, and administrative expenses. The difference between the two, described as "net proceeds" was then to be divided in agreed proportions between wages and profits, with the important proviso that wages could not fall below a minimum set at 20 per cent above the standard wage[129]. In Kent this minimum worked out at 32 per cent on the 1911 basis rates[130]. To prevent too sudden a fall in wages the government agreed to provide a subsidy of up to £10 million for three months[131]. The principles of the 1921 Agreement were continued in the new agreement which replaced it in 1924, when taking advantage of the temporary prosperity brought about by the occupation of the Ruhr, the M.F.G.B. succeeded not only in getting labour's share of the net proceeds raised slightly, but also, more significantly, in having the minimum wage raised from 20 to 33⅓ per cent

126. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 245; Lubin & Everett, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

127. Rowe, op. cit., p. 99.

128. Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 249-53.

129. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, pp. 132-33 and 150; Redmayne, op. cit., pp. 253-54. This minimum is not to be confused with the subsistence wage paid to low-paid day wage men, which in Kent varied with the size of the man's family.

130. Mines Department, Annual Report 1921, Statistical Appendix.

131. Redmayne, op. cit., p. 253.

above the standard wage, an increase of 11 per cent[132]. Although there were recoupment provisions under the 1921 and 1924 Agreements for employers, when they incurred extra expenditure in paying wages at the minimum rather than at the economic rate[133], they were to prove inoperative as far as the Kent Coalfield was concerned[134]. Kent wages, which were among the highest in the country, had scarcely been off the minimum from 1921 to 1924, when the percentage payable on basis rates was raised from 32 to 46.67 per cent[135]. The Kent owners were in such financial difficulty from May 1924 onwards that they maintained that the payment of the higher minimum wage was impossible[136]. As the Mining Association maintained that the national agreement was binding on all its members, the only way out for the Kent owners was to give their employees notice to terminate existing contracts. The owners offered to continue on the terms of the old agreement as they maintained that not only were they unable to pay the difference in wages between the old and new agreements, but they could not even pay it for the period from 1st May, when the latter came into effect, to 5th July, when notices expired. With full M.F.G.B. support the Kent

132. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, pp. 133 and 147.

133. Ibid., p. 144.

134. See below Table 4.4.

135. Mines Department, Annual Report 1922, pp. 9 and 11; Ibid. 1923, pp. 11 and 14; Ibid. 1921-24, Statistical Appendices; Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, p. 148. Kent had high basis rates and a high guaranteed minimum wage, which resulted in the coalfield paying both the highest wages and incurring some of the heaviest losses in the industry.

136. The Colliery Guardian, 20 June 1924, p. 1593, 27 June 1924, p. 1649, and 11 July 1924, p. 97. The Bristol, Forest of Dean, and Somerset owners also made this declaration. 'Minutes of Proceedings at meetings between Representatives of the Mining Association and of The Miners' Federation and (1) the Kent Coalfield Representatives; (2) The Bristol and the Forest of Dean Coalfields Representatives re New National Agreement, held on Thursday July 3rd, 1924', Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Minutes, 1924, pp. 399-409. For further details of industrial relations in this period see below Chapter 6.

miners, who were already amongst the highest paid in the country, decided to resist the Kent owners[137]. Of the two collieries affected - Snowdown had ceased production at the beginning of the year - Tilmanstone re-opened after a month following an agreement to introduce the 46⅔ per cent minimum gradually over a period of three months[138], while at Chislet the deadlock continued until December, when the men returned on practically the same terms as they were offered before work ceased[139]. The settlement at Tilmanstone on terms less favourable to the owners than under the old agreement was a gamble by the directors to keep the colliery working rather than see it flooded. As it happened it made little difference because six months later the company was forced into liquidation[140]. Unlike Snowdown, however, the colliery was not closed for long, and soon re-opened under new ownership. As it was unable to honour the 1924 Agreement or formulate a new district settlement, the Kent Colliery Owners' Association, which had been formed to implement the first national agreement in 1921, ceased to operate as a wage negotiating body, and in 1925 it was wound up[141].

Kent owners were not alone in finding the terms of the 1924 Agreement extremely onerous, for within five months of its signing in May every district was on the new minimum, except the Eastern Division, the new South Yorkshire Coalfield, and the insignificant Radstock area of Somerset. In July 1925 the Eastern Division fell into line[142]. The

137. The Colliery Guardian, 25 July 1924, pp. 229 and 233-34.

138. Ibid., 8 August 1924, p. 372.

139. Ibid., 19 December 1924, p. 1568.

140. Ibid., 20 February 1925, p. 472.

141. The Kent Colliery Owners' Association, Rules, 8 August 1921. (This document is in the possession of the author); The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 12 July 1921, 13 July 1925, and 17 November 1925.

142. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, p. 147.

rather sorry state in which the Kent Coalfield found itself in the years 1922-26 is reflected in Table 4.4. Apart from the first four months of 1924, when prices were high following the Ruhr occupation, only in the first part of 1925 did the coalfield make a profit. This was due to Kent coal prices not falling in the way they did in other districts, together with a sharp increase in output per manshift following the 1924 stoppage[143]. The situation in Kent in the second quarter of 1925 contrasted favourably with other coalfields, as it was the only district in this period to show a profit[144]. From then onwards, however, output per manshift fell back to its previous level and Kent followed the trend in other areas, with debits beginning to accumulate[145]. Practically all that was new in the 1921 Agreement by way of sharing proceeds between capital and labour had not operated at all except in the Eastern Division and in the exporting districts during the occupation of the Ruhr[146]. Kent was, in fact, on the minimum for 47 put of the 51 months from July 1921 to September 1925, a period which was exceeded by no other district[147].

With all districts, except the Eastern, on the minimum wage the Mining Association gave notice to terminate the existing wages agreement and offered new proposals, which would have eliminated the guaranteed minimum basic wage and guaranteed to capital 13 per cent of the proceeds

143. Mines Department, Annual Report 1925, pp. 5-6; see also Table 4.4. Both the export and domestic markets for British coal were severely depressed in 1925 (Neuman, *op. cit.*, pp. 472-73). Kent presumably did not suffer to the same extent as other districts as it supplied little coal for export or to heavy industry. The number of shifts worked was less than two-thirds of those before the strike and production could have been restricted to the more easily worked faces. Output per manshift increased during the first three months of 1925 to over 22 cwt., and profit per ton was over 2s. (The Colliery Guardian, 7 September 1923, p. 590, 2 November 1923, p. 1112, 15 February 1924, p. 426, 25 April, 1924, p. 1074, 28 November 1924, p. 1388 and 19 June 1925, p. 1513).

144. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. 3, p. 4. This was a credit of 0.61d. per ton compared with an average national debit of 11.81d.

145. *Ibid.*, p. 40; see also Table 4.4.

146. Royal Commission of 1925, Vol. I, p. 148.

147. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 390.

Table 4.4: Mines Department Statistics Relating to the Kent Coalfield, 1921-26

Period Covered		Gross Proceeds per ton s. d.	Costs Other than Wages per ton s. d.	Net Proceeds per ton s. d.	Wages Costs per ton s. d.	Subvention per ton s. d.	Profit (+) or Loss (-) per ton s. d.	Output per Manshift of Saleable Coal cwt.	Average Earnings per Manshift (All classes)(2) s. d.	Average No. of Manshifts worked per person employed	Average Earnings £ s. d.
1922		18. 6¼	6. 10¾	11. 7½	14. 10	-	- 3. 2½	20.05	12. 9¼	254	162. 5. 11
1923		19. 2½	5. 4½	13. 10	14. 10¾	-	- 1. 0¾	19.28	12. 5½	268	166. 18. 2
1924	4 months ended 30 April	21. 3	4. 10¾	16. 4¼	14. 8½	-	+ 1. 7¾	18.61	12. 0¼	92	55. 1. 5
	8 months ended 31 December(1)	20. 4¾	6. 5¾	13. 11	15. 10½	-	- 1. 11½	19.41	12. 10½	144	92. 9. 10
	Full Year	20. 9¾	5. 8¼	15. 1½	15. 3¾	-	- 0. 2¼	19.02	12. 5½	241	150. 1. 1
1925	7 months ended 31 July	20. 10¾	5. 10¾	15. 0	13. 11	-	+ 1. 0¼	20.61	12. 6¼	163	101. 18. 7
	5 months ended 31 December	19. 5½	5. 11¾	13. 5¾	16. 5½	2. 8¼	- 0. 3½	18.50	13. 1½	112	73. 4. 6
	Full Year	20. 3¾	5. 11¼	14. 4½	14. 11¾	1. 1	+ 0. 5¾	19.69	12. 9¼	274	175. 3. 7
August 1925 to April 1926 (inclusive) - the Subvention Period		18. 8¾	5. 11	12. 9¾	16. 3½	3. 9¾	+ 0. 4	18.61	13. 1½	199	130. 11. 5

Note: (1) Results affected by 1924 strike; (2) It would appear that these figures do not include the value of allowances in kind.

Year	Output tons	Workforce	Number of Manshifts Worked: At Coalface	Elsewhere Below Ground	On the Surface	Total	Aggregate Horse-Power of Electrical Motors in Use(2)	Number of Horses and Ponies Employed below Ground
			'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s		
1921	259,613	2,076	-	-	-	-	4,046	50
1922	403,911	1,805	166	125	108	399	4,939	29
1923	488,195	2,116	212	144	141	497	5,324	24
1924	330,197	1,743	142	108	84	335	5,823	-
1925	367,589	1,873	153	115	103	372	8,390	-
1926	213,969	2,117	56	45	33	135	10,532	-

Note: (3) **Before 1926 nearly all electrical power was used for pumping purposes.**

Source: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1921-26 Statistical Appendices.

of the industry regardless of what the resultant wages proved to be[148]. These terms were not surprisingly rejected by the M.F.G.B., and deadlock was only broken by the government intervening to offer a nine-month subsidy to enable the losing districts to pay existing wage rates[149]. The subsidy was to come to an end on 1 May 1926, by which time a Royal Commission was to investigate thoroughly and report on the whole subject of the production and distribution of coal[150]. Despite this subsidy which, from August 1925 to April 1926 inclusive, totalled £44,610[151] and was the equivalent of 3s. 9¾d. per ton, falling prices and increased labour costs due to declining output per manshift resulted in the Kent Coalfield making a profit of only 4d. per ton[152]. Although over the same period the industry as a whole received a subsidy of 2s. 8¾d. per ton, it was able to make a profit on each ton of only 1s. 0¾d.[153] The ending of the subsidy and the refusal of the miners to accept either wage cuts or a lengthening of the working day resulted in the General Strike, and a stoppage in the coal industry that lasted generally until November 1926[154]. In Kent the stoppage lasted till October at Chislet and November at Tilmanstone, when the men returned to work with rates of pay reduced by about 10 per cent and with the working day lengthened by half-an-hour to

148. Lubin and Everett, op. cit., pp. 59-61.

149. Ibid., pp. 63-64.

150. Ibid., p. 63.

151. The Colliery Guardian, 4 June 1926, p. 1218.

152. See Table 4.4.

153. Mines Department, Annual Report 1926, Statistical Appendix. Altogether in cash terms the subsidy totalled £23,350,000 (The Colliery Guardian, 6 August 1926, p. 299).

154. Lubin and Everett, op. cit., pp. 89-90 and 117.

7½ hours excluding winding time[155].

(2) 1927-35

The period of stagnation in the early twenties was followed after the General Strike by nine years of unparalleled development in the coalfield. As can be seen from Table 4.5 these developments, particularly by Pearson and Dorman Long, led to saleable output increasing more than threefold from 636,911 tons in 1927 to the new record total of 2,089,205 tons in 1935, a figure which has never since been surpassed in the coalfield.

155. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 14 October 1926 and 16 November 1926; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 18; The Colliery Guardian, 9 April 1926, p. 853 and 3 December 1926, p. 1239e.

Table 4.5: Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised in the Kent Coalfield, 1927-35

Year	Outputs of Companies(1)			Total Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised
	Pearson and Dorman Long	Chislet	Tilmanstone	
	tons	tons	tons	tons
1927	187,000	223,807	226,000	636,911
1928	333,647	263,813	332,000	929,803
1929	527,020	284,249	338,000	1,148,963
1930	678,937	293,000	320,000	1,291,680
1931	887,555	381,977	316,000	1,585,750
1932	1,107,487	399,806	317,000	1,823,883
1933	1,277,536	396,000	255,000	1,927,747
1934	1,331,858	424,000	275,000	2,030,491
1935	1,324,409	473,000	292,000	2,089,205

Note: (1) The company totals do not add up to the final total as figures given to the nearest thousand tons are estimated company outputs[156].

Sources: Pearson and Dorman Long Correspondence with their auditors (this correspondence is in the possession of the Whitehall Securities Corporation Ltd., Document numbered 584); Davies, Chislet Memorandum, Statement 1; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 1 April 1932 and 6 July 1933; Mines Department, Annual Reports 1927-35, Statistical Appendices.

156. The Pearson and Dorman Long figures are as given in the correspondence with auditors; Chislet figures for 1930 and 1933-35 are calendar year estimates on actual output data given for financial years (ending 31 March), those for 1931 and 1932 are calculated from the Welfare Levy of 1d. per ton paid to the Mines Department; figures of total quantity of saleable coal raised are those given by the Mines Department; Tilmanstone figures are taken to be the residue from subtracting the P. & D.L. and Chislet figures from this grand total, except that adjustment has been made for the years 1930 and 1931. (The result given by this method of estimation for 1939 corresponds almost exactly to the actual output for Tilmanstone

colliery, which is known for that one year. See below Table 4.13). The calculated figures for Chislet in 1930 and 1931 are 311,000 and 364,000 tons respectively, but as output in 1931 is known to have been 381,977 tons it was necessary to transfer 18,000 tons from the former to the latter year, and to make the corresponding adjustment for Tilmanstone output. This adjustment would seem to be fairly reliable as in 1931 Chislet actually sold 359,228 tons and Tilmanstone 275,372 tons, which on the basis of their ratios of disposables to output would give total production figures of 381,000 (ratio of 1 : 1.06) and 323,000 tons (ratio 1 : 1.18) respectively; while in 1932 disposable outputs were Chislet 378,985 tons, Tilmanstone 279,917 tons, which corresponded to outputs of 402,000 and 330,000 respectively. (Coal Mines Acts, 1930, Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, Minutes of Executive Board, 19 February 1931, 18 May 1931, 23 July 1931, 12 November 1931, and 22 February 1932). As there is no indication that Tilmanstone output fell sharply in 1930 and then rose again in 1931 the adjustment avoids such an occurrence appearing in the Table. Although from data on disposables the Tilmanstone output might at 316,000 tons appear low this figure has been accepted both because (1) a slight change in the estimated 1 : 1.18 ratio could produce such a difference, (2) the 1 : 1.18 ratio is reliable only for the first six months, (3) the final quarter of 1932 saw a large fall in the colliery's output, and (4) with the lower output in 1933 the estimated ratio had changed to 1 : 1.13 (Kent District, Minutes of Executive Board, 30 June 1933). The adjusted figures also follow more closely changes in manpower at the Chislet and Tilmanstone collieries . (See below Table 4.7).

By the end of 1935 the new owners had, after allowing for depreciation, spent some £2½ million on developing their collieries, of which Pearson and Dorman Long had expended £1,927,928, Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. £343,678, and the Chislet Colliery Ltd., £323,689[157]. From the figures given in Table 4.6 it can be seen that the major increase in expenditure came before 1930, after which there was hardly any increase in net investment.

Table 4.6: Capital Expenditure in the Kent Coalfield, 1926-35

Year (as at 1st January)	Gross Capital Expenditure on T.S. Assets(1)	Written Down Value of Capital Expenditure
	£	£
1926	682,109	-
1927	733,235	-
1928	1,353,098	-
1929	1,375,935	-
1930	2,519,583	2,374,935
1931	2,641,526	2,438,129
1932	2,714,332	2,450,498
1933	2,800,170	2,476,537
1934	2,844,275	2,458,292
1935	2,872,123	2,423,646

Note: (1) T.S. (Terms of Settlement) Assets refer to actual colliery company assets which the National Coal Board inherited on 1st January 1947 and paid for out of the global sum available for compensation. Non T.S. items referred to ancillary assets, such as houses and farms, which were paid for separately.

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 63.

157. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 50; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 44; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 136. (The Chislet figure is for 31 March 1936). This total of £2,595,295 corresponds very closely to the written down value of capital expenditure on the T.S. assets given below.

The greater part of this expenditure was on the two Pearson and Dorman Long collieries. At Snowdown the opening out of the Millyard (Kent No. 6) seam at a depth of 3,000 ft. was completed in 1927 and production on a commercial basis started again the same year[158]. This seam was worked by the longwall advancing method, and by 1932 complete conversion had taken place from hand loading to conveyor loading at the faces[159]. The same method of working was adopted at the company's other colliery, Betteshanger, where production on a commercial basis began on 1 July 1929[160]. Development work at this colliery, which had been sunk to the "H" (Kent No. 7) seam at a depth of 2,250 ft., had been slower than anticipated because of variations in the thickness of the seam and undulations in the strata[161]. At the Chislet Colliery the workings, after 1926, had not suffered to quite the same extent as on previous occasions[162], and particularly from 1931 onwards development of the Chislet No. 5 (Kent No. 9) seam continued using the longwall advancing method[163]. With this seam also, which averaged a little above 4 ft. at a depth of 1,365 ft., there was frequent thickening and thinning, coupled with variations in gradient due to the undulating nature of the strata[164]. Only at the Tilmanstone Colliery, which because of water dangers continued to work the Beresford (Kent No. 1) seam by pillar and stall method, was there

158. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23.

159. Ibid., Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 42.

160. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23; Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 33.

161. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23; Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 31.

162. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 15 June 1927 (Thirteenth A.G.M.).

163. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, pp. 9-10; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23.

164. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 8.

consistency in seam thickness[165]. So although in general the degree of faulting in Kent was about the average for the country as a whole, and although Kent did not compare unfavourably with other coalfields so far as permanent changes in section arising from slow and predictable geological trends were concerned, there was no doubt that rapid variations in section on individual faces were substantially more common in Kent[166]. These conditions, together with the fact that Kent coals were somewhat friable and could be easily got by hand, naturally invited caution before companies would decide to adopt the mechanization of coal cutting[167]. It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1935 only 11 per cent of the Kent output was cut by machine compared with the national average of 51 per cent[168]. At the same time, however, 82 per cent of the coalfield's output was conveyed mechanically from the face, compared with 43 per cent for the industry as a whole, and these conveyors operated only at the three collieries using the longwall method of mining, which produced 86 per cent of the coalfield's total output[169]. At Tilmanstone moving tubs from the coal face by hand, known as tramming, continued until 1950[170].

The new investment in this period also endowed the coalfield with a

165. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 30. The 1930 depression meant that no further funds were available for developing the lower seams, and throughout the pre-nationalisation period Tilmanstone continued to work the Beresford seam. (Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 34, 36, 38 and 42).

166. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 63.

167. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report, p. 30; K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 21 and 24. The undulating nature of the seams also created some transport problems (K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 27).

168. Mines Department, Annual Report 1935, Statistical Appendix.

169. Ibid.; Table 4.5. The figures 11 per cent and 82 per cent do not, however, correspond to those of the K.C.O.A. Claim.

170. Information supplied by Mr. B. W. Whitaker, Manager of Tilmanstone Colliery 1929-60.

considerable amount of electrical equipment, the aggregate horse-power of which increased steadily from 10,532 in 1926 to 25,908 in 1935, although some two-fifths of the latter total was required for pumping purposes[171]. Before 1946 no colliery in Kent used power from the public supply[172]. In fact the 10,500 K.W. electrical generating station at Betteshanger supplied not only Snowdown Colliery but also the South East Kent Electric Power Company[173]. By 1930 Tilmanstone had a total of 8,000 K.W. of generating plant, which amongst other things operated a new 1,050 H.P. pump that was capable of lifting 1,500 gallons per minute from the seam to the surface, a height of 1,560 feet, and was the largest pump in the country used for colliery purposes[174]. A 3,000 K.W. generator had been installed in 1926 and a second had been acquired from the Guilford and Waldershare Company three years later, specifically for pumping purposes[175], while after 1933 Chislet Colliery installed an additional 2,000 K.W. turbo-generator[176].

If an adequate return was to be made on this investment it was essential that the collieries should operate at or near full capacity. This was not to be, however, as government policy, which had been so

171. Mines Department, Annual Reports 1926-35, Statistical Appendices. The national totals for the same years were 1,620,145 and 2,010,332.

172. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 36.

173. Ibid., p. 23. This Power Company had originally been formed by Arthur Burr in 1911 and had been subsequently acquired in 1923 by the County of London Electric Supply Company (see above Chapter 2, pp. 66-67). In addition Betteshanger had what were claimed to be the most powerful steam winding engines in the country, which had been installed initially to facilitate sinking (The Colliery Guardian, 9 September 1927, p. 137), while the electric winder at Snowdown was capable of raising 144 tons per hour (Ibid., 9 September 1927, p. 233).

174. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 31; The Colliery Guardian, 19 October 1928, p. 1575.

175. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 18 and 27.

176. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 14.

instrumental in enabling the heavy capital investment by Pearson and Dorman Long to be undertaken in the first place[177], began to work to the detriment of the coalfield in the 1930's, by its imposition of restrictions both on the recruitment of labour and on the level of output that the collieries were permitted to produce. The former limitation did not begin to have effect until after 1935, whereas the latter operated from the end of 1930. It is to a consideration of these two constraints that we must now turn to understand the nature of the development of the coalfield in the 1930's.

Between 1927 and 1935 there was a two-and-a-half fold increase in the size of the labour force, from an average of 2,795 in 1927 to 7,337 in 1935[178]. At the same time in the country as a whole the number of employed miners fell by 250,000 from 1,023,885 in 1927 to 769,474 in 1935[179]. The high unemployment in these other mining districts during these years was to the advantage of Kent, as the Mining Industry Act, 1926 (Section 18) had the effect of restricting the engagement of workers over 18 years of age to men who had been regularly employed in the industry prior to April 1926[180]. So the owners in Kent were obliged to recruit from these other mining districts the additional labour to carry out the development of the coalfield and to build up their labour force[181]. Moreover, when engaging miners, Pearson and Dorman Long were specifically

177. See above Chapter 3, pp. 139-143.

178. See Table 4.7.

179. Mines Department, Annual Reports, 1927-35, Statistical Appendices. Apart from a slight increase of 17,685 in 1929 the number of men employed fell in every year from 1927 to 1936..

180. Mining Industry Act, 1926, 16 & 17 Geo. 5 c. 28. Unemployment in mining (June figures) rose from 200,000 in 1929 to 420,000 in 1932, after which it declined steadily and was by 1938 down to just over 150,000. (R. Page Arnot, The Miners in Crisis and War (1961), p. 431).

181. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 6.

Table 4.7: Number of Men Employed in the Kent Coalfield, 1927-35

Year	Number of men employed in December of each year						Average number of men employed during the year
	Snowdown Colliery	Betteshanger Colliery	Pearson and Dorman Long (Snowdown and Betteshanger)	Chislet Colliery	Tilmanstone Colliery	Total	
1927	1,020	271	1,291	893	979	3,163	2,795
1928	1,249	491	1,740	1,026	993	3,759	3,553
1929	1,813	731	2,544	1,163	1,047	4,754	4,357
1930	1,762	1,111	2,873	1,217	1,178	5,268	5,063
1931	1,845	1,689	3,534	1,430	1,070	6,034	5,678
1932	2,075	2,114	4,189	1,380	937	6,506	6,382
1933	2,160	2,509	4,669	1,430	752	6,851	6,625
1934	2,197	2,714	4,911	1,500	781	7,192	7,088
1935	2,246	2,861	5,107	1,486	816	7,409	7,337

Sources: Figures for Snowdown, Betteshanger, Chislet and Tilmanstone from Mines Department, List of Mines, 1927-35; Average number of men employed during the year from Mines Department, Annual Reports, 1927-35, Statistical Appendices.

required under the Agreement with H.M. Treasury of February 1926 to employ suitable miners who had been thrown out of work by other pits closing down[182]. This was a continuing obligation on the Betteshanger and Snowdown mines, which in 1935 employed 69 per cent of the total labour force of the district and produced 63 per cent of the coalfield's output[183]. Despite these restrictions, during the years before 1936, the district was able to substantially meet its adult labour requirements[184], partly because development was limited by the operation of the Coal Mines Act of 1930[185]. The recruitment of colliery workers from other areas was not, however, easy, as well over 50 per cent of the men who came to Kent failed to settle down in the district and later left[186]. There were two basic reasons for this high labour turnover: one was that many men did not move their families, particularly if their sons, daughters or wives were in employment in their home district; the other, and more important, was that a fairly large proportion of the men had been accustomed to mining conditions differing from those in Kent[187]. This turnover was abnormally high at Snowdown Colliery[188], where one observer estimated that 700 men came and left between 1929 and 1931[189]. The men left in such large numbers because they could not stand the conditions in what,

182. See above Chapter 3, p. 142.

183. See Tables 4.5 and 4.7. At the same date Chislet and Tilmanstone employed respectively 20 and 11 per cent of the labour force, and produced 23 and 14 per cent of the output.

184. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 6.

185. See below pp. 51-55.

186. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 6.

187. Ibid.

188. Kent Mine Workers' Association, Minutes, 25 February 1929, 11 April 1929 and 23 September 1929.

189. Violet L. Hughes, 'A Social Survey of the East Kent Coalfield' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1934), p. 190.

at 3,000 ft., was one of the deepest mines in the country[190]. Not only does the temperature increase with the depth of a mine but in the case of the Millyard Seam there was the added problem of water, which raised the level of humidity and made it more difficult to adequately ventilate the colliery[191]. In these same workings in the late 'fifties dry-bulb temperatures of 85° at the face were fairly common, while the humidity was about 80° and the wet-bulb temperature nearly 80°.[192] It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Snowdown coal dust should have been found exceptional in the way it stuck to the skin[193]. Conditions such as these were of course a good breeding ground for skin diseases such as dermatitis[194].

Despite these problems sufficient labour of the kind required was recruited in the years before 1936. The owners were fairly stringent in their conditions, wanting men who were under 45 years of age and preferably under 40, and who had not been out of work too long and had thereby lost much of their physical fitness. The main demand was for underground workers, particularly face workers and technicians, who were used to deep mines[195]. Pearson and Dorman Long, the main company

190. K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 6; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 6 February 1930 and 13 March 1930; David Bean, 'Kent and Its Miners', Coal Quarterly, Winter 1963, pp. 8-9. Only in Lancashire were there any workings deeper than the Millyard in Kent (J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 58).

191. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', pp. 159 and 162; J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 58. At Snowdown in the late 1950's water was removed from the workings by 36 pumps which delivered 190,000 gallons per day to the main shaft, and in the course of a year 395,000 tons of water were pumped from the Millyard Seam.

192. J. H. Plumptre, 'Underground Waters', p. 162.

193. Norman Harrison, Once a Miner, (Oxford 1954), p. 2. Harrison, a 'Bevin Boy', was employed at Snowdown Colliery from 1942 until after nationalisation.

194. Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors: Midland and Southern Division, 1936 (Non-Parliamentary Papers), p. 49.

195. K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 6.

requiring labour, acquired its men through the Labour Exchanges[196]. Recruitment took place in South Wales in 1927, in the east and west Midlands in 1928, and was extended to all mining districts except Durham in 1929[197]. The situation was eased a little when growing financial difficulties towards the end of 1932 forced the Tilmanstone company to lay off over 300 of its men[198]. The year 1934 saw another advertising campaign through the Labour Exchanges in Lancashire, Cheshire and Cumberland, but many of the men recruited were subsequently rejected on medical grounds[199]. Once suitable men were found, everything was done to assist their coming to Kent. Early on Pearson and Dorman Long had an arrangement with the British Legion whereby men considered suitable were made an advance to cover travelling expenses and the removal of furniture[200]. It then became possible for those coming from districts on the official schedule of depressed areas to obtain allowances for their expenses from the Ministry of Labour[201]. In addition to those men coming through these recruiting and removal schemes, some came on their own initiative, and there were instances of men even walking to Kent from their home districts[202]. The attitude of the Kent Mine Workers' Association to this large influx of labour was one of discouragement. When, for example, Miners' Associations in North Staffordshire,

196. The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1928, p. 59; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 October 1928 and 12 August 1929.

197. The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1928, p. 59; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 October 1928, 11 April 1929, 12 August 1929 and 6 February 1930.

198. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 14 November 1932, 22 December 1932, and 19 January 1933. See also above Table 4.7.

199. Ibid., 23 August 1934.

200. The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1928, p. 59.

201. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 31 January 1929 and 11 April 1929.

202. David Bean, op. cit., p. 8.

Nottinghamshire, Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire made inquiries about work in Kent, and especially at Snowdown, they were discouraged from advising their members to come to the area[203]. The union talked about resisting fresh labour being brought into the coalfield, particularly as they felt that the management at Snowdown were taking advantage of the state of the labour market to lower the conditions at the colliery[204]. Once employed in the coalfield, however, every assistance was given by the union to such men[205], while the owners endeavoured to find them houses[206].

As we have already seen, the colliery companies had to provide housing in order to attract the necessary number of workers. The situation at Tilmanstone and Chislet was eased to some extent by the development of the villages of Elvington and Hersden [207]. More substantial provision was needed however for the Snowdown and Betteshanger collieries. To serve the former, a new village, called Aylesham, was built less than a mile to the north-west of the colliery, where between 1928 and 1930 some 552 houses were provided by Aylesham Tenants Ltd.[208] This company was established by an agreement between Pearson and Dorman Long and the Eastry Rural District Council, and was financed entirely by public loans[209]. Housing for the Betteshanger Colliery was provided from

203. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 October 1928.

204. Ibid., 19 December 1928 and 12 August 1929.

205. In, for example, obtaining removal allowances for men who moved prior to the Ministry of Labour's scheme, or for those who came from districts not included in the official schedule of depressed areas (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 December 1928 and 12 August 1929).

206. The Colliery Guardian, 6 January 1928, p. 59.

207. See above Chapter 3, pp. 157-58 and 174-75.

208. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59.

209. Aylesham Tenants Ltd., Registry of Friendly Societies, 10366 R.

1930 onwards by Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Pearson and Dorman Long, whose main development was the Mill Hill Estate on the outskirts of Deal.[210] Altogether Pearson and Dorman Long advanced well over £200,000 in loans to this subsidiary, which between 1930 and 1934 provided 492 houses on the Mill Hill Estate, 76 dwellings at Betteshanger next to the colliery, and 104 houses in the Snowdown area[211]. Subsequent additions to Aylesham and Mill Hill were left to a private development company, which took their final sizes up to 650 and 950 houses respectively[212].

Following the collapse of the miners' strike in 1926 the length of the working day underground was increased by one hour, from 7 hours, in all districts except Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, North Derby and Kent, where it was raised by only half an hour. Corresponding additions were made to the hours of surface workers. These changes led to an increase in output per manshift and a corresponding decrease in costs[213]. The reduction of the maximum legal hours from 8 to 7½ in 1930 therefore had no effect on the Kent Coalfield, which continued to operate the 7½ hour underground shift[214]. The three shift system continued to operate in the

210. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59; Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., Registry of Friendly Societies, 10328 R.

211. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, items 40, 59, 81 and 86.

212. See below Chapter 8, pp. 420 and 425.

213. Mines Department, Annual Report 1927, p. 11.

214. Ibid. 1930, pp. 13-14. The Saturday morning shift in Kent was shorter, being only 6 or 6½ hours (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 5 January 1931; 'Kent Coal Owners Association and Kent Mine Workers Association, Wages and Conditions of Employment, Agreement dated 20th January, 1934', p. 4. This latter document, hereafter referred to as District Agreement of 1934, is in the possession of Mr. G. M. Fotheringham). The change in hours had no noticeable effect on output per manshift in Great Britain as a whole (Mines Department, Annual Reports 1927-38, Statistical Appendices).

Kent Coalfield[215]. The companies having decided that the most economic way to produce the tonnages allocated to them under the output restriction scheme of 1930 was by operating their collieries at a reduced rate of output full time rather than at a full rate of output intermittently[216]. Consequently employment tended to be more regular than in other coalfields[217]. Despite the restrictions of this legislation output allocation was increased and the number of shifts worked rose substantially in the years 1930-35. (See Table 4.8).

Following the years 1921-26 the period from 1927 to 1935 was one of comparatively peaceful labour relations, and the total number of shifts worked in these years was little affected by stoppages. Much more important were the effects of the Coal Mines Act of 1930.

Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1925 the government had adopted a policy of encouraging a reorganisation of the coal industry through voluntary amalgamation[218]. The return to office in 1929 of a Labour Government pledged to reduce the hours of work, and the decline in the demand for coal in the early part of the following year led, through the passage of the Coal Mines Act, 1930, to the real entry of the state into the actual organisation of the coal industry[219]. Through this Act the government linked the question of hours with organisational reforms[220]. The rise in costs that would result from a

215. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 8; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 28 August 1930, 5 January 1931, and 29 November 1933.

216. Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, Minutes of Executive Board for Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme 1930, 16 December 1931. (Hereafter referred to as Minutes of Executive Board).

217. Violet L. Hughes, op. cit., p. 88.

218. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 235 and 253-54. Under certain circumstances compulsory amalgamation was made possible by the Mining Industry Act, 1926.

219. Ibid., pp. 254 and 315-18; Mines Department, Annual Report 1930, p. 3.

220. Neuman, op. cit., p. 346.

Table 4.8: Manshifts Worked in the Kent Coalfield, 1930-35

Year	Number of Manshifts Worked				
	At the Coalface	Elsewhere Underground	Total Underground	On the Surface	Total
1930	n.a.	n.a.	1,027,637	265,300	1,293,000
1931	n.a.	n.a.	1,233,510	284,000	1,517,500
1932	796,488	593,968	1,390,456	294,300	1,684,800
1933	830,603	604,407	1,435,010	295,500	1,730,500
1934	904,056	691,428	1,595,484	305,700	1,901,200
1935	902,043	744,022	1,646,065	307,400	1,953,400

Sources: K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 6 and p. 8, for figures on all shifts worked at the coalface and elsewhere underground. The total number of shifts worked is calculated by dividing the Mines Department figures (Annual Reports 1930-35, Statistical Appendices) of quantity of saleable coal raised by the K.C.O.A. Claim's figure of output of saleable coal per manshift for all workers (p. 24). The number of surface shifts is the difference between the figure for total shifts and the one for total underground shifts. (These calculated figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 shifts).

reduction of hours was to be counteracted by reorganising the industry into a cartel that would be able to raise proceeds by limiting production[221]. In addition, because of pressure from the Liberal Party, whose co-operation was necessary to get the legislation through Parliament, a Coal Mines Reorganization Commission was established, with powers to make amalgamations compulsory[222]. By this Act a Central Council, representative of all the coal owners in the country, was established, together with 21

221. Ibid., pp. 348, 361 and 365. As we have seen hours were reduced in 1930 from 8 to 7½ per shift.

222. Ibid., pp. 371-72.

district schemes, which were administered by Executive Boards elected by all the owners in the district[223]. The Executive Boards were responsible for classifying the coal, regulating output and determining minimum prices. The Central Council allocated to each district the proportion of total estimated output which it was permitted to produce in the period, and this district allocation was then apportioned among the pits or undertakings. Standard tonnages were fixed for each mine or undertaking based on some output produced in a recent period when voluntary regulation of output was not in force. Mines or undertakings were then allocated a percentage or quota of their standard tonnage so that the total of quotas did not exceed the district allocation for the period. Penalties could be imposed by the Central Council on any district exceeding its allocation, and by the Executive Boards on any of the coalowners selling below the minimum price.

As Kent was a developing district, its coalowners naturally wanted to continue to expand their mines till they reached their full potential, and so were opposed to this legislation[224]. When the schemes came into force in November 1930, Kent therefore applied for an unrestricted output because of the developing character of the coalfield[225]. The Central Council, however, fixed district quotas for the March Quarter, 1931 at 10 per cent below district outputs for the corresponding quarter of 1930[226].

223. Mines Department, Annual Report 1930, pp. 15-18. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

224. Neuman, op. cit., p. 373. Owners in Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, South Wales and a number of smaller coalfields were also against the Act, whose main supporters were the owners in Yorkshire, the Midlands and Lancashire - a division that roughly corresponded to the exporting and home producing districts. For details of the Kent Scheme see: The Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, 1930 (Non-Parliamentary Papers).

225. Minutes of Executive Board, 4 November 1930.

226. Report by the Board of Trade under Section 7 of the Coal Mines Act, 1930, on the Working of Schemes under Part I of the Act during the March Quarter 1931, P.P. 1930-31 (Cmd. 3905) XXV, p. 735.

Kent was dissatisfied with its allocation of 331,190 tons, and by taking the matter to arbitration was granted an increase of 68,870 tons[227]. The basic problem in the case of Kent was that although when fixing standard tonnages within the district regard had to be paid to the special circumstances of every mine, including the efficiency and economy of its working, the extent to which it had been developed or was being developed for economic working, and the extent to which its output had increased or decreased[228], the same criteria were not applied to the district by the Central Council when it was determining each district's allocation[229]. As it felt the treatment it was receiving was unfair, the Kent Executive Board referred the Central Council allocations to arbitration on five separate occasions during the first two years of the Scheme's operation. (See Table 4.9 for details of the operation of the scheme from 1930 to 1935). The fact that each time arbitration resulted in Kent's allocation being increased only reinforced the Executive Board's belief that the Central Council was deliberately discriminating against the district[230]. To try and deal with this problem the Allocations Committee of the Central Council had proposed in September 1931 to exclude Kent from their consideration when endeavouring to formulate a basis for fixing allocations for the other districts, and to then arrive at a separate formula for Kent applicable to the special circumstances in the district[231]. So while in 1931 other districts had to share proportionately in output restriction, Kent had preferential access to the Council's small extra quota reserve of

227. Ibid., p. 736; Minutes of Executive Board, 19 December 1930.

228. Mines Department, Annual Report 1930, p. 17.

229. Minutes of Executive Board, 16 December 1931.

230. Ibid., 22 February 1932.

231. Ibid., 11 September 1931.

Table 4.9: Kent Coalfield: Working of Schemes under Part I of the Coal Mines Act, 1930 during the years 1931-35

Year	Quarter ending	Allocation Applied for (tons)	Central Council's Initial Allocation (tons)	Resulting Action taken by Kent Executive Board	Additional Output Allocated as Result of: Arbitration (tons)	Additional Output Allocated as Result of: Application to Central Council for Supplement (tons)	Final Total Allocation (tons)	Actual Output (tons)	Actual Output as percentage of Final Total Allocation (%)	Comment
1931	31 Mar.	Unrestricted Output(1)	331,190	Referred to arbitration	68,810	-	400,000	392,000	98.00	(1) Due to developing character of the district.
	30 June	460,000	400,000	Application for increase refused and no further action taken	-	-	400,000	397,994(5)	99.50	(5) Due partly to trade depression and to one of the pits being affected by wage negotiations.
	30 Sept.	478,000	379,000	Referred to Arbitration Supplementary application for 40,000 tons	11,000	20,000	410,000	433,918	105.83	District fined £2,900 for over-production.
	31 Dec.	-	440,000	Application for supplementary allocation of 30,000 tons	-	21,600	461,000	461,892	100.06	The output for the Quarter was 32% higher than for Dec.Quarter 1930.
1932	31 Mar.	-	450,000	(a) Referred to Arbitration (b) Application for supplementary allocation of 40,000 tons referred to Arbitration	(a) 20,000 (b) 20,000	-	490,000	481,637	98.29	-
	30 June	not less than 500,000	490,000	Supplementary application for 20,000 tons (4)	-	-	490,000	490,112	100.02	(4) Application refused.
	30 Sept.	-	490,000	-	-	-	490,000	493,063	100.63	-
	31 Dec.	523,000	438,797	Referred to Arbitration	61,203	3,000	503,000	503,373	100.07	District fined £15.
1933	31 Mar.	546,000	520,000	Application for supplementary allocation of 12,000 tons	-	10,400	530,400	530,634	100.04	-
	30 June	534,000(2)	490,000	Application for supplementary increase of 44,000 tons	-	24,000	514,000	505,954(6)	98.43	Under-production due to labour dispute at one colliery.

Table 4.9 continued

Year	Quarted ending	Allocation Applied for (tons)	Central Council's Initial Allocation (tons)	Resulting Action taken by Kent Executive Board	Additional Output Allocated as Result of: Arbitration (tons)	Application to Central Council for Supplement (tons)	Final Total Allocation (tons)	Actual Output (tons)	Actual Output as percentage of Final Total Allocation (%)	Comment
1933	30 Sept.	571,300[2]	525,000[3]	-	-	-	525,000	522,932	99.61	[3]Raised from 468,000 tons on recommendation of the Arbitration Committee of the Central Council.
	31 Dec.	578,400	503,373	Application for supplementary allocation	-	28,000	531,373	521,254	98.10	-
1934	31 Mar.	-	n.a.	-	-	-	571,660	569,683	99.65	-
	30 June	-	535,000	Application for supplementary allocation	-	35,000	570,000	554,330	97.25	Increased from initial proposal of 464,650 tons.
	30 Sept.	561,096	549,079	-	-	-	549,079	540,330	98.41	Increased from initial proposal of 498,027 tons.
	31 Dec.	-	n.a.	-	-	-	552,317	546,856	99.01	-
1935[7]	31 Mar.	-	n.a.	-	-	-	572,683	571,739	99.84	-
	30 June	-	n.a.	Referred inland supply allocation to arbitration	-	-	548,918	543,576	99.03	Export supply: Kent applied for increase which was granted in full. Inland supply: amended as result of arbitration.
	30 Sept.	-	n.a.	-	-	-	560,330	558,482	99.67	-
	31 Dec.	-	n.a.	-	-	-	601,856	592,852	98.50	-

Notes: (2) Estimated output prior to making application. (7) For details of separate export and inland quotas see Table 4.18.

Sources: Minutes of Executive Board, 9 November 1930 to 2 October 1933; Working of Schemes under Part I of Coal Mines Act, 1930 during years 1930 to 1935, P.P. 1930-31 (Cmd. 3905) XXV, P.P. 1931-32 (Cmd. 3982) XII, P.P. 1931-32 (Cmd. 4076) XII, P.P. 1932-33 (Cmd. 4224) XV, P.P. 1933-34 (Cmd. 4477) XIV, P.P. 1934-35 (Cmd. 4769) X, P.P. 1934-35 (Cmd. 4973) X, P.P. 1935-36 (Cmd. 5062) XIV; Mines Department, Annual Reports 1930-35.

250,000 tons[232]. Despite this, further complaints and successful arbitration actions from Kent led in 1932 to the Central Council proposing that a special committee of the Council should be appointed to examine and report on the principle on which future allocation should be made to the district, but the Kent owners objected to the composition of the committee, as they did not want membership to be open to members of the Council[233].

Although arbitration always resulted in the Kent allocation being raised, it also caused uncertainty and delay, which affected output[234], and at the same time it imposed heavy costs on the district. These included not only the fees paid each time to E.O. Forster Brown for preparing and conducting the district's case[235], but also the heavy expenditure of time required by the staff of the various companies. The arbitration hearing over the December Quarter of 1932, for example, took three days, during which time the managers and other senior staff had to be present[236].

In 1933 a more flexible method of allocation was introduced by which the Central Council made an initial allocation and then left each district during the quarter to apply for and justify such increase as was considered necessary to meet demand[237].

232. Neuman, op. cit., p. 432.

233. Working of Schemes under Part I of Coal Mines Act, 1930 during 1932, P.P. 1932-33 (Cmd. 4224) XV, p. 110; Minutes of Executive Board, 4 March 1932.

234. Minutes of Executive Board, 6 May 1932.

235. Ibid., 30 January 1931. Fees of £330 were paid to Forster Brown for the first arbitration when the allocation was increased by 68,000 tons.

236. Ibid., 24 October 1932. The total cost of this arbitration, which resulted in allocation being increased by 61,203 tons, was £600.

237. Mines Department, Annual Report 1933, p. 21.

Kent did, however, derive some benefit from the scheme. It was one of the first districts to fix minimum prices[238], and resolutely opposed any attempts to introduce a zone system of minimum prices for inland trade, by which minimum prices would vary according to the distance of destination from the pit, as fixing prices on a delivered basis would have enabled the remoter districts to increase their trade in the south-east of England[239].

As can be seen from Table 4.10 throughout the years 1927 to 1935 the price of Kent coal was always one or two shillings per ton above the national average.

Table 4.10: Average Price of Coal Per Ton

Year	Kent	Great Britain
	s. d.	s. d.
1927	15. 8	14. 7
1928	14. 3	12. 10
1929	14. 8	13. 5
1930	15. 10	13. 7
1931	15. 5	13. 6
1932	15. 3	13. 3
1933	15. 1	13. 0
1934	15. 0	12. 11
1935	15. 4	13. 0

Source: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1927-35, Statistical Appendices.

238. Working of Schemes under Part I of Coal Mines Act, 1930 during March Quarter 1931, P.P. 1930-31 (Cmd. 3905) XXV, p. 740.

239. Ibid., during June and September Quarters 1931, P.P. 1931-32 (Cmd. 3982) XII, p. 319; Minutes of Executive Board, 30 June 1932 and 24 October 1932.

Nevertheless up to 1936 the need to find new customers for the increasing tonnages which were being produced each year made it necessary for Kent suppliers to offer price inducements to consumers to persuade them to change from a coal supplied by other areas, which they had been using and which met their requirements, to a coal of which they had no experience[240]. Consequently in the early years Kent producers had to be content with relatively lower prices.

Unfortunately the Mines Department ceased to issue separate figures of costs and profits for the Kent Coalfield after 1926. Some information is contained, however, in the Kent Coal Owners' Claim presented to the Central Valuation Board under the Nationalisation Act of 1946, and is given below in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Profits, Depreciation, Wages and Labour Productivity in the Kent Coalfield, 1930-35

Year	Profit (+) or Loss (-) per ton	Depreciation per ton(1)	Average Wage per shift(2)	Output per Manshift of Saleable Coal for All Workers
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	cwts.
1930	- 1. 5	1. 0	11. 5	19.98
1931	- 0. 7	0. 10	11. 2	20.90
1932	+ 0. 1	0. 8	11. 1	21.65
1933	+ 0. 4	0. 8	10. 10	22.28
1934	+ 0. 3	0. 8	10. 7	21.36
1935	+ 0. 4	0. 8	10. 8	21.39

Notes: (1) This was an admissible cost under the 1921 and subsequent wage agreements.

(2) Including allowances in kind. The national average wage at this time varied from between 9s. 6d. and 9s. 8d. per shift.

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 8, facing 9, 12 and 24.

240. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 10.

As prices were reasonably stable from 1930 to 1935 the improvement in the profitability position of the coalfield can be attributed to the fall in costs as output per manshift improved slightly with increased production and as the collieries began to operate nearer to, but still well below, their optimum levels. Despite this, however, the high wages prevailing in Kent still meant that these profits were always a few pence per ton below the national average[241]. The cost problems faced by the coalfield in the first half of the 'thirties were nevertheless still great, and the results in these years reflected the heavy incidence of the many fixed and semi-fixed charges, such as administration, surface personnel, pumping, and depreciation, all of which had to be borne by the lower output at collieries during the development stage, and which became progressively less as the collieries developed and the output approached the economic levels for which they had been designed and equipped[242]. Depreciation, for example, which was calculated as a percentage on the written down value of the plant, was at its highest for a new colliery when it started production on a revenue basis. The figures for depreciation per ton in Kent, given in Table 4.11, were all considerably higher than the national average of between 4d. and 5d. per ton. It was estimated that the Kent figure would have fallen to 5½d. per ton had the collieries reached the level of production for which they were being developed. As we have already seen, pumping was another item of cost which did not vary with output, and having been 9¼d. per ton in 1930 this had fallen to 5½d. by 1935. The number of surface personnel employed at a colliery was another expense which did not vary in direct relation to output. Between 1930 and 1935 the number of manshifts worked on the surface increased by only 16 per

241. After amortisation the return on capital in Kent from 1930 to 1935 was estimated at only 2.3 per cent per annum (K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 54).

242. K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 9-10. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source except where otherwise stated.

cent, while saleable output in the same years rose by 62 per cent[243]. Over the same period the increase in the number of shifts worked underground was 60 per cent, and in the total number of shifts worked altogether 51 per cent. The effects of these ddvelopments on output per manshift can be seen in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Output Per Manshift of Saleable Coal in the Kent Coalfield, 1930-35

Year	Faceworkers	Underground Workers	All Employed
	(cwt.)	(cwt.)	(cwt.)
1930	46.80	25.10	19.98
1931	45.74	25.73	20.90
1932	45.82	26.25	21.65
1933	46.42	26.87	22.28
1934	44.90	25.44	21.36
1935	46.32	25.38	21.39

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 24.

So although the output per manshift of faceworkers and underground workers did not rise during these years, the 40 per cent increase in saleable output per manshift worked on the surface, from 97.9 cwts. in 1930 to 136 cwts. in 1935, brought about the slight rise in O.M.S. of all employed. In 1930 the additional cost of surface labour above that for 1935 had been about 7d. per ton. Likewise administration expenses had been 3d. per ton higher in 1930 than in 1935. Further cost reductions came about in this period with the government de-rating scheme of 1929, by which collieries were relieved of three-quarters of their rate

243. See Tables 4.5 and 4.8.

burdens[244], through all the companies in the early 'thirties determining the leases of mineral areas they did not plan to work for some years[245], and by the men at Chislet in 1929 and at Tilmanstone in 1930 agreeing to small wage reductions[246].

Despite these improvements, however, output in 1935 was still below the coalfield's full potential capacity and so depressed profits[247]. A new District Wage Agreement in January 1934 tried to overcome this by introducing a means of sharing proceeds which was entirely different from those prevailing in other areas[248]. The usual form of wages agreement provided for the allocation of the "net proceeds", i.e. the balance after meeting all other admissible expenses, in a ratio varying between 83 per cent and 87 per cent to wages, and 13 per cent to 17 per cent as the owners' share. With the new Kent scheme the owners' share was to be a sum equal to 20 per cent of the average shift wage on each ton of coal raised[249]. Therefore, if wage rates were increased the owners' share per ton would increase. Likewise, if individual output efficiency were increased the owners would receive 20 per cent of the average shift wage

244. Neuman, op. cit., p. 248; Mines Department, Annual Report 1929, p. 5. This was calculated to amount to rather more than 3d. per ton on all coal commercially disposable in the country as a whole.

245. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, items 42 and 43; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 38 and 42; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 24 June 1932. Chislet also entered into an agreement with the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. to modify the payment of super-royalties. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 March 1930).

246. See above Chapter 3, p. 162; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 16 February 1929.

247. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 11.

248. Ibid., p. 15. (The rest of the paragraph is based on this source except where otherwise stated). This was the first time a district wage agreement was signed in Kent (Mines Department, Annual Report 1934, p. 28).

249. The Kent Coal Owners' Association and the Kent Mine Workers' Association, Wages and Conditions of Employment, Agreement dated 20th January, 1934, p. 5. (This document is in the possession of Mr. G. M. Fotheringham).

on that increase in efficiency. The terms of the Agreement also provided for the inclusion in costs other than wages of an amount of 6d. per ton on all coal raised to cover interest on capital[250]. As far as was known only one other district had this provision and in that district the rate was only 1d. per ton. It was claimed that the Kent Agreement would permit the owners to retain a larger share of the net proceeds, i.e. a higher rate of profit, than the standard form of agreement in force in other districts. Moreover, it was claimed that there was a greater inducement for the Kent district to incur capital expenditure on mechanisation and other projects to increase efficiency than in other districts, as the profit rate would increase as the output per manshift improved. It was not, however, until 1938 that the profit rate began to show a marked improvement.

(3) 1936-46

The years from 1936 to 1946 were ones of relative stagnation and decline in the coalfield, with output of saleable coal falling from over 2 million tons to just above 1¼ millions. This was due firstly to production difficulties at Pearson and Dorman Long's two collieries and then to the effects of the Second World War on all collieries. These trends are clearly seen in Table 4.13.

250. Ibid., p. 8.

Table 4.13: Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised in the Kent Coalfield, 1936-46

Year	Output of Companies[1]			Total Quantity of Saleable Coal Raised
	Pearson and Dorman Long	Chislet	Tilmanstone	
	tons	tons	tons	tons
1936	1,231,101	490,242	304,000	2,025,604
1937	1,159,958	485,926	309,000	1,955,056
1938	973,258	464,521	333,000	1,771,104
1939	1,032,482	481,819	350,887	1,865,100
1940	850,492	378,274	343,000	1,571,800
1941	797,062	304,000	275,000	1,376,700
1942	767,216	278,000	276,000	1,321,600
1943	818,382	294,000	276,000	1,387,900
1944	733,931	298,000	284,000	1,315,700
1945	694,724	262,888	253,600	1,211,200
1946	784,491	n.a.	n.a.	1,292,500

Notes: (1) The Company totals do not add up to the final total as figures given to nearest thousand tons are estimated company outputs[251].

Sources: Pearson and Dorman Long correspondence with auditors (Whitehall Securities Records No. 584); Davies, Chislet Memorandum, Statement 1; Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-38, Statistical Appendices; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII; Ibid. 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X; Ibid. 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd.6920) XXI; N.C.B. Annual Reports for 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1947-48 (174) and (175) X.

251. Chislet: the 1936 and 1939 figures are from K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 12; 1937, 1938, 1940 and 1945 figures are from Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 17. (The Davies figures for 1936 and 1939 are 488,587 tons and 378,274 tons respectively - a difference of less than 1%); 1941-44 figures for calendar years are calculated from figures for financial years ending 31st March (Ibid., p. 11). Tilmanstone: 1939 figure is from the K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 12. The rest are the difference between the Coalfield total and the total outputs of the other two companies.

Although small amounts of capital expenditure continued each year, they were not quite sufficient to offset depreciation, and between 1936 and 1947 the written down value of capital expenditure had fallen slightly from £2,385,288 to £2,273,050[252]. (See Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Capital Expenditure in the Kent Coalfield, 1936-47

Year (as at 1st January)	Gross Capital Expenditure on T.S. Assets	Written Down Value of Capital Expenditure
	£	£
1936	2,897,189	2,385,288
1937	2,950,001	2,383,991
1938	3,003,874	2,384,798
1939	3,041,537	2,366,317
1940	3,078,153	2,345,637
1941	3,091,349	2,304,097
1942	3,102,029	2,262,978
1943	3,125,230	2,236,075
1944	3,118,969	2,182,120
1945	3,131,873	2,150,910
1946	3,195,210	2,172,612
1947	3,339,630	2,273,050

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 63.

There was consequently very little improvement in the level of mechanisation at the four collieries over this period until 1946, when both the percentages of coal cut mechanically and that conveyed on the

252. At Chislet Colliery some underground development did take place in the years 1944-47 following the publication of the Reid Report. (See above Chapter 3, p. 183).

coal face showed sudden upward movements, the former coming after a period of wartime decline. Even so the percentage of coal cut mechanically remained well below the national average. (See Table 4.15).

Table 4.15: The Kent Coalfield: Percentages of Coal Cut at the Coal Face and Coal Conveyed on the Coal Face, 1936-46

Year	Percentage of Coal Cut at Coal Face		Percentage of Coal Conveyed on Coal Face	
	Kent	Great Britain	Kent	Great Britain
1936	18	55	78	48
1937	14	57	81	51
1938	10	59	78	54
1939	9	61	79	58
1940	8	64	77	61
1941	5	66	78	64
1942	3	66	78	65
1943	2	69	80	66
1944	3	72	80	69
1945	11	72	78	71
1946	17	74	92	73

Sources: 1936-38: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-38, Statistical Appendices,
1938-43: Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII.
1944 : Ibid. 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X
1945-46: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 23.

There was also no increase in the aggregate horse-power of electrical equipment used by the collieries in these years, being 27,533 in 1938 and only 26,599 in 1944[253].

The decline in output was due not so much to these technical factors, however, as to the contraction in the coalfield's labour force from 1936 onwards, which perpetuated the problem of the Snowdown and Betteshanger Collieries not being able to work at near their full potential capacities. The number of men employed in the coalfield had fallen from its peak of 7,385 in 1935 to 6,419 by 1938 and to 5,847 by 1945. (See Table 4.16). In the years 1936-39 this development came about with the improvement in employment prospects in industry generally and in the mining industry in particular[254]. Surplus mining labour of the class required in Kent became much less plentiful in the other coalfields, and beginning with the year 1936 there was a considerable reduction in the men coming to Kent from other districts[255], while at the same time a high proportion of men still continued to leave the area[256]. At the time it was considered that this loss was a temporary phase and that the position would be restored after a short time. Consequently there was little change in the development plans in the district during 1936 and the early part of 1937[257]. So while Britain as a whole was enjoying increased employment of underground workers due to the improvement in trade, Kent was suffering a setback directly attributable to that improvement. During 1937 it was considered that there was no immediate prospect of recovering the labour position and restoring the ratio of coal face to

253. Mines Department, Annual Report 1938, Statistical Appendix; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 67.

254. The number of miners employed in Britain increased from 769,000 in 1935 to 787,000 in 1938. (W. H. B. Court, Coal (H.M.S.O. 1951), p. 31).

255. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 6.

256. *Ibid.*, facing p. 6.

257. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Table 4.16: Number of Men Employed in the Kent Coalfield, 1936-45

Year	Number of men employed in December of each Year						Average number of men employed during the year
	Snowdown Colliery	Betteshanger Colliery	Pearson and Dorman Long (Snowdown and Betteshanger)	Chislet Colliery	Tilmanstone Colliery	Total	
1936	2,101	2,955	5,056	1,513	809	7,378	7,385
1937	1,936	2,894	4,830	1,491	936	7,256	7,223
1938	1,803	2,338	4,141	1,560	956	6,657	6,641
1939							6,419
1940							5,684
1941							5,008
1942			Figures not Available				5,336
1943							5,494
1944							5,783
1945	1,876	2,033	3,909	1,350	914	6,173	5,847

Sources: Figures for Snowdown, Betteshanger, Chislet and Tilmanstone from Mines Department, List of Mines, 1936-38 and 1945; Average number of men employed during the year from Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-37, Statistical Appendices (for 1936-37); Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII (for 1938-43); Ibid. for 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X (for 1944); K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 13 (for 1945).

other workers[258], so at the two largest collieries of Betteshanger and Snowdown, where the loss of labour had been heaviest, it was decided to reorganise and to concentrate the workings in order to utilise the available manpower to the best advantage[259]. At the largest pit, Betteshanger, the decision to close two faces and dismiss 226 men resulted in 1938 in a nine-week strike[260]. Following the settlement of this dispute at the end of June the re-arrangements underground were put into effect[261]. The effects of these changes on the number of manshifts worked in the coalfield can be seen in Table 4.17.

The increase in shifts worked elsewhere underground in 1936 and 1937 as compared with 1935 was due to a continuation in development work in the hope that the overall labour supply would pick up. While the decline in face-workers shifts came about because these men had to be removed to carry out essential maintenance work on the roadways, which had been getting behind with the general decline in the labour force[262].

258. Ibid., pp. 7-8. There was an attempt to try and alleviate the situation by upgrading boys who had been engaged locally. Pearson and Dorman Long also tried to retain labour by introducing in 1939 a deferred service gratuity scheme for boys entering employment at Snowdown and Betteshanger Collieries, by which each entrant was credited with about £10 per annum and which was paid to him, if he was still in the employ of the company, when he attained the age of 23 years. (Kent Coal Owners' Association, Minutes, 20 October 1939; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 12 September 1947).

259. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 8.

260. K.M.W.A. Minutes, 31 March 1938, 11 April 1938, 25 April 1938, 2 May 1938, 13 June 1938, and 27 June 1938. The men who became redundant were non-face underground workers who were not capable of being upgraded. (K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 11). (A two week strike had occurred at the same colliery at the end of November 1936, which started as a result of the attitudes of two deputies towards boys of whom they were in charge. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 November 1936, 26 November 1936, 2 December 1936, and 4 December 1936).

261. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 8. It was estimated that 113,000 saleable tons of coal were lost due to this stoppage.

262. Ibid., facing p. 7. A further 49,284 faceworkers shifts were estimated to have been lost by the 1938 strike.

Table 4.17: Manshifts Worked in the Kent Coalfield, 1936-46

Year	Number of Manshifts Worked				
	At the Coalface	Elsewhere Underground	Total Underground	On the Surface	Total
1936	855,625	776,137	1,631,764	309,400	1,941,200
1937	765,143	812,148	1,577,293	322,700	1,900,000
1938	629,222	710,345	1,339,567	310,371	1,649,938
1939	625,116	735,081	1,360,197	329,148	1,689,345
1940	517,723	653,345	1,171,068	330,900	1,502,000
1941	441,244	577,150	1,018,394	310,500	1,328,900
1942	457,522	562,308	1,019,830	319,200	1,339,000
1943	469,673	575,092	1,044,765	317,900	1,362,700
1944	463,852	595,727	1,059,579	317,400	1,377,000
1945	448,812	582,506	1,031,318	n.a.	n.a.
1946	n.a.	n.a.	1,040,093	n.a.	n.a.

Sources: K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 6, pp. 8, 11 and facing p. 13 for all figures not rounded to the nearest hundred shifts. Those figures rounded to the nearest hundred shifts are calculated by dividing the quantity of saleable coal raised by the figure for output per shift for all workers employed. (K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 24).

Meanwhile the number of shifts worked on the surface changed very little after 1935, even during the war years.

The effects of the Second World War on the operation of the collieries in Kent up to May 1940 was probably no greater than in other districts[263]. Although, as in the First World War, enlistment in the

263. Ibid., pp. 12-14. The rest of this section on the effects of the war on the labour force and production is based on this source except where otherwise stated.

armed forces caused some reduction in the labour force[264]. With the collapse of France in May 1940, however, serious difficulties arose and the district was placed at a great disadvantage compared with other coalfields. After Dunkirk the local authorities began to arrange for the evacuation of the civilian population from the coastal towns of Dover, Deal and Ramsgate in which the majority of the men resided. Most of the miners' families were removed to evacuation areas in different parts of the country. One of the areas to which many were sent was South Wales, and a large number of men either went with their families or followed soon afterwards. At Betteshanger, for example, 436 men out of 2,226 left within six weeks of the French coast being occupied by the enemy. Between 1939 and 1941 Kent lost over 20 per cent of its labour force. The loss in relation to output was much greater, as with increasing absenteeism, the number of shifts worked fell by 29 per cent between these same dates. Despite this, however, the Kent Mineworkers' Association was not over-enthusiastic about a suggestion made by the Minister of Mines for the transfer of men from the South Wales Coalfield[265]. A small amount of alleviation of the labour problem came in 1943 with the government's decision to direct labour into the mines[266], a number of the early recruits being allotted to Snowdown Colliery[267].

Towards the end of 1940 the military authorities were seriously considering the withdrawal of the entire civilian population from the area and arrangements were made for evacuation at a few hours' notice[268].

264. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 140.

265. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 November 1940, 19 December 1940, 16 January 1941 and 30 January 1941.

266. Court, op. cit., p. 304.

267. Norman Harrison, op. cit., p. 35.

268. See also Court, op. cit., p. 133.

Only the intervention of the Secretary for Mines prevented the Kent pits, which at that time were producing 30,000 tons of coal a week, from being closed down completely[269]. The Ministry considered it essential that the mines should continue working, as their output was urgently needed to save transport and meet priority requirements for the railways and power stations south of the Thames, particularly during periods when sea and rail traffic was dislocated by enemy action[270]. Also throughout the latter half of 1940 there was almost continued enemy activity, which caused numerous interruptions of work at the collieries. During the six months July to December 1940 there were no fewer than 477 air raid warnings, and under the instructions then in force men on the surface had to cease work and take cover during these raids[271]. In addition to air attacks, the district was within range of heavy calibre guns which the enemy mounted on the French coast, and during the latter part of the war, as air activity decreased, the shelling by enemy artillery became more frequent and intensive. So when men were not at work their rest was broken both by enemy activity and by civil defence and home guard duties, which tended to be very intensive in this area. So during the war absenteeism increased partly because men were not able to get to the pits as all transport stopped during an air raid, and in addition there was a large increase in the proportion of men arriving late for work[272].

269. See also K.M.W.A., Minutes, 29 June 1940, and Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 401, cols. 1937-38 (13 July 1944), Speech by Mr. D. Grenfell, who was Secretary for Mines in 1940.

270. See also Court, op. cit., pp. 61-62, 89, and 93-94.

271. By a two-to-one majority the Kent miners had in fact voted in favour of continuing work during air raids. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 7 November 1940).
Between September 1939 and March 1945 there were 2,458 air raid alerts at Chislet Colliery. (Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 23).

272. See also K.M.W.A., Minutes, 10 April 1943 and 27 April 1943.

Considerable damage was caused by enemy action at Betteshanger. During a daylight attack on the colliery in April 1942 there was a direct hit on the boiler plant which resulted in very great damage to the surface installations. This caused considerable loss of ourput and a substantial increase in production costs for a long period thereafter until the damage could be made good and the boiler plant replaced. During a further attack in September 1942 the mine ventilating plant was wrecked by a direct hit. This caused a shut down until temporary arrangements could be made for ventilating the mine, and during this time many of the underground workmen were transferred temporarily to other collieries in the district[273].

Already before the outbreak of war the policy of trying to restrict the output of the coal industry had been considerably relaxed. Although the Kent District Scheme under the Coal Mines Act of 1930 had been amended in 1936 to provide for the central control of sales, the rising demand for coal early in 1937 made the operation of the scheme easier[274]. The period from August 1936 onwards was, in fact, one in which the level of prices was dictated more by market conditions than by the acts of sales committees[275], until a decline in demand began to set in at the end of March 1938, when the schemes again prevented prices from falling as they would have done under perfect competition[276].

273. See also <u>ibid.</u>, 7 December 1942. Betteshanger men were in fact mostly transferred to Snowdown.

274. Working of Schemes under Part I of Coal Mines Act, 1930 since the December Quarter, 1935, P.P. 1936-37 (Cmd. 5474) XIII, pp. 950-51 and 953; <u>Ibid.</u> since December Quarter 1936, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5773) XIII, pp. 928 and 930. Central Selling had been introduced to pay for the nationally negotiated wage increase of 1936.

275. <u>Ibid.</u>, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5773) XIII, p. 934.

276. <u>Ibid.</u>, since the December Quarter 1937, P.P. 1939-40 (Cmd. 6170) V, pp. 24 and 26. Details of the effects of the operation of the 1930 Act on Kent are given in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Kent Coalfield: Working of Schemes under Part I of the Coal Mines Act, 1930 during the years 1935-38

Year	Quarter Ending	Output Allocation	Actual Output	Actual Output as a percentage of Allocation	Export Supply Allocation	Export Disposals	Export Disposals as a percentage of export Allocations	Inland Supply Allocation	Inland Disposals	Inland Disposals as a percentage of inland Allocation	Comment
1935	31 Mar.	572,683	571,739	99.84	34,156	29,341	85.90	477,683	455,726	95.40	
	30 June	548,918	543,576	99.03	31,628	28,734	90.85	433,158	429,099	99.06	
	30 Sept.	560,330	558,482	99.67	33,354	26,892	80.63	422,590	422,590	100.00	
	31 Dec.	601,856	592,852	98.50	35,000	25,510	72.89	515,921	513,311	99.49	
1936	31 Mar.	600,326	592,576	98.71	27,874	20,396	73,17	481,512	481,105	99.92	
	30 June	570,755	539,429	94.51	25,861	16,349	63.22	454,554	447,504	98.45	
	30 Sept.	572,444	548,594	95.83	20,000	19,114	95,57	459,155	449,167	97.82	
	31 Dec.	592,852	512,180	86.39	22,959	8,703	37.91	513,311	427,314	83.25	Labour difficulties experienced
1937	31 Mar.	592,576	521,877	88.07	6,000	5,597	93.28	469,077	433,828	92.49	
	30 June	557,041	543,085	97.49	20,436	6,432	31.47	458,692	445,535	97.13	
	30 Sept.	601,920	509,476	84.64	10,000	5,827	58.27	503.800	429,308	85.21	
	31 Dec.	557,704	545,537	97.82	10,000	4,787	47.87	468,814	458,755	97.85	
1938	31 Mar.	566,928	522,644	92.19	17,500	10,560	60.34	459,858	425,445	92.52	
	30 June	543,085	374,489	68,96	16,432	12,806	77.93	445,535	309,541	69.48	Labour difficulties
	30 Sept.	510,528	497,849	97.52	12,744	12,216	95.86	388,377	385,164	99.17	
	31 Dec.	527,584	503,902	95.51	16,213	14,838	91.52	444,074	420,671	94.73	

Sources: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1935-38; Working of Schemes under Part I of the Coal Mines Act, 1930 during the years 1935-38, P.P. 1934-35 (Cmd. 4973) X, P.P. 1935-36 (Cmd. 5062) XIV, P.P. 1936-37 (Cmd. 5474) XIII, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5775) XIII, P.P. 1939-40 (Cmd. 6170) V.

Because of the experience of control brought about by the First World War, the government in 1939 wished to avoid taking over financial responsibility of the coal industry, as this would have necessitated its settling both prices and wage rates[277]. Instead it was decided to exercise indirect, decentralised control through officers stationed at three critical points: Coal Supplies Officers operated in the coalfields, Divisional Coal Officers in the consuming areas, and Coal Export Officers in the principal shipping districts[278]. A link with the machinery established by the Coal Mines Act of 1930 was provided in that the Coal Supplies Officers were drawn from the District Executive Boards of the colliery owners which had been established under this legislation[279]. This organisation formed the machinery of the coal control as operated by the Mines Department from September 1939 to mid-summer 1942 when the Ministry of Fuel and Power and its Regional Organisation came into being[280]. The experience of the war proved, however, that direct control was necessary. As a result the general direction of coal mining operations, although not the day to day working of the mines, was assumed by the government in 1942[281]. So in the second half of the war not only was the government more and more concerned with the technical details and labour relations of the industry, but also with the establishment of the Coal Charges Account it took extensive control over the finances of the industry, including just those questions of profits and wages which indirect control had been designed to avoid[282].

277. Court, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

278. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

279. Ibid., p. 43.

280. Ibid., p. 44.

281. Ibid., p. 45.

282. Ibid., p. 45.

The war led to a sharper rate of increase in the price of Kent coal, which, after having been 16s. 6½d. in 1936 and 20s. 9½d. in 1939, reached a record level of 38s. 6d. in 1944. (See Table 4.19)[283]. Over the same years the differential between the Kent and national average price per ton increased from just under 2s. to 5s. These high wartime prices also resulted in an increase in the coalfield's profits per ton from 9¼d. in 1938 to an unadjusted peak of 3s. 1d. in 1943. Although the position deteriorated after this date, owners in Kent did not suffer as they benefitted from recoveries from the Coal Charges Account, which had been established by the government following its White Paper on Coal, dated 3rd June 1942 (Cmd. 6364)[284]. Through this Account the low cost and more profitable coalfields were made to carry the high cost and less profitable ones[285]. In this way it was possible to maintain production at a higher level than would otherwise have occurred for the given price increases permitted by the government, and conversely prices were lower than would otherwise have been necessary to maintain output at its existing level had market forces been permitted to operate more freely.

After 1940 the maintenance of coal output at its existing level became a primary concern of the government, as it was realised that any

283. Although no figures are available for the price of Kent coal in 1946 it would seem not unreasonable to expect that it continued the upward trend as revealed by the figures for Great Britain. For an explanation of how long-term contracts to supply the Southern Railway depressed Kent prices (and therefore wages) in the years 1936-38 inclusive see below Chapter 5, pp. 321-22.

284. For details of the operation of the Coal Charges Account see Ministry of Fuel and Power, Financial Position of the Coalmining Industry: Coal Charges Account, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6617) X; Court, op. cit., Chapter XVIII.

285. Rises in costs including wage increases were averaged over the entire output of the industry, and the funds to meet these increases were provided by means of a national average charge per ton on all producers. The industry then recouped the cost of this levy through national price increases approved by the government. In fact the government was compelled to subsidise the fund to the extent of £22¾ million between June 1942 and December 1945.

Table 4.19: Costs of Production, Proceeds, Depreciation and Yield on Working Capital, 1936-46

Year	KENT						GREAT BRITAIN		
	Per ton Commercially Disposable						Per ton Commercially Disposable		
	Proceeds(1)	Costs	Credit Balance	Credit Balance Adjusted after transactions with Coal Charges Account	Depreciation	Percentage Yield after taking into account working capital involved	Proceeds	Credits Balance	Credit Balance Adjusted after transactions with Coal Charges Account
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	%	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1936	16. 6½	(16. 6¼)	0. 0¼	-	0. 6¾	n.a.	14. 7½	0. 11½	-
1937	17. 5¾	(18. 2¾)	- 0. 9	-	0. 6¾	n.a.	15. 10½	1. 2¾	-
1938	19. 5¾	18. 8½	0. 9¼	-	0. 8	2.3	17. 4¼	1. 4	-
1939	20. 9½	18. 9	2. 0½	-	0. 7¾	6.7	17. 11¼	1. 7½	-
1940	23. 5	21. 11½	1. 5¾	-	n.a.	4.0	20. 5	1. 7	-
1941	28. 9½	25. 11½	2. 10	n.a.	n.a.	6.9	24. 0½	1. 11	1. 9(3)
1942	31. 6	30. 5	1. 1	1. 10	n.a.	4.3	26. 5	0. 11	1. 6
1943	34. 1	31. 0	3. 1	2. 6	n.a.	6.2	29. 1	0. 11	1. 6
1944	38. 6	37. 6	1. 0	3. 0	n.a.	7.2	33. 5	0. 2	1. 6
1945	44. 9	43. 9	- 1. 0(2)	2. 0	n.a.	5.5	38. 4	2. 5	1. 7
1946	n.a.	n.a.	- 0. 4½	n.a.	n.a.	5.1	39. 6	3. 8	1. 11

Notes: (1) The proceeds figures for the years 1942-46 inclusive include proceeds from sale of miners' coal, which was approximately from 1½d. to 2d. per ton.

(2) The K.C.O.A. Claim gives this figure as - 6½d.

(3) Prior to 3rd June 1942 the transactions relate to the War Emergency Assistance Scheme and the Coal Mines Guaranteed Wage levy which, at that date, were consolidated in the Coal (Charges) Order.

Sources: For Proceeds, Costs and Credit Balances: 1936-37 Kent: K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 8, 24, 54 and facing p. 64. G.B.: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-37, Statistical Appendices; 1938-41 Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII, and Ministry of Fuel and Power, Financial Position of Coalmining Industry, Coal Charges Account, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6617) X; 1945-46: Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest for 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Ibid. for 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1948-49 (Cmd. 7548) XXIX, and Court, op. cit., pp. 338 and 346.

For Depreciation: K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p.9.

For Percentage Yield on Capital: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 63.

decline would seriously affect the nation's war effort. Two aspects of of production that caused particular concern were the number of men leaving the industry and the steadily increasing rate of absenteeism amongst those remaining[286]. To try and overcome these problems the government decided in May 1941 to issue the Essential Work (Coalmining Industry) Order, which prohibited the free taking on or dismissal of men, gave a guaranteed minimum wage, and empowered the National Service Officer to deal with persistent absentees[287]. This was followed by an increase in wages of 1s. per shift[288]. This increase, as with all others during the war, was applied on a flat-rate basis to all wage earners. At the time it was the largest such increase granted. (See Table 4.20).

Table 4.20: Wage Increases Granted During the Second World War

		Amount per Shift s. d.
Cost of Living Increases:		
1 November 1939		0. 8
1 January 1940		0. 5
1 April 1940		0. 4
1 October 1940		0. 5
1 January 1941		0. 6
1 July 1941		0. 4
'Attendance Bonus':		
1 June 1941		1. 0
Greene Award		
1 June 1942		2. 6
Porter Awards		
November 1943 to January 1944	approximately	1. 3
	TOTAL	7s. 5d.

Source: Court, op. cit., p. 224.

286. Court, op. cit., Chapter 6.

287. Ibid., pp. 139-40.

288. Court, op. cit., p.141.

Of the later increases the largest, 2s. 6d. per shift in 1942 was awarded as a result of a Board of Inquiry set up under Lord Greene, who was Master of the Rolls[289]. This Board also recommended the setting up of a new National Conciliation Committee, consisting of a Negotiating Committee of owners and men, and a National Tribunal of three independent members to whom questions might be referred for final decision if the first Committee failed to reach agreement. This proposal was accepted and Lord Porter was appointed Chairman of the National Reference Tribunal[290]. It was this latter body that decided the wage awards of 1943 and 1944[291]. It was following this Tribunal's expression of opinion that the wage system of the industry stood in need of overhaul that a new National Wage Agreement was signed in April 1944 by the Mining Association, the Miners' Federation and the Minister of Fuel and Power[292]. To encourage production the existing district ascertainments were suspended and current percentage additions were merged in the day wages or piece rates payable under the new agreement. The Kent percentage of 32 (37 for lower paid workers) was raised to a flat 38 per cent. The effects of the wage settlements from 1942 to 1944 was to substantially improve the miner's relative position in the social pyramid and make him one of the best paid industrial workers in the country[293]. As can be seen from Table 4.21 Kent miners earned slightly above the national average till 1943 and slightly below it thereafter[294].

289. Ibid., pp. 219-24.

290. Ibid., p. 235.

291. Ibid., Chapter XIV.

292. For the text of the Agreement, which was to last till 1948 see R. Page Arnot, The Miners in Crisis and War (1961), pp. 400-02.

293. Court, op. cit., p. 266.

294. The war saw average weekly cash earnings rather more than double, while the cost of living did not rise so much. (Court, op. cit., p. 265).

Table 4.21: Wages and Earnings in the Coal Industry, 1936-46

Year	Average Wage Per Shift (excluding value of allowances in kind)		Average Weekly Cash Earnings (excluding value of allowances in kind)(1)	
	Kent	Great Britain	Kent	Great Britain
	s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1936	11. 3(2)	10. 5(2)	n.a.	2. 10. 5
1937	11. 11½(2)	11. 0¾(2)	n.a.	2. 15. 5
1938	12. 1¾	11. 2¾	3. 0. 6	2. 15. 9
1939	12. 9½	11. 6¾	3. 5. 7	2. 19. 6
1940	14. 1	13. 0½	3. 13. 7	3. 8. 8
1941	16. 6¾	14. 11	4. 4. 10	4. 0. 0
1942	19. 4	17. 5½	4. 13. 11	4. 13. 2
1943	20. 8	19. 1¼	4. 19. 8	5. 0. 0
1944	23. 0¾	21. 8	5. 6. 7	5. 9. 4
1945	n.a.	23. 1	n.a.	5. 12. 8
1946	n.a.	23. 11	n.a.	5. 18. 7

Notes: (1) These allowances varied from 2s. 2d. to 4s. 7d. for Great Britain. No individual figures are available for Kent except for 1944 when they were 3s. 1d. (In this same year they were 3s. 8d. for Great Britain).

(2) Includes value of allowances in kind. The corresponding figures for 1938 are 12s. 5¼d. and 11s. 8d. respectively.

Sources: Average Wage per Shift: 1936-37 K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 12; 1938-43 Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII; 1944 Ibid. for 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X; 1945 Ibid. for 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI; 1946 Ibid. for 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1948-49 (Cmd. 7548) XXIX.
Average Weekly Cash Earnings: 1936-37 calculated from Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-37, Statistical Appendices (dividing yearly total by 52); 1938-46 as for Average Wage per shift.

Despite Kent having higher wages per shift than the national average, earnings per week were lower because of the greater percentage of absenteeism in the coalfield compared with others[295]. The situation was unlikely to have been any better in 1942 compared with other coalfields as there was a three week strike at Betteshanger Colliery at the beginning of the year, which was only resolved following government prosecution of the strikers[296]. Absenteeism affected both the number of shifts worked and output per manshift. The total number of shifts worked fell sharply from nearly 1,700,000 in 1939 to just over 1,300,000 in 1941 but were stable thereafter until 1944. (See above Table 4.17). Within this aggregate, however, the number of shifts worked on the surface remained almost constant at just over 300,000 from 1936 to 1944. The significant drop was, therefore, in the shifts worked underground, particularly at the coalface. These developments are reflected in the figures of output per manshift. (See Table 4.22). The O.M.S. of coal-face workers continued its upward trend during the first part of the war and reached a peak of 62.40 cwts. in 1941, after which it gradually declined. The O.M.S. of all underground workers, however, had reached its peak of 27.42 cwt. in 1939, after which it showed a downward trend. This was directly attributable to the unsatisfactory nature of the systems of transport from the coal faces to the pit bottoms[297]. The O.M.S. of surface workers, on the other hand, was higher than the national average despite being low for Kent, given that the surface plant

295. Detailed comparative data is available only for the years 1943 and 1944, when total absenteeism in Kent (voluntary together with involuntary) was the highest in the country. (Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII, Table 17; Ibid. 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 55. The K.C.O.A. Claim (facing p. 13) indicated that absenteeism in Kent increased from 12.66 per cent in 1939 to 21.9 per cent in 1945.

296. See below Chapter 7.

297. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 26.

Table 4.22: Output per Manshift of Saleable Coal, 1936-46

Year	Output per Manshift: Kent: Coal-face Workers	Kent: All Underground Workers	Kent: All Employed	Great Britain: All Employed
	cwt.	cwt.	cwt.	cwt.
1936	47.35	24.83	20.87	23.54
1937	51.10	24.79	20.58	23.35
1938	56.25	26.42	21.45	22.80
1939	59.68	27.42	22.08	22.80
1940	60.72	26.84	20.93	22.00
1941	62.40	27.02	20.72	21.40
1942	57.76	25.90	19.74	21.00
1943	59.10	26.56	20.37	20.60
1944	56.74	24.84	19.11	20.00
1945	52.44	23.64	18.09	20.00
1946	59.00	n.a.	18.28	20.60

Sources: Kent O.M.S.: K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 24 and 29; G.B. O.M.S.: 1936-37 Mines Department, Annual Reports 1936-37 (calculated from quarterly figures), 1938-46 Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1948-49 (Cmd. 7548) XXIX.

at the collieries was capable of dealing with a much larger output[298]. The overall effect was that O.M.S. rose to 22.08 cwts. in 1939 when it almost reached the national average, but thereafter declined more rapidly

298. Ibid., p. 26. The number of shifts worked on the surface was almost static from 1936 to 1944, during which period output fell by a third.

than in the country as a whole[299].

Needless to say these developments had their effects on the Kent Coalfield's costs of production, which more than doubled between 1939 and 1945 from 18s. 9d. to 43s. 9d. per ton[300]. Although in the years up to 1943 these rises were more than matched by the price increases, thereafter this was not the case and the Kent owners received substantial payments on their tonnages from the Coal Charges Account. (See Table 4.19).

The war years did, however, end on a note of optimism, and the coalfield looked forward to a period during which a policy of modernisation and reorganisation would make up the leeway of the past years[301].

299. See Table 4.22. The national O.M.S. figure declined steadily from 1936 to 1946.

300. See Table 4.19.

301. K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 29 and 32. Altogether there was £228,822 of capital expenditure in the coalfield during the years 1945 and 1946, and as a result of concentrating workings, improving transport from coal faces to pit bottoms, introducing more coal cutting machinery and reducing the number of loading points there was a substantial rise in the O.M.S. of face workers. The Chislet Company led the way with these developments, investing £143,000 in its colliery between 1944 and 1 January 1947.

CHAPTER 5

MARKETS

The Kent Coalfield is only 65 miles from London[1], and is nearer to the markets of the south-eastern corner of England than any other mining district in the country[2]. It was obvious, therefore, that Kent coal would have a distinct advantage in terms of transport costs, which would enable its producers to charge a higher pithead price per ton than their competitors and yet still sell at the same delivered price throughout the region[3]. The Coalfield was also strategically placed to take advantage of markets on the Continent and to provide bunkering coal for ships and vessels passing the Kent coast[4].

Coal is not, however, a homogeneous product,and, apart from anthracite, the highest prices in the south-east of England tended to be paid for good household coal. The best household coal came in large pieces, was not friable and contained a high percentage of volatile matter. As it happened Kent coal was not very suitable for household purposes[5]. It was, in fact, found to be bituminous, semi-anthracitic,

1. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 4.

2. Evidence of Edward Otto Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, pp. 717-18. Forster Brown estimated that in 1919 the consumption of coal in Kent and neighbouring counties was over 2 million tons per annum, and in London about 17 million tons. (Forster Brown did not, however, name these neighbouring counties).

3. See above Chapter 2, pp. 33 and 49.

4. H. Stanley Jevons, The British Coal Trade (1915), p. 174.

5. See above Chapter 2, pp. 60-61; A. E. Ritchie, The Kent Coalfeld: Its Evolution and Development (1919), p. 134; H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Stephenson Clarke Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery Ltd., p. 2. (Hereafter referred to as: H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet). Mr. Partridge operated this agency in Kent from 1919 to 1946. After nationalisation he joined the staff of the National Coal Board and in 1950 became Marketing Director of the South-Eastern Division.

and generally friable. Although its calorific values were high and compared favourably with those of other districts[6], from an analysis of disposals made in 1939 (Table 5.1) one can see that nearly two-thirds of the Kent output consisted of small coal.

Table 5.1: Kent District: Classification of Coal Disposal in 1939

Class of Coal	Tonnage	Percentage
Large	443,767	26.28
Cobbles	90,879	5.38
Nuts	56,645	3.36
Beans	1,607	0.10
Smalls	1,095,667	64.88
Total	1,688,565	100.00
Unscreened	40,636	
Total	1,729,201	

Source: Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946: Central Valuation Board: Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, p. 51. (Hereafter referred to as K.C.O.A. Claim).

Coal quality obviously depends upon many different properties, the most important, however, is its volatile content[7]. Kent coals come in the volatile range from 10 per cent to 30 per cent, and generally are of the same rank as those of the South Wales Coalfield[8]. Generally volatile

6. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 7.

7. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', Minutes of Proceedings of the National Association of Colliery Managers, Vol. LVI, 1959, p. 60. (Hereafter referred to as J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield').

8. Ibid., pp. 60-61. As the seams are followed out under the Channel they probably go below 10 per cent and come into the anthracite classification.

matter in coal decreases proportionately with the depth of the seam from the surface[9]. The seams being worked in 1945 are indicated in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Kent Coalfield: Seams Being Worked in 1945

Seam Being Worked		Depth	Thickness		Type of Coal	
Kent No.	Local Name	ft.	ft.	ins.	Volatile Matter (dry-ash-free coal)	Caking Properties(1)
1	Beresford	1,500	4.	0	20-30(2)	strong
6	Millyard (Snowdown)(2)	3,000	4.	0	17.5-30	strong
	"F" (Betteshanger)	1,900	4.	0	13.5-30	weak to medium
7	"H" (Betteshanger)	2,150	4.	0	13.5-20	weak to medium
8	"I" (Betteshanger)	2,200	4.	0	n.a.	n.a.
9	"J" (Betteshanger)	2,250	4.	6	10-17.5	non to weak
	No. 5 (Chislet)	1,350	3.	9	20-36.9	strong

Notes: (1) "caking" means becoming plastic on heating and forming a coherent residue.

(2) At Snowdown the volatile matter in the Beresford seam was 30-39 and the coal had strong caking properties; while the Snowdown "Hard" Seam (Kent No. 3) at a depth of 2,235 ft. was 3 ft. thick (but split), had volatile matter of 20-36.9 and strong caking properties.

Source: Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), pp. 12-27.

The change in volatile content as a seam in Kent is followed across the coalfield is very rapid, so even where the same seam is being worked at different collieries the coal has different characteristics[10]. Some indication of the way in which these factors affected the outputs of the

9. Ibid., p. 62.

10. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', p. 61.

different collieries is given in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Proximate Analysis of Kent Coal: Large Grade

	Betteshanger %	Snowdown %	Chislet %	Tilmanstone %
Fixed Carbon	78.9	73.9	63.8	64.5
Volatiles	15.9	21.2	26.7	21.8
Ash	4.7	4.2	8.4	12.1
Moisture	0.5	0.7	1.1	1.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Calorific Value: British Thermal Units per 1lb. of Coal	14,650	14,795	13,990	13,490

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 51. (See footnote 11).

Betteshanger coal was, therefore, low volatile, practically smokeless, and in the same category as Welsh dry steam coals[11]. Snowdown, however, produced what was primarily a coking coal, but unfortunately the failure of Pearson and Dorman Long to develop a steel industry in the area[12] meant that there was no such available outlet in the south-east[13]. Chislet coal was suitable for locomotive, steam-raising and manufacturing

11. Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946: Central Valuation Board: Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, p. 53. (This record is in the possession of the Whitehall Securities Corporation Ltd., Document numbered 584: hereafter referred to as K.C.O.A. Claim). The rest of the paragraph is based on this source except where otherwise stated.

12. See above Chapter 3, pp. 144-46.

13. The coal had therefore to be used for locomotive, steam-raising and manufacturing purposes.

purposes, and was adaptable for gas works requirements. Although not in the front rank of gas-making coals it could be blended with higher yielding gas coals, or used on its own where suitable plant had been installed[14]. Tilmanstone coal was particularly friable, giving as much as 60 per cent of fines[15], and was best used for general industrial purposes, in pulverised fuel plant, and for cement making.

Altogether, therefore, in 1948 the types of Kent coal produced, compared with the country as a whole, were as follows:

Table 5.4: Types of Coal Production in Kent and Great Britain, 1948

Type of Coal	Percentage of Total Output	
	Kent %	G.B. %
Anthracite and dry steam Coal	-	5.0
Coking Steam Coals	35.0	3.5
Medium-Volatile Special Coking Coals (of special interest to the steel industry)	43.5	8.0
High-Volatile Very Strongly Caking Coals	21.5	6.5
Less Strongly Caking and Higher Volatile Coals	-	77.0

Source: National Coal Board, Plan for Coal: the National Coal Board's Proposals (1950), pp. 48-49 and 53.

In terms of sulphur content, however, Kent coals tended to come closer to

14. It was also capable of producing a hard strong coke suitable for metallurgical purposes.

15. H. G. Dines, 'The Sequence and Structure of the Kent Coalfield' in Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Summary of the Progress of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and the Museum of Practical Geology for the Year 1932, Part II, p. 41. (Hereafter referred to as H. G. Dines, op. cit. (1933)).

the national average, while in terms of ash content they were above average, being like the coals of South Wales, Bristol and Somerset[16]. (See Table 5.5).

<u>Table 5.5: Ash Range and Sulphur Content of Coal: Kent and Great Britain in 1948</u>

Ash Range (Ash Content as Percentage of Output)	Kent %	G.B. %	Sulphur Content (Percentage of Output)	Kent %	G.B. %
Under 2	-	2.5	Under 1	52.5	42.0
2-5	57.5	58.5	1-1½	4.0	26.5
5-8	26.0	32.0	1½-2½	43.5	21.5
8-12	16.5	6.0	Over 2½	-	10.0
Over 12	-	1.0			

<u>Source</u>: National Coal Board, <u>Plan for Coal: the National Coal Board's Proposals</u> (1950), p. 54.

These then were some of the characteristics of Kent coal and the problem of its marketing was to a considerable extent related to them. The years before nationalisation, however, can be divided into three broad periods:

(1) 1913-20 when Kent output, the total demand for British coal and prices were all increasing;

(2) 1921-35 when generally Kent output was increasing, but total demand for British coal and prices were falling;

16. National Coal Board, <u>Plan for Coal: the National Coal Board's Proposals</u> (1950), p. 49.

(3) 1936-46 when Kent output was declining, but total demand for British coal and prices were rising.

The first and last periods were, therefore, ones in which the Kent Coalfield found it relatively easy to market its output, while the middle years were ones when some difficulties were experienced. It is to an analysis of these three periods that we now turn.

(1) 1913-20

The early years of production in the Kent Coalfield were ones in which marketing conditions were extremely favourable. Apart from a slight setback due to labour shortage in 1918, output rose steadily from 1913 to 1920, while over the same years the price of Kent coal more than doubled. (See Table 5.6). As at the end of the First World War the total consumption of coal in Kent and neighbouring counties was over 2 million tons per annum, while the London market consumed about 17 million tons[17], it can be seen that Kent's output satisfied little more than two per cent of the region's coal demand.

As we have already seen both the Snowdown and Tilmanstone Collieries commenced production from the Beresford Seam in 1913. The Snowdown coal was of poorer quality than that at Tilmanstone and at neither colliery was it suitable for domestic purposes[18]. The Beresford coal was friable, had a stone parting in it, which had to be picked out by hand, and the bulk of it - some 65 to 70 per cent - was marketable only in the form of slack[19]. In the early years of working this seam the coal at Tilmanstone

17. See above p. 271.

18. Above Chapter 2, pp. 60-61.

19. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 134; H. Stanley Jevons, op. cit., p. 169; The Colliery Guardian, 6 June 1913, p. 1209.

Table 5.6: The Kent Coalfield: Saleable Coal Raised and Prices, 1913-20

Year	Prices (per ton)		Kent Output (Saleable Coal Raised)
	Kent	Great Britain	
	s. d.	s. d.	tons
1913	11. 11	10. 2	59,205
1914	11. 3	10. 0	130,440
1915	14. 3	12. 6	158,389
1916	16. 1	15. 7	208,623
1917	18. 6	16. 9	255,583
1918	21. 10	20. 11	235,819
1919	25. 3	27. 4	277,829
1920	n.a.(1)	34. 7	378,205

Note: (1) The average selling price at pitmouth for the December quarter of 1919 was 33s. 0d. per ton.

Sources: See above Chapter 4, Tables 4.1 and 4.3.

was considered suitable for gas and coke making, in addition to its use for steam raising purposes, while that at Snowdown was regarded as a particularly good steam coal, which was also suitable for gas making[20]. Because lower prices were obtainable for small coal[21], the directors of the two companies, who wished to improve the financial position of their enterprises, had a combination of three possible alternatives available to them: clean the coal before sale; install briquetting plants; sink

20. The Colliery Guardian, 6 June 1913, p. 1209; East Kent Colliery Company Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 61; The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 64.

21. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 64.

to lower, harder seams that were more likely to yield a good household coal.

As early as 1913 a temporary screening plant was in operation at Tilmanstone, which removed much of the dirt and sized the coal into four different categories[22], while Snowdown had not only screening facilities but also a washing plant[23]. Tilmanstone also appreciated the need for washing machinery to deal with the small coal[24]. Not only would this enhance the value of the coal, but much small coal hitherto unsaleable at profit could be brought onto the market[25]. Such a plant was delivered at Tilmanstone in 1917[26]. During a period of booming demand it is important to remember, however, that competition between suppliers is less keen and that the need to clean coal is thereby considerably reduced. This also means from the point of view of the producer that his unit costs of production are that much lower.

Briquetting plants manufacture fuel briquettes from small coal or washed slack. The powdered coal was normally treated by adding a binding agent so that it would cohere under pressure and heat, and then fed into a press, where, between dies, it was compressed into briquettes[27]. As the small coal problem was worse at Snowdown it is not surprising that it was this company that first decided to install such a plant in May 1917 at an estimated cost of £6,000[28]. Because of the wartime control there

22. The Colliery Guardian, 6 June 1913, p. 1209.

23. Ibid., 6 February 1914, p. 313 and 13 February 1914, p. 366.

24. East Kent Colliery Company Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 61.

25. H. Stanley Jevons, op. cit., p. 230.

26. The Colliery Guardian, 18 May 1917, p. 958.

27. Mining Association of Great Britain, Historical Review of Coal Mining (1924), Appendix p. 58.

28. The Colliery Guardian, 18 May 1917, p. 958.

was some delay in the company's plans until the approval of the Coal Controller was obtained in September 1917, by which time the estimated cost had risen to between £7,000 and £8,000[29]. Although an order was then placed, financial circumstances at the colliery led to its cancellation and to the plant being offered by the Yorkshire firm of manufacturers to Tilmanstone for £7,000[30]. The Tilmanstone company looked into the question of raising the necessary funds, but the plant was never erected.

As early as 1914 the Snowdown directors had decided to sink to a lower seam and in May of that year one shaft reached, at a depth of 2,236 ft., the Snowdown "Hard" Seam, which was thought to be more suitable for domestic purposes[31]. Lack of financial resources, however, prevented any large-scale working of this seam, which was abandoned in 1921[32]. The East Kent Colliery Company in 1918 also considered sinking to the harder seams below[33], although no such development materialised at this colliery until 1960.

From the coalfield's commencement of production in 1913 the pattern of demand for Kent coal in the pre-nationalisation period clearly began to be established, with the bulk of output going to local gas and electricity undertakings, to the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, and to the Kent cement and paper industries[34].

29. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 72; The Colliery Guardian, 28 September 1917, p. 605.

30. The Colliery Guardian, 14 February 1919, p. 380 and 7 March 1919, p. 551.

31. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 64; The Colliery Guardian, 24 December 1914, p. 1336; see also above Chapter 2, p. 61.

32. See above Chapter 3, pp. 127-28; Mines Department, Catalogue of Plans of Abandoned Mines, Vol. 2, 1929, entry for Kent: Snowdown, 7421.

33. The Colliery Guardian, 30 August 1918, p. 452.

34. Ibid., 12 November 1915, p. 993, 10 July 1914, pp. 94-95 and 20 March 1914, p. 642.

Before the outbreak of war the Tilmanstone Colliery was already supplying Ramsgate, Sandwich, Deal & Walmer, Tonbridge, Ash, Hythe & Sandgate, Canterbury and Milton Regis Gasworks[35], and it extended its gasworks market to include Dover in 1915[36], and Maidstone in 1916[37]. The Snowdown Colliery also supplied many of these customers[38].

Tilmanstone colliery supplied both the Folkestone and Canterbury electricity works, the former experiencing a considerable saving in costs[39], while the municipally owned electricity works at Dover obtained supplies from both Snowdown and Tilmanstone[40]. At first the Dover works used the coal mixed with fine northern coal[41], but later in 1918, because Kent coal was three shillings per ton cheaper than northern coal and had a 10 per cent higher calorific power, it was decided to follow the example of Folkestone and install an underfeed stoker to use Kent coal alone[42]. This was completed in 1920, by which time Kent coal was 6s. 7d. per ton cheaper than the Yorkshire coal that had been used and had higher heating value[43].

35. Ibid., 6 June 1913, p. 1209, 13 March 1914, p. 583, 20 March 1914, p. 642, and 27 March 1914, p. 695.

36. Ibid., 8 January 1915, p. 93.

37. Ibid., 25 August 1916, p. 366.

38. Ibid., 10 July 1914, pp. 94-95.

39. Ibid., 27 March 1914, p. 695.

40. Ibid., 16 October 1914, p. 837, 15 January 1915, p. 140, 11 June 1915, p. 1237, and 20 April 1917, p. 779.

41. Ibid., 6 August 1915.

42. Ibid., 18 October 1918, p. 819. Kent coal used at the works in 1916 had been 3s. 9d. per ton cheaper than Derbyshire coal. (Ibid., 22 September 1916, p. 565).

43. Ibid., 16 July 1920, p. 187. As approximately 1,300 tons of coal were used per annum it was estimated that the stoker, which cost £800, would save £395 on this tonnage and so pay for itself in just over two years. Consequently a second stoker was ordered. The price of Snowdown coal supplied to the electricity works had risen from 17s. 0d. in January 1915 to 24s. 6d. in June 1915 and 26s. 6d. by 1917. In addition to which all coal entering Dover had to pay 1s. 7d. in town dues. (Ibid., 15 January 1915, p. 140, 11 June 1915, p. 1237, and 20 April 1917, p. 779).

Before the end of the war Kent coal was also being supplied to electricity works in London, where furnaces were altered to suit the coal[44].

Although initially the small proportion of large coal produced by Kent was only used as a standby for railway purposes[45], growing wartime fuel shortages led to its being increasingly used by the South Eastern and Chatham Railway[46]. It was not, however, until the Chislet Colliery commenced production in 1918 that the coalfield became an important supplier of locomotive coal. The Chislet coal was sufficiently different from any already being produced in the area[47] for the South Eastern and Chatham Railway to take the greater part of the colliery's output in the years 1919-20[48].

The Snowdown Colliery started to supply both the Associated Portland Cement Company and the British Portland Cement Company with coal in 1914[49]. In normal years the cement industry in Britain used 1,600,000 tons of coal per annum, and in pre-war years this had been mostly high quality Durham slack. During the war the price paid for this coal increased from 12s. 9d. in 1912 to 33s. 9d. in April 1919[50]. The fact that five-eighths of the

44. Ibid., 5 October 1917, p. 657. The electricity works are not, however, named.

45. H. Stanley Jevons, op. cit., p. 169.

46. The Colliery Guardian, 12 November 1915, p. 993.

47. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 6 May 1919 (Fifth O.G.M.).

48. The Colliery Guardian, 9 May 1919, p. 1100 and 23 January 1920, p. 259; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 56.

49. The Colliery Guardian, 10 July 1914, pp. 94-95. Although these may have been just trial loads that were later discontinued, the fact that the Kent collieries subsequently became important suppliers to the cement industry would seem to suggest that they were probably the beginning of more regular supplies.

50. Evidence of Mr. Alfred Brooks, Managing Director of Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers (1900) Ltd., and a Director of British Portland Cement Manufacturers, Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, p. 1073.

country's total cement output was produced near the Thames and Medway[51] obviously placed the Kent Coalfield in a favourable position. At the same time as Snowdown Colliery appeared to be gaining entry to the cement manufacturing industry, Tilmanstone entered into a contract with Lloyds Paper Mills at Sittingbourne[52].

There were numerous other local outlets for Kent coal, including Folkestone waterworks[53], and the workhouses at Canterbury and probably Dover. Also because at the beginning of the war less coal arrived in east Kent from the north of England and other areas, Tilmanstone was able in October 1914 to sell coal from retail depots in various parts of the district at 22s. 6d. per ton[55]. As the war continued there were even sales to the government[56].

Two new outlets that developed were exports to France and bunker coal. The former commenced in the summer of 1917 after sanction had been granted by the Coal Controller[57]. At first just Tilmanstone coal was sent, but by September supplies were also coming from Snowdown[58]. Towards the end of the year, however, the Admiralty opposed the use of Dover Harbour for this traffic[59]. With the end of hostilities some exports were

51. Ibid., p. 1073.

52. The Colliery Guardian, 20 March 1914, p. 642. Again in view of subsequent developments one assumes that this was the beginnings of regular supplies to the paper making industry, which became one of the Kent Coalfield's most important markets.

53. Ibid., 27 March 1914, p. 695. Supplied by Tilmanstone.

54. Ibid., 20 March 1914, p. 642, 1 October 1915, p. 689, and 31 August 1917, p. 410.

55. Ibid., 2 October 1914, p. 735.

56. Ibid., 9 February 1917, p. 294 and 3 August 1917, p. 219.

57. Ibid., 27 July 1917, p. 170 and 17 August 1917, p. 315.

58. Ibid., 21 September 1917, p. 556.

59. Ibid., 23 November 1917, p. 996.

sent through Faversham[60], although it was not until December 1919 that regular supplies resumed through Dover[61]. It would seem that the shipments at the end of 1919 were mostly of Tilmanstone coal, as the Coal Controller did not permit Snowdown to export to France until the beginning of 1920[62]. No sooner had this permission been granted, however, than the Controller ordered the export of Kent coal from Dover to cease[63], presumably as part of the government's policy to try and prevent domestic prices rising too rapidly[64]. This was a time when ships were waiting in queues at all British ports for their turn to coal[65], and for two months the cross-Channel shipments from Dover had employed a fleet of small craft[66]. After representations, however, the Controller gave permission for this trade to resume[67], and by the summer the flotilla of small steamers, sailing vessels and barges were again in operation[68]. This trade continued till the end of the year[69].

During 1920 Kent coal also found an outlet as a bunkering coal for

60. Ibid., 21 February 1919, p. 439.

61. Ibid., 12 December 1919, p. 1589. The coal was used for conversion into briquettes. Although the size of this trade is not known, one firm was shipping 300 tons per day from Dover, and it was sufficiently large for the Harbour Board to consider plans to improve the facilities for coal export. (Ibid., 19 December 1919, p. 1658). By January 1920 there were six vessels regularly loading Kent coal at Dover for Calais and Boulogne. (Ibid., 23 January 1920, p. 259).

62. Ibid., 9 January 1920, p. 119.

63. Ibid., 13 February 1920, p. 468.

64. A. M. Neuman, Economic Organization of the British Coal Industry (1934), pp. 18-19.

65. Ibid., p. 466.

66. The Colliery Guardian, 13 February 1920, p. 468.

67. Ibid., 20 February 1920, p. 537.

68. Ibid., 13 June 1920, p. 1734.

69. Ibid., 3 December 1920, p. 1619.

steamers calling at Dover[70]. Although in 1914 the Admiralty had ordered some coal from Snowdown[71], it appears to have been Chislet Colliery that benefitted most from this new area of demand[72]. It was such a lucrative trade that the Chislet Colliery raised the commission paid to its sales agents on coal shipped for bunkering purposes from 3d. to 1s. 0d. per ton[73]. Kent coal was placed in an even more favourable position in October 1920 when the Coal Controller restricted bunkering coal at Dover to Kent and South Wales coal alone. There were, however, strong objections to this move from the Dover Chamber of Commerce[74].

Needless to say, these early years were not ones of severe competition between the Kent collieries. Within one month of the outbreak of war in 1914 the demand for Kent coal exceeded its supply[75]. Not only did less coal arrive in east Kent from the north country and other districts[76], but an extra 1s. 3d. per ton war risk insurance for northern coal put the Kent pits in an even better position[77], while the temporary closure of Tilmanstone in 1915 caused a local coal shortage to develop[78]. These developments continued throughout the years of the war and post-war

70. Ibid., 19 March 1920, p. 818, 16 July 1920, p. 187, and 3 December 1920, p. 1619.

71. Ibid., 13 February 1914, p. 366.

72. Ibid., 19 March 1920, p. 818; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 56; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 25 June 1920 (Sixth O.G.M.).

73. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 25 June 1920 (Sixth O.G.M.) and 14 September 1920.

74. The Colliery Guardian, 1 October 1920, p. 957.

75. Ibid., 4 September 1914, p. 533 and 18 September 1914, p. 631.

76. Ibid., 2 October 1914, p. 735.

77. Ibid., 16 October 1914, p. 837.

78. Ibid., 21 May 1915, p. 1082.

boom, and resulted in a sharp rise in prices between 1914 and 1920[79].

On the actual marketing side the East Kent Colliery Company set up at the beginning of 1914 its own coal sales agency in Dover, with local agents also in neighbouring towns[80], while the Chislet Colliery in the same year entered into an agreement with Stephenson Clarke for the latter company to act as sole sales agent for its coal[81]. There is, however, no record of how the Snowdown Colliery disposed of its output in these years, and one can only assume that like Tilmanstone it had its own sales agency.

(2) 1921-35

Following the period of boom during and just after the First World War, the years 1921-35 saw the Kent Coalfield having to face a number of difficulties in terms of marketing its product. During these years Kent production, after a short period of stagnation between 1921 and 1926, rose sharply and ran counter to the general output trend in the industry as a whole. From 1927 to 1936 there was, therefore, a need to find new customers for the increasing tonnages which were being raised each year[82]. Although the demand in the south-east of England was at all times very much greater than the quantities supplied from Kent, most of these markets were previously supplied by other districts, and during these years of declining demand their suppliers were not prepared to lose business without

79. See above Table 5.6; also The Colliery Guardian, 23 July 1915, p. 184, 6 August 1915, 9 February 1917, p. 294, and 22 November 1918, p. 1089.

80. East Kent Colliery Company Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 67; The Colliery Guardian, 23 January 1914, p. 207. Under an Act of Parliament of 1815, however, the town authorities in Dover were empowered to charge Coal Dues of 1s. 7d. per ton on all coal brought into the borough boundaries. (See also The Colliery Guardian, 15 May 1925, p. 1214).

81. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 October 1914; see also above Chapter 3, p. 169. This agreement was renewed at the beginning of 1920. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 13 January 1920).

82. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 10.

a determined effort, even if this involved price reduction[83]. So whereas other districts were generally concerned with maintaining their trade, Kent had to substantially increase its sales[84]. To replace existing sources of supply with a new and unknown coal having different characteristics meant that a price inducement had to be offered in the first place. In the 1930's this was usually between 6d. and 1s. 0d. per ton, and averaged about 8d.[85]

The general situation in these years is reflected in Table 5.7.

The sharp decline in district production in 1921 was due to setbacks at the Tilmanstone and Snowdown Collieries[86]. Through lack of demand, output at the former colliery fell to only half of what it had been the year before, although recovery took place in 1922[87]; while at the latter output fell even more sharply and resulted in the colliery closing temporarily in 1922 and being forced into liquidation in 1923[88]. As we have seen, both collieries produced a large proportion of small coal[89], Snowdown nearly 80 per cent slack[90], and Tilmanstone between 60 and 75 per cent of fines[91].

Apart from Snowdown, the demand for Kent coal recovered in 1922 and

83. Ibid., p. 10.

84. Ibid., pp. 10 and 55; see also Chapter 4, p. 246.

85. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 55.

86. See above Chapter 4, Table 4.1.

87. East Kent Colliery Company Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 77.

88. The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, item 78; The Colliery Guardian, 13 January 1922, p. 112 and 31 March 1922, p. 796; also see above Chapter 3, pp. 127-28.

89. See above pp. 277-78.

90. The Colliery Guardian, 28 November 1924, p. 1393.

91. H. G. Dines, op. cit.,(1932), p. 41; The Colliery Guardian, 25 March 1927, p. 699.

Table 5.7: The Kent Coalfield: Saleable Coal Raised and Prices, 1921-35

Year	Prices (per ton)		Kent Output (saleable Coal Raised)
	Kent	Great Britain	
	s. d.	s. d.	tons
1921	27. 8	26. 2	259,613
1922	17. 9	17. 8	403,911
1923	17. 8	18. 10	488,195
1924	18. 2	18. 11	330,197
1925	18. 9	16. 4	367,589
1926	25. 2	19. 7	213,969
1927	15. 8	14. 7	636,911
1928	14. 3	12. 10	929,803
1929	14. 8	13. 5	1,148,963
1930	15. 10	13. 7	1,291,680
1931	15. 5	13. 6	1,585,750
1932	15. 3	13. 3	1,823,883
1933	15. 1	13. 0	1,927,747
1934	15. 0	12. 11	2,030,491
1935	15. 4	13. 0	2,089,205

Sources: See above Chapter 4, Tables 4.1, 4.3, 4.5 and 4.10.

1923, and it was the supply side that was then affected by the stoppage of 1924. Not only did this stoppage sharply reduce Chislet's output, but the damage to roadways and faces prevented the colliery increasing its output even in the following year[92]. This was a particularly severe blow for the Chislet company, which produced 38 per cent of its output in the

92. See above Chapter 3, p. 171 and Chapter 4, Table 4.1.

the form of large coal, being greater than $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in size[93], and at this time received a price well above the district average for its output[94]. Chislet coal was, in fact, the best priced coal until Betteshanger Colliery, with a production of 40 per cent round coal and 60 per cent slack[95], surpassed it in the late twenties[96]. Meanwhile Snowdown, which received a lower price than Tilmanstone per ton when both were working the Beresford seam, pushed Tilmanstone into last place when from 1927 it started production from the Millyard seam[97].

After the stoppage of 1926 the situation did not improve much for the Kent Coalfield. It was particularly difficult in 1928 and again in the five years 1931 to 1935. Although in 1928 Kent was one of the two districts that did not suffer a decrease in output[98], it did to a certain extent share in the decrease in prices[99]. While 1929 saw general improvement in the industry, 1930 saw the beginning of a new downward phase in output resulting from the world depression[100]. In 1931 British coal production was lower than at any time since 1901, apart that is from

93. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge.

94. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Ledger 2, p. 146. The Chislet Colliery sold coal to its sales agents at between 22 and 26 shillings per ton in the years 1922 to 1925.

95. Information supplied by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham; H. G. Dines, op. cit. (1933), p. 42.

96. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 53.

97. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge.

98. Neuman, op. cit., p. 477. The other district was Durham.

99. See Table 5.7.

100. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 478-80; J. H. Jones, G. Cartwright and P. H. Guénault, The Coal Mining Industry: an International Study in Planning (1939), p. 157. Prices did rise slightly, however, in 1930 due to the operation of the co-operative marketing schemes which had started in 1927-28 and by the price arrangement amongst the owners.

the years 1921 and 1926, which had been severely affected by labour disputes[101]. Although the operation of the marketing schemes under the Coal Mines Act of 1930 did not have much effect on output, they did prevent domestic prices falling substantially between 1929 and 1933[102]. In 1932 the position was even worse with national output falling a further 10 million tons[103], but the trough was not finally reached until the following year, after which output recovered[104]. The effects of these developments in the early thirties can be seen in Table 5.8, where they are contrasted with developments in Kent.

Table 5.8: Tonnage of Coal Commercially Disposable: Kent and Great Britain, 1930-35

Year	Kent(1) (thousand tons)	Great Britain (thousand tons)
1930	1,175	214,183
1931	1,460	195,893
1932	1,688	185,516
1933	1,782	184,895
1934	1,880	198,325
1935	1,936	199,630

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 54, Exhibit A.E.C.6.

Note: (1) Detailed figures for Pearson and Dorman Long, Chislet, and Tilmanstone were respectively: 1931: 805,601; 359,228; 275,372; 1932: 1,037,597; 378,985; 279,917[105].

101. Neuman, op. cit., p. 481.

102. Ibid., pp. 481-82; Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op.cit., pp.147-48.

103. Neuman, op. cit., p. 483.

104. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., pp. 68 and 77; see also Table 5.8. But even in 1937 output was not back to the 1930 level.

105. Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, Minutes of Executive Board for Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme 1930, 18 May 1931, 31 July 1931, 12 November 1931, 22 February 1932, 6 May 1932, 3 August 1932, 6 January 1933, and 13 February 1933.

When discussing coal prices it is important to remember that they may change not only because of the normal overall variations in supply and demand but also because of changes in the proportion of coal that is washed and screened. In other words, other things being equal, prices may rise through improvement in the product[106]. The big improvement in coal washing and cleaning came naturally enough for the Kent collieries in the years from 1927 to 1935, when they were having to establish markets for their ever increasing output. These improvements in the quality of the coal sold also imposed increased costs on the producers. From Table 5.9 it can also be seen that the years after 1935, when the marketing situation for Kent coal became easier, were also ones in which the proportion of saleable output washed and cleaned declined.

According to the Mines Department figures (Table 5.9) there was no washing or cleaning of Kent coal in 1927. All the surface buildings and equipment at Snowdown were replaced by Pearson and Dorman Long[107] and a new dry cleaning plant was installed in 1927[108]. The following year a similar plant was installed at Tilmanstone[109]. It is not clear, however, what happened to the earlier cleaning plant that had been delivered to the colliery in 1917[110]. A different form of coal preparation was introduced at Betteshanger Colliery, where a washery was installed in 1929 and came

106. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., p. 6. Prices may also vary due to changes in the quantities of different classes of coal supplied, and to changes in the relative values of different classes.

107. See above Chapter 3, p. 129.

108. The Colliery Guardian, 23 September 1927, p. 330. The reference is merely to the installation of up-to-date screens, but from subsequent references it is clear that Snowdown is the colliery referred to in Table 5.9 for 1928.

109. Ibid., 12 October 1928, p. 1474. The reference is to Lockwood's Clean Coal Process Ltd. installing a clean coal plant at the colliery.

110. See above p. 279.

Table 5.9: Coal Washing and Cleaning Plants in the Kent Coalfield, 1927-44

Year	Number of Washing or Cleaning Plants Installed		Quantities of Saleable Coal Washed or Cleaned		Percentage of Total Ouput Washed or Cleaned	
	Washeries	Dry Cleaning	Washeries	Dry Cleaning	Kent	Great Britain
			tons	tons	%	%
1927	-	-	-	-	-	20.5
1928	-	1	-	92,105	9.9	25.4
1929	-	2	-	136,650	11.9	27.6
1930	1	2	118,615	220,589	26.3	29.8
1931	1	2	219,400	278,772	31.4	30.4
1932	1	2	363,789	259,599	34.2	34.3
1933	1	2	484,876	301,895	40.8	37.4
1934	1	2	500,286	303,391	39.6	39.6
1935	1	2	495,273	327,196	39.4	41.4
1936	1	2	490,948	263,455	37.2	43.1
1937	1	2	477,118	227,974	36.1	43.8
1938	1	3	361,513	290,987	36.8	45.4
1944	1	2	226,328	257,275	36.8	46.6

Sources: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1927-38, Statistical Appendices; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 69.

into operation in February of the following year[111]. Meanwhile the only method of cleaning the coal at Chislet Colliery was by extracting some of the incombustible material, such as rock and shale, from the large

111. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 33.

coal by hand picking on the surface conveyor belts as the coal passed from the screens to the truck loading shutes[112]. This was, however, very unreliable and could not be depended upon to give a consistent degree of quality to the coal. As a result the ash content varied considerably and averaged over 10 per cent, while the ash content of the small coal fluctuated even more and on occasions averaged over 25 per cent[113]. Dry cleaning plant was finally introduced at the colliery in 1938[114]. As a result of these developments the percentage of Kent coal washed or cleaned increased from nil in 1927 to 39.4 in 1935, which was not far off the national average[115].

Up to 1935 the outlets for Kent coal continued to follow the pattern that had already been emerging by 1920. Although gas works did not during this period develop into a major consumer, electricity works, the railways, and the cement and paper industries did, while supplies for exports and bunkers continued to be significant (see Table 5.10). As can be seen from Table 5.10, in 1935 over 25 per cent of total disposals went to the railways, just under 25 per cent to the paper

112. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p.1. The jigger screens at Chislet, which were installed in 1920, had 1¼ inch round holes and all coal above that size was regarded as large coal. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 25 June 1925 (Sixth O.G.M.), where reference is to delay in getting the screens finished).

113. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p. 1. It was, however, possible to dispose of a proportion of the output in the form of through coal, i.e. "run-of-mine" or unscreened. Apart from hand picking the coal was not treated in any way, and here again the ash content was high and varied considerably.

114. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 April 1936, 30 July 1938 (Twenty-fourth A.G.M.), and 21 July 1939 (Twenty-fifth A.G.M.).

115. See Table 5.9. It was estimated that the quantity of coal washed or cleaned in 1927 was, in the industry as a whole, approximately double the quantity so treated in 1913. (The Mines Department, Annual Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1927, p. 8. Hereafter referred to as Mines Department, Annual Report 1927, etc.). For details of the techniques of coal preparation in these years see H. Stanley Jevons, op. cit., pp. 219-31, and Mining Association of Great Britain, op. cit., pp. 204-18.

Table 5.10: Kent District: Actual Tonnages Supplied to Consumers in 1935

Class of Consumer	Tonnage Supplied
Gas Works	21,895
Electricity Works	223,834
Railways	508,796
Waterworks	38,288
Cement Works	233,563
Paper Works	452,284
Brickworks	23,257
Breweries	6,039
Laundries	10,442
Other Industrial	74,963
Public Authorities	43,327
Hospitals and Institutions	22,435
Factors and Merchants	98,351
Bunkers	110,475
Retail Business	34,019
Miscellaneous	29,162
TOTAL	1,931,130

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 53, Exhibit A.E.C.3.

industry, and over 10 per cent to both electricity and cement works.

Both the South Eastern and Chatham Railway and the Southern Railway, of which it became a part in 1923, were mainly passenger lines[116].

116. C. F. Dendy Marshall, A History of the Southern Railway, revised by R. W. Kidner (1963), Vol. II, pp. 373, 399 and 456-57. In 1913, for example, only a quarter of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway's traffic consisted of freight.

As a consequence the Southern Railway was not hit as badly by the economic depression of the inter-war years as were the other three regional railways in Britain, which depended much more on freight traffic[117]. It therefore provided an extremely valuable outlet for Kent coal. Of the half-million tons supplied in the mid-thirties just under 50 per cent came from Pearson and Dorman Long's collieries, well over a third from Chislet, and the rest from Tilmanstone[118].

The total consumption of coal at paper mills and cement works in south-eastern England was substantially greater than the quantity supplied by Kent, and these industries would have taken larger tonnages than those supplied in the twenties and thirties, but the colliery companies considered it desirable to mix trade to some extent in order to limit the effect of a sudden slump in the trade of any one consumer or class of consumer[119].

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the increased demand for paper had resulted in large mills being established at New Hythe on the River Medway, at Sittingbourne on the Swale, and at Northfleet and Dartford on the Thames[120]. In the 1920's Messrs. Albert E. Reed and Company Ltd. began operations at Aylesford on the Medway[121]. In time their mill, which was situated on a 500 acre site, became the largest

117. Ibid., p. 464. For the net revenues of the four main railways of Britain from 1928 to 1938 see C. I. Savage, Inland Transport (H.M.S.O. 1957), Appendix I, p. 57. (The Southern Railway also did more electrifying of its lines, though not in Kent).

118. K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 56. These proportions actually apply to the year 1936. In particular Betteshanger coal was held in very high esteem for loco purposes by the Railway Company (Ibid., p. 53).

119. Ibid., facing p. 52.

120. F. W. Jessup, Kent History Illustrated (Maidstone 1966), p. 66. All were well served by water-transport, which was necessary for bringing in imports of wood pulp from the Baltic and Newfoundland.

121. Ibid., p. 44.

paper making concentration in Europe[122].

The cement industry in 1935 consumed nearly a quarter of a million tons of Kent coal[123]. The cement industry had begun at Northfleet, near Gravesend, in the 1830's[124]. Cement making involves burning together chalk and clay and grinding the product into powder. The North Downs provided the supply of chalk, and clay was available from the Thames and Medway estuaries. Because of this availability of raw materials and river transport, the industry developed on Thamesside from Gravesend to Dartford, in the Medway Valley, and at Sittingbourne on the River Swale[125]. The Medway cement works were, however, nearly all closed in the 1920's as they could not compete with those of the other two parts of Kent. New works were established later downstream on the west bank of the Medway between Snodland and Cuxton[126]. Although in 1921 the cement works in Kent had stopped taking Chislet coal[127], demand later revived[128], and the cement industry became one of the main customers of its small coal[129]. In the case of Snowdown, before 1924 the bulk of the colliery's

122. Duncan Rand (ed.), An Industrial Review and Guide to the Medway (Pyramid Press, 1961), p. 34; Kentish Gazette, 15 March 1968, p. 5. As the Kent paper mills used coal to generate their own electrical power and to produce steam for heating and process work, they were one of the largest users of Kent small coal (see also H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p. 2). This latter reference is to Chislet coal, but given that the railways took most of the large coal, and that all collieries supplied the paper industry, it is possible to generalise on this point about the coalfield as a whole.

123. See Table 5.10.

124. Jessup, op. cit., p. 66. It was known as Portland cement because it was thought to look like Portland stone.

125. Ibid., p. 66.

126. Ibid., p. 66.

127. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 18 November 1921.

128. Ibid., 11 August 1925, and 25 September 1925.

129. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p. 2.

output was taken by cement companies on the Medway[130]. While, as we have already seen, Tilden Smith was in the late twenties planning to produce cement at Dover[131]. Although these plans did not materialise, Tilmanstone Colliery was by 1935 supplying increasing tonnages to the cement companies[132]. By this time Tilmanstone was also probably supplying Sussex cement works at Lewes and Shoreham[133].

Electricity works were the last of the large industrial consumers of Kent coal, and by 1935 they accounted for over 200,000 tons of the Coalfield's output[134]. This market extended beyond what had been established in Kent before 1920. As early as 1924 a considerable proportion of the Tilmanstone output was finding its way via Richborough to electricity works on the Thames[135], while the Chislet Colliery supplied the two large power stations at Brighton and Croydon[136]. In the mid-twenties some consideration was given to the question of establishing a large power station in east Kent[137]. Richborough, on the River Stour, was the only site in the area for such a station[138], but there were reservations about whether it would be able to supply sufficient water

130. The Colliery Guardian, 28 November 1924, p. 1393.

131. See above Chapter 3, p. 160; The Colliery Guardian, 5 October 1928, p. 1371 and 12 October 1928, p. 1474.

132. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 44.

133. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 42, Exhibit F.C.A.1. These works were taking supplies of Kent coal in 1946, and it seems not unreasonable to suppose that Tilmanstone would have supplied them via the aerial ropeway and ship from Dover in the 1930's.

134. See Table 5.10.

135. The Colliery Guardian, 17 October 1924, p. 1006.

136. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge.

137. Patrick Abercrombie and John Archibald, East Kent Regional Planning Scheme: Preliminary Survey (Liverpool and London, 1925), pp. 101-102.

138. Ibid., pp. 101-102; The Colliery Guardian, 4 March 1927, p. 522.

for direct cooling purposes[139], and the Central Electricity Board decided not to establish a power station in east Kent[140]. Following this decision Tilden Smith for a time considered developing his own large-scale electricity works in the area, but nothing came of his plans[141].

After the First World War gasworks failed to develop as a major outlet for Kent coal, and in 1935 they consumed only 21,895 tons of the Coalfield's output[142]. Mostly it was a case of the Chislet Colliery supplying small tonnages to local gas works, where it was mixed with Durham coal[143]. As we have seen, Tilden Smith was also keenly interested in developing gas outlets for Tilmanstone coal, and had acquired a financial interest in a number of local gas works before his death in 1929[144].

Throughout the inter-war period attempts were made from time to time to popularise Kent coal for household use. Although a certain amount of house coal was supplied in the vicinity of the mines it was never a significant tonnage[145]. Betteshanger Colliery did meet with a little success in this direction[146], but Chislet met with none at all, as its large coal was not prepared for such trade and contained too much incombustible matter[147]. The most determined effort was made in this

139. Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit., p. 102.

140. The Colliery Guardian, 9 December 1927, p. 1456.

141. Ibid., 5 October 1928, p. 1371 and 12 October 1928, p. 1474. A power station was finally built at Richborough in the early 1960's. (Jessup, op. cit., p. 68).

142. See Table 5.10.

143. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge.

144. See above Chapter 3, p. 159.

145. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 52.

146. Ibid., p. 53.

147. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p. 2. The coal was also friable and produced too much small coal and slack.

field by the Tilmanstone Colliery, which tried to overcome the problem of the coal's smallness and friability by installing a new briquetting plant to make 'coaloids' and coal bricks[148]. An additional press was installed in 1932, in which year about 24,000 tons of coaloids and briquettes were sold[149]. Sales declined, however, to 17,500 tons in the following year, and to only 16,500 tons in 1934[150]. In the latter year it was decided to discontinue the manufacture of coal bricks and concentrate on coaloids, which were more readily marketable and were becoming popular in London and the south-east[151].

Other home consumers of Kent coal included waterworks, laundries, breweries, hospitals and institutions, which used it for general steam raising purposes mostly on Lancashire hand-fired boilers, and at brickworks for kiln firing[152]. Two outlets that failed to develop were low-temperature carbonisation and coking coal for the steel industry. As we have already seen, Pearson and Dorman Long were planning in 1922 to establish coke works, by-product plants, brickworks, blast furnaces and steel works in the area[153]. The iron and steel failed to develop[154], and after an initial start at Snowdown so did the coke and by-product plant, while nothing further was heard of the brickworks. At Snowdown

148. Kencole: The Official Organ of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited & its Associated Activities, No. 4, Christmas 1929, p. 4; see above Chapter 3, p. 162. 'Coaloids' was an unregistered trade name, but in December 1931 the Tilmanstone company acquired from British Fuel Products Ltd. (in Liquidation) the registered trade mark 'Colvoids' to prevent its use by anyone else. (Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52).

149. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 34 and 36.

150. Ibid., items 38 and 42.

151. Ibid., item 42.

152. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, p.2.

153. See above Chapter 3, pp. 119-20.

154. See above Chapter 3, p. 146.

an Illingworth low-temperature carbonisation plant was installed in the late twenties[155], but it operated for only five months in 1930 before being permanently closed due to technical difficulties[156].

Coal exports and coal for ships' bunkers did not constitute a very large market for Kent coal in the period 1921-35. In the latter year bunker coal totalled 110,475 tons, while there appears to have been no actual exports[157]. The references to coal exports from Kent in this part of the inter-war period are very few. In 1921 Chislet Colliery was described as not being well placed for export business[158], although two years later, at the time of the French occupation of the Ruhr, its export trade was quite good[159]. In the same year Tilmanstone Colliery exported 23,000 tons from Dover, although it made no further shipments for at least another four years[160]. In the 1930's Pearson and Dorman Long shipped Snowdown coking smalls to Hamburg, Belgium and Holland, where they gave excellent results when mixed with north country coals[161]. The

155. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 33; The Colliery Guardian, 24 August 1928, p. 739. The plant was intended to produce smokeless fuel, motor spirit, tars, oils and gas. By an agreement with the Illingworth Carbonisation Co. Ltd. Pearson and Dorman Long were granted an exclusive licence for Kent (excluding a 15 mile radius of Charing Cross) to erect and operate plants under the Illingworth patents. There were also plans to make a smokeless domestic fuel.

156. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, items 37 and 40.

157. See above Table 5.10 and Chapter 4, Table 4.18. The Mines Department figures for exports under the Coal Mines Scheme of 1930 included coal for ships' bunkers.

158. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 7 June 1921 (Seventh O.G.M.); The Colliery Guardian, 10 June 1921, p. 1685.

159. The Colliery Guardian, 12 September 1924, p. 684. Mostly this was coal sent to Belgium in Pearson and Dorman Long lighters from Richborough. (Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge). At this time the Dover Harbour Board was planning to develop the former Admiralty Harbour as a coaling port. (The Colliery Guardian, 7 September 1923, p. 598 and 17 April 1924, p. 1010.

160. The Colliery Guardian, 25 March 1927, p. 699.

161. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 54.

company may have engaged in this trade as early as 1927[162].

As we have already seen the nearness of Kent to the markets of the south-east did not mean that the coalfield was without its transport problems[163]. As early as 1921 the Chislet Colliery complained of the high railway rates then prevailing[164]; while three years later one of the advantages of developing Richborough for coal shipments was that it was expected to enable companies to avoid the high railway charges[165]. The theme was taken up later in the decade by Tilden Smith and the Tilmanstone Colliery. Railway rates had in fact been stationary from 1888-94 to 1920, but for coal they were raised by 25 per cent in January 1920 and by a further 75 per cent in September 1920, making a 100 per cent increase altogether. They were, however, reduced to 75 per cent and then 60 per cent in January and August of 1922, and finally to 50 per cent in August of the following year[166]. Nationally, receipts per ton mile for coal (excluding free hauled coal) averaged about 1d. between 1920 and 1924, except for the year 1921, when they were over 1¼d.[167] Almost all coal in Kent was moved by rail, only very small quantities going to consumers by road[168]. In addition the Southern Railway Company

162. The Colliery Guardian, 29 July 1927, p. 289. The reference is to Kent exports chiefly to metallurgical works in Belgium and France. The company also exported coal to Greek electricity works. (Information supplied by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham).

163. See above Chapter 3, p. 158.

164. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 7 June 1921 (Seventh O.G.M.).

165. The Colliery Guardian, 19 December 1924, p. 1581.

166. Report of Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 2 (Part A) Minutes of Evidence, Memoranda submitted on behalf of the Railway Companies, p. 805.

167. Ibid., p. 804.

168. Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge.

provided all the wagons[169].

The Tilmanstone Colliery was in a somewhat more disadvantageous position than the other three collieries, as it was linked to the Southern Railway by the East Kent Light Railway[170], which was almost entirely dependent for its revenue on transporting Tilmanstone coal, and charged very high rates for the three mile haul from the colliery to the Shepherdswell junction[171].

According to Tilden Smith, at the end of 1926 it was costing 8s. 6d. per ton to take Tilmanstone coal all the way to London and as much as 5s. 9d. per ton to take it by rail for shipment at Dover[172]. Because of the nature of the coal, being about 75 per cent small, it was necessary to sell it cheaply[173]. In March 1927 costs per ton, not including interest on capital or depreciation, were 17s. 2½d. per ton, whereas the average selling price was only 14s. 4¾d. The colliery needed to increase its output to reduce costs, yet it could not find a local market for such increased production[174]. The aerial ropeway from Tilmanstone to Dover Harbour[175] was seen as a means of reducing the transport cost over this

169. Report of Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 2 (Part A) Minutes of Evidence, Memoranda submitted on behalf of the Railway Companies, p. 809. There have in fact never been any private wagons in the Kent Coalfield. (Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge).

170. See above Chapter 2, p. 64.

171. See Table 5.11. Some coal went to Richborough, although the last 3½ miles of line to the port were not opened until 1929, but mostly it went to Shepherdswell.

172. The Colliery Guardian, 24 December 1926, p. 1416 and 25 March 1927, p. 699.

173. Ibid., 25 March 1927, p. 699.

174. Ibid., 25 March 1927, p. 702. It was estimated that on an output of 250,000 tons costs per ton would be 12s. or 13s., to which would have to be added the cost of transport. (Ibid., 25 March 1927, p. 699).

175. See above Chapter 3, pp. 158-59.

Table 5.11: East Kent Light Railway Company: Receipts and Carriage of Kent Coal, 1916-38

Year	Receipts		Receipts from Coal Traffic as Percentage of Total Receipts	Coal Originating on the Company's System(1)	Average Receipts per ton of Coal transported
	Total	From Coal Traffic			
	£	£	%	tons	pence
1916	899	741	82.4	-	-
1917	5,360	-	-	-	-
1918	5,885	-	-	-	-
1919	7,059	-	-	118,370	-
1920	12,937	-	-	162,896	-
1921	8,713	-	-	91,454	-
1922	10,032	7,557	75.3	159,781	10.97
1923	12,354	9,479	76.7	209,944	10.70
1924	11,073	8,751	79.0	188,865	10.93
1925	12,120	10,153	83.8	225,811	10.96
1926	8,532	6,442	75.5	97,041	15.68
1927	10,341	7,847	75.9	207,477	8.93
1928	10,472	8,247	78.8	288,830	6.77
1929	13,526	11,184	82.7	294.447	8.50
1930	12,441	9,723	78.2	247,762	8.54
1931	9,927	8,448	85.1	210,787	8.80
1932	9,674	8,436	87.2	220,592	8.97
1933	11,267	9,979	88.6	218,214	9.38
1934	10,664	9,535	89.4	238,779	9.34
1935	10,913	9,420	86.3	236,427	9.39
1936	11,584	10,092	87.1	248,409	9.57
1937	10,924	9,686	88.7	244,996	9.37
1938	10,383	9,253	89.1	237,384	9.23

Note: (1) From 1919 to 1929 this represented most of the disposable output of Tilmanstone Colliery. Between 1930 and 1939 some 650,000 tons were also carried from the colliery by the aerial ropeway. (See below Table 5.12).

Source: East Kent Light Railway Company, B.O.T. 763 R, Annual Financial and Statistical Returns, 1916-38.

distance and into ships holds from 5s. 9d. to 1s. 9½d. per ton[176]. Although the Southern Railway, which in 1926 had acquired control of the East Kent Light Railway[177], belatedly offered to take the coal to Dover for only 2 shillings per ton, Tilden Smith went ahead with his scheme and the ropeway was opened early in 1930. Altogether some 650,000 tons were carried by the ropeway before the outbreak of war. (See Table 5.12).

Table 5.12: Tonnages of Coal Carried by Aerial Ropeway from Tilmanstone Colliery to Dover Harbour, 1930-39

Year	Tonnage	Year	Tonnage
1930	65,000	1935	40,000
1931	93,000	1936	50,000
1932	95,000	1937	55,000
1933	65,000	1938	70,000
1934	29,000	1939	84,354

Sources: Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, Directors' Reports for the years 1929-40. (The figures in these reports for the years 1930-34 cover the year from September to September, and have been adjusted to calendar years by assuming that shipments were spread evenly throughout each twelve-month period. The adjusted figures have been rounded, as was the normal company custom (except in 1939), to the nearest thousand tons).

The sharp fall of ropeway traffic in 1934 was due to more of the colliery's output being sold to inland consumers at better prices than were obtainable from coastwise and export markets. This trend continued in 1935[178]. As a result the ropeway, which was capable of handling 700,000

176. The Colliery Guardian, 29 July 1927, p. 289.

177. See above Chapter 3, pp. 162-63.

178. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 38 and 42.

tons per annum, was considerably under-used[179].

From a marketing point of view the Kent Coalfield did not benefit much after 1928 from the Railway Freight Rebates Scheme, as it applied only to coal that was exported, used for bunkering of ships engaged in foreign trade, or supplied to iron and steel works[180].

The actual marketing of Kent coal varied with each colliery company. As we have already seen, in 1914 Stephenson Clarke and Company entered into an agreement with the Chislet colliery to act as sales agents for the colliery's coal[181]. The agreement was renewed in 1920[182], and again in 1924[183], 1929[184], and 1936[185]. During this time Stephenson Clarke rendered considerable financial assistance to the Chislet Colliery, and gained control over it by becoming one of its three guarantors during the reorganisation in 1929[186]. Until nationalisation in 1947, Stephenson Clarke was therefore responsible for selling all Chislet coal[187]. The commission paid by the colliery for this service was at the rate of 3d. per ton up to 250,000 tons in each year, and 2d. per ton on the rest of the

179. Ibid., item 51.

180. Neuman, op. cit., p. 247. (A further important reduction of freight rates, equal nationally to about 10 per cent, was granted to collieries on the transport of timber, iron, and steel props used as mines' supports).

181. See above Chapter 3, p. 169.

182. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 13 January 1920.

183. Ibid., 12 February 1924, and 18 March 1924.

184. Ibid., 16 January 1929.

185. Ibid., 21 February 1936.

186. See above Chapter 3, pp. 172-79.

187. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Cash Books, 1913-46; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 41.

output sold[188]. The Stephenson Clarke Company had a wide knowledge of the selling and factoring of coal, which was very necessary in the early days for the Chislet Company as potential buyers were somewhat reluctant to disrupt their channels of supply of known coals[189]. Gradually, however, the coal began to establish itself in local markets, particularly gas works and the railways, with which Stephenson Clarke already had contacts[190].

Before 1930 Tilmanstone Colliery appears to have handled its own coal sales through local agencies[191]. In that year, however, it entered into an agreement appointing Messrs. William Cory & Sons Ltd. as its sole sales agents[192]. The latter company was one of the largest coal agencies in the country[193], and together with the Powell Duffryn Company controlled Stephenson Clarke and Associated Companies[194].

188. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 February 1926. This was the rate prevailing from 1929 to 1936. The rate payable on coal sold in 1920 was 3d. per ton. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Journal 1, 1913-1927, p. 92). On coal shipped for bunkering purposes it was raised in 1920 to 1 shilling per ton. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 14 September 1920).

189. H. H. Partridge, Notes on the Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery, pp.1-2.

190. Ibid., p.2. Mr. H. H. Partridge was sent to Kent by C.B.O. Clarke in 1919, where for a week once a month he hired a taxi and toured Kent, Surrey and Sussex, calling at all factories and electricity works in the area in an effort to develop local markets. It was, however, Stephenson Clarke's connections with Cory Bros., which supplied the Brighton Electricity Works, that provided entrée to this important outlet. (Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 24 July 1931).

191. The Colliery Guardian, 23 January 1914, p. 207.

192. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52.

193. Neuman, op. cit., p. 130.

194. Margot Heinemann, Britain's Coal (1944), pp. 120 and 179. In 1933 William Cory & Son Ltd. and Stephenson Clarke & Associated Companies Ltd. formed Coal Distributors (South Wales) Ltd. in order to centralise and co-ordinate their sales of South Wales coal. (Neuman, op. cit., p. 140). The largest shareholder in William Cory & Son Ltd. was the Peninsular and Orient Steam Navigation Company, while Lord Joicey, a major coal owner in the north-east (Ibid., p. 148), also had interests in it. (Royal Commission on Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendices p. 128).

It is not certain how Snowdown sold its coal in the early years, and one can only assume that like Tilmanstone, its sister colliery in the Burr enterprises, it had its own local agencies. From 1926, however, its output, together with that of Betteshanger Colliery, was sold through Pearson and Dorman Long's own sales organisation operating from Betteshanger[195]. To assist sales in the London area the company opened a small rail depot at Battersea and another at Bromley[196].

The only period of severe competition amongst the colliery companies in Kent came between 1927 and 1930, when output in the coalfield was rising rapidly and before the introduction of the marketing schemes under the Coal Mines Act of 1930. The Chislet Colliery accused the other two companies of price cutting and put to them proposals for their regulation. There was, however, at this stage no desire or readiness to agree to even the principle[197]. At a time when coalowners in a number of other districts were entering into voluntary marketing agreements[198] there was still no strong response in Kent for the regulation of selling prices[199]. So this short period of cut price competition did not finally come to an end until the 1930 Act began to operate[200].

195. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 51; and information supplied by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham.

196. Information supplied by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham.

197. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 20 July 1927 and 13 June 1928 (fourteenth O.G.M.).

198. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 157-69 and 479; Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., pp. 88-107. These agreements, which covered Scotland, South Wales and the Five Counties of the Midland Area (Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire) were not very successful.

199. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 17 July 1928. There was, however, some indication that one of the other two companies (probably Pearson and Dorman Long) was in discussions with Chislet on this question. (The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minutes, 13 June 1928, seventeenth O.G.M.).

200. Information supplied by Mr. G. M. Fotheringham.

During 1929 the government intimated their intention of enforcing district marketing schemes on colliery owners, unless they had themselves taken some steps towards formulation of such schemes before 15 October[201]. The Kent Coal Owners' Association met at the end of August[202], and after protracted discussions, which were interrupted by the death of Tilden Smith in December 1929, the final draft marketing scheme was forwarded to the Board of Trade on 18 September 1930[203].

Minimum prices were fixed by the newly established Kent Executive Board at the end of 1930, ranging from 11s. 0d. per ton for small coal to 22s. 9d. for Railway grade "A" coal[204]. Two years later the sales agents of the Chislet and Tilmanstone companies were asked to certify monthly that they had not sold any of their clients' coal at less than the relevant minimum price[205]. For the first five years of the operation of the scheme there was, however, no effective control of prices on an inter-district basis[206]. Kent, as we have seen, was concerned with increased competition in the south-east from other districts and so opposed the fixing of prices on a delivered rather than pithead basis, as this would have enabled remoter districts to increase their trade in Kent[207]. In 1932 as increased competition tended to force down prices[208], the Kent

201. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 6 September 1929.

202. Ibid., 6 September 1929.

203. Ibid., 19 September 1929, 11 November 1929, 18 December 1929, 16 January 1930, 5 September 1930 and 24 September 1930.

204. Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme: Minutes of Executive Board for Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme 1930, 8 December 1930. (Hereafter referred to as Minutes of Executive Board).

205. Ibid., 22 February 1932.

206. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 54.

207. See above Chapter 4, p. 245; Minutes of Executive Board, 30 June 1932 and 24 October 1932; Working of Schemes under 1930 Act, June and September Quarters 1931, P.P. 1931-32 (Cmd. 3982) XII, p. 319.

208. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 24; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 1 April 1932. At the same time in the case of Chislet there was a distinct improvement in the quality of coal sent to market.

Board became even more convinced that Boards in other areas were not exercising sufficient control to prevent the evasion of minimum price regulations[209]. Despite this, the conclusion of one authority is that the operation of the Act helped to maintain prices, which fell only slightly from 1930 to 1933[210]. In 1934 the Kent Board was given extra powers to deal with evasions of the minimum price provisions of the scheme, and the Central Scheme was amended to provide for inter-district co-ordination of minimum prices from the beginning of the following year[211]. By then, however, the marketing position had already begun to improve as demand recovered[212].

(3) 1936-46

The final ten year period before the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1946 was one in which Kent's output was declining, while the national demand for coal and coal prices were rising. Between 1936 and 1945 Kent's commercially disposable tonnage declined from 1,869,000 to 1,065,000, while prices per ton rose from 16s. 6½d. to over 44s. 9d. (See Table 5.13). As we have already seen this decline in output was due entirely to constraints on the supply side[213].

209. Minutes of Executive Board, 24 October 1932. One observer concluded that there was in fact wholesale evasion of minimum prices from 1930 to 1933. (J. P. Dickie, The Coal Problem (1936), p. 105). In Kent independent accountants examined the sales made by the various owners.

210. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

211. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act during 1934, P.P. 1934-35 (Cmd. 4769) X, pp. 818-19, and 821.

212. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., pp. 77, 131 and 133.

213. See above Chapter 4, pp. 250-70.

Table 5.13: The Kent Coalfield and Great Britain: Tonnages of Coal Commercially Disposable and Prices, 1936-46

Year	Prices Per Ton		Tonnages Commercially Disposable	
	Kent	G.B.	Kent	Great Britain
	s. d.	s. d.	thousand tons	thousand tons
1936	16. 6½	14. 7½	1,869	205,478
1937	17. 5¾	15. 10½	1,788	217,037
1938	19. 5¾	17. 4¼	1,609	203,813
1939	20. 9½	17. 11¼	1,700	208,431
1940	23. 5	20. 5	1,416	200,330
1941	28. 9½	24. 0½	1,231	183,284
1942	31. 6	26. 5	1,182	180,912
1943	34. 1	29. 1	1,241	172,876
1944	38. 6	33. 5	1,163	163,223
1945	44. 9	38. 4	1,065	154,735
1946	n.a.	39. 6	1,135	160,666

Sources: See Table 4.19 for Prices; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 54, Exhibit A.E.C.6 for Tonnages Commercially Disposable.

Although there was no overall improvement in the washing and cleaning of Kent coal in the years just before the war, despite the introduction of the dry cleaning plant at Chislet in 1938[214], the situation did not deteriorate further during the war years, even though Tilmanstone ceased to clean its output[215].

214. See above Table 5.9 and p. 293.

215. In 1944 only three collieries cleaned their coal, whereas in 1938 four had done so. The three remaining were Betteshanger, Chislet and Snowdown. (See Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p.31). The indications are therefore that the cleaning plant at Tilmanstone could not have handled a very significant tonnage.

The period 1936-46 saw major changes in the pattern of distribution of Kent coal, particularly during the war years. (See Table 5.14). On the one hand there was a relative and absolute decline in the railway, paper, cement and bunker coal outlets, and a relative and absolute increase in the supplied going to electricity and gas works. These changes started after 1939, and during the war there was also a decline in the proportion of large coal produced, which, including cobbles, fell from over 30 per cent of total disposables, excluding miners' coal and colliery fuel, in 1939[216] to 27 per cent in 1944 and 1945[217].

Two-thirds of the large coal went to the railways, about twenty per cent to industrial undertakings and most of the rest to merchants and gas works[218]. The unscreened through coal went almost entirely to gas works[219], and the graded coal mostly to industrial undertakings. Of the small coal half went to electricity works, and over 40 per cent to industry[220].

The decline in the quantity of Kent coal supplied to the paper and cement industries and as bunker coal reflects changes brought about by the war. The diversion of resources into the war effort resulted in

216. See above Table 5.1.

217. See Table 5.15. One would expect colliery fuel to be almost entirely smalls.

218. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 45; Ibid. 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Table 87. The rest of the paragraph is based on these sources except where otherwise stated.

219. Also (Cmd. 6639), Table 44.

220. 90 per cent of the small coal taken by the electricity works was "dry" and the rest washed, whereas industrial undertakings took just over 25 per cent of their small coal in the washed condition.

Table 5.14: The Kent Coalfield: Coal Distributed by Classes of Consumers, 1935-46

Class of Consumer	Actual Tonnages				
	1935	1943-44[1]	1944	1945	1946
Gasworks	21,895	83,000	86,800	92,700	98 979
Electricity Works	223,834	333,800	360,400	327,500	329,465
Railways (mainly for use in locomotives)	508,796	234,900	213,900	190,200	203,624
Cement Works	223,563				105,600
Paper Works	452,284				167,634
Brickworks	23,257	520,600	441,900	322,100	19,612
Breweries	6,039				3,406
Laundries	10,442				16,136
Other Industrial	74,963				53,138
Waterworks	38,288				17,875
Public Authorities	43,327	30,800			2,403
Hospitals and Institutions	22,435		50,200	95,400	25,745
Bunkers	110,475				868
Retail Business	34,019	14,500			23,219
Miscellaneous	29,162				46,649
Factors and Merchants (mainly for domestic purposes)	98,351		7,400	27,900	23,748
Total	1,931,130	1,217,600	1,160,600	1,055,800	1,138,101
Collieries	n.a.	126,200	130,300	131,900	n.a.
Miners' Coal	n.a.	20,700	22,200	23,500	n.a.
Grand Total	-	1,364,500	1,313,100	1,211,200	-

Note: (1) Coal Year 1st May 1943 to 30 April 1944.

Sources: For years 1935 and 1946, K.C.O.A. Claim, p.53, Exhibit A.E.C.3; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44(Cmd. 6538) VIII, Table 25; Ibid. 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 42; Ibid. 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Table 86.

Table 5.15: Coal Distribution from Kent by Grades of Coal, 1944 and 1945: Total Disposals for Inland Consumption

Grade of Coal	Thousand Tons	
	1944	1945
Large (including Hards and Cobbles)	320.1	283.2
Unscreened (Through Coal)	80.1	84.9
Graded	32.0	32.4
Slacks and Smalls:		
Washed	129.8	138.1
Dry	598.6	517.2
Miners' Coal	22.2	23.5
Colliery Fuel	130.3	131.9
TOTAL	1,313.1	1,211.2

Sources: Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 43; Ibid. 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Table 87.

reductions in the output of paper[221] and of cement[222], while the actual outbreak of war led to the closing of Dover Harbour for commercial purposes[223]. Although nationally the railways slightly increased their consumption of coal during the war years[224], the quantity of loco coal supplied by Kent to the Southern Railway had been declining in the years

221. Central Statistical Office, Statistical Digest of the War (H.M.S.O. 1951), Table 104, p. 123.

222. C. M. Kohan, Works and Buildings (H.M.S.O. 1952), pp. 168-70.

223. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 58.

224. Central Statistical Office, op. cit., Table 74, p. 77.

just before the outbreak of war[225], and this trend continued after 1939.

Table 5.16: Kent Coal Supplied to the Southern Railway for Locomotive Purposes, 1936-38

Colliery	1936	1937	1938
	tons	tons	tons
Betteshanger / Snowdown	237,429	210,067	167,522
Chislet	176,314	174,235	164,080
Tilmanstone	72,511	61,716	68,151
TOTAL	486,254	446,018	399,753

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 56.

The increase in Kent coal supplied to electricity and gas works in the south-east was not only a reflection of the increased output of these industries during the war[226], but also of the increased difficulty of bringing coal by sea to the south coast, and by rail south of the River Thames[227]. Nevertheless Kent supplied less than 5 per cent of the coal requirements of London and south-eastern England. (See Table 5.17). It was, however, cheaper to transport this coal to any of the more important

225. See Table 5.16.

226. Coal used for gas making in the country as a whole rose from 19,128,000 tons in 1938 to 21,043,000 tons in 1945, while that used for generating electricity increased even more sharply between these dates from 14,927,000 tons to 23,493,000 tons. (Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Tables 55 and 66).

227. See above Chapter 4, p. 259. The seaborne coal affected included Northumberland and Durham coal supplied to electricity and gas works in southern England. (W. R. Garside, The Durham Miners 1919-1960 (1971), p. 353).

Table 5.17: Consumption of Coal in London and the South-Eastern Region: Showing Tonnages Supplied by Kent, 1945-46

Class of Consumer	Total Tonnage Consumed in London and South-Eastern England 1945 (1)	Tonnage Supplied by Kent 1946	Kent Tonnage column (c) as percentage of column (b)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Thousand Tons	Thousand Tons	%
Gasworks	6,169.9	99.0	1.6
Electricity Works	5,864.4	329.5	5.6
Railways	1,650.0	203.6	12.3
Waterworks	207.0	17.9	8.6
Coke Ovens	271.2	-	-
Iron and Steel	20.5	-	-
Engineering	612.9	4.6	0.7
Other Industrial	2,637.2	365.5	13.9
Non-Industrial	661.6	28.1	4.3
Domestic:			
(a) Home Coal	4,474.3	23.0	0.5
(b) Anthracite and Boiler	676.8	24.0	3.5
Miscellaneous	679.3	42.9	6.3
TOTAL	23,925.1	1,138.1	4.8

Note: (1) The figures in this column are in fact taken from the Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1945 (Cmd. 6920) Table 43, where London is defined as the Metropolitan Police District, and South-Eastern England as those parts of the counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex not included in the London area. (*Ibid*. p. 4).

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 53, Exhibit A.E.C.4. (Details of consumers' total consumption by region are not available for 1946).

customers than to bring supplies by rail or sea from other areas. (See Table 5.18).

Table 5.18: Kent Coalfield: Comparative Transport Charges, December 1946

	Tonnages in Short Term Estimate (1)	Kent Highest Rail or Sea Dec.1946	Other Districts: Lowest Railborne Dec.1946	Other Districts: Lowest Seaborne Dec.1946	Advantage to Kent Dec.1946
	Thousand Tons	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Cement:					
Snodland	110	5. 9½	18. 0	21. 5	12. 2½
Shoreham	25	9. 8	18. 8	25. 1½	9. 0
Strood	30	5. 9	17. 7	19. 3½	11. 10
Rodmell	30	7. 11	19. 5	23. 4	11. 6
Lewes	20	7. 11	19. 3	24. 2	11. 4
Halling	35	5. 9½	18. 0	19. 4	12. 2½
	250				
Paper Mills:					
Farningham Road	13	6. 1½	17. 1	23. 0	10. 11½
Sittingbourne	150	3. 8½	18. 2	19. 11	14. 5½
Aylesford	140	6. 1½	18. 0	15. 10	9. 8½
Maidstone	20	6. 1½	18. 0	20. 7	11. 10½
Kearsney	20	3. 9	20. 9	23. 4½	17. 0
	343				
Electricity:					
Brighton	135	13. 3½	22. 6	18. 4	5. 0½
Broadstairs	10	6. 2	20. 6	23. 7½	14. 4
Canterbury	7.5	3. 4	19. 8	22. 6½	16. 4
Waddon Marsh	100	8. 3½	16. 3	19. 3	7. 11½
Eastbourne	8.7	9. 5½	19. 10	26. 2	10. 4½
Shorncliffe	7	4. 5	20. 10	24. 2	16. 5
Guildford	15	8. 9	16. 2	23. 0	7. 5
Ore	22.3	8. 0½	20. 4	27. 0	12. 3½
Dartford	75	6. 3	17. 4	9. 10	3. 7
Maidstone	20	6. 4½	18. 0	20. 2	11. 7½
Ramsgate	7.5	5. 1½	20. 6	20. 0	14. 10½
Tonbridge Wells	12	7. 9½	18. 2	23. 0	10. 4½
	420				

Table 5.18 continued

	Tonnages in Short Term Estimate (1)	Kent Highest Rail or Sea Dec.1946	Other Districts: Lowest Railborne Dec.1946	Other Districts: Lowest Seaborne Dec.1946	Advantage to Kent Dec.1946
	Thousand Tons	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Gas:					
Ashford	11	5. 1	19. 11	24. 9	14. 10
Broadstairs	6.5	6. 2	20. 6	23. 7½	14. 4
Canterbury	16	3. 4½	19. 8	22. 6½	16. 3½
Deal	2.5	3. 10	20. 10	23. 2	17. 0
Dover	30	3. 4	20. 1	21. 6	16. 9
Folkestone	15	4. 7	20. 11	24. 2	16. 4
Maidstone	4	6. 6	18. 0	20. 2	11. 6
Margate	10	5. 1	20. 5	20. 0	14. 11
Ramsgate	27.5	5. 1½	20. 6	20. 0	14. 10½
Westgate	7.5	7. 1½	20. 5	22. 9½	13. 3½
	130				
Railway:					
Delivery point on Southern System	465	Nil	10. 9	-	10. 9
TOTAL	1,608			Weighted Average	10. 9

Note: (1) The short-term estimate would appear to be for the year 1949.

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 41, Exhibit F.C.A.1.

In calculating the advantage to Kent in December 1946 the lowest transport cost from any other district was given, but that district may not have produced the required coal, such as for gasworks, so the advantages to Kent, which averaged 10s. 9d. per ton, were conservative estimates[228]. The advantage to Kent before September 1939 had been 6s. 5d. per ton, but the increase in coastal freights from 1939 onwards offset the advantages previously enjoyed by districts conveniently situated for coastal shipment[229]. Most Kent coal was in fact moved by rail in 1945 (see Table 5.19), even more so once the aerial ropeway from Tilmanstone had ceased to operate with the closing of Dover Harbour to commercial traffic on the outbreak of war in 1939[230].

228. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 43. The advantage to Kent was in fact even higher as the highest rate from any pit in Kent usually applied to only Tilmanstone. (Ibid., p. 46. The pit is not actually named but is described as producing less than 20 per cent of the coalfield's total output). These advantages were expected to increase in the post-war years following a 24 per cent rise in railway rates in October 1947. (Ibid., pp. 44-45). In addition there was in operation in 1946 a Coal Freight Refund Scheme operated by the Ministry of Fuel and Power with the object of maintaining the cost of transport to the consumer below a fixed minimum. In the case of Aylesford, for example, the cost to the consumer had been reduced by the appropriate subsidy. (Ibid., p. 42). In assessing Kent's freight advantages one should also remember that railway companies sometimes gave preferential rates on coal going in trainloads. So coal from, say, the East Midlands may not have been at quite such a disadvantage compared with Kent coal in the London markets.

229. Ibid., pp. 45-46. The Littlebrook Power Station at Dartford was one of the most important consumers to bring its coal in by sea. Shipping rates were, however, subsidised through the Coal Freight Refund Scheme. (Ibid., facing p. 57).

230. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 58. From 1936-39 inclusive 260,000 tons of coal were transported via the ropeway to Dover Harbour. (For details see Table 5.12). In addition in 1932 the Southern Railway had installed special loading plant at the Eastern Arm of Dover Harbour, designed for ships carrying up to 5,000 tons of coal, at a cost of £22,000, while the Harbour Board itself had expended a further £10,000 on railway sidings. (Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 31).

Table 5.19: Method of Transport for Kent Coal Distributed for Inland Consumption in 1945

Method of Transport	Thousand Tons
Sea direct and rail and sea	26.1
Rail	995.4
Road (including land sale)	34.3
Total	1,055.8
Miners' coal and colliery consumption	155.4
Grand Total	1,211.2

Sources: Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1945, P.P. 1945-46 (Cmd. 6920) XXI, Table 97.

Export and bunker coal had in any case declined after 1935. (See Table 5.20).

Table 5.20: Kent Coalfield: Export Disposals 1935-38

Kent	Export Disposals(1)
	tons
1935	110,477
1936	64,562
1937	22,643
1938	50,420

Note: (1) These include foreign bunker coal.

Source: See Table 4.18.

The decline was in no way attributable to the magnitude of the export supply allocation, which remained substantially above actual disposals[231].

As we have already seen[232] control over prices under the 1930 Coal Mines Act had been strengthened in 1934 and 1935[233]. Even though the overall financial position of the industry had not improved substantially since 1930, the miners in the autumn of 1935 pressed for a wage increase to the point of threatening a strike[234]. Any advance in wages was, however, impossible without some form of centralised selling and a substantial rise in the level of prices[235]. Pending the necessary reorganisation, steps were taken to increase prices under new contracts and, as a special measure, to try and obtain from inland consumers a voluntary increase of one shilling per ton in the price of coal supplied after 1st January 1936 under existing contracts[236]. Many big consumers in the country did agree to such increases on condition that the extra revenue so derived went exclusively to pay the miners' higher wages[237]. Wage increases ranged from 5d. to 1s. 0d. per shift and the Kent increase was the lowest[238]. The reason for this was that the price increase in

231. See Table 4.18.

232. Above p. 309.

233. In addition the Central and District Schemes were amended to separate inland and export quotas from the beginning of 1935. (Working of Schemes under 1930 Act during 1934, P.P. 1934-35 (Cmd. 4769) X, pp. 818-19; The Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, 1930 (Non-Parliamentary Paper), Amendments of Scheme 1934, p. 2).

234. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, _op. cit._, p. 65; also see Chapter 7, p. 392.

235. Dickie, _op. cit._, p. 106; Mines Department, _Annual Report 1935_, p.3. The government was opposed to any subsidy for the industry. (R. Page Arnot, _The Miners: In Crisis and War_ (1961), pp. 157-58).

236. Mines Department, _Annual Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1935_, p. 3; _Ibid._ for 1936, p. 3.

237. Page Arnot, _op. cit._,(1961), p. 171.

238. _Ibid._, pp. 173-74. No advances were paid in North Derby and Bristol, although later North Derby paid 9d. per shift. (_Ibid._, p. 176).

in Kent at 7¾d. per ton was the lowest of any district in the country[239]. The price difference per ton between Kent and Great Britain in fact declined in 1936 and 1937 as follows:[240]

1935	2s. 2¼d.
1936	1s. 11d.
1937	1s. 7¼d.
1938	2s. 1¾d.

The reason for these developments was that in August 1935 the Kent district entered into three year contracts with the Southern Railway at the same price as for 1935. This was a high percentage of coal disposals:[241]

	1936	1937	1938
Total disposals (tons)	1,869,000	1,788,000	1,609,000
Tonnage to Southern Railway (tons)	486,254	446,018	399,753
Percentage of Total to Southern Railway	26%	24.8%	24.7%

Although an appeal was made on a national basis to all contract buyers to agree to a voluntary increase in price of 1s. 0d. per ton from 1st January 1936, the Southern Railway declined to pay this addition until October 1937. Even the difference in favour of Kent in 1938 would have been greater than 2s. 1¾d. per ton had the district not still been supplying the Railway Company at the price fixed in October 1935 plus

239. Mines Department, Annual Report 1936, p. 10. The increase in Scotland was 1s. 4¾d., in Durham 10d. and in remaining districts 1s. 0d.

240. K.C.O.A. Claim, pp. 55-56.

241. Ibid., p. 56. The rest of the paragraph is based on this source. The twelve month contract with consumers was the most common, with some as long as two years. (Information supplied by Mr. H. H. Partridge).

this voluntary shilling[242].

In October 1935 the colliery owners gave an undertaking to the government that by the middle of 1936 an organisation for the complete and effective control of the sale of coal would be set up in each district, with central co-ordination[243]. The selling schemes became operative from 1st August 1936[244]. It was intended that these schemes should effectively prevent colliery competition[245]. Kent adopted the central control of sales scheme, as did eleven other districts. The other four adopted district selling schemes, by which the coal was actually sold by the District Executive Board[246]. In Kent the Executive Board appointed a Sales Committee, which issued sales permits to the owners stating the output to be sold and the minimum price[247].

Prices rose in 1936, to some extent due to the government's

242. The Tilmanstone Colliery did not reap the full benefit of increased prices due to the control schemes until June 1938 when certain long term contracts expired. (Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 54). These would have included Railway contracts for the average of 60-70,000 tons of coal supplied per annum in the years 1936-38 inclusive. (See above p. 314).

243. Dickie, op. cit., p. 106.

244. Mines Department, Annual Report 1936, p. 3.

245. Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, op. cit., p. 128.

246. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1935, P.P. 1936-37 (Cmd. 5474) XIII, p. 951.

247. Ibid., p. 951; The Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme, 1930 (Non-Parliamentary Paper) Amendments approved in 1936, pp. 2, 7 and 14. "Generally speaking, the permits, which are issued in respect of inquiries received by the colliery owner and submitted to the Sales Committee, prescribe the tonnage which may be sold, the destination to which it may be sent, and the price below which the owner may not make the sale. Other conditions of sale such as the maximum discount or commission that may be given, or the terms of credit, may be included in the permit. In respect of day-to-day sales where small tonnages are involved individual permits would not be practicable. General permits, covering such sales over a period up to a total tonnage, are issued and these lay down the minimum prices and conditions for sales under the permits." (Cmd. 5474, p. 951).

rearmament programme[248], and again in 1937[249]. This rising demand for coal made the operation of the selling schemes easier[250]. In the controlled selling districts, except for Bristol and Kent, the improved situation resulted in the suspension of the owners' trade shares from 1st April 1937 to 31st March 1938[251]. Although at the end of March 1938 the high level of demand began to ease, the selling schemes helped to stabilise prices throughout the year[252]. The Central Council in 1937 set up a committee to co-ordinate inter-district prices on a voluntary basis[253]. In September 1938 the Central Council made it obligatory on all districts to refer inter-district matters to the co-ordinating committees, and there was co-ordination of the coastwise and railborne trades in London and the south of England[254]. The conclusion of the government was, however, that the period from August 1936 had been one in which the level of prices was dictated more by market conditions than by the acts of district sales committees[255].

248. Mines Department, <u>Annual Report 1936</u>, p. 3.

249. <u>Ibid.</u> for 1937, p. 13.

250. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1935, P.P. 1936-37 (Cmd. 5474) XIII, p. 953.

251. <u>Ibid</u>. since December Quarter 1936, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5773) XIII, p. 927. The system of trade shares had been introduced in order to ensure that owners would enjoy equal benefits from the scheme. Owners who supplied more than their share during a specified period were penalised and owners who supplied less were compensated. (Jones, Cartwright and Guénault, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 129-30).

252. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1937, P.P. 1939-40 (Cmd. 6170) V, pp. 24 - 26.

253. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 27; Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1936, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5773) XIII, p. 932.

254. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1937, P.P. 1939-40 (Cmd. 6170) V, pp. 28-30. From 1st October 1937 there had been an increase in railway rates, which also would have worked to Kent's advantage. (Mines Department, <u>Annual Report 1937</u>, p. 11)

255. Working of Schemes under 1930 Act since December Quarter 1936, P.P. 1937-38 (Cmd. 5773) XIII, p. 934.

During these years it should be remembered that Pearson and Dorman Long was experiencing a declining output, Chislet was more or less maintaining its level of production, and Tilmanstone was actually increasing its disposable tonnage[256]. Although Tilmanstone was increasing its sales to cement companies, its sales of coaloids levelled off at 14,000 tons[257], while Chislet found it increasingly important to improve the quality of its coal through better screening in 1937 and the erection of a cleaning plant in 1938[258].

With the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 much of the 1930 Act machinery was taken over for war purposes. The full-time senior officials of the colliery sales organisations became the Coal Supplies Officers of the Mines Department, and were directly responsible for seeing that the flow of coal to consumers was maintained[259]. In Kent this post was filled by Arthur Ernest Cogden, who had been sales manager of Pearson and Dorman Long since 1926 and chairman of the Kent District Sales Committee from its inception in 1933[260]. Throughout the war there was government control of prices, which were increased on a flat rate basis to meet the average increases in costs of the industry. Some special increases were also given on a district basis to meet particular circumstances in the early part of the war[261]. The increases granted to Kent between November 1939

256. See above Chapter 4, Table 4.13.

257. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 46, 51 and 54. Coaloid sales were 14,000 tons in 1936 and 13,671 tons in 1937.

258. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 17 July 1936 (Twenty-second A.G.M.), 30 July 1937 (Twenty-third A.G.M.), 29 July 1938, 29 July 1938 (Twenty-fourth A.G.M.), and 21 July 1939 (Twenty-fifth A.G.M.). Also in 1939 the company agreed to increase the rate of commission to its sales agents to 3d. per ton on all coal sold in each year.

259. W. H. B. Court, Coal (H.M.S.O. 1951), p. 150.

260. K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 51. In October 1946 Mr. Cogdon was appointed Marketing Director for the South Eastern Division of the National Coal Board.

261. Court, op. cit., pp. 189-92; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 57.

and August 1944 totalled 17s. 5d. per ton compared with a national average of 15s. 11d. (See Table 5.21).

Table 5.21: Increases in the Pit-head Price of Kent Coal down to the end of 1944

Date		Increase per Ton	Comment
		s. d.	
1939	3 November	1. 0	
1940	2 May	8	
	1 November	3. 3	G.B. only 1s. 9d.
1941	1 January	8	
	1 June	10	
1942	3 July	3. 0	
1943	1 January	1. 0	
1944	1 February	3. 0	
	1 August	4. 0	
	TOTAL	17. 5	G.B. Total 15s. 11d.

Source: Court, op. cit., p. 343[262].

On 1st May 1945 coal prices were raised by a further 3s. 6d. per ton[263].

262. The corresponding increases in the Levy under the Coal (Charges) Orders were:

		s. d.
1942	3 June	7
	3 July	3. 0
1943	1 January	1. 5
1944	1 February	3. 0
	1 August	4. 0
	TOTAL	12. 0

263. Court, op. cit., p. 344.

The war also seriously affected the marketing of coal in London and south-eastern England. As early as 1937 there had been concern about how coal supplies to London would be maintained if seaborne traffic was interrupted by war[264]. The winter of 1939-40 quickly proved that the view held about the railway's capacity to handle such diverted traffic had been over-optimistic, and troubles developed over the supply of coal to London and to public utility undertakings in the south of England[265]. Although the crisis was created largely by the cutting off of the great coastwise movement of coal upon which London and south-eastern England had depended in normal years for about two-thirds of their supplies, it was seriously aggravated by severe weather conditions[266]. During the following winter German air raids also began to disorganise the railways, and the attacks on railway crossings over the Thames created the prospect of an acute coal shortage in south London and the southern counties[267]. At this stage road transport was used for short hauls from the Kent Coalfield[268]. As we have seen already, it was under these circumstances that the government changed its plans regarding the closure of the Kent mines[269].

Nearness to markets was therefore once again a key factor affecting the coalfield. The pioneers had considered this a vital element in the early years and, as we shall see, the theme played an important part when

264. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

265. Ibid., p. 61.

266. Ibid., p. 62. With the shortage of shipping freight rates rose, as did the retail price of seaborne coal in some towns.

267. Ibid., pp. 89 and 93-94.

268. Ibid., p. 94.

269. See above Chapter 4, pp. 258-59.

the three surviving colliery companies came to present their case for compensation under the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act of 1946[270].

270. See below Chapter 6, pp. 349-50.

CHAPTER 6

NATIONALISATION OF MINERALS AND MINES

The nationalisation of the coal industry came about in two stages: the state acquiring mineral rights in coal in 1942 and the actual collieries in 1947. Although this final state ownership came about in a very short space of time, it followed over two decades of steadily increasing government intervention in the affairs of the industry.

The mineral rights position as it existed before the Coal Act, 1938 dated back to about 1568 when a decision of the courts ruled that, with the exceptions of gold and silver, all other minerals belonged to the individual landowners. As a result a landowner could sell any coal found under his property at an agreed royalty payment per ton to any colliery proprietor who wished to extract it[1]. Although the private ownership of minerals came under criticism during the period of rapid expansion of the British coal industry in the late nineteenth century, a Royal Commission on Mining Royalties had declared in its final report in 1894 that the system of royalties had not interfered with the general development of the country's mineral resources, or with the export trade in coal[2]. It was soon after the Royal Commission reported against any change that the newly-formed Miners' Federation of Great Britain began affirming its belief in the principle of the nationalisation of minerals and mines[3]. There was, however, little support for the principle of mines nationalisation outside the ranks of the miners and the Labour Party

1. Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. I, P.P. 1926 (Cmd. 2600) XIV, pp. 74-75. (Hereafter referred to as Royal Commission of 1925 or Samuel Commission).

2. Royal Commission on Mining Royalties, Final Report, P.P. 1893-4 (C. 6980) XLI, p. 435.

3. I. Lubin and H. Everett, The British Coal Dilemma (1927), pp. 205-206; R. Page Arnot, The Miners: Years of Struggle (1953), pp. 127-29.

until the Sankey Commission of 1919 began to issue its reports[4]. While disagreeing on nearly all major questions, the four final reports all agreed that mining royalties should be nationalised[5]. They were also all in favour of the different administrative offices of the government that were concerned with the coal mining industry being amalgamated into one Ministry of Mines[6]. The famous reports in favour of the nationalisation of the industry itself were signed only by those members of the Commission nominated by, or whose nomination was approved by, the Miners' Federation and by Mr. Justice Sankey himself[7]. The government's response to the Commission's findings was to accept the unanimous recommendations of the reports to purchase the mineral rights in coal for the state, but not to nationalise the industry itself[8]. The government also decided to follow the recommendation of the Commission to co-ordinate its own dealings with the industry by establishing a Mines Department under the President of the Board of Trade[9]. Although action was taken in the latter case, none was in the former, and legislation for the nationalisation of minerals had to wait until 1938. New privileges were given to colliery owners in connection with mineral rights, however, by the Mines (Working Facilities and Support) Act, 1923[10]. This legislation, which was based on

4. A Mines Nationalisation Bill, drafted by the Miners' Federation in 1912 and amended by the Labour Party, had actually been presented to the House of Commons in 1913, but it had not been discussed. (R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 132-33 .

5. Coal Industry Commission, Vol. II, Reports and Minutes of Evidence on the Second Stage of the Inquiry, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, pp. 4-6, 13-14, 19-20 and 22.

6. Ibid., pp. 5, 13-14, 18 and 25.

7. See above Chapter 3, p. 103.

8. Ibid., pp. 105-06.

9. Mining Industry Act, 1920, 10 & 11 Geo. V cap. 50; A. M. Neuman, Economic Organization of the British Coal Industry (1934), p. 239

10. 13 & 14 Geo. V cap. 20.

recommendations made by the Coal Conservation Committee in 1918 and the Acquisition and Valuation of Land Committee in 1919[11], was designed to overcome some of the difficulties inherent in the private ownership of coal by making provision for the compulsory acquisition of rights to work it and rights ancilliary to its working[12]. Cases brought under the Act were to come first to the Mines Department of the Board of Trade and were then referred to the Railway and Canal Commission[13]. Although the legislation was useful and, as we have seen, led to an important legal decision in the case of the Tilmanstone aerial ropeway[14], nationally it only touched the fringe of the problem[15].

The Royal Commission of 1925 also recommended the nationalisation of coal royalties, but not of the industry itself, together with a recommendation that the industry should be reorganised by amalgamation into larger business units[16]. The first suggestion was not adopted, although the scope of the 1923 Act was widened by Part II of the Mining Industry Act, 1926, while Part I of the same Act made provision for facilitating the reorganisation of the industry by the voluntary

11. Mines Department, Third Annual Report of the Secretary for Mines for Mines for year ending 31st December 1923, p. 16. (Hereafter referred to as Mines Department, Annual Report 1923, etc.)

12. F. A. Enever, The Coal Act, 1938 with the Coal (Registration of Ownership) Act, 1937 (1938), p. vii. Dr. Enever was Legal Adviser and Registrar to the Coal Commission established by the 1938 Act. Despite its title this book in fact brings together with detailed annotations all the five Acts of Parliament governing the control of the coal industry from 1923 to 1938.

13. Mines Department, Annual Report 1923, p. 16.

14. See above Chapter 3, p. 158. By initiating proceedings under Part I of the Mines (Working Facilities and Support) Act, 1923 and Part II of the Mining Industry Act, 1926 Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. in 1932 and the Chislet Colliery Ltd. in 1938 obtained the right to work minerals. (Mines Department, Annual Report 1932, p. 45 and Annual Report 1938, p. 62).

15. Enever, op. cit., p. vii.

16. Royal Commission of 1925, p. 233.

amalgamation of colliery undertakings[17]. A further step was taken by the Coal Mines Act, 1930, which not only provided under Part I for a system of quota restriction on output and minimum prices[18], but also under Part II set up the Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission to further the reorganisation of the industry by amalgamation, and with powers to actually promote schemes under Part I of the Mining Industry Act, 1926[19]. The 1930 Act contained only those provisions which the government believed would allow the industry to withstand an immediate return to shorter working hours. The government intended to cover the nationalisation of royalties by separate legislation to be introduced later[20]. In the absence of this legislation the newly formed Commission found that the system of mineral ownership to be one of the major obstacles in the way of any effective and lasting reorganisation of the industry[21]. As the Reorganisation Commission was able to achieve so little under existing legislation[22], the government decided in 1936 to introduce a new Coal Mines Bill, which was to give the Commission extensive powers of compulsory amalgamation and remove the safeguards provided in the 1930 Act by which the Railway and Canal Commission acted as an outside independent tribunal[23]. Because of opposition to these proposals,

17. Enever, op. cit., p. vii; Mines Department, Annual Report 1926, p.22.

18. See above Chapter 4, pp. 239-41.

19. Mines Department, Annual Report 1930, p. 20. These two Parts of the Act were in many ways contradictory. For a full explanation of the events leading to this anomaly see Neuman, op. cit., pp. 361-77.

20. Mines Department, Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission, Report to the Secretary for Mines, P.P. 1933-34 (Cmd. 4468) XIV, p. 334.

21. Ibid., pp. 334-35 and 342-43.

22. Ivor Thomas, 'The Coal Mines Reorganization Commission' in William A. Robson (ed.), Public Enterprise: Developments in Social Ownership and Control in Great Britain (1937), pp. 237-40; J. P. Dickie, The Coal Problem (1936), pp. 151-54.

23. Ivor Thomas, op. cit., pp. 240-41; J. P. Dickie, op. cit., pp. 154-56.

particularly from its own supporters, the government decided to withdraw the Bill and submit a new one in the autumn[24]. This finally appeared in 1937 and was passed by Parliament in the following year. Entitled the Coal Act, 1938, it provided for the unification of coal royalties under public ownership and control, as well as for the furtherance of reorganisation schemes[25].

It was agreed between the government and the Mineral Owners' Joint Committee, which represented a large majority of the owners of coal, that a Tribunal should be appointed to determine the value of the whole property concerned on the basis of a sale on the open market by a willing seller[26]. The Tribunal, under the chairmanship of Sir Wilfred Greene, decided that 15 years purchase should be applied to the average net annual income from coal royalties for the seven years 1928-34 inclusive. As this figure was agreed with the Mineral Owners' Association at £4,430,000, the total compensation payable was therefore £66,450,000[27]. It was the responsibility of a Central Valuation Board, established under the 1938 Act, to divide Great Britain into valuation regions, and to allocate to each region a part of the global figure which bore the same proportion to the whole as they estimated the value of all principal coal hereditaments in the region bore to the value of all principal coal hereditaments in Great Britain. In addition Regional Valuation Boards were set up to value individual properties in these regions, and these valuations were, for compensation purposes, to be scaled up or down

24. Ivor Thomas, op. cit., pp. 241-42; J. P. Dickie, op. cit., pp. 164-65.

25. Mines Department, Annual Report 1937, p.3. The unification of coal royalties had been the declared policy of the government since the general election of 1935.

26. Ibid., p. 3.

27. Mines Department, Annual Report 1937, p. 4; Enever, op. cit., p. 67.

according to the ratio which the total regional valuation bore to the portion of the global figure allocated to that region[28]. To facilitate this work, and as a preliminary to the main legislation once the £66,450,000 award had been accepted by the government, a Coal (Registration of Ownership) Act had been passed in 1937, by which owners of coal were required to register details of their assets with the Board of Trade[29]. As a result of the Central Valuation the Southern Region, which covered the Bristol, Somerset, Forest of Dean and Kent Coalfields, was awarded £1,196,100[30]. Although it is not known how much was awarded to the mineral owners in the Kent Coalfield alone, on the basis of the tonnages given in Table 4.5 and an average district mineral royalty of 6d. per ton[31], the average net annual income from coal royalties in the Kent Coalfield for the years 1928-34 inclusive multiplied by 15 years purchase would have been £575,000. One would therefore have expected the Kent mineral owners to have received something like this figure as compensation. Some specific information is available, however, both for a number of the mineral companies that helped to pioneer the development of the coalfield and for one of the colliery companies. Before looking at the compensation these companies received it is necessary to examine briefly their assets and activities from the early twenties onwards.

The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., and its allied companies - the South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., Extended Extension Ltd., and the

28. Enever, op. cit., p. 67. In the Southern Region, which included Kent, they were scaled down. (South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 120).

29. Mines Department, Annual Report 1937, p. 4.

30. Mines Department, Coal Act 1938, Central Valuation Board, Valuation Regions and Regional Allocations, P.P. 1938-39 (Cmd. 5904) XXI, p.143.

31. See Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol.2 (Part B), Minutes of Evidence, Evidence of Thomas Henry Bailey on Behalf of the Pioneer Companies, p. 503, q. 9267 and p. 506, q. 9351.

Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd. - had ceased to play an active part in the development of Kent in 1922, when they transferred to Dorman Long Ltd. some 17,466 acres of leasehold and 2,374 acres of freehold minerals in the northern part of the Coalfield[32]. The benefit of these agreements had then transferred to Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., which in 1924 allocated the Stodmarsh and Canterbury areas to Chislet Colliery Ltd. in order to rationalise arrangements in the north of the coalfield[33]. As a result of these arrangements, and following Pearson and Dorman Long's acquisition of the Snowdown Colliery, the South Eastern Coalfield Extension became entitled to a super-royalty of 1½d. per ton from the Stodmarsh area[34], and the Kent Coal Concessions to a super-royalty of 1d. per ton on all coal raised from a wide area at Snowdown Colliery[35]. After concluding these arrangements the Concessions Group was reorganised in 1926. The existing capital of the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. and the South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd. was written down by 90 per cent, that of Extended Extension Ltd. by 80 per cent[36]. The original capital became designated as 'B' shares. The outstanding debentures of the three

32. See above Chapter 3, pp. 114-16.

33. See above Chapter 3, p. 126. The following year the Canterbury area was removed from the agreement.

34. South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 33; see above Chapter 3, p. 115. It is important to note that this 1½d. per ton super-royalty was payable to the South Eastern Coalfield Extension even though it no longer had any property rights in the land from which the coal was extracted.

35. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 134 and 153. The workings at Snowdown did not in fact extend beyond this area until 1944-45, so from 1927 until then the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. received 1d. per ton on all coal raised at the colliery. (Ibid., item 179).

36. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 143-49 and 151-55; South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, items 82, 87-91, 93-94 and 99-100; Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137, items 64, 70-73 and 85. The rest of the paragraph and Table 6.1 are based on these sources.

companies ceased to carry interest, and half the premium of 20 per cent, due to be paid on the value of these debentures when redeemed, together with half the interest that had accrued, less tax, became payable in newly created 'A' shares, issued as fully paid[37]. Meanwhile the holders of the £90,000 of Bonds that had been raised to finance the deep sinking at Snowdown Colliery in 1915[38] together with other unsecured creditors received one-fifth of the sums owed to them, both principal and interest, in the form of newly created 'B' shares. The complete results are given in Table 6.1. No reorganisation took place, however, with the Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.[39], while in 1927 the Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd. went into liquidation and had its assets acquired by the newly formed Wingham Holding Company Ltd.[40]

The three mineral companies operating outside the Concessions Group were: the Betteshanger Holding Company Ltd., the Ebbsfleet Holding Company Ltd., and the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. The Betteshanger Company had been formed in 1922 to acquire the assets of the Betteshanger Boring Company[41], and its £4,000 of share capital was all issued to the shareholders of the Boring Company[42]. The Ebbsfleet Holding Company Ltd. had been formed in 1927 to acquire the assets of the Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd. in return for the entire £1,115 of share capital in the new

37. The Commissioners of Inland Revenue accepted 'A' shares in lieu of the tax owed of 4 shillings in the £.

38. See above Chapter 2, p. 87.

39. Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 109782, items 54, 56-57 and 74.

40. Wingham Holding Company Ltd., B.O.T. 222182, items 4, 6, 11-12 and 17. The new company had an issued capital of only £4,986. Its directors were the same men who sat on the Boards of the four main companies of the Concessions Group.

41. Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361, items 6, 8 and 12; also see above Chapter 2, pp. 74-75.

42. Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361, items 12, 13, 14 and 15.

Table 6.1: The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., and Extended Extension Ltd.: Reorganization Schemes, 1926

	The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.	South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.	Extended Extension Ltd.
	£	£	£
Written down value of original 'B' shares	24,678	6,521	9,155
Newly created 'B' shares:			
Issued to Bondholders	15,029	7,350	5,405
Issued to Unsecured Creditors	32,788	7,819	6,628
Issued to Commissioners of Inland Revenue	951	973	
Total value of 'B' shares	73,446	22,663	21,188
Newly issued 'A' shares	60,913	36,330	8,788
Total share capital	134,359	58,993	29,976
Debenture capital	60,000	64,000	23,000
Total capital	194,359	122,993	52,976

Source: See p. 334 , footnote 36.

company[43]. The North Kent Coalfield Ltd. dated back to 1911 and had been instrumental in forming the Chislet Colliery Ltd.[44].

The varying fortunes of these eight mineral companies between 1927 and their liquidation is given in Tables 6.2 and 6.3.

43. Ebbsfleet Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 222836, items 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14.

44. See above Chapter 2, pp. 75-77.

Table 6.2: Kent Mineral Companies: Rents and Royalties Received and Profits, 1927-52

Year	The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.		South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.		Extended Extension Ltd.		Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.		Wingham Holding Company Ltd.		Betteshanger Holding Company Ltd.		Ebbsfleet Holding Company Ltd.		The North Kent Coalfield Ltd.	
	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(1)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(1)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(1)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(1)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(1)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year(5)	Rents and Royalties Received	Profits for the Year
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1927	1,207	- 2,693	389	- 3,507	331	- 774	-	-	.	.	-	19(3)	.	.	5,568	44
1928	1,588	380	477	- 760	334	- 303	-	-	-	- 181	-	253(4)	.	.	6,600	252
1929	2,224	1,348	781	11	423	- 287	-	-	-	- 37	-	482	-	1	.	.
1930	2,739	1,163	1,215	- 15	536	- 216	-	-	-	- 41	997	974	-	6	8,151(6)	373(6)
1931	2,886	1,359	2,237	839	803	47	-	-	-	- 81	1,963	1,827	-	32	5,625	495
1932	2,784	1,220	1,927	536	695	- 38	-	-	-	22	2,694	2,349	-	27	n.a.	1,239
1933	2,932	1,264	617	- 436	433	- 64	-	-	-	39	3,326	3,115	-	71	6,581	1,839
1934	3,124	1,448	779	- 293	272	- 189	-	-	-	32	3,657	3,339	-	65	5,650	1,409
1935	3,141	1,698	1,326	167	266	- 122	-	-	-	- 44	3,630	3,178	-	34	5,690	1,543
1936	3,066	1,379	1,321	125	250	- 193	-	-	-	54	3,523	3,118	-	52	6,738	1,446
1937	2,810	1,209	1,407	293	294	99	-	-	-	52	3,364	2,664	-	57	6,694	1,559
1938	2,867	1,211	1,896	540	285	193	-	-	-	52	1,799	1,812	-	22	4,915	1,371
1939	2,633	976	2,151	825	257	- 1,231	-	-	-	50	2,038	1,959	-	30	3,173	1,207
1940	2,486	843	1,881	436	271	- 1,211	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,493	1,541	-	11	2,842	1,625
1941	2,513	749	1,160	- 60	262	- 1,237	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	36	1,141	(1,200)(7)	-	13	1,729	1,045
1942	2,645	697	1,184	39	262	- 1,220	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	932	984	-	12	.	.
1943	2,464(2)	1,154	1,268(2)	289	58	- 1,329	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,083(2)	1,147	.	.	.	.
1944	2,251	625	1,334	- 685							992	1,056				
1945	1,929	706	962	- 29							1,059	1,304				
1946	1,924	577	662	227							1,377	1,380				
1947	1,951	872	1,006	257							1,328	1,380				
1948	1,515	528	663	117							3,205	1,697				
1949	991	47	362	- 54							1,794	1,050				
1950	6	- 503	100	- 178							Nil	- 307				
1951	38	- 489	Nil	- 484												
1952	295	- 161	Nil	- 431												

(7) This is an estimate.

Notes: (1) Year ending 31 March.
(2) Super royalty payments continued till June 1949.
(3) Year to 30 September 1927.
(4) 15 months to 31 December 1928
(5) Year ending 30 September.
(6) As at 31 March from 1930 onwards. (1930 figure is for 15 month period).

Sources: The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693; South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638; Extended Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 106137; Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 109782; Wingham Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 222182; Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361; Ebbsfleet Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 222836; The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., B.O.T. 118501.

Table 6.3: Kent Mineral Companies: Share and Debenture Capital, Compensation Payments Received for Assets, and Details of Liquidation, 1942-58

		The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.	South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.	Extended Extension Ltd.	Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.	Wingham Holding Company Ltd.	Betteshanger Holding Company Ltd.	Ebbsfleet Holding Company Ltd.	The North Kent Coalfield Ltd.
Share Capital Issued	£	134,503	59,020	30,262	36,997	4,986	4,000	1,208	103,000
Debenture capital still to be redeemed in 1942-43 before receipt of compensation from Coal Commission	£	17,683	52,639	23,000	4,076	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Balance in Profit and Loss Account in 1942-43	£	14,911	- 937	- 8,656	Nil	- 19	(13,708)(5)	130	- 2,197
Compensation received from Coal Commission for nationalization of minerals (including interest accrued)	£	35,944	10,706	22,332	1,492	Nil	596	Nil	11,820
Compensation received from National Coal Board for super royalties	£	22,150(2)	21,143(2)	1,498(3)	-	-	27,300	Nil	-(6)
Dates of liquidation of Company(1)		1954-55	1954-58	1944-58	1942-43	1942-44	1952-53	1944-45	1942-43
Balance in Profit and Loss Account at commencement of liquidation	£	18,267	1,907	- 8,656	Nil	- 19	(16,935)	130	- 2,197
Amount of debenture capital not redeemed after liquidation	£	Nil	17,112	(Nil)(4)	4,076	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Amount returned in share capital	£	49,601	Nil	Nil	Nil	7,480	28,794	856	37,016

Notes: (1) From the commencement of winding up to final liquidation.
(2) This is the maximum possible figure and represents cash at bank at commencement of liquidation in 1954.
(3) £1,250 was also received from Kent Coal Concessions to whom these were assigned in 1948.
(4) This is an assumption based on the other information given in this column.
(5) Profit for 1941 estimated at £1,200.
(6) Sold in 1943 to Shires Investment Trust and Chislet Colliery for £2,223 and £250 respectively.

Sources: As for Table 6.2.

As can be seen from Table 6.3 these mineral companies received £82,890 in compensation and accrued interest from the Coal Commission for the nationalisation of their minerals. In addition the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. received £22,089 for the whole of its 1,721 acres of freehold coal[45]. There is, however, no record in the accounts of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. or the Chislet Colliery Ltd. of how much they received respectively for their 2,489 and 26 acres of minerals, or for the 1,130 acres that they owned jointly[46].

Super-royalty payments were not affected by the Coal Act, 1938, nor initially by the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1946, and they continued to be paid by the colliery companies after minerals had vested in the Coal Commission in July 1942, and by the National Coal Board, which in 1947 acquired both the collieries and the assets of the Coal Commission[47]. Only three of the mineral companies - the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., and the Betteshanger Holding Company Ltd. - continued to receive super royalties, however, and in June 1949 the National Coal Board decided to suspend its payments of them[48]. After negotiations with the National Coal Board these three companies, together with the Extended Extension Ltd., received

45. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 51, 54 and 63.

46. For details of mineral holdings see: Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. B.O.T. 184836, item 59; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes 2 February 1939, 21 July 1939 (Twenty-fifth A.G.M.) and 6 October 1939.

47. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 169, 178, 180 and 181; South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, items 114, 123, 125 and 126; Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361, item 47.

48. See above Tables 6.2 and 6.3; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693; item 188; South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., B.O.T. 93638, item 133; Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361, item 47.

the sums indicated in Table 6.3[49].

After these settlements with the National Coal Board these four mineral companies followed the rest into voluntary liquidation. Only the Betteshanger Holding Company had been financially successful in its operations. Over 99 per cent of its revenue had consisted of tonnage, i.e. super-royalty, payments from Betteshanger Colliery, and altogether it paid out between 1929 and 1942 £15,833 in dividends on its share capital of £4,000, which represented an average annual return of 28 per cent over these years. From 1943 to 1948 it paid out a further £4,833[50]. The only other mineral company to pay any dividend after 1927 was the Ebbsfleet Holding Company Ltd., whose shareholders received £101 in 1934, 1937 and 1939. Its revenue came not from its own mineral areas, however, but from shares in the Betteshanger Holding Company and from investments in Government War Stock[51]. Despite the rather poor financial performance of the Concessions Group of companies and of the North Kent Coalfield Ltd. one should not forget the important pioneering work that they had done in both proving and developing the coalfield.

The Coal Commission that was established by the 1938 Act also acquired, in augmented form, the functions of the Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission to bring about the amalgamation of colliery undertakings where this would improve the efficiency of their working[52]. In the case of Kent

49. Although the latter company had received no super-royalty payments since 1943, the National Coal Board presumably had after June 1949 worked, or intended working, coal in areas for which they would become liable for payment.

50. Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 183361, Annual Reports 1923-50.

51. The Ebbsfleet Holding Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 222836, items 23, 26 and 28.

52. Enever, op. cit., Chapter IV; The Coal Act, 1938 sections 47-50, cited in Enever, op. cit., pp. 235-40.

the Commission proposed the consolidation of the three existing colliery undertakings in the area[53]. The directors of the Chislet Colliery Ltd. were firmly of the opinion that no benefits could follow from such a policy, either to their company or to the coalfield as a whole. The war intervened, however, before the matter could be taken further.

We have already seen how during the war years the government once again obtained complete control over the whole coal industry[54]. Meanwhile the Miners' Federation of Great Britain continued to argue that the only solution for the country's coal problem was to nationalise the mining industry[55]. Despite backbench Labour demands, however, the Prime Minister in October 1943 firmly rejected such a solution[56]. The following year the Mining Association of Great Britain began to consider ways of improving the industry under private ownership[57]. As a first step in May 1944 it appointed Robert Foot, an outsider to the industry, as its chairman[58]. A man of wide business experience, Foot had been General Manager of the Gas Light and Coke Company until 1941, and from 1942 Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation[59]. His task as independent chairman of the Mining Association was to produce a scheme of reorganisation for the whole industry. In his plan, which appeared in

53. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 July 1929 (Twenty-fifth A.G.M.). The rest of the paragraph is based on this source.

54. See above Chapter 4, p. 262.

55. R. Page Arnot, The Miners in Crisis and War (1961), pp. 325, 335-36 and 381.

56. W. H. B. Court, Coal (H.M.S.O. 1951), pp. 247-48; Michael Foot, Aneurin Bevan, Vol. I (1962), pp. 443-44.

57. Harold Wilson, New Deal for Coal (1945), pp. 188 and 191.

58. Ibid., p. 191.

59. Asa Briggs, The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, Vol. III: The War of Words (1970), pp. 25-27 and 554.

January 1945, he advocated no change in the ownership of the industry[60]. Instead he proposed the establishment of a Central Coal Board, consisting entirely of owners, which would act as trustees to Parliament and the country for the observance and maintenance of twenty principles laid down for the smooth and efficient running of the industry[61]. All undertakings were to bind themselves to accept every decision made by the Board in accordance with its constitution, and to give effect to them in practice. The Coal Commission was also to be asked to insist upon a similar irrevocable covenant being accepted by every undertaking to which it granted a lease. The Central Board was to submit an annual report to the Minister of Fuel and Power, and was to be assisted in its work by District Boards. It was also intended that amalgamation should normally be on a voluntary basis, and that there should be co-ordinated selling arrangements throughout the industry[62]. Needless to say the Foot Plan was strongly criticised by those in favour of nationalisation[63].

The success of the Labour Party in the General Election of July 1945, however, rendered the Foot Plan of purely academic interest. The inevitability of nationalisation was accepted by the Kent Coal Owners at the August meeting of their Association, when they unanimously agreed to:

> " ... place themselves fully at the disposal of the Government, both in connection with the working out of the necessary organization to be created and in connection with the arrangements which will be necessary to ensure that the transfer from private ownership to the new organization will be accomplished in a smooth and efficient manner." [64]

60. Robert Foot, A Plan for Coal (1945), pp. 39-40.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-47.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

63. For a particularly strong criticism see Harold Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-97.

64. The Kent Coal Owners' Association, *Minutes*, 24 August 1945.

By October they knew that compensation would be paid in a global sum, and two months later they also knew this sum was to be decided[65].

By the terms of the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946 the assets to be transferred to the National Coal Board were divided into three classifications:[66]

Part I Assets, which were to be transferred without option and consisted of the already nationalised interests of the Coal Commission together with the privately owned collieries, including their related electricity and manufactured fuel plants;

Part II Assets, which were to be transferred at the option of the N.C.B. or of the colliery owners and included colliery stores, wharves etc., colliery housing and farm property;

Part III and IV Assets, which were to be transferred at the option of the N.C.B. or of the colliery owners, subject to arbitration in the case of objection, and included central rescue stations[67].

The compensation to be paid to the owners for the Part I assets was fixed at the global figure of £164,660,000[68]. This sum was then to be

65. Ibid., 10 October 1945 and 13 December 1945.

66. 9 & 10 Geo. 6 cap. 59. Reference is only made to those aspects of the Act relevant to Kent.

67. Apart from the Central Rescue Station only Part I and Part II Assets related to Kent. As this was such a small item and as there is no reference to the three Kent colliery companies receiving any Part III compensation, it can only be assumed that this was subsequently included in the figures for Part II compensation.

68. National Coal Board, Second Annual Report for the Year ending 31st December 1947, P.P. 1947-48 (174) X, p. 484. (Hereafter referred to as N.C.B., Annual Report for 1947). The fixing of this global sum was known as Stage I of the Valuation Proceedings.

divided amongst the different districts by a Central Valuation Board[69], and each company was to have its share of the district total determined by a separate District Valuation Board[70]. The District Valuation Board was also to determine the amount of additional compensation for subsidiary, Part II, III and IV, assets[71].

The hearing before the Central Valuation Board in connection with Stage II of the Valuation Proceedings commenced in November 1948. Sir Cyril Radcliff K.C. presented the Kent claim, which was supported by the evidence of five witnesses:[72]

1) G. M. Fotheringham, who was Secretary and Director of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. and had recently resigned as Finance Director of the South-Eastern Division of the National Coal Board[73], dealt mainly with the results in the District prior to the outbreak of war;

2) Harry Watson Smith, who was a director of the Chislet Colliery Ltd. and had recently resigned as Production Director of the East Midlands Division of the N.C.B., gave evidence in reference to technical developments and prospects in the coalfield;[74]

69. This was known as Stage II of the Valuation Proceedings.

70. Kent Coal Owners Association, Minutes, 30 August 1948; N.C.B., Annual Report for 1947, p. 484. It was of course permissible for companies to agree amongst themselves on their respective shares, and then have their agreement approved by the District Valuation Board.

71. N.C.B., Annual Report for 1947, p. 484. This was known as Stage III of the Valuation Proceedings. There was of course nothing to stop the National Coal Board and individual companies coming to their own agreement on these items.

72. The Kent Coal Owners' Association, Minutes, 30 August 1948 and 18 October 1948; Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946, Central Valuation Board, Claim of the Kent District Coal Owners' Association, passim. (Hereafter referred to as K.C.O.A. Claim).

73. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 71. He became a director in January 1948, having resigned his N.C.B. post in December 1947.

74. Watson Smith was one of the country's leading mining engineers and had been a member of the Reid Committee (Ministry of Fuel and Power, Coal Mining, Report of the Technical Advisory Committee, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6610) IV, p. 317). He had rejoined the Chislet Board in February 1948, having resigned in December 1946 to take up the N.C.B. post, which he then left in January 1948. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 158).

3) Frederick Cecil Asgill, a director of Chislet's sales agents Stephenson Clarke Ltd., submitted evidence relating to the advantages enjoyed by the Kent District in regard to the freight position as compared with those of other districts which had been in competition with the Kent producers;

4) Arthur Ernest Cogdon, who had been sales manager of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. from 1926 until his appointment as Marketing Director of the South Eastern Division of the N.C.B. in October 1946, gave evidence in regard to the marketing position in retrospect and as it affected the future;

5) Harry James Sanders, a partner in Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., Chartered Accountants, showed how the evidence of the previous witnesses should affect the amount of compensation to which the District was entitled.

As compensation was to be based on a district's net maintainable revenue, which meant on its past profitability, calculated according to the criteria laid down in the Terms of Settlement that ended the national coal strike of 1921[75], together with some allowance for its prospects of future profitability[76], and as the division of the district allocation was to be divided amongst colliery companies on the same basis, it is necessary to consider the trading results contained in Tables 6.4 and 6.5. Although only the results contained in Table 6.5 and the last two columns of Table 6.4 are calculated according to the Terms of Settlement criteria, the results for the three individual companies do give a broad indication of the level of their past profitability: Chislet very successful,

75. See above Chapter 4, p. 219.

76. K.C.O.A. Claim, Evidence of Harry James Sanders, pp. 63-71.

Table 6.4: Profits Earned by Colliery Companies in the Kent Coalfield and District Profitability, 1930-46

Date	Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.	Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd.		The Chislet Colliery Ltd.(6)			Kent District	
	Net Annual Additions to Profit and Loss Account	Sales of Coal less costs of raising coal(2)	Net Annual Additions to Profit and Loss Account	Gross Profit on Trading after providing for depreciation for the year	Net Annual Additions to Profit and Loss Account before deducting Dividend Payments	Distributed as Dividends(10)	Balance (after Coal Charges A/c) and after deduction of charges for pensions, subs and amortisation	Balance etc. before the operation of the Coal Changes Account
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1930	- 102,108	- 9,493	- 49,436	-	-	-	- 83,785	
1931	- 99,347	- 11,813	- 85,889	- 8,569	- 14,138	-	- 42,674	
1932	- 62,836	- 9,837	- 84,363	+ 13,481	+ 6,555	-	- 8,985	
1933	- 52,857	+ 3,001	- 72,872	+ 27,913	+ 9,998	-	+ 9,812	
1934	- 70,432	+ 6,548	- 71,912	+ 13,874	+ 2,346	-	- 2,272	
1935	- 95,522	+ 14,059	- 65,817	+ 31,157	+ 7,256	-	+ 20,260	
1936	- 136,977	+ 21,800	+ 293,931(3)	+ 46,624	+ 14,804	10,433	- 2,550	
1937	- 195,347	+ 15,449	- 5,496(4)	+ 44,505	+ 17,159	12,803	- 70,451	
1938	- 99,827	+ 38,846	+ 4,681	+ 60,499	+ 24,644	19 920	+ 58,434(12)	
1939	- 14,284	+ 58,329	+ 12,355	+ 72,405	+ 31,070	24,920	+ 169,163	
1940	- 94,936	+ 74,561	+ 3,509	+ 68,793	+ 11,671	15,026	+ 99,806	+ 100,894
1941	+ 5,262	+ 59,569	+ 9,950	+ 59,927(7)	+ 13,279	12,657	+ 170,068	+ 164,473
1942	- 2,993	+ 53,578	+ 9,870	+ 74,182	+ 20,416	16,841	+ 103,396	+ 62,640
1943	- 7,170	+ 41,862	- 1,868	+ 58,311	+ 18,305	16,842	+ 148,004	+ 188,955
1944	- 75,791	+ 92,075	+ 1,796	+ 56,776	+ 21,734	19,056	+ 169,415	+ 59,189
1945	- 8,382	+ 118,999	+ 9,191	+ 43,422	+ 18,350	17,084	+ 127,580	- 28,714
1946	+ 58,249(1)	+ 101,287	+ 25,064(5)	+ 14,376	+ 12,970	12,009	+ 119,879	- 20,800
1947				+ 29,360(8)	+ 13,001(9)	12,359(11)		

Notes:
(1) Total loss on Profit and Loss Account to 31 December 1946: £1,314,456.
(2) Including wages, rents, royalties and sundry works expenses.
(3) This was brought about by the waiving of £273,730 of debenture interest and the waiving of a further £30,953 of interest.
(4) All deficits prior to 31 December 1937 written off under scheme of arrangement with debenture holders.
(5) 5 per cent dividend paid on ordinary shares, totalling £8,938.
(6) All figures for the Chislet Colliery Ltd. relate to the financial year ending 31st March.
(7) Before depreciation (no figure given for depreciation so this could be misprint in the Balance Sheet).
(8) For the nine months to 31st December 1946.
(9) Balance in Profit and Loss Account at 31st March 1947: £31,507.
(10) Not including additional directors' fees under Article 93, which were also deducted from Profit and Loss Account, which varied from £417 to £550 when dividends were paid.
(11) Altogether between 1936 and 1947 inclusive, £189,950 were paid out in dividends.
(12) Half year to 30th June 1938 showed a loss of £25,224, half year to 31st December 1938 showed a profit of £83,658.

Sources: Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988; K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 63 and facing p. 64.

Table 6.5: Profits for individual Collieries (before Coal Charges Account Adjustments), 1944-46

Year	Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.					
	Betteshanger	Snowdown(1)	Total	Tilmanstone	Chislet(1)	District
1944	- 116,642	+ 19,134	- 97,508	+ 78,770	+ 77,927	+ 59,189
1945	- 115,834	+ 8,703	- 107,131	+ 89,702	- 11,285	- 28,714
1946	- 118,094	+ 55,182	- 62,912	+ 65,330	- 23,224	- 20,806

Note: (1) Chislet had always been profitable prior to 1945 and Snowdown had also made profits prior to that year. Reorganisation underground in 1945 and 1946 had disturbed the figures at both collieries. (K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 66).

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, facing p. 65.

Tilmanstone moderately so and improving, and Pearson and Dorman Long almost permanently incurring losses. Given that the war years were abnormal in the sense of being affected by flat rate price and wage increases and the operation of the Coal Charges Account, for the Kent Coal Owners to make a strong case their witnesses had to show that prior to July 1938 the pre-war years were also abnormal, and that the eighteen months from 1st July 1938 to 31st December 1939 was the only period in which the results could be regarded as a proper starting point for valuing the district's basic maintainable revenue[77]. It was argued that with the lower outputs during the period of development in the early 1930's the fixed and semi-fixed charges, such as administration, the number of surface personnel, pumping costs and depreciation, were relatively high and therefore depressed profitability[78]. No reference

77. Ibid., p. 67.

78. Ibid., Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, pp. 9-10. For an elaboration of these points see above Chapter 4, pp. 247-48.

was made, however, to the detrimental effects of the operation of the quota restrictions under the Coal Mines Act of 1930[79]. The decline in output from 1936 to 1939 was then attributed to the loss of labour brought about by recovery in other coalfields and the restrictions on recruitment in Kent, both by the Mining Industry Act, 1926 and by the terms of Pearson and Dorman Long's agreement with the Treasury for raising its debenture capital[80]. This both reduced the percentage of men working at the coal face and at Snowdown and Betteshanger necessitated a reorganisation and concentration of working places. The implementation of this policy provoked a nine week strike at the latter colliery during the first half of 1938. Not only was it maintained therefore that costs were rendered higher than would have been the case under normal working conditions, but also that prices were abnormally depressed until as late as 1938. It was argued that up to 1936 the need to find new customers for the increased tonnages being produced during a period of intense competition made it necessary for Kent producers to offer price inducements to prospective customers[81]. While it was clearly shown that the continuation of long term railway contracts from 1936 to 1938 depressed the rise in Kent prices compared with those of other districts[82]. Of the remaining years between July 1938 and December 1946 both Fotheringham and Watson Smith argued that the period from 31 December 1939 to 31 December 1946 should be disregarded as the war conditions, including the loss of labour and the effects of enemy air raids, and the absence of

79. See above Chapter 4, pp. 241-44.

80. K.C.O.A. Claim, Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, pp. 6-8; also see above Chapter 4, pp. 232, 234 and 254.

81. K.C.O.A. Claim, Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, p. 10 and Evidence of A. E. Cogdon, p. 55.

82. <u>Ibid.</u>, Evidence of A. E. Cogdon, pp. 55-56; also see above Chapter 5, pp. 320-22.

comparative handicaps in other districts made it unfair to compare the performance of Kent during the war with that for other districts in assessing the relative values for compensation[83]. This left therefore as a basis for ascertainment only the eighteen months July 1938 to December 1939[84]. Although in this eighteen month period, between the end of the Betteshanger strike and before the war began to have effect on the district, output was still well below capacity, the rate of profitability was 25 per cent above the average for the industry[85]. As to the post-war future, it was argued that both the present production capacity of the coalfield and its transport cost advantages over other coalfields were likely to increase substantially[86].

In presenting the actual claim for compensation Sanders straight away declared that the financial results of the district up to the middle of 1938 were no indication of the district's future earning capacity, and that they had been disregarded in making valuation[87]. To arrive at a figure for the basic net maintainable revenue the average credit balance of 1s. 11.83d. per ton for the eighteen months 1st July 1938 to 31st December 1939 was multiplied by 1,241,864 tons, which was the commercially disposable output from 1st October 1945 to 30th September 1946 increased by 13 per cent to allow for the increase in output between the last quarter of 1945 and the last quarter of 1946, to arrive at an annual

83. Ibid., Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, pp. 12-14, and Evidence of H. Watson Smith, p. 28.

84. Ibid., Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, p. 16 and Evidence of H. J. Sanders, p. 67.

85. Ibid., Evidence of G. M. Fotheringham, p. 16.

86. Ibid., Evidence of H. Watson Smith, Exhibit H.S.W.3, p. 22, and Evidence of F. C. Asgill, Exhibit F.C.A.1, p. 42.

87. Ibid., Evidence of H. S. Sanders, p. 64.

revenue, after deducting interest charges, of £113,680[88]. This figure was then multiplied by 12½ years purchase to arrive at a basic claim figure of £1,421,000. The Kent multiplier was lower than many other coalfields as it was felt that the basic annual net maintainable revenue used in the district claim had not been supported by a sufficient period of profitable working[89]. To this was added a figure of £1,323,130 as the estimated potential increase in net maintainable revenue to 1956, making a total claim of £2,744,130, rounded to £2,700,000[90]. The full details of the claim and its method of calculation are shown in Table 6.6. As the written down value of the district's capital assets on the vesting date of 1st January 1947 was claimed to be £2,270,000[91], the Kent Coal Owners were asking for £430,000 in excess of this on the basis of expected improved profitability. The Central Valuation Board was not, however, impressed by the case they heard as in August 1949 it awarded

88. Ibid., Evidence of H. J. Sanders, Exhibits H.J.S.2, and H.J.S.3, pp. 65-67. The commercially disposable output for the twelve months to 30 September 1946 was 1,098,314 tons. This figure was increased by 13.07 per cent, as the commercially disposable tonnage in the fourth quarter of 1946 was 316,612 tons compared with 280,023 in the corresponding period of 1945.

89. Ibid., facing p. 67.

90. Ibid., pp. 65-71.

91. K.C.O.A. Claim, Evidence of H. J. Sanders, Exhibit H.J.S.1, p. 63 and p. 71. That this was an overstatement of the value of these Schedule I assets see Table 6.7 below.

Table 6.6: Kent District: Summary of Claim for Compensation, Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946

Output		Profit per Ton	Annual Revenue (after deducting interest charges)(1)	Increase in Annual Revenue	Years Purchase	Claim
	Tons	s. d.	£	£	No.	£
Basic (1945-46)	1,241,864	1. 11.83	113,680	-	$12\frac{1}{2}$	1,421,000
Short Term (1949)	1,917,000	2. 11.06	250,010	136,330	$6\frac{1}{4}$	852,060(2)
Medium Term (1952)	2,600,000	2. 11.25	320,360	70,350	3	211,050
Long Term (1956)	3,650,000	2. 11.45	430,620	110,260	2	220.520
					Total of Claim	2,704,630
					Claim Submitted	2,700,000

Note: (1) Interest charges of 4 per cent were assumed on capital provided from the districts own resources, and 5 per cent on fresh borrowings. Interest deducted was £6,320 in 1945-46, £23,710 in 1949, £55,190 in 1952, and £101,740 in 1956.

(2) A discrepancy exists between Exhibit H.J.S.2, p. 65 and p. 71. On the latter page the short-term figure is for £142,650 X $6\frac{1}{4}$ years purchase, totalling £891,550. The total claim therefore comes to £2,744,130, but is rounded to £2,700,000 before submission.

Source: K.C.O.A. Claim, Evidence of H. J. Sanders, Exhibit H.J.S.2, p. 65 and pp. 69-71.

the Kent District only £1,094,000[92]. Although the three companies could have used the machinery of the District Valuation Board to allocate this sum, they preferred to try and reach a voluntary agreement amongst themselves. This had the advantage of avoiding expenses, which were likely to have been in the region of £44,000, and which, unlike those incurred before the Central Valuation Board, would have fallen entirely on the companies[93].

Each company left negotiations to one of its directors: Fotheringham acting for Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., Ganderton for the Chislet Colliery Ltd., and G. T. Hannaford, Tilden Smith's former private secretary, for Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. Discussions amongst the three started on 29th August 1949[94]. Because of Pearson and Dorman Long's poor

92. Whitehall Securities Records, No. 584: File on Compensation Negotiations: Correspondence with Mr. Ganderton, Letter dated 22 September 1949 from E. W. Ganderton to G. M. Fotheringham. (Apart from a Note of a telephone conversation on 20 September 1949 between Fotheringham and Ganderton, this correspondence is hereafter referred to as Letter from Ganderton to Fotheringham, or Copy of letter from Fotheringham to Ganderton); Whitehall Securities Records, No. 584: File on Compensation Negotiations: Correspondence with Directors, Copy of letter dated 23 August 1949 from G. M. Fotheringham to A. Dorman (at Middlesbrough). (Apart from one letter dated 20 February 1950 from Fotheringham to Lord Cowdray, all correspondence is between Fotheringham and Arthur Dorman and, with this one exception, is hereafter referred to as Letter from Dorman to Fortheringham, or Copy of letter from Fotheringham to Dorman). Edward William Ganderton was a director of the Chislet Colliery Ltd. and of its parent companies Stephenson Clarke Ltd.,and Powell Duffryn Ltd. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 161). Dorman and Cowdray were the representatives of the two main parent companies on the Board of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.

93. Letter dated 25 October 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham. The Stage II Expenses totalling £23,707 that had been incurred by the District in presenting its case before the Central Valuation Board had been partly met by the Government. (Kent Coal Owners' Association, Minutes, 8 March 1951; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 167. Chislet received £2,879, which must have been just under a quarter of the Government's total contribution to the district, as the Owners - Minutes, 18 October 1948 - had agreed that the Stage II expenses should be shared by the three companies in proportion to their saleable outputs in the year 1946.)

94. Copies of letters dated 23 August 1949 and 30 August 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman.

profitability record in comparison to the other two companies, Fotheringham appreciated that he was not in a strong position and at best he hoped for 50 per cent of the district's £1,094,000 of compensation[95]. He opened negotiations, however, with a minimum figure acceptable to Pearson and Dorman Long of £570,000[96]. As Ganderton was prepared to accept a minimum of £370,000 only on condition that Pearson and Dorman Long received no more than 50 per cent of the "kitty"[97], and as Hannaford placed Tilmanstone's minimum at £200,000[98], it soon became evident that Fotheringham would have to scale down his figure. Arthur Dorman wanted a voluntary settlement and was prepared to consider Fotheringham's suggestion of accepting only £542,000 if a definite agreement could be reached[99]. Chislet was not prepared, however, to go below £360,000[100], and Tilmanstone insisted on at least £196,000[101]. As other Pearson and Dorman Long directors were prepared to go slightly below 50 per cent[102], Fotheringham concluded that £538,000 may be the best offer he could

95. Copy of letter dated 30 August 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman.

96. Note of a telephone conversation on 20 September 1949 between Fotheringham and Ganderton; Letter dated 22 September 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham; Copy of letter dated 27 September 1949 from Fotheringham to Ganderton.

97. Letter dated 29 September 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham.

98. Letter dated 22 September 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham.

99. Letters dated 30 September 1949 and 5 October 1949 from Dorman to Fotheringham; Copy of letter dated 3 October 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman.

100. Letters dated 29 September 1949 and 28 October 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham.

101. Copy of letter dated 2 November 1949 from Ganderton to Hannaford (enclosed with Letter dated 2 November 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham); Copy of letter dated 4 November 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman.

102. Letters dated 7 October 1949 and 14 October 1949 from Dorman to Fotheringham. These included Sir Ellis Hunter and E. W. Towler of Dorman Long Ltd.

obtain[103]. He therefore agreed with Ganderton to try and settle with Hannaford along the following lines:[104]

	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.	540	540	539	538
The Chislet Colliery Ltd.	360	358	357	356
Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd.	194	196	198	200

Under no circumstances would Pearson and Dorman Long and Chislet agree to Tilmanstone receiving more than £200,000. Tilmanstone must, however, have stuck firmly to its demand for this figure as on 17 November 1949 the three companies agreed to the 538 : 356 : 200 division[105]. Although the agreement was subject to the compensation stock being received not later than 30th June 1950, this time limit was later removed[106], and the settlement was submitted for approval to the District Valuation Board[107].

Stage III Proceedings, by which the Schedule II Assets were valued, commenced in November 1951, and by December of the following year both Pearson and Dorman Long and the Chislet Colliery had reached settlements with the National Coal Board, which were then confirmed by the District

103. Copy of letter dated 4 November 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman.

104. Copy of letter dated 7 November 1949 from John P. Stephenson Clarke to Hannaford (enclosed with Letter dated 8 November 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham); Letter dated 8 November 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham. In addition Chislet was to pay Pearson and Dorman Long between £5,000 and £7,000 when it received a refund of its Stage III costs.

105. Copy of letter dated 24 November 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman; Letter dated 2 December 1949 from Ganderton to Fotheringham. Fotheringham felt that he had to give way for fear of Tilmanstone backing out. (Copy of letter dated 2 December 1949 from Fotheringham to Dorman).

106. Copy of letter dated 20 February 1950 from Fotheringham to Lord Cowdray; Letter dated 24 February 1950 from Dorman to Fotheringham; Letter dated 17 February 1950 from Ganderton to Fotheringham; Copy of letter dated 21 February 1950 from Fotheringham to Ganderton.

107. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 164.

Valuation Board[108]. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. did not reach agreement, however, until the middle of 1953[109]. The sums received by the three companies for these subsidiary assets are given in Table 6.7.

As can be seen from Table 6.7 the Chislet and Tilmanstone companies received in compensation sums greater than the value of their vested assets, while Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. received considerably less. On receipt of these payments each of the three companies adopted a different policy.

Pearson and Dorman Long used the first instalments of the compensation it received to redeem in September 1950 the whole of its £675,200 of outstanding debenture stock[110]. Four years later it realised £4,242 on the liquidation of a subsidiary company, the Dover Cliffe Land Co. Ltd., whose assets did not vest in the N.C.B.[111], but the following year the liquidation of another subsidiary, the Channel Steel Co. Ltd., resulted in a realised loss of £420,744[112]. By transferring £296,892 from its capital reserves, however, the company was able to reduce its total capital losses on realisation of assets to £576,639[113]. The company's only asset was then £625,000 in cash which it deposited with its parent company, Whitehall Securities Ltd.[114]. So although the company

108. The Kent Coal Owners' Association, Minutes, 14 January 1952 and 12 December 1952. Consequently these two companies then retired from the Kent Coal Owners' Association leaving Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. as the only member.

109. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 77.

110. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 79.

111. Ibid., item 93.

112. Ibid., item 94.

113. Ibid., item 94. The loss on nationalisation was listed in 1955 as £452,807.

114. Ibid., items 94 and 101. Dorman Long Ltd. had sold its shares in Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. in 1954 to Broadminster Nominees Ltd. (Ibid., item 89).

Table 6.7: Compensation paid to the Kent Colliery Companies under the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946

	Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.	Chislet	Tilmanstone	Total
	£	£	£	£
Vested Assets:				
Capital Expenditure at cost less realization and amounts written off.(1)	1,271,764			
Stocks: Book values of stocks vested in N.C.B.	139,748			
Dead Rents and Royalties	48,073			
Total Value of Vested Assets	1,459,585	311,917	254,905	
Total later reduced to	1,432,908	311,917	251,445(3)	1,996,270
Compensation: Received from Government for:				
Schedule I Assets	538,000	356,000(2)	200,000(4)	1,094,000
Schedule II Assets	436,358	176,823	109,151	722,332
Total Compensation Received	974,358	532,823	309,151	1,816,332
Balance of Compensation Received over Value of Vested Assets	- 458,550	+ 220,906	+ 57,706	- 179,938

Notes: (1) Includes collieries, land, buildings, plant, equipment, cost of development and houses, and in the case of Pearson and Dorman Long the Richborough area.

(2) Itemised this was: £61,594 for stocks and stores; £10,500 for shortworkings; and £104,729 for houses and farms.

(3) Reduced because of War Damage Claim of £3,460.

(4) Itemised this was: £21,959 for stocks and stores; £87,191 for other ancilliary interests, including housing.

Sources: Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988.

contimues to exist it now engages in no business activity.

Having continued to pay £12,359 in dividends in each of the three years 1948 to 1950 inclusive, the Chislet Colliery Ltd. decided as early as September 1950 to go into voluntary liquidation[115]. After receiving its compensation and covering its remaining liabilities, the company returned 6s. 5.05d. on each 4 shilling ordinary share, and 43s. 0.8428d. on each £1 preference share, totalling £130,156 and £409,316 respectively, and was finally dissolved in 1954[116].

Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. changed its name in August 1947 to Tilmanstone Holdings Ltd. and, after selling the 3½ per cent Treasury Stock it received as compensation for its assets, it became an investment trust[117]. Its shareholders benefitted considerably from this change, as in 1953 the company used the £57,706 surplus compensation over the book value of its assets, together with £87,962 from the contingencies reserve no longer needed, to pay a 50 per cent dividend totalling £162,500[118].

As one would have expected, therefore, given the method of valuation of colliery assets under the Nationalisation Act of 1946, the shareholders of the two profitable companies cannot be said to have lost by nationalisation. The losers, were Lord Cowdray's Whitehall Securities Corporation and Dorman Long Ltd., the two companies that had done so much to develop the coalfield after the collapse of the Kent Coal Concessions Group in the early twenties.

115. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, items 161-62 and 164-65.

116. <u>Ibid.</u>, items 173-74.

117. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, items 66-68 and 72-73. Its name was subsequently changed to the Tilmanstone Investment Trust Ltd.

118. <u>Ibid.</u>, item 78.

CHAPTER 7

THE KENT MINE WORKERS' ASSOCIATION

During the submission of evidence by E. Rowley, H.M. Mines Inspector for the Midland and Southern Division, to the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines in March 1936, it was noted that Kent was one of the districts which took most advantage of the right of workmen's representatives to make regular inspections of their mines. To try to explain this Ebby Edwards, the General Secretary of the Mineworkers Federation of Great Britain informed his fellow Commissioners that:

> Kent is our strongest section. The miners are better organized as a trade union in Kent than in any other section[1].

Although formed only twenty-one years earlier, the Kent Mine Workers' Association[2] had certain advantages compared with the larger constituent members of the M.F.G.B. Before analysing these, however, it is first necessary to draw attention to the comments of J. E. Williams on the question of labour in the coalfields:

> Labour is a factor of production. Its behaviour becomes meaningful only when it is studied in relation to that of other factors of production. The costs of production of any given amount of a commodity are the supply prices of the corresponding quantities of its factors of production. And the sum of these is the supply price of that amount of the commodity. The demand for labour is derived indirectly from the

1. Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines, 1936-38, Minutes of Evidence, Vol. I, p. 207 (Non-Parliamentary Paper).

2. From 1915 to 1921 the union was officially called the Kent Miners' Association, and after 1st January 1945 it became the National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area). Similarly the Miners' Federation of Great Britain changed its title in 1931 to the Mineworkers' Federation of Great Britain.

> consumer demand for its final product. This applies to all factors of production, so the demand for each factor will depend upon the prices of all factors, not on its own price alone. Within these limits labour has sought to increase its price by striving to create an imperfect market for itself by forming trade unions. The unions have taken not only industrial action but also political action. In both cases the motive has invariably been economic. The price of labour is not governed by wages along, but by hours and working conditions. Wages, hours and conditions have all been the subject of legislation which the unions have sought to bring about by political action. Political action has also been taken to ensure that the powers of the unions were not restricted, to improve social welfare and even to change the relations of production by the extension of public ownership, but the basis of all these endeavours has been economic[3].

From this one can begin to see what were some of the advantages enjoyed by labour in Kent compared with other coalfields. The nearness to south-eastern markets enabled Kent to obtain higher than national average prices per ton for its coal, and this contributed to its being able to pay a higher than national average wage to its labour force. In addition shortage of labour throughout the greater part of the period 1913 to 1946 further strengthened the bargaining position of the miners[4]. The Kent Mine Workers' Association sought to retain this favourable position by not encouraging miners from other areas to come to the district. It also endeavoured to improve earnings and conditions locally by giving full support to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in its attempts to bring about national wage settlements, reduce the hours of work, and improve conditions of employment through Parliamentary

3. J. E. Williams, 'Labour in the Coalfields: A Critical Bibliography', <u>Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History</u>, No. 4, Spring 1962, p. 25.

4. It was only in the years 1921-26 and early in 1938 that there was a surplus of miners in Kent at the then prevailing wage rates.

legislation. For this purpose, and also because the experience of the 1924 strike in Kent showed the importance of its affiliation to the M.F.G.B.[5], the K.M.W.A. was one of the strongest advocates of a more centralised national miners' union. Before analysing these policy goals in greater detail, however, it is first necessary to consider the formation, organisation and finances of the Kent miners' union.

The first independent trade union activity in the Kent Coalfield commenced in October 1913[6]. At first there were separate workmen's committees at the Tilmanstone and Snowdown collieries, but in August 1914 a joint committee was established with its own district secretary[7]. Seven months later in March 1915 the Snowdown committee was instrumental in forming the Kent Miners' Association[8]. At first the Tilmanstone committee was reluctant to join the new association[9], as it had reservations about the strength of union organisation at the Snowdown

5. See below pp. 371 and 386-87.

6. P.R.O., F.S. 12/241 Kent Mine Workers' Association 1647T, Annual Return for 1917. (Hereafter referred to as K.M.W.A. Annual Return for 1917, etc.) The Kent Coal League, an association for all employees of the Concessions group of companies, had been formed in 1910, but the chairman tended to be one of the colliery managers, and its secretary was the company secretary of the Snowdown Colliery Ltd. (The Colliery Guardian, 8 June 1917, p. 1090 and 21 June 1918, p. 1260). This association was not registered with the Registry of Friendly Societies, and appears to have ceased operation soon after 1921. An income and expenditure account and balance sheet for 1921 shows that it received £803 in contributions from members and £686 from employers, while loans to the Snowdown and Tilmanstone Branches of the K.M.W.A. totalled £100. (This document is in the possession of Mr. W. Newman).

7. Kent Mine Workers' Association, Minutes, 20 March 1915 and 3 September 1916. (Hereafter referred to as K.M.W.A. Minutes).

8. K.M.W.A., Minutes, entry for 10 March 1915 and 20 March 1915. The name of the Association was changed to the Kent Mine Workers in 1921.

9. Ibid., 25 July 1915.

Colliery[10]. After discussions between the executive committee of the K.M.W.A. and the Tilmanstone committee, however, the members of the Tilmanstone union voted unanimously to join the association[11]. Soon after this the K.M.W.A. became affiliated to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain[12].

The K.M.W.A. was fairly slow in drawing up its rules and becoming registered with the Registry of Friendly Societies[13]. Final registration did not take place until June 1917[14], and in the meantime it operated according to the rules of the South Yorkshire Miners' Association[15]. Under its new constitution executive power was vested in a Council, which consisted of a President, Vice-President, General Secretary and Treasurer elected annually by ballot and three delegates elected by each Branch[16]. It was intended that strike action should be firmly in the control of the Council, as it required the sanction of two-thirds of Branch members by a ballot vote, which first had to be sanctioned by the Council itself[17].

10. Information supplied by Mr. R. Job. Mr. Job, who worked as a miner in Kent, wrote a dissertation on the Kent Coalfield when a student at Ruskin College, Oxford, just after the last war. He kindly made available that section of his dissertation on the formation and early years of the K.M.W.A. For a reference to the union at Snowdown being in a weak position in November 1914 see K.M.W.A., Minutes, 8 August 1915.

11. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 25 July 1915.

12. Ibid., 4 September 1915 and 2 October 1915.

13. Ibid., 4 September 1915, 29 January 1916, 2 April 1916, 15 April 1916, 5 August 1916, and 9 September 1916.

14. K.M.W.A., Annual Return for 1917.

15. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 8 August 1915 and 9 April 1916.

16. Registry of Friendly Societies, K.M.W.A., Vol. II, Intermediate File 1647 T, Rules of K.M.A., 13 June 1917. (Hereafter referred to as K.M.W.A. Rules 1917, etc.) The Branch Committees were to be elected every six months.

17. Ibid. Also at least three-quarters of the members had to vote.

The establishment of a new Branch at Chislet Colliery in 1918[18] occasioned a review of the operation of the union[19], which, after the formation of yet another Branch at Guilford Colliery in the following year[20], finally resulted in a new set of rules being adopted in 1921[21]. Under these new rules the Executive Council was reduced in size and in future was to consist of a President, a General Secretary-Agent, a Treasurer, and one delegate from each Branch[22]. With the disbandment of the Branch at Guilford in 1921, due to the closure of the colliery and the establishment of a new one at Betteshanger three years later[23], the Council attained a size that remained unchanged until 1945, when the K.M.W.A. became a constituent part of the newly formed National Union of Mineworkers. All officials of the union, except the General Secretary whose post became full-time, were to be elected annually in June[24].

Although the early officials of the K.M.W.A. were all part-time, the shortage of labour that existed in the coalfield before 1921 meant that there was much less risk of the kind of victimisation that accompanied the formation of mining unions in other areas[25]. In any case the first President and Secretary of the union were both checkweighmen at

18. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 1 June 1918 and 22 June 1918.

19. Ibid., 9 September 1918.

20. Ibid., 21 December 1918.

21. K.M.W.A. Rules 1921.

22. At meetings of the Council only the Branch delegates were allowed to vote, with the President having a casting vote. A card vote was to become operative, however, if demanded by the delegates.

23. K.M.W.A., Annual Returns for 1921 and 1924.

24. K.M.W.A., Annual Return for 1921.

25. As, for example, in Derbyshire in the 1880's. (See J. E. Williams, The Derbyshire Miners (1962), pp. 219-20).

the Snowdown Colliery[26], which automatically put them beyond the direct control of the management[27]. The only alleged incidence of victimisation came at the Tilmanstone Colliery in 1919-20, when a winding engineman, who was also a member of the Branch Committee, was dismissed for a breach of the Coal Mines (Regulation) Act. Although the men accepted a Mines Inspector's report that he was not actually at the engine levers on an occasion when he should have been, they claimed it was a case of victimisation by the management, and in February 1920 came out on strike. After three weeks both sides accepted the appointment of a Ministry of Labour conciliator, and the men returned to work. An agreement was finally reached by which the engineman was reinstated[28]. The first full-time General Secretary, John Elks, was elected in 1920 and held office from the beginning of the following year until his retirement in 1950[29]. Elks had come from Shropshire and had worked as a sinker at the Shakespeare Colliery before moving to Snowdown[30]. He had become secretary of the Snowdown Branch in 1917 and a member of the K.M.W.A. Executive Council the following year[31]. With the run-down and closure of Snowdown from 1922 to 1927, however, the other two union offices, those

26. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 10 March 1915 and 31 August 1918.

27. Under the tonnage (piece-rate) system of payment the coal-face workers elected and paid their own checkweighmen (one for each coaling shift) to ensure that the company's weighmen did not make any mistakes in weighing the loaded tubs sent to the surface by each group of coal face workers in the mine.

28. Tilmanstone Branch K.M.W.A., Minutes, 8 December 1918, 21 November 1919, 25 November 1919, 26 November 1919, 15 December 1919 and 10 January 1920; The Colliery Guardian, 13 February 1920, p. 455, 27 February 1920, pp. 593-94, 5 March 1920, p. 676, and 13 March 1920, p. 750; also information supplied by Mr. W. Newman.

29. K.M.W.A., Annual Return for 1920; Registry of Friendly Societies, K.M.W.A., File 1647 T, Annual Return for 1950.

30. Information supplied by Mr. R. Job.

31. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 10 November 1917 and 19 January 1918.

of President and General Treasurer, came to be dominated respectively by the secretaries of the Tilmanstone and Chislet Branches, William Newman and Wilfred Twigger[32]. With the re-opening of Snowdown Colliery in 1927, Edward Lawther, the younger brother of the Northumberland miners' leader William Lawther, became a major figure in the union. After serving a year as Snowdown Branch secretary, in 1929 he defeated Newman for the Presidency of the union and held this office for six years[33]. He was then elected to the General Treasureship, when it was made a full-time post in 1935[34]. He served in this office until his early death ten years later[35]. After this it was decided that the General Secretary should combine his post with that of Treasurer and engage a full-time clerical assistant[36]. With Lawther's departure from the Presidency in 1935, this office came to be dominated by members from the Betteshanger Branch, which had in 1933 become the largest single constituent of the K.M.W.A.[37].

32. Newman was Tilmanstone secretary from 1920 to 1945, and Kent President from about 1921 to 1929 and in 1938-39; Twigger had been the last part-time General Secretary in 1920, he was Chislet secretary intermittently before 1939, and General Treasurer from 1926 to 1935. (K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46; K.M.W.A., Minutes, passim; information supplied by Mr. W. Newman).

33. K.M.W.A., Annual Returns 1928-35; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 29 June 1929. Later in 1929 he also became checkweighman at Snowdown. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 24 October 1929).

34. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 27 May 1935, 26 June 1935, 26 July 1935, 19 August 1935, and 26 August 1935.

35. Ibid., 22 October 1945.

36. Ibid., 4 March 1946 and 2 April 1946.

37. Between 1932 and 1933 the number of members voting at Betteshanger in the county election for President and Treasurer increased from just over 250 to over 1,260. The latter figure constituted over a third of the total electorate. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 7 July 1932 and 29 June 1933). During the next thirty-five years there was only one occasion when a member from another Branch held this office, and this came about in 1938 when the Betteshanger leaders lost support at their own Branch following a nine-week strike at the colliery. (Ibid., 9 July 1938; information supplied by Mr. John Johnson, General Secretary, National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area) 1950-60, and by Mr. Jack Dunn, General Secretary, N.U.M. (Kent Area) since 1960. In addition both these later holders of the post of General Secretary were from the Betteshanger Branch).

From both its rules and activities it can be seen that the K.M.W.A. had a number of clearly defined objectives. It sought to protect the employment of its members, to maximise their incomes subject to the maintenance and, where possible, improvement of basic conditions of employment, to provide a certain range of friendly society benefits, and to support political activities with the ultimate objective of bringing about the nationalisation of the coal industry[38]. The favourable employment opportunities that existed in the coalfield from 1913 to 1920 and again for the most part after 1926 made it easier for the K.M.W.A. to attain these objectives. With the exception of the early twenties the demand for labour tended to exceed the supply, even at rates of pay that were well above the national average[39].

The leaders of the K.M.W.A. appreciated that employment was more likely to be protected, and earnings more likely to be kept above the national average, if all the men working in the coalfield were organised into one union, and if miners from other areas were not encouraged to come to Kent. In this way, partly because the ultimate threat of strike action would be more effective, the bargaining position of the union would be strengthened[40]. As can be seen from Table 7.1, apart from the year 1926, there was always a reasonably high proportion of the Kent miners in the K.M.W.A. Allowing for the fact that deputies could not be

38. K.M.W.A. Rules 1917 and 1921.

39. See above Chapter 4, passim, and Table 7.2.

40. Strikes are of course a major instrument of union policy. While attention will be paid to the objectives behind such action and their consequences, it is not intended to detail their course. (One exception will be made in the case of the Betteshanger strike of 1942, which has frequently been cited in current discussion on the question of the use of legal sanctions in the field of industrial relations). The national strikes organised by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain between 1920 and 1926 will in addition be covered only to the extent that they affected Kent, as the detailed events leading up to them are dealt with at length in works such as R. Page Arnot, The Miners: Years of Struggle (1953) and J. E. Williams, The Derbyshire Miners (1962).

Table 7.1: Kent Mine Workers' Association: Membership 1916-46

Year	Members at beginning of year	Members leaving during the year	New Members joining during the year	Members at end of the year	Total Wage Earners above and below ground[5]	Net Gain of Members during the year	Net Increase of Wage Earners	Turnover of Membership: Percentage of Members at 1st January who left the union during the year	Turnover of Membership: Percentage of Members at 31st December who had joined the union during the year	Members as a percentage of total wage earners[6]
1916	-	-	-	(810)	1,128	-	-	-	-	(71.81)
1917	810	371	466	905	1,098	95	- 30	45.80	51.49	82.42
1918	905	357	597	1,145	1,299	240	201	39.45	52.14	88.14
1919	1,483[1]	-	292	1,775	1,954	630	655	-	16.45	90.84
1920	1,775	370	600[2]	2,005	2,405	230	451	20.85	29.93	83.37
1921	2,005	449	145	1,701	1,977	- 304	- 428	22.39	8.52	86.04
1922	1,701	571	427	1,557	1,801	- 144	- 176	33.57	27.42	86.45
1923	1,557	282	325	1,600	2,116	43	315	18.11	20.31	75.61
1924	1,600	230	270	1,640	2,159	40	43	14.38	16.46	71.33
1925	1,640[3]	460	325	1,505	1,979	- 135	- 180	28.05	21.59	76.05
1926	1,505	825	525	1,205	2,287	- 300	308	54.82	43.57	52.69
1927	1,205	516	1,560	2,249	3,084	1,044	797	42.82	69.36	72.92
1928	2,249	1,040	1,825	3,034	3,673	785	589	46.24	60.15	82.60
1929	3,034	868	1,633	3,799	4,639	765	966	28.61	42.98	81.89
1930	3,799	882	1,580	4,497	5,152	698	513	23.22	35.13	87.29
1931	4,497	570	1,175	5,102	5,920	605	768	12.68	23.03	86.18
1932	5,102	951	675	4,826	6,396	- 276	476	18.64	13.99	75.45
1933	4,826	551	1,575	5,850	6,731	1,024	335	11.42	26.92	86.91
1934	5,850	810	1,260	6,300	7,068	450	337	13.85	20.00	89.13
1935	6,300	325	855	6,830	7,283	530	215	5.16	12.52	93.78
1936	6,830	960	975	6,845	7,248	15	- 35	14.06	14.24	94.44
1937	6,830[4]	749	675	6,756	7,126	- 89	- 122	10.97	9.99	94.80
1938	6,756	1,398	525	5,883	6,512	- 873	- 614	20.69	8.92	90.34
1939	5,883	698	549	5,734	6,419	- 149	- 93	11.86	9.57	89.33
1940	5,734	-	-	4,480	5,684	-1,254	- 735	-	-	78.82
1941	4,480	-	-	4,170	5,008	- 310	- 676	-	-	83.27
1942	4,170	-	-	4,832	5,336	662	328	-	-	90.55
1943	4,832	-	-	4,875	5,494	43	158	-	-	88.73
1944	4,875	-	-	5,205	5,783	330	289	-	-	90.01
1945	5,205	-	-	5,111	5,847	- 94	64	-	-	87.41
1946	5,111	-	-	5.208	-	97	-	-	-	-

Notes: (1) Presumably these members who returned from the armed forces were credited as still being paid up members. One also assumes that these particular members had not been included in the end of the year figure for 1918 as it was not known for certain if they were actually returning to the mines.

Table 7.1 continued

Notes: (2) In the union's accounts this figure is given as 500, but this is presumably a misprint for 600.

(3) Including unemployed members.

(4) This figure is given in the union's Annual Return.

(5) The figures for the years 1916-24 are for the labour force employed, those for 1925-38 are for Wage Earners employed in December of each year, and those for 1939-45 are the average number of men employed at the collieries during the year and include salaried staff.

(6) These percentages are most reliable for the years 1925-38 inclusive.

Sources: K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46; Table 4.2 (Labour force employed 1916-24); Mines Department, Annual Returns 1925-38 (Total number of wage earners employed in December of each year); Table 4.16 (Average number of men employed during the years 1939-45).

Table 7.2: Average Earnings in the Kent Coalfield, 1922-46

Year	Average earnings per man shift (excluding value of allowances in kind 1920-29, and including these allowances 1930-46)		Average real earnings per man shift at 1922 prices		Index of Retail Prices (1958 = 100)
	Kent	G.B.	Kent	G.B.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
1920	-	(15. 1½)[2]	-	(11. 2½)	58
1921	-	15. 11[2]	-	12. 11	53
1922	12. 9¼	9. 11¾	12. 9¼	9. 11¾	43
1923	12. 5½	10. 1	13. 0¾	10. 7	41
1924	12. 5½	10. 7¾	13. 0¾	11. 2	41
1925	12. 9¼	10. 6	13. 4¾	11. 0¼	41
1926	13. 1½	10. 5	14. 1¼	11. 2¼	40
1927	n.a.	10. 0¾	n.a.	11. 1¼	39
1928	n.a.	9. 3½	n.a.	10. 3	39
1929	n.a.	9. 2¾	n.a.	10. 2	39
1930	11. 4½	9. 8¼	13. 2¾	11. 3	37
1931	11. 2¼	9. 6¾	13. 9	11. 9	35
1932	11. 0½	9. 6¾	13. 11½	12. 1¼	34
1933	10. 9¾	9. 6	14. 1	12. 4½	33
1934	10. 6½	9. 6¼	13. 8¾	12. 4¾	33
1935	10. 8	9. 7¾	13. 6	12. 2½	34
1936	11. 3	10. 5	13. 9¾	12. 9½	35
1937	11. 11½	11. 0¾	14. 3½	13. 2½	36
1938	12. 5¼	11. 8	14. 5½	13. 6¾	37
1939	13. 1¾	12. 0	14. 10½	13. 7	38
1940	14. 5[1]	13. 6	14. 5	13. 6	43
1941	16. 11[1]	15. 5	15. 5¾	14. 1¼	47
1942	19. 9[1]	18. 0	16. 11¾	15. 5¾	50
1943	21. 2[1]	19. 8	17. 6	16. 3¼	52
1944	23. 8¾	22. 5	19. 3	18. 2¼	53
1945	n.a.	23. 11	-	18. 8½	55
1946	n.a.	24. 10	-	18. 8¾	57

Notes: (1) Includes the average value of allowances in kind for Kent and six other small districts (Cumberland, N. Wales,

Table 7.2 continued

Notes:

S. Staffs., Shropshire, Forest of Dean, and Bristol and Somerset). From 1938-39 figures Kent's allowances in kind were between ½d. and 1d. above the average for these seven districts. Allowances per manshift for the seven districts rose from just under 3d. in 1938 to just under 6d. in 1943.

(2) These figures are cited in W. R. Garside, The Durham Miners 1919-1960 (1971), p. 314. The figure for 1920 relates just to the months January to March.

Sources: 1922-26: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1922-26,

G.B. 1927-37: Mines Department, Annual Reports 1927-37,

G.B. 1938-46: Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest for 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1948-49 (Cmd. 7548) XXIX, Table 62 (Part A).

Kent 1930-39: K.C.O.A. Claim, p. 12.

Kent 1940-43: Ministry of Fuel and Power Statistical Digest from 1938, P.P. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6538) VIII, Table 35.

Kent 1944 : Ibid., for 1944, P.P. 1944-45 (Cmd. 6639) X, Table 59.

Index of Retail Prices: London and Cambridge Economic Service, The British Economy: Key Statistics 1900-1964, Table C, p. 8.

members of the union[41], and that colliery officials had their own association[42], the Executive Council of the K.M.W.A. came to consider that they would have a 100 per cent organisation if a minimum of seven-eighths of the men employed in the coalfield were in their union[43]. The Association attained this figure before 1920, when the union came close to imposing a virtual closed shop in the coalfield, and again after 1933. Once the K.M.W.A. had been formed there had been strong moves, certainly at Tilmanstone, to get all surface men into the organisation[44], and then to make both the Tilmanstone and Snowdown collieries into closed shops. Before the end of 1916 this latter goal had been attained[45]. Once the

41. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 14 October 1916.

42. P.R.O. F.S. 12/289, Kent Colliery Officials Association, 1767 T. This union was formed in 1919 and was affiliated to the Federation of Colliery Officials of Great Britain. It had branches at only the Snowdown and Betteshanger collieries, and its membership before 1946 fluctuated between 27 and 64. Along with other affiliated members of the Federation of Colliery Officials it became a constituent association of the National Union of Mineworkers after the Second World War.

43. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 May 1929.

44. Tilmanstone Branch K.M.W.A., Minutes, 16 April 1916 and 30 April 1916. As an inducement they were permitted at Tilmanstone to join the union at half the normal rate of entrance fee. Although this reference is just to surface men at Tilmanstone, it would seem from the information that follows that this policy must also have been pursued at Snowdown.

45. Ibid., 28 May 1916, 23 July 1916, 5 November 1916, 19 November 1916 (This reference is to men at Snowdown being dismissed for not being in the union), 25 November 1916, 3 December 1916, 10 December 1916 (The Tilmanstone Branch finally threatened strike action unless those men not in the union joined by 15 December), 6 December 1917 (By this date three men were being threatened with dismissal from the colliery for not having paid the full union entrance fee), 29 July 1917, 16 September 1917, 23 September 1917, 11 November 1917, 14 July 1918, 3 November 1919, 10 January 1920, and 21 March 1920; K.M.W.A. Minutes, 25 March 1916. In November 1917 and July 1918 the Branch secretary wrote to the Tilmanstone manager asking that particular individuals be prevented from working at the colliery until they joined the union. There is some evidence that this type of action, presumably at the Tilmanstone Colliery, was still proving effective as late as 1922. (See J. R. Raynes, Coal and Its Conflicts (1928), p. 195. Although Raynes does not mention the colliery by name, it would seem likely to have been Tilmanstone because Snowdown was near to closure, while at Chislet there is no evidence of this kind of action ever having been taken in the early years).

coalfield began to enter a period of economic difficulty after 1920[46], this high proportion of union membership declined and did not reach the same high level again until 1933. From the beginning of 1927 until then the size of the work force grew very substantially, from under 3,000 to 6,731 men, in addition to which there was a substantial turnover of labour, particularly at the Snowdown Colliery[47]. It was only during these years that non-unionism started to cause the K.M.W.A. serious concern[48]. There was a certain amount of non-unionism at Betteshanger[49], but at this colliery the situation was resolved in 1933 when the management agreed to the Branch's request to deduct union subscriptions directly from the men's weekly pay packets[50]. Towards the end of the same year similar arrangements were made at Snowdown[51]. At the other two collieries the membership situation gave no such cause for concern[52].

The finances of the K.M.W.A. between 1916 and 1946 are indicated in Tables 7.3 and 7.4. The change in the level of union subscriptions from 6d. to one shilling per week in 1921 and back again to 6d. in 1935 did not have the effect on union income that might have been expected[53]. The

46. See above Chapter 4, pp. 206-07.

47. See above Chapter 4, pp. 234-35.

48. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 25 February 1929, 11 April 1929, 23 September 1929, 30 June 1930, 24 July 1930, 20 October 1930, 11 February 1931, 14 July 1931, 31 August 1931, 21 November 1931, 11 February 1932, and 14 November 1932. An indication of the scale of the problem in terms of turnover of union membership is given in Table 7.1.

49. Ibid., 23 December 1930, 14 July 1931, 21 November 1931 and 11 February 1932.

50. Ibid., 16 February 1933 and 6 April 1933.

51. Ibid., 29 November 1933.

52. Ibid., 25 February 1929.

53. K.M.W.A. Rules 1917, 1921 and 1935. In 1935 one shilling still had to be paid during the last week of each month. Three years later, however, the Rules were amended to make this for just one week in each quarter. Members under 16 years of age paid only half-rate contributions.

Table 7.3: Kent Mine Workers' Association: General Fund Accounts 1916-46

Year	Income: From Members	Income: Total Income (including grants from M.F.G.B.)	Total Expenditure (including remittances to M.F.G.B.)	Balance of Income over Expenditure	Balance at end of the Year	Remitted to M.F.G.B.	Grants from M.F.G.B.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1916	-	-	-	-	889	-	-
1917	1,015	1,067	501	466	1,355 (1,292)(1)	14	-
1918	1,111	1,172	1,255	- 83	1,209	21	-
1919	1,162	1,235	2,264	- 1,029	180	24	-
1920	5,796	6,120	7,059	- 939	- 759	47	-
1921	5,516	6,368	10,444	- 4,076	- 4,835	58	500
1922	3,157	3,283	2,093	1,190	- 3,645	41	75
1923	3,592	3,621	3,333	288	- 3,357	55	-
1924	3,270	16,297	16,498	- 200	- 3,557	100	13,000
1925	3,152	3,167	2,788	379	- 3,177	76	-
1926	1,717	5,782	6,283	- 501	- 3,678	63	4,050
1927	3,564	3,762	2,934	828	- 2,850	163	28
1928	5,011	5,165	4,847	318	- 2,532	83	-
1929	6,366	7,076	3,940	3,136	604	101	-
1930	7,622	7,674	5,531	2,143	2,747	207	-
1931	6,434	6,505	4,899	1,705	4,352	156	-
1932	5,593	5,674	6,901	- 1,227	3,125	170	-
1933	6,453	6,516	5,972	544	3,668	207	-
1934	8,660	8,768	7,020	1,748	5,416	184	-
1935	9,224	9,309	8,561	747	6,163	243	-
1936	9,000	9,102	11,888	- 2,785	3,378	304	-
1937	9,085	9,130	8,726	404	3,782	506	-
1938	8,204	9,461	12,437	- 2,975	807	152	1,000
1939	7,161	7,195	7,022	172	979	230	-
1940	6,250	6,263	6,014	249	1,228	183	-
1941	5,425	5,440	5,650	- 210	1,019	149	-
1942	5,688	5,714	5,835	- 121	898	202	-
1943	6,657	6,816	6,446	370	1,268	175	-
1944	6,815	6,899	6,806	94	1,361	117	-
1945	6,546	6,572	6,519	52	1,413	3,107(2)	-
1946	7,113	7,168	6,748	420	1,833	3,531	-

Table 7.3: continued

Notes: (1) At beginning of 1918.

(2) Cost of purchase of Dover offices and salaries of General Secretary and Treasurer (later Secretarial assistant) now paid by central N.U.M.

Source: K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46.

average subscription from each member per annum was about 45 shillings in 1920, 54 shillings in 1921, and only 30 shillings in 1922[54], which would seem to indicate the difficulty of obtaining regular subscriptions in times of economic difficulty. On the other hand, the figure was stationary at just below 21 shillings in 1934 and 1935, but fell only to just over 19 shillings in 1936[55]. As these were averages of 5d. and 4½d. per member per week respectively one can only conclude that the union must have had considerable difficulty in collecting the full rate each week before 1935, but that the new rate together with the collection of subscriptions through the colliery offices at Betteshanger and Snowdown led to a more regular pattern of payment by members. The other main source of income was grants from the M.F.G.B., which were high in the strike years of 1924 and 1926[56].

Items of expenditure included the usual costs of administering the union, such as salaries of officers[57], general office expenses[58], and

54. K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1920-22.

55. Ibid., 1934-36.

56. See below Table 7.4.

57. The full-time General Secretary's salary was originally £350 per annum, but this was never paid except early in 1921. Early in 1922 it was reduced to £234 p.a. because of the closing down of Snowdown Colliery. It was increased to £260 in 1924 and again to £312 in 1930. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 13 March 1930). The General Treasurer was paid £6 p.a. before 1918, £14 from then until 1935 and £300 till 1943. (Ibid., 29 January 1916, 9 April 1916, 11 September 1918, 27 May 1935, 19 January 1943). Thereafter he was given parity with the General Secretary, and both received the flat-rate war additions. The President's salary remained fixed at £6 p.a. till 1938, when it was raised to £20. (Ibid., 29 January 1916, 23 December 1937 and 7 February 1938). Other Executive Council members were paid the district day wage rate plus expenses for each meeting they attended. (Ibid., 25 August 1917, 5 November 1917 19 January 1943).

58. The union rented offices in Dover until 1946. Although during the war it had to move to temporary headquarters in Canterbury. (K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1927, 1942 and 1946; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 28 August 1940, 7 November 1940, 13 June 1942). The present offices in Dover were purchased for the Association by the central N.U.M. in 1946.

payments to delegates and deputations[59], together with the cost of funeral benefits[60]. The big increases in outlay came, however, during periods when members were either on strike or unemployed through stoppages at the mines[61]. The details of the effects of these stoppages on the finances of the K.M.W.A. are given in Table 7.4. The strikes of 1920 and 1921 forced the K.M.W.A. into debt, and it was only able to make payments in the latter year because of loans made available by other unions[62]. It was not until 1929, when the loans for the most part were repaid, that the union's assets once again exceeded its liabilities[63], and it was not until the following year that it was finally free of any debts[64]. Apart from £950 invested in Government War Loan from 1917 to 1919 and £20 in 'Daily Herald' Debenture Bonds from 1921 to 1923, the K.M.W.A. had no investments until 1952[65].

59. From 1917 to 1935 the Branches retained 2d. out of every shilling collected as contributions, together with entrance fees, to cover their working expenses. After 1935 this figure was raised to 3d. Entrance fees for full members were fixed at 10 shillings in 1917, they were then raised to £1 in 1921 and reduced to only 5 shillings in 1935. Half members (under 18 years of age) paid only half rates. (K.M.W.A. Rules 1917, 1921 and 1935).

60. These were a very small item of expenditure. The union made no provision for sickness benefits or pensions.

61. Strike and unemployment pay per week was from 1917 to 1921 9 shillings for full members, 4s. 6d. for half members, and one shilling per child under 14 years of age. These rates were raised to £1, 10 shillings and 2 shillings respectively in 1921, and lowered again to 15 shillings, 7s. 6d. and 2 shillings in 1935. (K.M.W.A. Rules 1917, 1921 and 1935).

62. It would appear that these included: the National Union of Public Employees, the Amalgamated Engineers Union, and the National Union of Corporation Workers. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 April 1929, 1 June 1929, 29 June 1929, 19 December 1929 and 13 March 1930).

63. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 27 February 1930.

64. Ibid., 24 July 1930.

65. K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-52; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 20 January 1917, 17 February 1917 and 2 November 1918.

Table 7.4: Kent Mine Workers' Association: Strike and Unemployment Pay during Major Stoppages, 1917-46

Year	Payments Made	Comment
	£	
1919	823(1)	1,191 members receiving 9 shillings each.
1920	4,408(1)	£3,500 of traders credit bonds or food coupons were issued in lieu of strike pay. (£1,167 of which were still outstanding at the end of the year).
1921	6,954(1)	Despite a £500 grant from the M.F.G.B.(3) and loans of £6,100 from other unions it was not possible to pay full dispute pay to the 1,850 members during the 13 week dispute(4).
	1,632(2)	After the dispute 900 men received unemployment pay until such time as they could resume work.
1924	14,460(2)	Grant of £13,000 from M.F.G.B.
1926	4,443(2)	Grant of £4,050 from M.F.G.B.
1936	2,746(1)	Dispute at Betteshanger Colliery.
1938	5,860(1)	Dispute at Betteshanger Colliery. Grant of £1,000 from M.F.G.B.

Notes: (1) Dispute Pay.

(2) Unemployment Pay.

(3) Technically the £500 grant was made to offset debts incurred in the previous year. (Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Minutes, 7 January 1921).

(4) The M.F.G.B. felt unable to help the K.M.W.A. during this stoppage (M.F.G.B., Minutes, 26 May 1921).

Source: K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46.

The income of the K.M.W.A.'s Political Fund was never very great, and a high proportion of its money was remitted to the M.F.G.B. (See Table 7.5). Members who wished paid 6d. of the last weekly contribution per quarter into this fund[66]. Although all members paid this sum prior

66. K.M.W.A. Rules 1917, 1921 and 1935.

Table 7.5: Kent Mine Workers' Association: Political Fund Accounts, 1917-46

Year	Income	Expenditure (including net remittances to M.F.G.B.)	Balance at end of year	Remitted to M.F.G.B. (net)
	£	£	£	£
1917	90	63	27	20
1918	114	150	- 10	18
1919	143	95	38	71 (1)
1920	175	157	56	87
1921	161	94	123	75
1922	125	96	152	64
1923	155	130	177	79
1924	80	188	68	42
1925	80	105	43	43
1926	0	19	24	1 (2)
1927	80	99	5	40
1928	260	259	5	130
1929	316	309	13	113
1930	289	232	70	113
1931	293	358	4	169
1932	302	271	35	169
1933	263	226	73	113
1934	314	305	81	113
1935 (3)	379	456	4	13
1936	576	537	43	165
1937	383	336	90	165
1938	358	348	100	75
1939	328	275	153	100
1940	309	250	211	114 (2)

Table 7.5: continued

Year	Income	Expenditure (including net remittances to M.F.G.B.)	Balance at end of year	Remitted to M.F.G.B. (net)
	£	£	£	£
1941	264	218	257	115(2)
1942	296	225	329	115
1943	329	267	391	115
1944	384	361	414	147
1945	386	596	204	138
1946	381	439	145	164(2)

Notes: (1) Item may include affiliation fees other than to M.F.G.B.

(2) Item is described as affiliation fees to M.F.G.B. and the Labour Party.

(3) In the years 1935-41 inclusive there is an element of double counting in the union's accounts, which has been removed in this Table.

Source: K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46.

to 1926[67], the situation changed with the introduction of the practice of 'contracting in' brought about by the Trades Disputes Act 1927. The proportion of members who continued to make these contributions is given in Table 7.6.

The K.M.W.A.'s leaders were anxious to build a strong union. The occurrence of declining employment opportunities in the coalfield in the years 1921 to 1926 had, however, contributed towards undermining some of their earlier success[68]. After this experience it was not surprising that the K.M.W.A. was not keen to see the coalfield flooded with miners from other districts, as this would have tended to undermine one of their potential sources of strength. Other district mining associations, some of whose members were considering coming to Kent, were informed of the difficulties they were likely to encounter, in particular the working conditions at Snowdown Colliery[69]. At one stage the assistance of the M.F.G.B. was sought to prevent fresh importation of labour into the coalfield, as it was regarded as "a menace to the Association and its members".[70] Presumably because employment opportunities continued to increase in the coalfield in the thirties, the Executive Council of the K.M.W.A. did not discuss the matter again until 1940, when a suggestion by the Minister of Mines to transfer Welsh miners to the district met

67. Because of the stoppage in 1926 it was decided to make no deduction of contributions that year for the Political Fund. (K.M.W.A. Annual Return 1926).

68. See Table 7.1. These years were in fact the only ones in which there was any unemployment in the Kent Coalfield.

69. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 October 1928, 12 August 1929 and 6 February 1930.

70. Ibid., 19 December 1928. In 1929 the K.M.W.A. informed the Kent Rural Community Council that it had no objections to its settling miners from distressed areas in the county, providing that these men did not seek work in the Kent pits. (Ibid., 31 January 1929).

Table 7.6: Kent Mine Workers' Association: Members Contributing to Political Fund, 1927-46[1]

Year	Members contributing to Political Fund at the end of the Year	Total number of members at the end of the Year	Percentage of members contributing to Political Fund
1927	1,600	2,249	71.14
1928	2,490	3,034	82.07
1929	3,006	3,799	79.13
1930	3,027	4,497	67.31
1931	3,200	5,102	62.72
1932	3,112	4,826	64.48
1933	3,025	5,850	51.71[3]
1934	3,905	6,300	61.98
1935	4,300	6,830	62.96
1936	4,485	6,845	65.52
1937	4,287	6,756	63.45
1938	3,625	5,883	61.62
1939	3,357	5,734	58.55
1940	2,820	4,480	62.95
1941	2,810	4,170	67.39
1942	3,150	4,832	65.19
1943	3,492	4,875	71.63
1944	3,975	5,205	76.37
1945	3,991	5,111	78.09
1946	5,208[2]	5,208	100.00

Notes: (1) Prior to 1927 all members contributed to the Fund.

(2) This was as a result of the Trades Disputes Act, 1946, which reintroduced "contracting-out".

(3) There is no obvious explanation for this sudden fall in percentage of members contributing to the Political Fund.

Source: K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46.

with a not very enthusiastic response[71]. After the war, presumably with the industry's previous experience of post-war boom and sudden collapse in mind, the union became positively hostile to new recruits flooding into the coalfield[72].

The K.M.W.A. had become affiliated to the M.F.G.B. in 1915[73]. Although it had immediately asked for representation on the Federation's Executive Committee, it did not gain it until its General Secretary, John Elks, was elected in 1926[74]. Elks was re-elected subsequently in 1930, 1934, 1938-40, 1942 and 1944[75]. From as early as 1931 the K.M.W.A. was strongly in favour of the formation of a single miners' union to take the place of the existing district associations and federations and the M.F.G.B. itself[76]. It raised the matter first at the Federation's Annual Conference in 1931, and again in 1937, when its resolution for a "National Association for all mineworkers" was accepted in principle[77].

71. Ibid., 19 November 1940. The General Secretary pointed out that no "strangers" would be permitted to start work on the coal face or other contract work until the K.M.W.A.'s own men, who had up to the present been unable to secure contract work, had been provided for.

72. Ibid., 3 June 1946 (Meeting between Executive Council and Regional Control Officials). At this meeting the Regional Control Officials considered that Kent would need to recruit 390 men and could also do with 200 juveniles per year. The union's reply was that it was concerned with finding surface jobs for men disabled by accidents and industrial disease, and that new recruits must not come into the industry to the detriment of men already employed. One of the Regional Control Officials said he had never met with such opposition as in Kent. The following year the Kent union was totally opposed to any Polish labour being introduced into the coalfield. (Ibid., 23 January 1947).

73. Ibid., 25 July 1915 and 20 October 1915.

74. R. Page Arnot, op. cit.,(1953), p. 549. Election was on an annual basis.

75. Ibid., and R. Page Arnot, The Miners in Crisis and War (1961), pp. 437-38. Being a small union the Kent representative was sometimes elected as part of a group embracing the Somerset, Bristol and Forest of Dean mining associations, and sometimes because Kent itself was allocated a seat. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 25 February 1929, 17 May 1934, 7 March 1938 and 27 June 1938).

76. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 April 1931.

77. Ibid., 31 August 1931 and 24 May 1937; R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1961), pp. 97 and 99.

The vested interests of the separate district unions frustrated these moves, however, until the war years presented an increased number of matters requiring centralised decisions to be made by the union's national officials, and so provided the right climate for a reorganization formula to be adopted in 1944[78]. As the K.M.W.A. did not own property and did not have substantial funds from which a wide range of benefits were paid, it had few vested interests in the existing union structure. In fact the K.M.W.A.'s smallness and reliance on the M.F.G.B. for funds in times of industrial dispute gave it strong motivation in favouring a more centtalised organisation[79].

The K.M.W.A. was in favour of having all men working in or about the mines in Kent within its ranks[80], and one of the objectives specified in its rules was to make membership of the Association a condition of employment[81]. Although it had shown some tolerance in the early years towards the Kent Coal League, which was virtually a company union[82], this attitude towards other organisations was not maintained. In 1931 it even refused to make any agreement with the Engine Winders and Mechanics Union, which was a constituent association of the M.F.G.B. and had about 80 members at the Tilmanstone and Snowdown collieries, over the question of

78. For a detailed analysis of the events leading to the formation of the National Union of Mineworkers in 1945 see George B. Baldwin, 'Structural Reform in the British Miners' Union', Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. LXVII (1953), pp. 576-97.

79, The financial position of the K.M.W.A. was such that it did not pay the National Union of Mineworkers the capitation fee of £1 per member, which was due by 31 March 1945, until after 1950. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 27 December 1945; K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1944-50).

80. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 16 October 1935, 31 August 1936 and 10 June 1937. Except, as we have seen, for deputies.

81. K.M.W.A. Rules 1921.

82. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 5 November 1917. It advised Branches to select delegates for the League's elections in 1917, while four years later we have seen that the League had lent money to the Snowdown and Tilmanstone Branches.

representation either on a Joint Board of the K.M.W.A. and the owners, or on the District Welfare Committee[83]. Six years later the K.M.W.A. went so far as to break the foothold that the Winding and General Engineers' Section of the Transport and General Workers Union had at the Betteshanger Colliery. A strike by 54 of the Section's members in 1937 resulted not in their hoped for recognition, but in an agreement between the T. & G.W.U. and the K.M.W.A., which gave the men concerned three months in which they could join the latter union[84].

The main function of the K.M.W.A. was clearly to endeavour to provide its members with the highest possible standard of living, subject to the constraint of maintaining acceptable conditions of employment. Attention will, therefore, be concentrated first on these constraints, then on wage negotiations, and finally upon the wider considerations that affected living standards.

The constraints that the K.M.W.A. sought to impose on the employment of its members included the length of the working day, the number of shifts any man worked during the course of a week, the terms of their contracts, and the level of enforcement of safety standards.

Although the length of the shift was fixed by legislation, we have already seen that changes in the legal maximum in 1919, 1926 and 1930

83. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 February 1931 and 30 April 1931.

84. Ibid. 31 August 1936, 10 June 1937, 29 July 1937, 28 August 1937, 30 September 1937 and 7 March 1938. In 1939 the T. & G.W.U. again started accepting men at Betteshanger Colliery into the union, but as nothing further was reported on this one can only assume that the 1937 agreement was reinforced. (Ibid., 13 February 1939 and 15 March 1939). Some easing of this all embrasive policy came, however, in 1945, when the N.U.M. (Kent Area) agreed to the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union accepting as members surface clerical workers. (Ibid., 24 July 1945).

had little effect in Kent because the operation of the three-shift system made it impossible to have any shift lasting longer than 7½ hours[85]. It remained the K.M.W.A.'s policy, however, to try to achieve a 7 hour shift and a 5 day week[86]. Although no modification was made to the length of the working day after 1926, the union did become extremely concerned from 1931 onwards about the amount of overtime that began to be worked in the coalfield, particularly at weekends[87]. Despite raising the matter with the Minister for mines, with the District Board, on which both the owners and the union were represented, and with the M.F.G.B., the K.M.W.A. appears to have had little or no success in dealing with the problem[88].

The terms of contracts concerned the K.M.W.A. because from the very early years its leaders were opposed to the operation of the sub-contracting, or "butty", system in the Kent Coalfield[89]. Under this system the manager made a contract for the working of a stall or heading with one man, the butty, who then arranged for other men to work with him. Payment for the coal produced by the group was normally paid to the butty, who then shared the proceeds with the other men[90]. Sometimes he divided

85. See above Chapter 4, pp. 207-11 and 238-39. The length of the shift in Kent was 7½ hours, except from 1919 to 1926 when it was only 7 hours.

86. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 February 1932.

87. Ibid., 31 August 1931, 19 December 1931, 13 January 1932, 14 April 1932, 6 July 1932 and 19 January 1933. This overtime was worked most extensively at the Betteshanger Colliery.

88. Ibid., 31 August 1931, 21 November 1931, 30 April 1936 and 22 August 1936.

89. Strictly speaking this was the 'little butty system' of collective piecework at the coal face. For further information on this and the true butty system see A. J. Taylor, 'The Sub-contract System in the British Coal Industry' in L. S. Pressnell (ed.), Studies in the Industrial Revolution (1961), pp. 215-35.

90. The system could in fact be applied to any contract work in a colliery, such as driving headings, setting timber, and (in the case of Tilmanstone) tramming, i.e. moving the loaded tubs from the stall to the main haulage road.

the money equally with the others, but often he kept a higher share for himself[91]. The issue first became important at the Tilmanstone Colliery in 1916, when the Association advised men, who were sent to work in different stalls, to make their bargains as to payment before starting work[92]. The Branch Committee then followed this up by intervening in at least one case where a man had not received equal remuneration[93], and then clearly laid down the guideline that " ... any man working in another man's place shall, if he is a collier, receive the same amount of wages as the man he is working with if he is in that place over three days."[94] Even stronger action was taken in 1918 when the Branch decided by ballot that all men working on a particular contract should receive equal pay, and that any person not obeying this ruling would have his membership of the K.M.W.A. cancelled. The indications are that this policy was then effectively implemented at the colliery[96]. As there are no records relating to the operation of the sub-contracting system at the Snowdown Colliery, one can only assume, given the K.M.W.A.'s strength at this time

91. This system was particularly prevalent in the east Midlands, where it continued in places until nationalisation. (A. J. Taylor, op. cit., p. 220; A. R. Griffin, Mining in the East Midlands 1550-1947 (1971), pp. 192 and 211).

92. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 14 October 1916.

93. Tilmanstone Branch K.M.W.A., Minutes, 3 June 1917. This case is not entirely clear as it refers to just the "deficit" of a man's wages due from two others, but the implication is one of equal shares.

94. Ibid., 11 November 1917. Also a deputation was to see the manager to get the principle accepted of equal shares for groups of surface men working on contract.

95. Ibid., 7 September 1918 and 22 February 1919. Although the voting figures are not given, 500 ballot papers were printed, which provides some indication of the size of Branch membership in 1918.

96. Ibid., 1 February 1919, 22 February 1919 and 26 April 1919. A case involving three men was sent to the Executive Council in April 1919. Unfortunately the K.M.W.A. Minutes which would have covered this case were amongst those destroyed by enemy action in the Second World War.

and its support for the Tilmanstone Branch, that events there followed a similar course. Just as the sub-contracting system was being reduced in one part of the coalfield, however, it began to appear in another with the opening of the Chislet Colliery[97]. Presumably it did not become firmly established there, as there is no further reference to it, except that attempts in 1931 to establish certain work, such as ripping (i.e. cutting down the stone roofs) in new drifts, on a sub-contracting basis was firmly resisted[98]. In 1921 the K.M.W.A. had in fact gone so far as to declare in its Rule Book that the abolition of the system was one of its specific objectives[99]. Despite these early successes the butty system became a serious problem for the union in the late twenties and early thirties, when Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. introduced it into its newly opened Snowdown and Betteshanger collieries[100]. At both Branches ballots were taken in 1929, which produced results in favour of its abolition[101]. Even so its removal was a gradual process, coming at Betteshanger somewhere around the end of 1930, and at Snowdown only after a second ballot and threatened strike action some two years later[102]. The

97. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 31 August 1918, 11 September 1918, 1 October 1918 and 13 October 1918.

98. Ibid. 5 January 1931 and 11 February 1931.

99. K.M.W.A. Rules 1921.

100. The Snowdown Colliery had been deepened and its surface equipment completely renewed after its acquisition by Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. in 1924. (See above Chapter 3, pp. 126-27, 129 and 144).

101. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 December 1928, 31 January 1929, 25 February 1929 and 23 September 1929. At Betteshanger there were 29 votes for retaining the system and 235 against. There are no figures available for the Snowdown ballot.

102. Ibid., 28 August 1930, 11 February 1931, 25 August 1932, 24 September 1932, 1 October 1932 and 20 October 1932. The abolition at Snowdown came in October 1932. In the case of Betteshanger efforts were being made to eliminate the system in August 1930, after which there is no further reference to it in the K.M.W.A. Minutes. Already in December 1929, in a case involving a Snowdown employee who absconded with the wages of seven other men working in his stall, the company accepted liability to reimburse the men concerned. (Ibid., 19 December 1929 and 6 February 1930).

existence of the sub-contracting system at these two collieries, despite the opposition of the K.M.W.A., was in any case probably a reflection of the greater extent of non-unionism amongst their workers at the time[103].

The general level of safety conditions in coal mines was laid down by Act of Parliament, and as we have seen Kent was one of the districts in which the miners took full advantage of this legislation to make their own regular inspections of the pits[104]. Nevertheless accidents occurred in the coalfield and, besides its policy of trying to reduce their incidence[105], the K.M.W.A. also, from its very earliest years, sought to gain compensation for its members who were injured, and for the dependents of members who were killed[106]. By the early thirties the handling of such compensation cases had become a very important part of

103. When the Tilmanstone Branch proposed to include in the K.M.W.A. Rules "that no Buttyman to be allowed to be a member of the Association", the Executive Council decided instead to make a special effort to get a clause inserted into all price lists (i.e. the piece-rates agreed between the owners and the union for production from each seam at each colliery) that any man having two years experience on the coal face, and who is signed on at the colliers' base rate, to share equally in all contracts made, or wages earned. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 15 April 1930).

104. See above p. 358. Safety conditions in the coalfield are dealt with in more detail in Chapter 8.

105. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 18 November 1916 and 2 December 1916. From at least as early as 1916 workmen's inspections were being carried out at Tilmanstone Colliery, and the cost was being met from Branch funds.

106. Ibid., 13 November 1915, 11 December 1915, 17 February 1917, 17 March 1917, 14 April 1917 and 28 September 1918. In these early years the union was always represented at inquests following a fatality at work. Each colliery elected a representative to attend these inquests. Although in the early Minutes there is only reference to a compensation claim following a fatality, it seems not unreasonable to assume that the union was also representing its members in cases of injury. From subsequent Minutes it is clear that individual compensation cases were discussed at Executive Council meetings only in exceptional circumstances. Although the K.M.W.A.'s policy in supporting its members compensation claims is not quite a constraint on earnings in the same way as safety conditions, it is best dealt with here as such active union support would presumably have made employers more careful in seeing that safety regulations were adhered to.

the Association's activities[107]. One aspect that particularly affected Kent was the incidence of skin diseases, particularly dermatitis, which was rare in other districts but quite common in Kent[108]. Although there was some doubt whether skin diseases due to employment were technically covered by the Workmen's Compensation Acts[109], compensation was actually awarded in 1932 in the case of a Snowdown member suffering from dermatitis[110]. Had this case been lost, however, it would have made it difficult for any member to obtain compensation for this disease[111]. Nevertheless some confusion still existed, because although sufferers from dermatitis were now covered for compensation, those with other skin diseases were apparently not[112]. It was decided, therefore, to ask the M.F.G.B. to have this matter raised in Parliament with a view to having the legislation extended to include all skin diseases contracted by mineworkers through their employment[113]. It does not seem, however, that this approach met with much success during the next decade[114].

On the question of wages and industrial relations, we have already

107. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 14 July 1931, 6 June 1932 and 3 August 1933.

108. Ibid., 3 August 1933. The incidence was particularly high at Snowdown Colliery due to the extreme level of humidity. (See above Chapter 4, pp. 234-35).

109. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 17 May 1935.

110. Ibid., 6 June 1932.

111. Ibid.

112. Ibid., 23 August 1934. A number of men submitted to the medical referee in 1934 were certified as suffering from some occupational disease, but as this was not dermatitis no claim could be established for compensation.

113. Ibid., 17 May 1935, 2 May 1934, 23 August 1934 and 30 April 1936.

114. There are no further references to it in the K.M.W.A. Minutes, or of compensation claims for skin diseases other than dermatitis.

seen how wages were calculated, followed the course of wage changes from 1913 to 1946, and looked at the major industrial disputes that occurred in the coalfield as a result of the breakdown of wage negotiations[115].

From 1919 to 1926 and again after 1934 wage settlements in Kent were reached on a district basis. The first such agreement, covering the hours and rates of pay of surface workers, came in 1919 as a result of arbitration, following the breakdown of protracted negotiations, threatened strike action, and a final series of meetings between the representatives of the owners and of the K.M.W.A.[116]. Later in the year the K.M.W.A. called its first coalfield strike in an effort to reduce the working day for underground men from 7½ to 6½ hours. In the end they compromised on the Sankey Commission's recommendation of 7 hours, together, however, with concessions for a 20 minute meal break and a 6 hour day on Saturdays[117].

Between 1920 and 1926 industrial relations in the coal industry

115. See above Chapter 4, pp. 215-25, 246-47, 249-51, 256 and 265-68. It is not intended to deal with these matters again, but merely to examine certain additional aspects that directly concerned the K.M.W.A.

116. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 30 August 1917, 22 September 1917, 27 January 1918, 2 February 1918, 1 June 1918, 20 July 1918, 28 July 1918, 11 September 1918, 19 September 1918, 28 September 1918, 9 October 1918, 13 October 1918, 4 January 1919, 11 January 1919 and 18 January 1919; The Colliery Guardian, 11 October 1918, p. 768, 18 October 1918, p. 820, 1 November 1918, p. 928, 13 December 1918, p. 1254, 7 February 1919, p. 319, and 9 May 1919, p. 1100; (Report of) Conference held in "Royal Fountain Hotel", Canterbury on October 22nd 1918 between representatives of the Kent Miners' Association and Kent Colliery Owners for the purpose of fixing standard rates of pay and conditions for surface workers in Kent. (The adjourned Conference also met on 23 October, 7 November and 14 November. This hand-written verbatim report is in the possession of Mr. W. Newman). It would seem that it was agreed to pay the surface men the same wage per shift, but reduce the length of the shift (from 10) to 8½ hours (including 20 minutes for meal times).

117. See above Chapter 4, pp. 217-18; The Colliery Guardian, 18 July 1919, p. 174, 25 July 1919, p. 241 and 1 August 1919, p. 309. In addition there was disagreement over the adjustment of rates of pay following the reduction in hours.

came increasingly under the direction of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. Both the datum line strike of October-November 1920, and the stoppage following the end of government control of the industry in 1921 were organised by the M.F.G.B.[118]. The Terms of Settlement ending the latter dispute were in fact negotiated between the M.F.G.B. and the Mining Association of Great Britain, which represented the coal owners[119]. We have already seen how this settlement was responsible for Kent, which was established as a separate district under the agreement, paying wages that were amongst the highest in the country, and yet having wage rates that were rarely above the basic minimum agreed for the district. We have also seen how the agreement of 1924, negotiated at higher rates during a temporary period of prosperity, was so unacceptable to the Kent owners, who were unable to pay even the new higher minimum wages, that they refused to implement it, and thereby provoked a coalfield stoppage in which the K.M.W.A. was given full backing by the M.F.G.B.[120] In addition we have seen how from the union's point of view the action was not really successful at the Chislet Colliery, where the men returned to work at rates offered before the stoppage began, while at Tilmanstone the owners made concessions and settled quickly in what was their last desperate bid to remain in business[121]. During this dispute, which started on 5th July[122], the Kent miners were assisted by a levy of 2d.

118. See above Chapter 4, pp. 218-19; R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 262-75 and Chapter X.

119. It was, however, the principles governing general wage movements, and not the actual level of wages, which were settled in these national negotiations.

120. See above Chapter 4, pp. 219-21; also The Colliery Guardian, 1 August 1924, p. 295.

121. The Snowdown Colliery had already closed by this time and had been acquired by Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.

122. The Colliery Guardian, 8 August 1924, p. 372.

per week made by the M.F.G.B. on all members of its affiliated associations[123], and initially by relief from local Boards of Guardians[124]. Following the return to work in early August of the Tilmanstone men[125], however, the M.F.G.B. also managed to successfully claim unemployment benefit for the men at Chislet, on the grounds that they had been locked out by their employers, who had served notices on them in order to avoid paying wages at the new rates agreed between the M.F.G.B. and the Mining Association, to which the Kent owners were legally a party[126].

Although the attitudes of the Kent miners in the months before the General Strike are not known for certain, throughout the long coal stoppage of 1926 they did consistently support the leadership of the M.F.G.B.[127] As we have seen already the strike in Kent, which started on 1st May, lasted until October at the Chislet Colliery and November at

123. Ibid., 25 July 1924, pp. 233-34 and 238.

124. Ibid., 1 August 1924, p. 295. This reference is to 77 miners, 74 of their wives and 200 of their children receiving relief in Dover.

125. Ibid., 8 August 1924, p. 372.

126. Ibid., 8 August 1924, pp. 358 and 372, 29 August 1924, p. 560, 5 September 1924, p. 618, 19 September 1924, p. 754, 26 September 1924, p. 818-19, 3 October 1924, p. 879, 10 October 1924, p. 947, 17 October 1924, p. 1006 and 14 November 1924, pp. 1259-60. The Chislet men received retrospective payments of £1 per week from 1st August, and these continued till the end of the stoppage in mid-November. Miners' M.P.s had in fact played an important part in getting a new clause added to the Unemployment Insurance Act during the course of the year. The companies were also legally liable to pay the increased wage rates for the weeks between 1st May and 5th July 1924, i.e. between the time of the new wages agreement coming into operation and the Kent men receiving notice. (Ibid., 25 July 1924, p. 238, 8 August 1924, p. 372 and 26 September 1924, p. 819). The Chislet company always accepted liability for these payments.

127. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 479-80 and 492-93. It seems extremely unlikely that the same leaders of the K.M.W.A., who unswervingly followed M.F.G.B. policy from 1921 to 1924 and again throughout the 1926 stoppage, would have pursued a markedly different policy in 1925 and the early months of 1926.

Tilmanstone[128], when the men returned to work with rates of pay reduced by about 10 per cent and the working day lengthened from 7 to 7½ hours[129].

During the course of the strike the K.M.W.A. was in favour of the proposals for ending the dispute made by Church leaders in July, which advocated a resumption of work at the April wages and conditions (including a continuation of the subvention), pending a permanent national settlement being reached, if necessary by arbitration, within four months[130]. It was, however, against accepting the proposals put forward by the government in September, which suggested a return to work on district agreements, but with a National Arbitration Tribunal to review wages and conditions of employment in any district where it was requested to do so by either side, providing that district was working more than a 7 hour day[131]. Although throughout this dispute the M.F.G.B. was not able to provide assistance on the scale of the 1924 stoppage (see Table 7.2), additional relief came for the men at Tilmanstone from the colliery's new owner, Richard Tilden Smith, who privately contributed £100 per week to feed the men's wives and children[132].

At the end of the dispute Kent was one of four districts in which

128. By the beginning of September only six men had returned to work in Kent, but by the end of the month 250 had done so. The figure for Great Britain as a whole at these dates were 36,785 and 81,178. (R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 479-80 and 492).

129. See Chapter 4, pp. 224-25. Unfortunately no figures are available for earnings per manshift for the years from 1927 to 1929 inclusive. (See Table 7.1).

130. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 470-71. These proposals were in fact rejected by both the government and, narrowly, by a special M.F.G.B. Conference.

131. Ibid., pp. 487-88 and 492-93. These proposals were rejected overwhelmingly by the M.F.G.B.

132. Letter dated 6 December 1926 from R. Tilden Smith to W. Newman; 'The Co-operative System of Management Inaugurated by the late Mr. R. Tilden Smith at the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., Nr. Dover'. (Both these documents are in the possession of Mr. W. Newman). Also see above Chapter 3, p. 157.

the owners refused to meet the miners' representatives[133]. Partly this was because the Kent Coal Owners' Association had been wound up in the previous year, as after the experience of the 1924 stoppage its members had had doubts about the value of keeping it in existence[134]. The M.F.G.B. felt very strongly about this state of affairs and it drew the attention of the government to it[135], as well as writing to the companies concerned[136]. The M.F.G.B.'s appeal to the government had some success, as the Ministry of Labour also contacted the companies, which, after consultations amongst themselves, agreed towards the end of 1927 to the formation of a District Wages Board and a new Kent Coal Owners' Association[137]. Despite the existence of this District Board, which consisted of representatives of the owners and of the K.M.W.A., there was no district wages agreement in Kent until 1934[138], and in the meantime wage agreements continued to be made between owners and the K.M.W.A. at the colliery level[139]. This situation was regarded as undesirable by the K.M.W.A. as it thought that without a district agreement wages would be reduced at each pit in turn[140].

133. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 505-06.

134. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 12 May 1925 and 17 November 1925. The K.C.O.A. had been formed in 1921 as a result of Kent being certified as a separate district under the national wages settlement of that year. (Ibid., 12 July 1921).

135. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1953), pp. 505-06; The Colliery Guardian, 7 January 1927, p. 29 and 2 September 1927, p. 68.

136. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 16 February 1927. The Chislet company was in fact willing to be a party to a meeting between the Kent owners and the K.M.W.A.

137. Ibid., 14 September 1927 and 18 October 1927; The Colliery Guardian, 24 February 1928, p. 759. The new Kent Coal Owners' Association was in existence by the end of the year. (Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 20). The new wages board was officially called the 'Kent Coal Mining District Board', but it was also referred to as the 'District Wages Board', or just the 'District Board'.

138. For details of this Agreement see above Chapter 4, pp. 249-50.

139. The District Board did, however, do valuable work in preparing the ground for the 1934 Agreement.

140. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 December 1928.

Although attempts made by the management to reduce the rates of pay for day wage men during the course of a strike at the newly opened Snowdown Colliery in November 1928 were successfully resisted[141], wage cuts were experienced at both the Chislet and Tilmanstone collieries, in 1929 and 1931 respectively[142]. The reductions at Tilmanstone came about, however, only after approval by the colliery's Joint Management Committee[143]. This body had been set up in October 1928 on the initiative of Richard Tilden Smith in an attempt to overcome the poor industrial relations that had hitherto existed at the colliery[144]. It consisted of two representatives of the management and two elected by the men, it met weekly, had full access to all the company's account books and records, and it had to approve management decisions before they could be implemented[145]. The Joint Committee came to its decision, therefore,

141. Ibid., 19 December 1928; The Colliery Guardian, 16 November 1928, p. 1962, 23 November 1928, p. 2064, 30 November 1928, p. 2168 and 7 December 1928, p. 2284. The strike had arisen over an alleged violation of the price list by the management, and involved 1,200 men.

142. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 16 February 1929; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 December 1929, 6 February 1930, 23 December 1930, 11 February 1931, 17 March 1931 and 23 April 1931.

143. Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins. The reductions were graduated from 2½ to 5 per cent from the lowest to the highest paid workmen, while officials' salaries were cut by 7½ per cent. There was, however, a guaranteed minimum subsistence wage for all men.

144. 'The Co-operative System of Management Inaugurated by the late Mr. R. Tilden Smith at the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries, Ltd., Nr. Dover'.

145. Mr. B. Whitaker and Mr. D. T. Jenkins were the owners' representatives on this committee from 1929 and 1928 onwards respectively; while the men elected J. J. Evans and William Newman, who were respectively the chairman and secretary of the Tilmanstone Branch of the K.M.W.A. (Copies of some of the agendas and minutes of the early meetings of this committee are amongst the papers in the possession of Mr. W. Newman). In addition the committee channeled labour recruitment through the Branch secretary.

only after verifying the company's heavy financial losses[146]. Meanwhile at the Betteshanger Colliery there were throughout 1929 protracted negotiations over introducing a price list for the colliery[147]. The companies were finally persuaded to start formal discussions on a district wages agreement through the District Board at the end of 1931[148]. Little progress was made, however, for over a year and the final agreement was not signed until January 1934[149]. As we have seen this agreement was different from those prevailing in other coalfields and introduced a new principle of sharing proceeds between capital and labour[150]. Not only were the owners permitted to include in costs 6d. per ton on all coal raised to cover interest on capital, but their share of total proceeds was to equal 20 per cent of the average earnings per shift for each ton of coal raised in the district during the quarterly

146. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 16 May 1931. The Tilmanstone agreement had, however, to be modified slightly as it was held to violate the principles of the day wage rates applicable to men employed in Kent. (Ibid., 17 March 1931 and 23 April 1931). This was, of course, a commonly accepted rate as there was no district wage agreement at this time.

147. Ibid., 31 January 1929, 23 September 1929, 24 October 1929 and 19 December 1929; Betteshanger Branch, K.M.W.A., Betteshanger Colliery, Price List, "H" Seam (20 June 1930). (This document is in the possession of the author).

148. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 21 November 1932.

149. Ibid., 13 January 1932, 23 March 1933, 18 May 1933, 29 June 1933, 3 August 1933, 31 August 1933, 26 October 1933, 2 November 1933, 13 December 1933, 10 January 1934. Delays occurred in the final stages because of objections from the Tilmanstone owners, who wanted their own minimum wage rates and price lists to remain unaltered. This was finally accepted by the K.M.W.A. Also see below p. 393, fn. 156.

150. See above Chapter 4, pp. 249-50. In addition it should be noted that there were minimum rates of pay for all men and that only 87½ per cent of any deficiencies of payments over proceeds were to be carried forward into the next quarterly ascertainment period. For a full list of District Wages Agreements in force in the British coal industry in 1934 see PEP (Political and Economic Planning), Report on the British Coal Industry (1936), p. 172.

ascertainment period.

In October 1935 the M.F.G.B. began a campaign to obtain a flat rate advance in wages for all miners.[151] The campaign was partially successful in that the following year all miners got some flat rate addition to wages, but, as we have seen, because of the refusal of large consumers, such as the railways, to agree to voluntary price increases on existing contracts, the increase in Kent was the lowest in the country[152]. Naturally the Kent Mine Workers' Association disliked the uneven wage increases gained in the different districts, and together with the Lancashire Association raised the matter at the M.F.G.B. Annual Conference in 1937.[153] Rather than initiate a further campaign, however, the Federation's Executive Committee felt that the selling schemes introduced in the previous year should be given the fullest opportunity to bring about an improvement in wages[154]. Attempts over the next few years to persuade the Kent owners to improve the flat rate advances of 1936 proved unsuccessful[155]. After long negotiations the Kent miners did, however, manage in 1937 to renew the District Wage Agreement on slightly

151. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1961), pp. 154-56; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 24 October 1935.

152. See above Chapter 5, pp. 320-22. For further information on this campaign see R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1961), pp. 164-66 and 174.

153. R. Page Arnot, op. cit. (1961), pp. 182-85.

154. The M.F.G.B. Executive Committee regarded the time inopportune as it was pressing for reduced hours of work.

155. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 7 August 1937 and 7 February 1938.

improved terms[156]. In the previous year the Tilmanstone Branch had also managed to obtain some restoration of the wage reductions agreed in 1931[157]. In 1938 negotiations began on the question of holidays with pay, and agreement on the basis of five paid days per annum was finally reached in May 1939[158].

It was during these years of modest advance that the K.M.W.A. suffered its one post-General Strike setback - the Betteshanger strike of 1938[159]. Earlier in that year 226 men at the colliery were made redundant as part of a scheme to reduce financial losses through a reorganisation and concentration of workings[160]. These redundancies came at a time when

156. Ibid., 14 January 1937, 7 August 1937 and 22 November 1937. There were small increases for the lower paid men and a change in the 80 : 20 "ratio" to 82½ : 17½, i.e. in future a sum equal to 17½ per cent, instead of 20 per cent, of the average shift wage was to be allocated to the owners for each ton of coal produced. In addition there were modifications to enable 50 per cent of any quarterly surplus to be divided in the ratio 82½ : 17½, even if there was at the time an overall deficit to be recouped by the owners. (In January 1937 this deficiency totalled £301,229). (It is interesting to note that the K.M.W.A. leaders were still thinking in terms of the traditional ratio of wages to capital, which did not apply in this sense to the Kent agreement. (Although it did to all other district wages agreements in the country). The Kent Agreement of 1934 was, however, extremely complex and it had taken Mr. G. M. Fotheringham, who devised it, some time both to explain it to the owners and men, and then to persuade them to accept it).

157. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 June 1936, 20 June 1936 and 16 July 1936.

158. Ibid., 23 March 1938, 26 September 1938, 29 April 1939, 17 May 1939 and 25 May 1939. Men over 21 and married men aged between 18 and 21 were to receive the full rate of £3 for the five days (with reduced rates for younger workers), providing they had a good attendance record, which was defined as not missing more than 23 shifts in a period of six months. In 1939 half rates of pay were to be made, and the full rates were to come into operation in 1940.

159. A two-week strike had occurred at the colliery in November/December 1936. Although this had started as a result of a disagreement between a deputy and a youth employed at the colliery, into which other men and a second deputy had been drawn, there appears to have been an earlier undercurrent of tension between the two deputies concerned and youths under their charge. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 19 November 1936, 21 November 1936, 26 November 1936, 27 November 1936, 30 November 1936, 2 December 1936 and 4 December 1936).

160. See above Chapter 4, pp. 255-56.

employment opportunities were not expanding elsewhere in the coalfield[161], and the Betteshanger Branch was anxious to try to get terms from the management for restarting the men[162]. As the owners refused to agree to either restarting these men in order of seniority or to having a ballot for places[163], strike procedure was set in motion and notices were handed in for 30 April[164]. The stoppage lasted for nearly nine weeks, and at the end of it the management would agree to no more than an undertaking to do its best to re-absorb the 226 men, and to discuss with the K.M.W.A. the case of any man not ultimately re-engaged[165]. By March 1939, however, all men who had received notice were back at work[166].

Throughout the 1930's there had been a tendency for the wage differentials between Kent and the rest of the coal industry to narrow in terms of average earnings per man shift[167]; although, given the more regular employment in the Kent Coalfield, the same may not have been true

161. The redundancies at Tilmanstone Colliery in 1932-33 had, of course, come at a time when the demand for labour was expanding at the other three collieries. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 14 November 1932, 22 December 1932 and 19 January 1933; see also Chapter 4, Table 4.7 and p. 236).

162. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 3 March 1938 and 11 April 1938.

163. It is not clear whether this procedure entailed all the men voting for their redundant colleagues so that an order of preference could be established, or, as seems more likely, whether names were to be selected randomly by lot from those redundant as jobs became available.

164. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 April 1938 and 25 April 1938. At the Branch, the voting in favour of strike action to enforce the right of the dismissed men to be re-engaged on the ballot system was 1,703 to 531.

165. The Ministry of Labour Gazette, June 1938, p. 242 and July 1938, p. 285; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 2 May 1938, 12 May 1938, 23 May 1938, 2 June 1938, 13 June 1938 and 27 June 1938. Union payments in connection with the strike had totalled about £5,000. (Ibid., 9 July 1938). In a ballot the Branch members accepted the terms by 1,038 votes to 576.

166. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 15 March 1939.

167. See above Table 7.2.

of weekly earnings[168]. With the outbreak of war, however, a closing of the gap between weekly earnings in Kent and the industry as a whole came about. This was partly because the differentials in real earnings per shift continued to close as wage increases came to be on the basis of flat rate advances, and also because, despite still having a higher wage per shift than the national average, there was a greater percentage of absenteeism in the Kent Coalfield[169]. In 1943 the average weekly wage in the industry as a whole started to exceed that for Kent[170]. This development would probably have occurred sooner had it not been for the Ministry of Mines agreeing in 1940 to the creation of a Special Award Fund for Kent, in order to provide for the payment per shift of one shilling to surface workers, 10d. to underground day wage men, and 5d. to contract workers by means of a price increase of 9d. per ton[171]. This fund was, however, intended to be self-supporting, so when early in 1944 payments began to exceed receipts it became necessary at the end of 1945 to reduce wages all round by 2d. per shift[172].

Although as a result of the war, wage negotiations had increasingly moved to the national level, friction over wages was still possible at the individual colliery. One of the best known strikes of the war occurred in fact at the Betteshanger Colliery in January 1942, and

168. For details of weekly cash earnings in Kent and Great Britain in the years 1938-44 see above Table 4.21.

169. See above Chapter 4, pp. 75-80 and Table 7.1.

170. See above Chapter 4, Table 4.21.

171. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 7 November 1940, 19 November 1940, 5 December 1940 and 19 December 1940.

172. Ibid., 2 April 1946. In addition during the war years the K.M.W.A. was very concerned over matters such as the adequacy of food rations for its members (Ibid., 26 March 1941), and the billeting allowances payable to miners' wives and children who had been evacuated. (Ibid., 11 November 1940).

resulted in the government prosecuting the men concerned[173]. This stoppage came about as a result of a disagreement between the management and some sixty men working on two newly opened coal faces. The men maintained that seam conditions were such as to prevent them earning a reasonable wage on piece-rates. Although special additions were then negotiated by the Branch officials of the K.M.W.A., these were not accepted and the men started to "go-slow". At this stage Albert Housley, the Branch chairman, and George Daughtrey, the Branch secretary, resigned and were replaced by Tudor Davies and William Powell[174]. Davies had been Betteshanger delegate on the K.M.W.A. Executive Council from 1933 to 1936, but had resigned because of the attitude of certain Branch members[175], while Powell had been President of the K.M.W.A. from 1935 until 1938, when he was defeated as a result of losing considerable support at Betteshanger following the unsuccessful strike of that year[176]. The "go-slow" continued following this change of leadership at the Branch, and the management retaliated by ordering the men concerned out of the pit. This provoked a

173. Details of this strike are to be found in: H. M. D. Parker, Manpower (H.M.S.O. 1957), pp. 460-62 and 468-70; Report of Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations 1965-1968 (Chairman : Lord Donovan)(Cmnd. 3623), p. 131 and Appendix 6 (written evidence of Sir Harold Emmerson, Chief Industrial Commissioner, Ministry of Labour, 1942-44) pp. 340-41; and Peter Gillman, 'Strike Law 1942' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 28 February 1971, pp. 8-13. It should be pointed out, however, that Emmerson's evidence contains a large number of factual mistakes. The most comprehensive and reliable account is that of Gillman. Except where otherwise stated, the rest of this and the next two paragraphs are based on these three sources.

174. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 12 January 1942; K.M.W.A. Annual Return 1941.

175. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 15 July 1933, 20 February 1936 and 6 April 1936. Whether this concerned personal criticism or a disagreement over policy is not clear from the Minutes.

176. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 21 September 1935, 1 July 1936, 14 July 1937 and 9 July 1938. Powell had received 1,659 out of 1,997 votes at Betteshanger in 1937 but only 510 out of 1,515 in 1938. (In the election for the Presidency of the K.M.W.A. in June 1942, Daughtrey, who had held this office since 1939 and had been re-elected comfortably in the previous year was overwhelmingly defeated by Tudor Davies. Ibid., 28 June 1941 and 30 June 1942).

a partial stoppage as other workers joined them[177]. Conciliation officers from the Mines Department visited the colliery, and it was agreed to refer the matter to arbitration[178]. Although the arbitrator's award was in effect a vindication of the management[179], it was nevertheless accepted by the union Branch at a meeting several days later on 30th December[180]. After this the men on one of the two new faces worked normally, but those on 2s (number 2) face continued the go-slow policy. This had already resulted in the company threatening to sue the men for damages[181], when on Thursday 8th January 1942 matters were brought to a head. On that day the management paid the men on number 2 face for 102 shifts at the day-wage rate of 10s. 4¾d. plus flat rate advances of 4s. 11d., and for 79 shifts at only 7s. 0d. - the piece rate for the coal actually produced - plus the same flat rate advances of 4s. 11d. The management refused to make up the latter to 15s. 3¾d., and the Branch committee called the men out on strike on the night of Friday 9th January[182]. Despite advice from the Mines Department's chief conciliator and from the General Secretary and Financial Secretary of the K.M.W.A., the men decided at a special Branch meeting on 16th January to remain off work[183], and a ballot five days later resulted in a two-to-one majority

177. Ibid., 13 December 1941.

178. Ibid., 13 December 1941 and 12 January 1942.

179. Parker, op. cit., p. 461.

180. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 12 January 1942.

181. Ibid., Minutes, 12 January 1942. The management had in fact written to the K.M.W.A. on 30th December alleging that the men on both faces were persisting in the go-slow policy.

182. Ibid., 12 January 1942. Strike action taken in this way was, of course, contrary to the Rules of the K.M.W.A. (See above pp. 361-62).

183. This special Branch meeting was not on 25th January as stated by Gillman. (See K.M.W.A., Minutes, 24 January 1942).

in favour of continuing the strike[184].

The owners, Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., decided to implement their threat of legal action, and summonses were issued against all underground workers for breach of contract. These summonses were withdrawn, however, when others were issued by the Ministry of Labour under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order 1940 (S R & O 1305). The Ministry of Labour was reluctant to take this action, and did so only as the agents of the Mines Department. The actual decision to prosecute had come in fact from the Secretary for Mines, who had first obtained the backing of the Cabinet. The cases involving 1,050 men in all[185], were heard at Canterbury on 23rd January. The Court found the men guilty and sentenced Powell, the Branch secretary, to two months' imprisonment, and Davies, the Branch president, and another committee member, Joe Methuen, to one month each. The thirty-five men on number 2 face were each fined £3, or in default one months' imprisonment, and the remaining men were each fined £1, or fourteen days' imprisonment. After the trial an offer by the management of the arbitrated conditions was rejected by the men, and, led by the remaining members of the Branch committee, they decided to stay on strike[186]. The committee also instructed members not to pay the fines[187].

On 27th January the Secretary for Mines and Ebby Edwards, the Secretary of the M.F.G.B., came to Kent to discuss the situation with the

184. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 24 January 1942 and 20 February 1942. The result was 667 votes to 305.

185. Altogether 1,620 men were on strike at the colliery, but, as the Mines Department found it impossible to select individuals, summonses were taken out against all the underground workers.

186. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 24 January 1942.

187. Information supplied by Mr. John Johnson who was Betteshanger representative on the K.M.W.A. Executive Council and a member of the Branch committee from 1941 to 1946.

colliery management and officials of the K.M.W.A. As a result the company agreed to an ex-gratia payment to make up the earnings of the workers on the number 2 face for the two weeks in dispute, while the men undertook not to restrict output[188]. As these terms almost completely conceded their pre-strike demands, they were accepted by the men at Betteshanger, who returned to work on 28th January. To make this settlement acceptable to the men, however, the Secretary for Mines promised to intercede with the Home Secretary for the release of the three imprisoned officials. As a result the men were freed on 2nd February. A further difficulty arose, however, because by May 1942 only nine of the 1,000 men convicted at Canterbury had paid their fines. Although the company offered to pay for the remaining men, it was told not to do so. The Ministry of Labour, on being consulted by the Home Office, suggested that the warrants for the arrest of the defaulters should be held in abeyance. This advice was then conveyed to the local Justices, who accepted it. The strike ended, therefore, in a moral victory for the men[189]. No further stoppages occurred in the Kent Coalfield throughout the war years.

The K.M.W.A. was also concerned at various times with other factors that affected the overall living standards of its members. These included housing, the cost of travelling to work, the provision of colliery welfare facilities, such as pithead baths and canteens[190], and

188. The Ministry of Labour Gazette, February 1942, p. 44.

189. Parker, op. cit., p. 462. The Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations 1965-1968 (p. 131) concluded that, on the evidence it had received from Sir Harold Emmerson, this strike showed "the fruitlessness of the use of penal sanctions for the purpose of enforcing industrial peace".

190. For details of these items see below Chapter 8.

the organisation and provision of funds to cover distress in times of unemployment[191]. In addition the K.M.W.A. and its members played an increasing role in local politics.

The problem of distress following the General Strike was much less severe in Kent than in other mining districts[192]. The local distress fund, which was under union control[193], mostly provided assistance for unemployed members, but it also helped the families of men who had arrived at Aylesham to work at the Snowdown Colliery[194].

The main political objective of the K.M.W.A. was clearly defined when in 1921 it included in its new rules the aim of securing "the complete abolition of private capitalism".[195] Although the union never had a large political fund, it did give steady support to the Labour Party both at national level through its remittances to the M.F.G.B., and locally by making grants to the Dover, Canterbury and Ramsgate

191. The K.M.W.A. did not make any provision for sickness benefits or pensions. A minor aspect of the union's activities in the mid-thirties included negotiating reductions in the coal dues paid on concessionary coal by its members living in Deal and Ramsgate. At Deal these were reduced from 1s. 6d. to 9d. per ton, and at Ramsgate by 20 per cent of the original figure of 2s. 0d. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 16 February 1933 and 27 May 1935). Coal dues also continued to be paid on concessionary coal entering Dover, where earlier attempts to achieve reductions in the 1s. 7d. per ton had proved unsuccessful. (Ibid., 19 September 1915; The Colliery Guardian, 27 March 1914, p. 695, 16 July 1915, p. 132, 24 September 1915, p. 63, 15 October 1915, p. 791 and 4 February 1916, p. 233; Dover Express, 16 July 1915, p. 3).

192. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 31 January 1929 and 25 February 1929.

193. Ibid., 19 December 1928.

194. Ibid., 23 October 1928, 19 December 1928 and 9 January 1929. Although Kent was the only district not included in the Lord Mayor's Fund for Relief of Distress in Coalfields, it did receive a £1,000 grant from that body in 1929. (Ibid., 1 August 1929).

195. K.M.W.A. Rules 1921.

Constituency Labour Parties[196]. Its activities in Kent were motivated, however, by a desire to be represented on all local governing and administrative bodies which affected the life and living conditions of its members[197]. The K.M.W.A. therefore gave financial support to those of its members who ran for office in local government elections[198]. The first member to be so elected was to the Dover Town Council in 1918[199]. Others followed, to the Eastry Rural District Council in 1929[200], to the Ramsgate Borough Council in 1934[201], and to the newly enlarged Deal Borough Council in 1935[202]. Also in 1935 W. H. Bennett, the chairman of the Tilmanstone Branch, was selected as Labour Parliamentary candidate for the Dover Constituency, although he was defeated in the General Election later in the year[203].

196. K.M.W.A. Annual Returns 1917-46; also see Table 7.5. Also on the political front, the K.M.W.A. started from 1928 onwards to hold an Annual May Day Demonstration, usually this was in Dover. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 1928-39, passim. The demonstration held in 1933 was referred to as the Sixth Annual May Day. (Ibid., 7 May 1933). There had, however, been an earlier demonstration in 1919 (The Colliery Guardian, 9 May 1919, p. 1100)).

197. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 23 September 1929. In pursuing this policy the Association's leaders felt that the local Labour Parties had not been as helpful as might have been expected.

198. Ibid., 24 October 1929, 19 December 1929, 1 October 1932, 3 August 1933, 5 July 1934, 7 March 1935 and 30 September 1937.

199. Ibid., 10 May 1918.

200. Ibid., 19 December 1929. This was for a new seat to cover Aylesham.

201. Ibid., 5 July 1934 and 23 August 1934. Wilfred Twigger, the General Treasurer, became the first Labour member on the Council.

202. Ibid., 7 March 1935 and 9 April 1935. Altogether four members of the Betteshanger Branch, including Tudor Davies, were elected. The Council was enlarged following an amalgamation of the Deal Borough and Walmer Urban District Councils. (Two years earlier Davies had been appointed a J.P. for the Deal Area. Ibid., 26 October 1933).

203. Ibid., 26 September 1934, 21 September 1935 and 2 December 1935. A Labour candidate captured the Dover Constituency, which included Deal and Aylesham, for the first time in 1945.

In addition to elective office the K.M.W.A. nominated members of the Dover Labour Exchange Employment Committee[204], the Isle of Thanet, Dover and District War Pensions Committee[205], the Sandwich and Dover Education Committees[206], and the Kent Education Mining Advisory Committee[207].

For the K.M.W.A. the most important political and economic development came with the election of the Labour Government in 1945, which resulted in the extension of public ownership to the coal industry.[20]

204. Ibid., 24 July 1930, 20 October 1932 and 4 March 1946. The Minutes in 1946 record the General Secretary as having been a member of this committee for 27 years and its acting chairman during the war.

205. Ibid., 4 June 1931.

206. Ibid., 25 February 1929 and 28 August 1930. John Elks was described as being a member of the local education committee, which would presumably have been Dover.

207. Ibid., 23 December 1930.

CHAPTER 8

SAFETY, HOUSING AND WELFARE

Safety, housing and welfare all imposed extra costs on the colliery companies in the Kent Coalfield.

E. O. Forster Brown in his 'Memorandum of Reservations' to the Report of the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines in 1938 pointed out that: " ... the economic aspect of the imposition of new regulations cannot be ignored", and that: "Taking an extreme view, it would be possible to devise rules and regulations so stringent in character that the cost of carrying them out would render it economically impracticable to continue coal mining in this country."[1] From the figures given in Table 8.1, however, it is clear that there was considerable need for improvement in the safety conditions in Kent, if the number of persons killed and injured per 100,000 shifts worked was to be brought into line with the average figure prevailing in the industry nationally. What is not so clear is why the general accident rate in Kent was so high in the inter-war years[2]. One factor was probably that the Kent miners were relatively slow in adopting protective equipment such as helmets, gloves,

1. Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines, Report, P.P. 1938-39 (Cmd. 5890) XIII, p. 804.

2. Between 1897 and 1913 twenty-five men had been killed in sinking operations, and eight of these deaths had occurred with the inrush of water at the Dover Colliery in March 1897. (See above Chapter 2, p. 19; Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines (North and East Lancashire and Ireland District (No. 6)), 1896-1900; Ibid. (Manchester and Ireland District (No. 6)), 1901-05; Ibid. (Southern District (No. 12)), 1906-14. Kent was included in these various districts until 1915, when it came under the Midland and Southern Division. (These District Mines Inspectors' Reports were Parliamentary Papers up to and including 1919, and Non-Parliamentary Papers thereafter.)

Table 8.1: The Kent Coalfield: Number of Persons Killed and Injured 1921-38

Year	Killed			Injured(1)			Number of Persons Killed or Injured per 100,000 manshifts worked	
	Under-ground	Surface	Total	Under-ground	Surface	Total	Kent	Great Britain
1921	-	-	-	188	14	202	n.a.	n.a.
1922	3	-	3	267	25	292	71.8	66.3
1923	2	-	2	289	57	346	68.4	67.3
1924	1	-	1	256	40	296	83.9(2)	62.9
1925	2	-	2	345	51	396	77.4(2)	63.9
1926	2	-	2	310	40	350	75.4	67.3
1927	10	-	10	570	35	605	n.a.	68.9
1928	7	-	7	895	56	951	n.a.	69.4
1929	7	-	7	1,228	77	1,305	n.a.	71.4
1930	4	-	4	1,484	70	1,554	120.5(3)	71.2
1931	3	2	5	1,659	98	1,757	116.1(3)	67.3
1932	7	1	8	1,756	83	1,839	109.5(3)	64.1
1933	7	-	7	1,674	95	1,769	102.6(3)	64.1
1934	12	-	12	1,677	93	1,770	(93.7)(3) 91.6	66.6
1935	9	3	12	1,690	83	1,773	89.7	67.5
1936	4	1	5	1,699	81	1,780	90.3	67.0
1937	11	1	12	1,552	91	1,643	85.5	65.6
1938(4)	4	1	5	1,422	99	1,521	90.6	64.0(5)

Notes: (1) Injured for more than seven days to 1924, and for more than three days after 1924.

(2) In these years the accident rate in Kent was higher than in any other district.

Table 8.1: continued

Notes: (3) These figures will be slightly on the high side compared with the rest of the column, as the figures for the number of manshifts worked have been taken from Table 4.8. The number of manshifts worked given in Tables 4.8 and 4.17 (for the years 1934-38) are on average about 37,000 less than the Mines Department figures, which would seem to indicate that the latter include clerks and salaried persons in their totals.

(4) No reports were issued during the war years. See Ministry of Fuel and Power, Report of H.M. Inspector of Mines (West Midland & Southern Division) 1947, p. 45.

(5) The accidents figure for Great Britain rose from 63.7 in 1939 to 100.5 in 1945, and fell again to 92.4 in 1946. (See Ministry of Fuel and Power, Statistical Digest 1946 and 1947, P.P. 1948-49 (Cmd. 7548) XXIX, Table 54).

Sources: Mines Department, Annual Reports and H.M. Mines Inspectors' Reports 1921-38; Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines (1938), Appendices, Appendix I, Table 17 (Non-Parliamentary Paper); Chapter 4, Tables 4.8 and 4.17.

shin guards, goggles, boots and knee-pads[3]. The improvement in the accident rate in 1934, after a particularly bad period in the early thirties, occurred at a time when the number of workmen's inspections per annum more than doubled, and when the regular training of boys in safety principles started to take place in the coalfield[4]. These developments were then followed by the appointment of a safety officer at the Chislet Colliery in 1936.[5]

Besides trying to prevent accidents, attention in the coalfield was also directed towards improving rescue facilities and treatment. At the beginning of 1930 the Divisional Inspector of Mines urged the Kent Coal Owners' Association to take steps to comply with the provision of the Coal Mines General Rescue Regulations by establishing a Central Rescue Station[6]. As a result a station was erected at Aylesham[7], and a Kent Collieries Rescue Association was set up to manage it[8]. A few years later the owners gave encouragement to their employees who were members of the St. John's Ambulance Association by instituting an Ambulance Shield

3. Evidence of E. Rowley, Mines Inspector Midland and Southern Division, Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines, 1936-38, Minutes of Evidence, Volume I, pp. 190 and 238, q. 6415. (Non-Parliamentary Paper). Kent was slow compared with other parts of the Midland and Southern District, which included the coalfields of the West Midlands, Bristol and Somerset.

4. Ibid., p. 187; Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1933, p. 32; Ibid. 1934, p. 30; and Ibid. 1935, pp. 32 and 34.

5. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 3 June 1936; Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1936, p. 47.

6. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 16 January 1930.

7. Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1930, p. 24; Ibid. 1931, p. 30.

8. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 5 September 1930.

for which colliery teams could compete[9].

Partly because the Kent coal seams are comparatively gas free[10] there have never been any major mining disasters in the coalfield. Fire damp was, for example, unheard of at the Snowdown Colliery[11]. Even so the district was not slow in switching over from flame to electric safety lamps. (See Table 8.2). The coalfield was, in fact, so safe that, after tests at Chislet, the Divisional Inspector of Mines was even prepared to allow the introduction of naked lights into the colliery[12]. This move was, however, strenously, but unsuccessfully, opposed by the Kent Mine Workers' Association[13]. Although Kent was relatively safe in terms of firedamp, the nature of the coal and overlying strata, and the lack of adequate dust suppression in the pre-nationalisation period[14] made pneumoconiosis and silicosis much more common than in a number of other coalfields[15]. In Kent the incidence of these diseases increased steadily

9. Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1936, p. 45. The St. John's Ambulance Association was well supported in the coalfield, there being brigades at all four collieries. (See also <u>Ibid.</u> 1937, p. 53 and <u>Ibid.</u> 1938, p. 60).

10. J. H. Plumptre, 'The Kent Coalfield', <u>Minutes of Proceedings of the National Association of Colliery Managers</u>, Vol. LVI, 1959, pp. 59-60.

11. Norman Harrison, <u>Once a Miner</u> (Oxford 1954), p. 109.

12. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., <u>Minutes</u>, 30 September 1932 and 23 February 1934. These were acetylene lamps. Chislet was freer from gas than any other colliery in the country of a comparable size and depth. (Plumptre, <u>op. cit.</u> (1959), p. 60).

13. Kent Mine Workers' Association, <u>Minutes</u>, 2 November 1933, 13 December 1933, 21 December 1933 and 22 February 1934.

14. For information on the slow progress of dust suppression in Kent, even after nationalisation, see Ministry of Fuel and Power, Reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines (West Midland and Southern Division) 1948, p. 24.

15. Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1938, p. 64. This reference is just to silicosis.

Table 8.2: The Kent Coalfield: Number of Safety Lamps in Use, 1921-38

Year	Number of Safety Lamps in Use		
	Flame	Electric	Total
1921	1,633	19	1,652
1922	1,483	21	1,504
1923	1,535	31	1,536
1924	1,441	385	1,826
1925	1,069	981	2,050
1926	610	1,782 (1)	2,392
1927	665	2,520	3,185
1928	706	3,280	3,986
1929	739	3,530	4,269
1930	777	4,145	4,922
1931	650	4,786	5,436
1932	816	5,235	6,051
1933	693	4,832	5,525
1934	449	4,719	5,168
1935	523	5,028	5,551
1936	822	5,079	5,901
1937	818	5,133	5,951
1938	851	4,938	5,789

Note: (1) It was not until 1930 that the total number of electric lamps exceeded flame in Great Britain as a whole.

Source: Mines Department, Annual Reports and H.M. Inspector of Mines' Annual Reports 1921-38.

in the years before 1947. (See Table 8.3).

Table 8.3: New Cases of Pneumoconiosis and Silicosis in the Kent Coalfield, 1939-47

Year	New Cases	Year	New Cases
1939	10	1944	30
1940	-	1945	71
1941	2	1946	51
1942	10	1947	79
1943	25		

Source: Report of H.M. Chief Inspector of Mines 1957, p. 61.

In addition we have seen that dermatitis was another disease common in Kent because of the extreme conditions of heat and moisture in the coalfield[16]. Although with improvements in ventilation in the late thirties this became less of a problem[17].

While improvements in safety conditions imposed costs on the colliery companies, injury and disease did the same for the individual sufferers through reduced earnings. Although redress could be had under the Workmen's Compensation Act, according to one observer, the amounts paid in the Kent Coalfield in the early 1930's never exceeded 30 shillings per week, and were always less than 75 per cent of earnings at the time of the accident[18]. Compensation paid to the nearest dependent in the

16. See above Chapter 4, pp. 234-35 and Chapter 7, p. 384. See also Mines Department, Reports of District Mines Inspectors (Midland and Southern Division) 1936, p. 49 and Ibid. 1937, pp. 55-56.

17. Ibid. 1938, p. 65.

18. Violet L. Hughes, 'A Social Survey of the East Kent Coalfield' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1934), p. 140.

case of death varied, however, from £200 to £600, according to the wages being earned at the time of the accident and the number of dependents[19]. Some indication of the cost of compensation payments to the company can be seen in the case of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., which paid out over £60,000 between 1925 and 1946[20]. For men not totally incapacitated through injury or disease, surface jobs in the coal industry were traditionally regarded as light and suitable. The granting of these jobs to men who were partially disabled and not in the best of health was also a means of saving on compensation payments[21].

At an early stage in the coalfield's development, it was appreciated that if suitable miners were to be attracted to Kent then a good class of housing would have to be provided[22]. It was further realised that if the yield from rents was not sufficient to cover the cost of construction, then it would be sound policy for the colliery companies to make up the deficit[23]. So in 1911 the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., assisted by the East Kent Contract and Finance Co. Ltd., started to build three model villages - at Woolage, Elvington and Stonehall - in order to provide housing for the men who would be needed to work at the Snowdown,

19. Ibid., p. 140.

20. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss Accounts, 1926-46. This colliery was, of course, the smallest in the coalfield, and, according to Mr. B. W. Whitaker, the manager from 1929 to 1960, it had a better safety record than the other three. Information on compensation payments does not exist for the other two companies.

21. F. Zweig, Men in the Pits (1948), pp. 25-26.

22. A. E. Ritchie, The Kent Coalfield: its Evolution and Development (1919), p. 272.

23. Ibid., pp. 272-73.

Tilmanstone, Stonehall and Guilford collieries[24]. Altogether, before the outbreak of war, 98 houses were provided at a cost of between £50,000 and £64,000[25]. Of these houses 25 were at Elvington, near the Tilmanstone Colliery[26], 24 at Woolage Village, three-quarters of a mile south-west of Snowdown, and 49 at Stonehall, which were intended to serve both the Stonehall and Guilford collieries[27]. The houses in these villages were, for the most part, brick built and semi-detached, with three bedrooms and a total floor area of just under 750 square feet[28]. They were also of attractive appearance[29], and had large gardens, while the villages themselves, with their spacious roads, were described by one writer as models which ought to be followed by all colliery companies and local authorities[30]. The Concessions company decided to retain the houses at Stonehall when, in 1914, it sold that colliery area to French investors[31].

As we have already seen, attempts to recruit miners from other districts during the war was made more difficult by the housing shortage

24. Ibid., p. 273; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 87 and 98; The Colliery Guardian, 9 June 1911, p. 1155; Christopher Buckingham, Lydden: A Parish History (Dover 1967), pp. 75-76; also see above Chapter 2, p. 47.

25. The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, items 87, 98-99, 118, 122, 126 and 128 (As in the company's balance sheets expenditure on freehold land was combined with expenditure on the houses it is not possible to be more precise); The Colliery Guardian, 7 February 1913, p. 295.

26. See Fig. 0.1.

27. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 273; The Colliery Guardian, 7 February 1913, p. 295.

28. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 273. They consisted of a living room, parlour, scullery, three bedrooms and a bathroom.

29. Ibid., p. 273.

30. H. Stanley Jevons, The British Coal Trade (1915), p. 175. The houses were in fact considered worth visiting by a delegation from the Sunderland Urban District Council. (The Colliery Guardian, 1 May 1914, p. 971).

31. See above Chapter 2, pp. 69-70.

in the area, which prevented men bringing their families with them. While in Dover, increasing pressure was put on housing accommodation by persons engaged in military operations moving into the town. At the same time, as miners joined the armed forces their homes remained occupied by their families and so were not available for re-allocation to men coming into the area[32]. Even though only a small amount of accommodation was available at Woolage, the Snowdown Colliery company was unable to build any houses of its own, and it had to rely on a special arrangement made before the war with the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway Company, by which trains were run at low rates for miners from Canterbury and Dover to a station that had been opened at the colliery[33]. In some ways the men at the Tilmanstone Colliery were not so fortunate, as they had to change lines at Shepherdswell, from the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway to the East Kent Light Railway, and there were complaints about the length of time they had to wait for trains to take them home from work[34]. At Tilmanstone the colliery company started in 1916 to try to increase the amount of accommodation available for employees[35]. An old mansion, Elvington Court, which was near to the colliery, was acquired and converted into a boarding house for about a hundred men[36]. The losses that were then

32. See above Chapter 4, pp. 205-06.

33. Snowdown Colliery Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/18389/97340, items 64, 70 and 72.

34. K.M.W.A., Minutes, 4 May 1918, 11 May 1918 and 22 June 1918. Although the East Kent Light Railway did not put forward proposals to carry passengers until 1916 (The Colliery Guardian, 8 September 1916, p. 467), there must have been some arrangement between the railway company and the East Kent Colliery Company before this date about taking men to and from Shepherdswell.

35. The lack of sufficient housing contributed to keeping down output at the colliery (East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 71).

36. The Colliery Guardian, 21 July 1916, p. 129 and 25 August 1916, p. 366. It would seem that the actual ownership of this property was vested in a company called the Elvington Court Extended Extension Ltd., and that the mansion was then leased to the East Kent Colliery Company.

incurred on running this establishment were considered as fully compensated by the additional coal output produced by the men using it[37]. The following year George Thomas and Arthur Wells, the two directors who had played a leading role in preventing the Channel Collieries Trust takeover of the colliery in 1915[38], formed the Tilmanstone Miners Dwellings Building Syndicate Ltd. to erect miners' houses near to the colliery[39]. In 1918 the colliery company itself entered into a contract with Messrs. Henry Boot & Sons[40] to build twelve concrete houses near to the mine[41]. The exact arrangements between the colliery company and the Dwellings Syndicate are not clear. After experiencing difficulty in raising capital, however, eighteen three-bedroom houses were finally built at a cost of £500 each, using concrete blocks manufactured at the colliery from hard clinker and cement[42], and in 1920 the Dwellings Syndicate purchased six cottages (presumably from the eighteen), which it then leased to the colliery company for twenty-one years[43]. The rents for these

37. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 71. The annual losses for the calendar years 1916 to 1923 were: £18, £536, £511, £653, £824, £750, £269 and £895 (Ibid., items 69, 71, 73-77 and 79).

38. See above Chapter 2, pp. 89-90.

39. Tilmanstone Miners Dwellings Building Syndicate Ltd., B.O.T. 148394; The Colliery Guardian, 15 December 1916, p. 1176, 23 February 1917, p. 398, 7 September 1917, p. 461 and 14 September 1917, pp. 507-08.

40. This company later built houses to serve the Snowdown and Betteshanger collieries. (See below pp. 420 and 425.)

41. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 71; The Colliery Guardian, 19 April 1918, p. 808.

42. East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 73; The Colliery Guardian, 9 November 1917, p. 898, 21 December 1917, p. 1197, 18 January 1918, p. 136, 19 July 1918, p. 135, 24 January 1919, p. 206 and 20 June 1919, p. 1493. For earlier difficulties experienced by the colliery company in raising capital for housing see The Colliery Guardian, 31 November 1916, pp. 869-70 and 10 November 1916, p. 917.

43. Tilmanstone Miners Dwellings Building Syndicate Ltd., B.O.T. 148394, item 19. The Syndicate spent £2,636 on these six cottages, from which, until 1940, it received £182 per annum in rents (i.e. an average of 11s. 8d. per house per week). Its share capital was £2,599 and from 1920 until 1940 it paid a dividend of 6 per cent (£156). The company started to go into voluntary liquidation in 1971.

houses were between 11s. 8d. and 12s. 6d. per week[44]. Despite seeing housing as the key to its future success, and being prepared to build houses with every penny that could be spared or raised on anything like reasonable terms[45], these eighteen cottages were the limit of the colliery company's achievement[46]. In any case after the war the supply of houses became more plentiful in Dover[47], and at the same time the town housing committee put forward plans to build an extra 150 houses especially to meet the requirements of miners[48].

None of the other companies in Kent either had much success in providing housing in the years before 1926. As we have already seen, the Chislet Colliery Ltd. in 1919 entered into agreements to lease 256 houses in Ramsgate for its employees, and planned to build a village of up to 800 houses near the colliery[49]. The Ramsgate houses had been empty and they were the nearest place where accommodation could be obtained, as there were no small houses for letting in Canterbury[50]. The Ramsgate

44. Ibid., The Colliery Guardian, 20 June 1919, p. 1493. The houses consisted of three bedrooms, a living room, combined scullery and bathroom, and a store room.

45. The Colliery Guardian, 20 September 1918, p. 611.

46. Although the company did in 1920 purchase a farm of 120 acres near to the colliery with a view to building more houses (East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., B.O.T. 92735, item 74; The Colliery Guardian, 16 April 1920, p. 1094). A public utility society formed by the colliery company in 1919 remained dormant until its registration was cancelled in 1926 (Registry of Friendly Societies, Tilmanstone Housing Association Ltd., 7407 R).

47. See above Chapter 4, p. 206.

48. The Colliery Guardian, 30 October 1919, p. 913 and 24 October 1919, p. 1112. It was estimated that these houses would cost £1,000 each.

49. See above Chapter 3, p. 174. The company had in fact started to make plans to build cottages for its employees as early as 1914. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 29 October 1914). In 1920 a 77½ acre site was purchased for the new village from Kent Freehold and Mineral Ltd. at a cost of £150 per acre. (Ibid., 13 January 1920).

50. The Colliery Guardian, 18 October 1918, p. 819.

houses, however, proved to be a serious drain on the company's finances, and the leases were determined at various dates between 1922 and March 1926. Meanwhile lack of finance had delayed a start being made on the proposed village, and when the first 56 houses were completed in 1925 they had to be mortgaged straight away, together with 12 cottages that had been acquired in neighbouring villages, in order to provide money to carry on the colliery[51].

In 1925 the colliery companies in Kent were providing 229 houses, details of which are given in Table 8.4.

The growing interest of Dorman Long & Co. Ltd. in the Kent Coalfield[52] had probably been responsible for the Ministry of Health arranging a conference at Canterbury in 1922 to consider the question of co-operation amongst local authorities in planning the industrial development of the area[53]. The conference agreed to the setting up of a

51. See above Chapter 3, p. 174. Plans for part of the colliery village had been approved by the Blean Rural District Council in 1919 (The Colliery Guardian, 9 May 1919, p. 1100) and building contractors had then arrived on the site. (Letter dated 14 May 1919 from Wilfred Twigger to William Newman, which is in the possession of Mr. Newman). A public utility society, the Chislet Colliery Housing Company, was registered in June 1920, but its registration was cancelled by request less than two years later. (Registry of Friendly Societies, Chislet Colliery Housing Company, 7931 R). In 1924 consideration was given to registering another housing company, when the Public Works Loan Board provisionally agreed to advance up to two-thirds the cost of building 300 shouses through a public utility society. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 11 December 1923, 20 May 1924 and 15 July 1924). This plan did not, however, materialise. A public utility society to serve the Guilford Colliery was also formed in 1920, and had its registration cancelled by request in 1922. (Registry of Friendly Societies, Guilford and Waldershare Public Utility Society Ltd., 7913 R). Two houses were, however, built at the colliery for officials, and two more were started in 1922. (Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/23728/147701, item 23).

52. See above Chapter 3, p. 114.

53. The Colliery Guardian, 24 February 1922, p. 485. Three years earlier the Ministry of Health Housing Committee had been considering putting before the Kent colliery companies a proposal for the building of a miners' town in east Kent, with accommodation for a population of from 30,000 to 50,000. It was intended that such a new town would be situated as centrally as possible and be connected to the various pits by light railways. (Ibid., 24 October 1919, p. 1112).

Table 8.4: Provision of Houses by, or on behalf of, Kent Colliery Owners in 1925

	All Houses	Post-War Houses
Total Number of Houses:		
Free	11	-
At a Rental:		
Pre-War Houses	185	-
Post-War Houses	33	33
Number of Houses at a Rental of:		
4s. and under 5s.	6	-
5s. and under 6s.	1	-
6s. and under 7s.	14	-
7s. and under 8s.	49	-
8s. and under 9s.	57	-
9s. and under 10s.	15	-
10s. and under 11s.	18	3
11s. and under 12s.	5	-
12s. and under 13s.	50	30
13s. and over	3	-

Source: Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendices and Index, pp. 248-49.

Joint Town Planning Committee for the coalfield[54]. Some of the sense of urgency must then have passed, as the committee did not meet again until May of the following year, when it agreed that a regional town planning scheme should be prepared for the whole of east Kent. The committee met

54. Ibid., 8 June 1923, p. 1450.

again in November 1923 and charged this task to Professor Patrick Abercrombie, who was one of the country's leading town planners and held the chair of Civic Design at the University of Liverpool[55]. Abercrombie's report was presented to the Joint Committee and approved in January 1925[56], and published later in the year[57]. The Report estimated that over the next thirty years there would be an increase in the population of east Kent from 300,000 to 680,000, composed of: eighteen pits each requiring 2,500 workers and giving rise to a further 7,500 people; between 5,000 and 7,000 employees of the Channel Steel Company, giving rise to a total population of 28,000; ancillary trades and consequential population equal to about one-third of the industrial increase; and normal growth of the existing population, estimated at 99,300[58]. The Report was firmly opposed to the building of pithead villages, and proposed arranging 147,000 of the new coalfield population into some seven or eight moderate sized towns, each with a population varying from 12,000 to 35,000. These included towns at:

Chislet (8,000) to serve just the one colliery;

55. Patrick Abercrombie and John Archibald, East Kent Regional Planning Scheme: Preliminary Survey (Liverpool and London 1925), p. vii; Dictionary of National Biography 1951-61, sub. Sir (Leslie) Patrick Abercrombie (1879-1957). Archibald was surveyor to the Eastry Rural District Council.

    In June 1925 a Conference was held at Lambeth Palace to consider the social needs of the new coalfield. As a result the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed, with the help of Lord Milner, to appoint a small committee to watch the situation and to work with the Town Planning Committee. (The Colliery Guardian, 20 July 1923, p. 169). In addition George Bell, when Dean of Canterbury from 1924 to 1929, took a particularly keen interest in the development of the coalfield. (Ronald C. D. Jasper, George Bell: Bishop of Chichester (1967) pp. 47-48; K.M.W.A., Minutes, 11 April 1929; information supplied by Mr. W. Newman).

56. Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1925), p. viii.

57. The Colliery Guardian, 17 July 1925, pp. 163-64.

58. Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1925), pp. 34-35 and 69-72.

Ham (31,000) one mile to the east of Eastry, to serve Betteshanger and three other collieries;

Nonington (20,000) one mile north of Snowdown, to serve that colliery and a proposed one at Adisham;

Shepherdswell (24,000) to serve the Tilmanstone, Guilford and Stonehall collieries[59].

Of the existing mining villages, it was proposed to add 1,000 more people to Elvington, but to keep the houses at Woolage, Stonehall and the few at Snowdown for pithead pumpers and watchmen[60]. The only part of this plan that was ever implemented, however, apart from some extension of the Chislet and Elvington villages[61], was the development of Aylesham to serve Snowdown and the proposed Adisham Colliery[62].

The development of this new town was undertaken jointly by Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. and the Eastry Rural District Council[63]. Together in 1926 they formed a public utility society called Aylesham Tenants Ltd., which acquired from the Rural District Council a 605 acre site about a mile to the north of the Snowdown Colliery[64]. This land, which belonged to the farms of Curlswood and Aylesham, had been acquired by the Eastry R.D.C. for the new town earlier in the year from Lord Fitzwalter and other

59. Ibid., p. 73. Other towns were proposed for Littlebourne, three miles east of Canterbury, Wingham, Woodnesborough, and Martin Mill, on the main railway line between Dover and Deal.

60. Ibid., pp. 62 and 74.

61. In any case these extensions seem to have been considered more inevitable than desirable. (See Ibid., pp. 74 and 76).

62. Patrick Abercrombie and John Archibald, East Kent Regional Planning Scheme: Final Report (Canterbury 1928), pp. 50-52. The latter colliery did not, however, materialise. (Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 34).

63. The Colliery Guardian, 30 July 1926, p. 261.

64. Registry of Friendly Societies, Aylesham Tenants Ltd., No. 10366 R; The Colliery Guardian, 19 November 1926, p. 1125; The Kentish Observer, 18 November 1926. Under the company's rules 2 or 3 of the members of the management committee had to be tenants.

landowners at a cost of £18,205[65]. It was intended to build 1,200 houses, at a density of not more than 12 per acre, and to provide all services at an estimated total cost of £600,000, which included the purchase of the land[66]. This sum was to be provided:

(a) by a subsidy of £90,000 from the Exchequer under the Housing Act of 1925, this sum being the capitalised subsidy of £75 per house on 1,200 houses;

(b) by borrowing £340,000 from the Public Works Loan Commissioners at 5¼ per cent for forty years, the loan being repayable in annual instalments of £20,420;

(c) by an issue of £170,000 of debenture stock[67].

Once built Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. was to lease all the houses on a full repairing lease for forty years and to pay all the outgoings on them[68]. The architect and town planner for the scheme was to be John Archibald, the surveyor to the Eastry R.D.C., who was to continue to work in association with Professor Abercrombie, whom he had assisted in preparing the East Kent Regional Survey Report[69]. His plan was to build the town to the south-west of the railway. It was to have a long main boulevard starting from the railway station, with a large market square half-way along it[70]. The first 402 houses were built by the Dorman

65. The Colliery Guardian, 23 April 1926 p. 979, 25 June 1926 p. 1409 and 19 November 1926 p. 1125; The Kentish Observer, 13 January 1927. The Ministry of Health sanctioned the borrowing of the money for this purpose. The Minister was in fact sympathetic to the East Kent scheme for new townships instead of pithead villages. (The Kentish Observer, 18 November 1926).

66. The Colliery Guardian, 28 May 1926, p. 1179 and 19 November 1926 p.1125.

67. The Colliery Guardian, 19 November 1926, p. 1125; The Kentish Observer, 18 November 1926.

68. The Kentish Observer, 18 November 1926.

69. The Colliery Guardian, 30 July 1926, p. 260.

70. Ibid., Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), p. 50. This report contains a bird's-eye view of the architect's original plan.

Long Housing Company in 1927 and 1928[71], and were leased to Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. in the latter year[72]. By this time another 100 houses had been started[73], and these, together with another batch of 50 started later, were leased to Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. in 1930[74]. For these 552 houses the company paid Aylesham Tenants Ltd. £14,022 per annum, a cost of £25. 8s. per house. This would have made the average rent per house charged to the tenants at least 9s. 9d. per week[76]. No more houses were built by Aylesham Tenants Ltd., and the provision of another 104 dwellings in the village was left to the National Housing Trust, which was a subsidiary of Messrs. Henry Boot & Co. Ltd., a private firm of civil engineers and contractors, whose headquarters was in Sheffield[77].

71. The Colliery Guardian, 28 January 1927, p. 218, 11 March 1927, p. 584, 8 April 1927, p. 829 and 20 May 1927, p. 1191; Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), p. 51.

72. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59. Of these houses 202 were built of brick and 200 with a 2 ton steel frame and concrete walls with an insulation core composed of slabs of compressed cork. The latter was Dorman Long & Company's special form of construction. (For details see The Colliery Guardian, 17 April 1925, p. 962). There were five different types of house, 48 had two bedrooms, 354 three bedrooms, and all had bathrooms. Altogether nearly 400 men were employed on the site.

73. The Colliery Guardian, 16 November 1928, p. 1982; Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), p. 51. These were all brick built.

74. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59.

75. Whitehall Securities Records No. 584, Copy of letter dated 29 June 1950 from Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. to H.M. Inspector of Taxes, concerning accounts for the year ended 31 December 1946. The £14,022 is the sum paid to Aylesham Tenants Ltd. for the year.

76. Rents charged to tenants were presumably slightly higher than this as Pearson and Dorman Long also had to incur the cost of maintenance and repairs to the house. In addition tenants were probably liable to pay rates.

77. National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area) Records, File on A. Peachey & Co. - Colliery Houses in East Kent. The Aylesham houses were later purchased by Messrs. A. Peachey & Co., which became the Peachey Property Corporation after a merger with Bell London and Provincial Properties in 1958.

The failure of the Adisham Colliery to materialise meant, however, that Aylesham suffered from arrested development, and in 1945 many of the sites in the centre of the town were still rough grassland[78]. Seven years later Aylesham Tenants Ltd. sold its 552 houses to the Eastry Rural District Council and went into liquidation[79].

Although the site for housing to serve the Snowdown Colliery had been fairly quickly determined, that for Betteshanger took much longer, and this was despite having been the subject of discussion since 1923. In that year Sir Hugh Bell had expected Northbourne, just to the south of the Betteshanger Colliery, to be the first place affected by housing development[80]. In 1924, however, as if foreshadowing Abercrombie and Archibald's report, plans favoured a town between the colliery and Eastry[81]. Although development of this village was then delayed, a start was made in 1924 with the first of 60 cottages near to the colliery itself, which were intended primarily for safety men[82]. It was in erecting these dwellings that Dorman Long & Company first tried out in Kent its experimental method of building concrete houses[83]. The first thirty of them were completed in 1926, and plans then went ahead for building a further twenty-four[84].

78. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O.), p. 34.

79. Registry of Friendly Societies, Aylesham Tenants Ltd., No. 10366 R. At the time of dissolution the company's land and buildings (at cost) were valued at £279,621. Its liabilities included £82,416 borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board, £166,387 borrowed from local authorities, mostly in the form of debentures, and £60,247 in a sinking fund. (All annual returns prior to 1951 have been destroyed by the Registry of Friendly Societies).

80. The Colliery Guardian, 20 July 1923, p. 169.

81. Ibid., 14 December 1923, p. 1506.

82. Ibid., 23 May 1924, p. 1315 and 17 October 1924, p. 1006.

83. Ibid., 17 April 1925, p. 962.

84. Ibid., 23 April 1926, p. 979.

Pearson and Dorman Long would have preferred private enterprise to provide the necessary housing for its employees[85]. It was presumably to provide an inducement in this direction that when it made its agreement with the Treasury in February 1926 over the raising of £2m. of debentures, it budgeted for spending £200,000 on subsidising housing at the rate of £50 per house[86]. Presumably because it had doubts about private enterprise fulfilling this need, in the same year Pearson and Dorman Long formed Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., which was a wholly owned public utility society[87]. It would seem that this new company took over responsibility for the housing at Betteshanger, as in 1930 it leased 76 houses there to the parent firm[88]. In addition it appears that Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants not only acquired control of the 6½ acre site and 14 cottages at Woolage, near Snowdown, which Pearson and Dorman Long had purchased in 1924 from the Kent Coal Concessions[89], but also built more houses there, as well as near to the Snowdown Colliery itself. In 1930 it leased to its parent company 58 houses at the former site and 46 at the latter[90]. As Aylesham took care of the greater part of the needs

85. Ibid., 22 February 1924, p. 487.

86. See above Chapter 3, p. 140. Such subsidy would, of course, have been in addition to any received from the government, which in the case of Aylesham was £75 per house.

87. Registry of Friendly Societies, Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., No. 10328 R.

88. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59.

89. Ibid., item 23; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 134. The Concessions' records just list a reduction by £11,781 of its £64,100 of expenditure on villages. This sum covered sales during the year, and as these did not include Elvington or Stonehall they presumably referred to Woolage. According to Ritchie (see above p. 411) there were 24 houses there, and the price, at say £500 per house, would certainly seem to indicate that 24 rather than 14 houses were included in this sale. The figure 14 may therefore be a misprint in Pearson and Dorman Long's records.

90. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 59.

of the Snowdown miners, the main housing problem that faced Pearson and Dorman Long was provision for the men coming to the Betteshanger Colliery.

The company must have had doubts about meeting this need from its own resources, for early in 1927 it suggested to the Eastry R.D.C. that as Aylesham Tenants Ltd. had sanction to build 1,200 houses, it should include in its scope the provision of houses at Betteshanger, providing that the total number of houses on both sites did not exceed the 1,200 figure[91]. The Council agreed to this extension[92], and it was proposed to site a new town consisting initially of 500 houses, but with an ultimate population of 8,000, at Beacon Hill, near Little Mongeham, which was approximately 1¼ miles south of the colliery, and the same distance to the west of Deal[93]. Questions arose, however, concerning the sewage disposal from this site, and the problem of possible pollution of the Deal and Walmer water supplies[94]. Although this proposed new town was given the name Pixhill, presumably derived from Pixwell Point on Beacon Hill[95], a possible alternative location was proposed at Northbourne Park immediately to the south of the colliery[96]. The Eastry R.D.C. did not, however, favour this site[97]. By 1928 it was decided to abandon the plans for Pixhill[98] and to build instead at Mill Hill, just within the western

91. The Kentish Observer, 20 January 1927.

92. Ibid., 10 February 1927.

93. The Colliery Guardian, 14 April 1927, p. 887, 29 April 1927, p. 1008 and 6 May 1927, p. 1068.

94. Ibid., 29 April 1927, p. 1008 and 6 May 1927, p. 1068.

95. There was also what appears to be a house called Pixwell on the Beacon Hill side of Great Mongeham. (See Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1925), Map in Folder).

96. The Colliery Guardian, 13 May 1927, p. 1132.

97. Ibid., 3 June 1927, p. 1313. The cost of drainage and purification was estimated at £22,250 for the Little Mongeham site, and £26,600 for the one at Northbourne.

98. Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), p. 50.

boundary of the Borough of Deal[99]. A number of factors probably influenced this decision. Firstly, there was no immediate prospect of a colliery being sunk at Ripple, which could also be served by this town[100]. Secondly, as Abercrombie and Archibald recognised in their Final Report, if trunk sewers to the sea were insisted upon then it might become necessary to move the sites of their proposed towns nearer to the coast, in order to lessen the length of these sewers[101]. Finally, it seems that there was an increased desire amongst Kent miners to live not in mining villages but in nearby towns[102].

Work on the new site seems to have got off to a slow start. Possibly this was because the building of the houses became the responsibility not of Aylesham Tenants Ltd. but of Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd. Temporary advances, which were Pearson and Dorman Long's main method of financing the latter company, increased from a total of £131,350 in 1929 to £169,850 in 1930, to £223,075 in 1931, and to £252,125 in 1932, before settling down within the range £228,000 to £240,000, at which they remained until 1951[103]. The number of Deal houses leased to the parent company was 264 in 1932, 68 in 1933 and 161 in 1934[104]. Altogether the company leased 673 houses from the Snowdown

99. The Colliery Guardian, 14 September 1928, p. 1056.

100. Abercrombie and Archibald had placed emphasis on avoiding new single pit villages. See also Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), p. 50.

101. Ibid., p. 49. "In other words it might be found cheaper to make miners take a longer journey to their work than to carry sewage the longer distance to the sea."

102. See, for example, Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O.1945), p. 34.

103. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, Annual Returns 1929-52.

104. Ibid., item 59.

and Betteshanger Tenants[105], for which in 1946 it paid them £15,704 in rent, a cost for the year of £23. 6s. 8d. per house[106]. This would have made the average rent per house charged to the tenants at least 9 shillings per week[107]. No more houses were built by Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., and the further development of the Mill Hill Estate was left to the same private firm, the National Housing Trust, that had provided the additional dwellings at Aylesham. Altogether this company built 460 houses at Mill Hill[108], which took the final size of the estate to over 950[109]. These later houses were built with the assistance of a subsidy under the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act of 1933, on the understanding that they were for miners only. At the time of initial letting the men at Betteshanger had to take which came first, a colliery house or a Trust house[110]. One assumes, therefore, that the rents charged to tenants were similar for the two groups of houses.

105. In addition to the 493 houses at Deal, these included 76 at Betteshanger, 46 at Snowdown and 58 at Woolage.

106. Whitehall Securities Records No. 584, Copy of letter dated 29 June 1950 from Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. to H.M. Inspector of Taxes, concerning accounts for the year ended 31 December 1946.

107. The lower rent of these houses compared with the ones at Aylesham may have been due to their being slightly cheaper to build, although this is by no means certain. The average cost of the Aylesham houses was about £506, while that of the Snowdown and Betteshanger ones is not known for certain. The reason for this is that Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., unlike the other company, made some allowance for depreciation. If the rate for the year 1951 of approximately £3,600 is projected back for 19 years then the average cost of its houses also come to just over £500. These costs exclude the value of subsidies received. (As with Aylesham Tenants Ltd., the Registry of Friendly Societies has destroyed all annual returns of Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd. prior to 1951).

108. N.U.M. (Kent Area) Records, File on A. Peachey & Co. - Colliery Houses in East Kent.

109. Ministry of Fuel and Power, <u>Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report</u> (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 34.

110. N.U.M. (Kent Area) Records, File on A. Peachey & Co. - Colliery Houses in East Kent.

Under the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act of 1946 the houses of Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd. were vested in the National Coal Board as Part II Assets[111], and for them Pearson and Dorman Long received in 1952 something in the order of £231,344 in compensation[112]. This was almost the exact sum which the parent company had lent to its subsidiary at this date[113], although it must also have covered the National Coal Board's acquisition of the company's £1,200 of share capital[114].

Prior to taking over Tilmanstone Colliery in 1925[115], Richard Tilden Smith briefed Messrs. Ewart C. Culpin & R. S. Bowers, a London firm of architects and town planning advisers, to advise him on the best site for establishing a garden village, containing about one thousand houses, which would be within easy walking distance of the pithead, and yet be far enough away to ensure that the inhabitants did not suffer from the colliery's presence[116]. After consulting, amongst others, the chairman of

111. See above Chapter 6, p. 343.

112. Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836, item 86. Although this compensation is merely described as relating to subsidiary assets, it corresponds almost exactly to the £232,152 of temporary advances to subsidiary companies that was outstanding at the end of 1951; and was then reduced to nil by the end of the following year. (Also see above Chapter 6, pp. 354-56).

113. Registry of Friendly Societies, Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., No. 10328 R. In 1951 loans to this company totalled £273,655, of which £42,218 came from local authorities, leaving £231,437 as Pearson and Dorman Long's share. (The land and buildings of the company were valued at £267,535 in 1951, although appreciation raised this to £298,655 in the following year).

114. That all these shares were owned by Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. see G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949), Whitehall Securities Records No. 584.

115. See above Chapter 3, p. 154.

116. Tilmanstone (Kent) Colliery Company Limited Proposed Housing Scheme: Report to R. Tilden Smith, Esq., by Messrs. Ewart C. Culpin & R. S. Bowers, Architect & Town Planning Advisers (24 February 1925). (A copy of this report is in the possession of Mr. W. Newman).

the Joint Town Planning Committee and John Archibald, the surveyor to the Eastry Rural District Council, Culpin and Bowers recommended a site at Elvington, just beyond the new village started by the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., and about half a mile from the colliery[117]. The architects' report also recommended the financing and management of the village through a public utility society. Such a society, Elvington Tenants Ltd., was formed by the Eastry Rural District Council and Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. in 1926[118]. Soon afterwards this new company purchased the 25 houses already built at Elvington and the Elvington Institute from the Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. for £7,846[119]. In addition Elvington Tenants also acquired Elvington Court from the Elvington Court Extended Extension Ltd.[120].

Soon after the Eastry R.D.C. acquired the necessary land, work started on the first batch of 102 houses at Elvington at the end of 1926,

117. This development was accepted by Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1925), p. 74.

118. Registry of Friendly Societies, Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R; Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52.

119. The Kentish Observer, 13 January 1927; The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 155. The Concessions company's expenditure on freehold surface and villages was reduced by £23,148 between 31 March 1926 and 31 March 1927, and the loss on realisation of certain freehold minerals (sic) and Elvington Village was put at £15,302. (See also The Colliery Guardian, 14 December 1928, p. 2398). The 49 houses at Stonehall were sold at the rate of one or two per annum over the next few years. There were still 38 left at the end of 1931, and about 32 in 1939. From the company's accounts it would appear that these houses had cost about £526 each to build, and were being sold for between £300 and £400. When the Kent Coal Concessions went into liquidation in 1954 its remaining houses, numbering about 30, were sold for a total of £6,772. (The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, Annual Returns and Balance Sheets 1927-54, and Liquidator's Accounts).

120. The Kentish Observer, 13 January 1927. It would seem that the latter company had been set up by the East Kent Colliery Company to acquire Elvington Court in 1916, and that the property had then been leased to the colliery company as a boarding house.

the contractor being a local firm, Messrs. R. J. Barwick of Dover[121]. Meanwhile Elvington Court was leased to Tilden Smith, who started to have it converted into a residential club, with accommodation for about 200 persons[122]. Although some of the newly built houses became available in 1927, there were delays in their occupation because of finalising details in the tenancy agreements[123], and the first 102 houses and the Elvington Institute were not finally leased to the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries until early in 1929[124]. Already by 1928 Tilden Smith was beginning to favour not the continued expansion of Elvington, but the provision of more housing for Tilmanstone men in Dover, particularly as he believed that a growing number of men would wish to live in such a town in preference to a mining village[125]. As a result Tilden Smith met members of the Dover Town Council, who had already decided to erect 50 more houses under a subsidy scheme approved by the Ministry of Health, and let it be known that he would make arrangements to transport the men living in the town to and from the colliery[126]. Possibly because of his heavy financial outlays on the aerial ropeway and in acquiring interests in

121. Ibid., 7 October 1926, 18 November 1926, 16 December 1926 and 6 January 1927; The Colliery Guardian, 3 December 1926, p. 1239 and 28 January 1927, p. 218. For further details of construction see The Colliery Guardian, 4 March 1927, p. 522 and 20 May 1927, p. 1191.

122. The Kentish Observer, 18 November 1926; The Colliery Guardian, 3 December 1926, p. 1239.

123. The Colliery Guardian, 20 May 1927, p. 1191.

124. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52. These were known as the First Development Scheme. At the same time certain of the Eastry R.D.C.'s interests in Elvington Tenants Ltd. were transferred to the colliery company. Although these interests are not specified in this document.

125. The Colliery Guardian, 19 October 1928, p. 1575 and 26 October 1928, p. 1678.

126. Ibid.

east Kent gas companies[127], by 1929 Tilden Smith was no longer in favour of the colliery company being called upon to channel its funds into housing, and he felt that this matter should be taken in hand by the community as a whole[128]. Nevertheless, following Tilden Smith's death, the Tilmanstone company in 1930 reached agreement with the Eastry R.D.C. and Elvington Tenants Ltd. for the erection and leasing of a further 100 houses[129]. These became available in 1932 and took the total size of the village up to about 230 dwellings[130]. As this development co-incided with a decline in the colliery's labour force from 1,178 in 1930 to 752 in 1933[131], pressures on housing were reduced, and this, together with developments in Dover, resulted in no further additions being made to Elvington in the pre-nationalisation period.

Altogether it would appear that 227 houses at Elvington were leased to the colliery company for a period of 40 years at a rental that would cover the interest on capital[132]. The rental received by Elvington Tenants Ltd. on these houses was in 1951 £6,218[133], which would seem to

127. See above Chapter 3, pp. 158-59.

128. Kencole: The Official Organ of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited & its Allied Activities, No. 4, Christmas 1929, p. 30. He believed that some co-operative scheme could be worked out between the miners and the local authorities.

129. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52. These were known as the Second Development Scheme.

130. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 34.

131. See above Chapter 4, Table 4.7.

132. Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins, who in addition to being the accountant at Tilmanstone Colliery was also a member of the management committee of Elvington Tenants Ltd. (As with Aylesham Tenants Ltd. and Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd. the tenants of the company were entitled to elect two or three members of this committee). According to Mr. Jenkins, after the expiry of this 40 year period the houses were to become the property of the Eastry R.D.C.

133. Registry of Friendly Societies, Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R.

indicate that the average tenant paid at least 10s. 6d. per week[134]. As in 1950 the land and buildings at cost totalled £110,605[135], and as the original 25 houses had been purchased from the Kent Coal Concessions for £7,846[136], it would seem that the remaining 202 dwellings cost about £509 each to build. The capital of Elvington Tenants included only £400 in shares[137], but £110,000 of debentures, of which £72,500 had by 1938 been issued to the Eastry R.D.C. and £37,500 to the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd.[138]. By 1951 the amount of outstanding debentures had been reduced to £91,505, of which only £57,364 was issued to the Eastry R.D.C. and, by assumption, the remaining £34,140 was held by the Tilmanstone company, which did not dispose of these housing assets to the National Coal Board after nationalisation. The £87,191 paid in compensation to the Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. for Part II assets[139] probably included the twelve houses built near the colliery at the end of the First World War, but the greater part of this payment was probably for the aerial ropeway[140]. The Tilmanstone Company did, however, finally dispose of its investments in Elvington Tenants in 1953, when it

134. The average annual rent per house being £27. 7s. 10d. These calculations ignore the rental on the Elvington Institute, which was included in the £6,218. Although this may have reduced the figure of 10s. 6d. by a few pence, additions would then have been made to cover the cost of maintenance and repairs on houses.

135. Registry of Friendly Societies, Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R.

136. See above p. 427.

137. Registry of Friendly Societies, Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R.

138. Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., B.O.T. 207409, item 52.

139. See above Chapter 6, Table 6.7.

140. The ropeway was acquired by the National Coal Board, which dismantled it in the early 1950's. (Information supplied by Mr. D. T. Jenkins).

sold its shares and debentures to the Eastry R.D.C.[141]. The Eastry Council then acquired all Elvington Tenants' property and immediately dissolved the company[142].

As we have already seen, by 1925 the Chislet Colliery Ltd. had succeeded in building 56 houses in the new village near to the colliery, and bought 12 cottages in neighbouring villages[143]. Although the records of the Chislet company are a little confusing[144], it would seem that by 1928 the number of houses in the village had increased to about 70[145]. As the company wished to attract additional workers by building a further 100 houses near to the colliery and yet had no funds, it approached both the Public Works Loan Board and the Industrial Transference Board for assistance[146]. After receiving unfavourable replies it then turned to the Blean Rural District Council, which was able to help because the Ministry of Health was prepared to sanction a loan to the Council for the company's scheme[147]. Altogether the Chislet

141. Copy of letter dated 28 September 1953 from D. T. Jenkins to R. W. Stokes, Secretary of Tilmanstone Holdings Ltd.; Letter dated 28 September 1953 from R. W. Stokes to F. D. Mottram. (These documents are in the possession of Mr. F. D. Mottram).

142. Registry of Friendly Societies, Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R.

143. See above p. 415. Six new houses had been built "at the colliery" in 1920, presumably for the benefit of safety men, as two of them were rent free. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 10 February 1920). These were probably in the new village, as a map dated January 1925 shows approximately 26 houses in the village and none nearer to the colliery. (Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1925), Map in Folder).

144. Between 1921 and 1930, for example, annual balance sheets grouped together expenditure on cottages and colliery buildings, while the company's minutes refer to plans to start new houses, but do not say what was actually started, or what was completed.

145. Abercrombie and Archibald, op. cit. (1928), pp. 47 and 52.

146. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 15 June 1927 (Thirteenth O.G.M.), 21 February 1928 and 23 May 1928.

147. Ibid., 17 July 1928.

company borrowed £38,000 for a period of 30 years[148]. The first of these funds became available in 1929[149], and most of the additional 100 houses appear to have been completed in that year[150].

The first houses built in the village, which in 1928 had been given the name of Hersden[151], had been designed by Dorman Long & Company and were known as 'Dorlonco' type houses[152]. At least thirty of these had been built for £232 each by a Canterbury contractor, George Browning, with the Chislet company providing the roads and the drains in addition to the land[153]. It would seem that the later houses were of the same design, as in 1930 a total of £3,000 had to be spent on repairing 'Dorlonco' houses damaged by a gale[154]. The exact cost of building the later houses is not known[155]. Although expenditure on housing increased from £74,238 at the end of 1928 to £113,977 by the end of March 1930[156], this may not account for the total amount spent[157]. This latter figure was, however, written down in value to £75,000 following the reduction of the company's capital

148. See above Chapter 3, pp. 174-75.

149. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 23 January 1929.

150. The Kentish Observer, 15 August 1929. By August 68 of the houses had already been completed. 96 of the houses also qualified for a subsidy of £50 each, subject to completion on or before 31 March 1929. (The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 10 September 1928).

151. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 11 December 1928.

152. Ibid., 25 June 1920 and 8 February 1921.

153. Ibid., 21 November 1922.

154. Ibid., 16 January 1930 and 1 August 1930. As on 165 houses this would have worked out at about £18 per house, it seems not unreasonable to assume that all, or nearly all, were 'Dorlonco' houses.

155. Presumably they were built by local contractors.

156. See above Chapter 3, p. 175.

157. There may, for example, have been delays in paying contractors.

in 1929[158]. There was no significant increase in expenditure on housing after this date. When in 1933 the company wanted to add a further 70 to 100 houses to the village, it found the Blean R.D.C. and a number of building societies unresponsive[159]. The local council maintained the same position when approached again, both in 1934 and in 1937[160]. Even if the R.D.C. had been more helpful over finance, there was an additional problem in that the drainage system in the locality of Hersden was not really capable of dealing adequately with more houses[161]. In 1945, therefore, the village was still small and consisted of only 165 houses[162]. The value of these houses in 1946, after placing £26,027 to a reserve for depreciation, was £49,984[163]. After nationalisation the Chislet company received £104,729 in compensation for its houses and farms[164]. Unfortunately no figure is available for the houses alone[165].

By 1945, as a result of these various housing developments,

158. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, item 117; also see above Chapter 3, pp. 176-77.

159. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 6 January 1933, 27 March 1933 and 27 October 1933.

160. Ibid., 27 February 1935, 27 January 1937 and 17 December 1937. By 1934 the local council had been merged with the Bridge R.D.C. to become the Bridge-Blean R.D.C.

161. Ibid., 29 July 1938 (Twenty-fourth O.G.M.) and 21 July 1939 (Twenty-fifth O.G.M.).

162. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 34. Unfortunately, it is not known what rents were paid for these houses. When, however, the Blean R.D.C. was planning in 1930 to build houses in the neighbouring village of Sturry it thought of charging 11s. 9d. per week, excluding rates, for 3 bedroom houses, and 9s. per week for those with only two bedrooms. (The Kentish Observer, 24 July 1930).

163. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., B.O.T. 131988, balance sheets for the years 1930-46.

164. See above Chapter 6, Table 6.7.

165. At £500 per house one would have expected something in the order of £82,500.

approximately 70 per cent of the 5,000 to 6,000 workers in the Kent Coalfield lived in mining villages that had been provided directly or indirectly by the colliery companies[166]. As the distance of these villages from the pits that they served varied from a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to a maximum of three miles, there was a considerable saving in travelling expenses for the men who lived in them. In 1923, for example, some men were spending one shilling per day in fares to and from work[167]. (See Table 8.5). In the case of the Chislet Colliery, however, the company did make some payment, at least up to 1928, towards the cost of the rail fares of men living in Ramsgate[168]. At Tilmanstone there was certainly no subsidising of the men's travelling costs before 1925[169]. The greater provision of road transport to and from this and other collieries from the late 1920's onwards may, however, have included an element of subsidy, but this is by no means certain[170]. Bus fares were

166. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), pp. 33-36. The rest of this section on housing is based on this source except where otherwise stated. The assumption in this report is that there were 1.5 mineworkers to every house. According to one observer in the early 1930's, however, it was the custom for many of the housewives on the mining estates to take in lodgers, and that in spite of the Housing Acts and regulations made by the companies owning the houses, overcrowding was a recognised evil in some of the miners' homes. (Violet L. Hughes, op. cit., p. 122).

167. According to one of the Kent delegates at the M.F.G.B. Annual Conference in 1923 railway fares affected Kent more than any other district in the country. (Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Minutes, Annual Conference held at Folkestone commencing 10 July 1923, p. 440).

168. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 February 1928. The company was considering discontinuing these payments in 1928, and may have done so after the extensions to Hersden in 1929.

169. Tilmanstone (Kent) Colliery Company Limited Proposed Housing Scheme, Report to R. Tilden Smith, Esq., by Messrs. Ewart C. Culpin & R. S. Bowers, Architects & Town Planning Advisers (24 February 1925). Return fares to Dover were still about 5 shillings per week.

170. Apart from Chislet in 1928, there is no indication in any of the records of the various companies that they ever subsidised transport.

Table 8.5: The Kent Coalfield: Distance Travelled to Work and Cost of Daily Return Fares in 1923

Railway Stations	Number of Workmen Using Train(1)	Approximate Mileage	Present Daily Return Fare(2) s. d.
Dover to Tilmanstone	200	10	1. 0
Kearsney(3) to Tilmanstone	200	7½	9½
Stonehall to Tilmanstone	200	6	7½
Dover to Snowdown Halt	350(4)	10	10
Kearsney to Snowdown Halt	350(4)	7½	8½
Stonehall to Snowdown Halt	350(4)	6	6½
Shepherdswell to Snowdown Halt	350(4)	2½	3
Ramsgate to Chislet	450	12	1. 0
Sturry to Chislet	60	2	4

Notes: (1) Some of the men who worked at Snowdown and Chislet lived at Canterbury. For some reason these men were not included.

(2) Some saving may have been possible through buying season tickets.

(3) This station was between Dover and Stonehall.

(4) The Snowdown Colliery had been closed by 1923, and the total of at least 1,400 men working at this colliery, even when it was open, is clearly inaccurate.

Source: Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Minutes, 6 March 1923.

subsidised, however, during the war years[171].

Although the members of the Regional Survey Committee, who drew up the report on the coalfield in 1945, considered all the houses comprising

171. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 35. As it was expected that this subsidy would soon be removed, it was presumably a government financed measure applicable only for the duration of the war.

the mining villages to be adequate as regards the number and size of rooms and amenities, both the owners' and men's representatives felt that future housing accommodation should not be provided by the colliery companies[172]. Not only was it regarded as undesirable for the men to be in contact with their employers outside working hours through the relationship of landlord and tenant[173], but the companies felt that all would benefit more if future capital expenditure was concentrated entirely on developing the collieries themselves. Instead it was felt that the local authorities should not only make future provision, but also purchase the existing company owned houses. Because of the sense of isolation from the rest of the community that existed in Aylesham, Hersden and, to a lesser extent, Elvington[174], the members of the Regional Survey Committee were strongly in favour of locating any new housing sites in the neighbourhood of big towns such as Deal, Dover, Canterbury, Ramsgate, Herne Bay and Folkestone. It was felt that the larger towns would provide better job opportunities for any miners who became unemployed, enable children to enjoy better educational facilities, and provide other members of miners' families with the possibility of finding employment, which was lacking in the mining villages. It may also have been felt that by being less isolated there would be some diminution in the antagonisms that had developed

172. Only the representatives of the Chislet Colliery Ltd. dissented slightly, as feeling within the company was that Hersden was too small to be a self-contained community and required the provision of another hundred houses.

173. With regard to each of the estates, the colliery companies had an arrangement by which the men's rents were deducted from their wages. (Violet L. Hughes, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 61). According to Hughes, excluding the more expensive houses of officials, the rents varied from 5s. 4d. to 18s. 4d. per week.

174. See also Hughes, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 184-200.

between the miners and other members of the community[175]. Even just after the war there was still a feeling amongst some miners that they were generally unpopular in east Kent[176].

The amenities at the collieries and in the mining villages of Kent were gradually improved throughout the inter-war years as a result of the creation in 1920 of the Miners' Welfare Fund. This Fund came into being because, following the Sankey Commission's Inquiry in 1919, it was generally recognised that the social conditions of the mining communities were in need of urgent improvement[177]. The Mining Industry Act, 1920, by which the Fund was constituted, was in fact the first and only statutory provision for the social welfare of workers in any industry[178]. The objects of the Fund were wide:

> "Such purposes connected with the social well-being, recreation, and conditions of living of workers in or about coal mines, and with mining education and research, as the Board of Trade, after consultation with any Government Department concerned may decide."[179]

175. Ibid., pp. 184-90. Particularly antagonisms that had developed with farm labourers and tradesmen. There was some indication that in the early 'thirties tradesmen may have been charging slightly higher prices in the mining villages. Also the Kent Mine Workers' Association believed that local magistrates passed harsher sentences on miners than on other members of the community convicted of a similar offence. (K.M.W.A., Minutes, 21 August 1929. In one case, for example, a miner sentenced to fourteen days hard labour for stealing apples worth one shilling was released after three days following the intervention of the Home Secretary).

176. Zweig, op. cit., p. 4.

177. J. P. Dickie, The Coal Problem (1936), p. 226.

178. Miners' Welfare Fund, First Report, 1921-22, p. 6.(Non-Parliamentary Paper); The Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation, First Annual Report, 1952, p. 11 (Non-Parliamentary Paper).

179. Miners' Welfare Fund, First Report, 1921-22, p. 6.

The finance for the Welfare Fund was derived from a levy of 1d. per ton on the output of every mine[180]. Originally this was for a period of only five years, but it was renewed for a further five years by the Mining Industry Act, 1926, which also imposed a one shilling in the pound mineral levy on royalties in order to provide more funds for pithead baths[181]. After being further renewed in 1931, the output levy was reduced in 1934 to ½d. per ton and made to apply retrospectively to 1933[182]. It was, however, restored to 1d. in 1939, in order to provide extra revenue for constructing pit-head baths[183].

The Fund was administered by the Miners' Welfare Committee, which was appointed by the Board of Trade[184], and consisted of representatives of the owners and the mine workers, with some independent members[185]. In 1939 the Committee was replaced by the Miners' Welfare Commission, which was of similar composition[186]. In addition District Welfare Committees were established to advise the Central Committee[187], and these also

180. Ibid., p. 6.

181. Miners' Welfare Fund, Fifth Report, 1926, pp. 8, 23 and 40. The mineral levy was not payable, however, on super-royalties. (The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., B.O.T. 80693, item 169).

182. Miners' Welfare Fund, Tenth Annual Report, 1931, p. 6, Twelfth Annual Report, 1933, p. 5 and Thirteenth Annual Report, 1934, p. 5. The reduced rate was to apply until 1951.

183. Ibid., Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, p. 12. The increase was to apply for only five years.

184. Ibid., First Report, 1921-22, p. 5.

185. J. E. Williams, The Derbyshire Miners (1962), p. 785.

186. Ibid. The Miners' Welfare Commission was itself replaced by the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation in 1952. (The Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation, First Annual Report, 1952, p. 2).

187. Miners' Welfare Fund, First Report, 1921-22, p. 7.

consisted of representatives of the owners and men[188]. The District Committees were to receive a sum equal to four-fifths of the contributions of the output levy, while the remaining one-fifth was to go to a General Fund to finance mining education and research that related to improving health and safety in mines[189]. In Kent grants from the District Fund were made chiefly for pithead baths and recreational facilities[190].

Under the Coal Mines Act, 1911, colliery companies had to provide pithead baths if demanded by a two-thirds majority of the workmen, provided that, among other conditions, the estimated total cost of maintenance did not exceed 3d. per head per week, and on the understanding that the workmen agreed to contribute to the cost of maintenance a sum not exceeding half that amount. Owing to the high cost of construction and maintenance, however, this aspect of the Act had proved virtually inoperative[191]. In 1924 Chislet was one of the first six collieries in the country to have pithead baths erected with assistance from the Welfare Fund[192]. This was made possible, however, only because part of the cost of the scheme was met by the Chislet Colliery company, which provided the site at a nominal rent, a loan of £2,557 to cover part of the capital cost,

188. Ibid., Fifteenth Annual Report, 1936, p. 3 and Sixteenth Annual Report, 1937, p. 3. John Elks, the General Secretary of the Kent Mine Workers' Association, was joint-secretary of the Kent District Committee.

189. Ibid., First Report, 1921-22, pp. 6 and 14.

190. Ibid., Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, p. 94; see also Tables 8.6 and 8.7.

191. Miners' Welfare Fund, Second Report, 1923, p. 11. By 1923 the cost of maintenance, including interest on capital, was probably as much as one shilling per workman per week.

192. Ibid., p. 12.

Table 8.6: Miners' Welfare Fund: Kent District Fund, 1922-38

Year as at 31st Dec.	Contributions (being 4/5ths of total received) plus interest	Allocations approved	Actually paid out	Allocations to Schemes(1*)			
				Recreational(2*)	Pit Welfare (including baths)	Health	Administration
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1922	1,607	-	-	-	-	-	-
1923	3,020	3,840	2,593	250	2,500	1,060(3)	30
1924	4,122	3,840	3,840	250	2,500	1,060(3)	30
1925	5,066	3,840	3,840	250	2,500	1,060(3)	30
1926	5,780	3,840	3,840	250	2,500	1,060(3)	30
1927	6,493	3,865	3,865	250	2,500	1,060(3)	55
1928	8,616	8,014	5,492	4,299(4)	2,500	1,085(4)	130
1929	11,271	8,564	8,542	4,799(5)	2,500	1,085(4)	180
1930	15,545	13,565	13,493	6,250(6)	6,000(2)	1,085(4)	230
1931	19,851	18,375	18,353	6,250(6)	10,750(3)	1,085(4)	290
1932	25,137	28,538	21,016	6,805(6)	20,309(3)	1,085(4)	340
	Total Credited	Total Grants	Balance Unallocated	Grants to Schemes (as above)			
1933	30,550	25,747	4,803(3*)	6,805(6)	17,467(6)	1,085(4)	390
1934	30,056	28,373	1,683	6,804(6)	20,034(6)	1,085(4)	450
1935	32,285	29,076	3,211	6,783(6)	20,733(7)	1,085(4)	475
1936	34,602	34,375	227	11,512(9)	21,258(7)	1,085(4)	520
1937	36,796	36,837(4*)	- 41	13,368(9)	21,809(7)	1,085(4)	564
1938	39,051	38,316	735	14,237(10)	22,385(7)	1,085(4)	609

Notes: (1*) Only one scheme unless otherwise indicated by number in brackets.

(2*) Includes institutes, halls, recreation and sports grounds, pavilions, games equipment, colliery bands etc.

(3*) £2,368 of this sum was reserved, presumably for a particular scheme.

(4*) Includes miscellaneous grant of £11.

Source: Miners' Welfare Fund, Annual Reports 1921-38.

Table 8.7: The Kent Coalfield: Provision of Pithead Baths

Colliery	Persons Employed at Colliery in 1935	Baths		Grants		
		Accommodation	Date of opening	From Baths Fund	From District Fund	Total for Colliery
				£	£	£
Chislet	1,470	600	1924	-	5,309	
		315 (1)	1930	880	1,750	18,327
		592 (1)	1937	10,388	-	
Tilmanstone	759	1,008	1930	5,758	5,750	11,508
Betteshanger	2,678	2,520	1934	25,673	4,643 (2)	30,316
Snowdown	2,161	2,000	1935	21,159	3,582	24,741
TOTAL	7,068	7,035	-	63,858	21,034	84,892

Notes: (1) Extensions.

(2) Includes £1,668 for canteen.

Source: Miners' Welfare Fund, Annual Reports, 1933-38.

and agreed to pay for an attendant and supply light and water[193]. These baths were twice extended, in 1930 and again in 1937[194]. Baths were provided at the other three collieries between 1930 and 1935, being financed largely by grants from the Miners' Welfare Fund[195]. From the late twenties onwards Kent benefitted from the Welfare Committee's policy of giving preference to large mines, mines where double coaling shifts were worked[196], and to schemes assisted by District Welfare Committees[197] and by the colliery owners. In addition the Welfare Fund provided canteens at Betteshanger in 1935, Tilmanstone in 1936 and Chislet in

193. The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 21 November 1922, 13 February 1923, 11 September 1923, 8 April 1924 and 19 March 1928; The Colliery Guardian, 9 May 1924, p. 1205; G. J. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 19. Normally the Miners' Welfare Fund would make allocations only for purposes of capital expenditure. Maintenance and running costs had to be met by assistance from the colliery company and by making a charge on users. The capital was usually secured by a trust deed, and the maintenance entrusted to a joint management committee representing both owners and men. (Miners' Welfare Fund, First Report, 1921-22, pp. 8-9 and Second Report, 1923, p. 11).

194. Miners' Welfare Fund, Eighth Report, 1929, p. 21 and Ninth Report, 1930, p. 48; The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minutes, 24 July 1929 and 28 May 1937; also see Table 8.7.

195. Miners' Welfare Fund, Eighth Report, 1929, p. 21, Ninth Report, 1930, pp. 48-49, Eleventh Report, 1932, pp. 9-10, 19 and 77 , Twelfth Annual Report, 1933, pp. 41 and 98, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1934, pp. 12 and 28-29; see also Table 8.7. It was normal practice in the coal industry for men to subscribe about 6d. per week towards the upkeep of pithead baths. (Miners' Welfare Fund, Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, pp. 13-14). The provision of these baths would, of course, have contributed to the reduction of dermatitis and other skin diseases in the coalfield.

196. Ibid., Fifth Report, 1926, p. 44. The latter was in fact a recommendation made by the Royal Commission of 1925, which also recommended the levy on mineral royalties to provide extra baths. (Ibid., p. 40).

197. The Kent District Committee gave priority to providing baths, and by the end of 1935 had spent 38 per cent of its allocation in this way, which was a higher proportion than in any other district. (Miners' Welfare Fund, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1934, p. 12 and Fourteenth Annual Report, 1935, p. 15).

1942[198]. During or just before the war a canteen was also provided at the Snowdown Colliery[199].

Away from the collieries, recreational facilities, mostly of an outdoor nature, were provided in the mining villages[200]. These received little financial assistance from any other outside organisation, and were paid for by a levy collected from the men at the pits[201]. Expenditure on health services was small[202], and consisted mainly of a grant of £960 to cover the provision of ambulances[203]. In addition to this district expenditure, by the late 'thirties the central General Fund had made available educational grants totalling £7,750, mainly to finance projected mining departments at proposed new technical institutes at Dover and Deal[204].

With the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1946 the existence of the Miners' Welfare Commission was confirmed, and in addition the National Coal Board was made responsible for the welfare of the persons in its employment[205].

198. Ibid., Thirteenth Annual Report, 1934, pp. 28-29, Fourteenth Annual Report, 1935, p. 18 and Fifteenth Annual Report, 1936, p. 23; G. J. Davies, Chislet Memorandum, p. 19. At Chislet, as 500 men left the colliery after the outbreak of war, it was possible to provide a canteen by converting part of the pithead baths. (Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 37).

199. Miners' Welfare Fund, Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, pp. 94-95; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 37.

200. Miners' Welfare Fund, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1937, pp. 43-44 and 50 and Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, pp. 94-95; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), pp. 38-39. In addition to sporting facilities there was some provision of institutes and social clubs.

201. Miners' Welfare Fund, Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, pp. 94-95.

202. See Table 8.6.

203. Miners' Welfare Fund, Seventeenth Annual Report, 1938, p. 96.

204. Ibid.

205. The Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation, First Annual Report, 1952, p. 11.

CONCLUSION

The Kent Coalfield has always existed at the margin of the British mining industry. It was only the rapid increase in demand for Britain's coal in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that made it worth considering testing Godwin-Austen's hypothesis. Because of the concealed nature of the coalfield, attempts to prove its existence and then develop it were bound to involve a considerable element of financial risk, and it was not surprising that in the early years the dominant role was played by speculators, such as Arthur Burr, who induced numerous small investors, attracted by the prospect of high rates of return on their capital, to join him in this venture. As minerals in Britain were privately owned, the early pioneer companies not only had to meet the cost of exploratory borings, but also, if they were not to see the benefits of their work accrue to others, lease beforehand the right to mine coal from local landowners in as much of the surrounding area as possible. This policy would probably have been successful had it not been for the water problems encountered at depth in the coalfield. As a result, Burr and his Concessions group of companies found themselves in control of most of the coalfield, but without the necessary capital to sink and adequately equip their own collieries. While the difficulties both they and the owners of the Shakespeare Colliery had already encountered were something of a disincentive to certain other would be investors, who wished to acquire colliery areas from them. It was these water problems which, more than any other factor, kept Kent at the margin of the coal industry. Its one hope of developing into something more substantial came with the discovery of iron ore, which coupled with the fact that Kent coal, although not suitable for household use, was excellent for coking purposes, attracted the large steel firms of Bolckow, Vaughan Ltd. and Dorman, Long & Co. Ltd. into the area. The First World War intervened, however, to delay their plans, and to provide an extended lease of life to the complex group of companies created by Burr, nearly all of which, by the summer of 1914, were facing financial collapse. By the time Dorman, Long & Co., in alliance with Lord Cowdray, had acquired from the Concessions group control over the greater part of the coalfield, not only was the country's coal industry declining, but so was its steel industry, which suffered an even more severe rate of contraction during the inter-war years. As a result Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. was forced to concentrate on just coal production, and this in turn was hampered not only by the water problems, but also by labour shortages and the schemes introduced by the government in 1930 to restrict the country's coal output in an attempt to maintain prices and revenue. The roles played by Richard Tilden Smith and by the group of companies centred around the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. Ltd., while important in keeping in business the Tilmanstone and Chislet collieries respectively, were never such as to lead to developments on the scale envisaged by Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd. Although, just before his death in 1929, Tilden Smith was thinking of basing a number of coal using industries in the vicinity of his colliery and the aerial ropeway.

The impossibility of Kent coal ever gaining more than token access to the lucrative household market, and then the failure of the local steel industry to materialise meant that the companies had to develop alternative markets for their growing output in the south east of England. Although nearness to markets did confer certain advantages, they were poor consolation for the hoped for developments of either the early pioneers or the later industrialists. Instead of the expected profits, the companies mostly incurred losses, and it was only the reconstructed Chislet company that ever paid a dividend to its shareholders before nationalisation.

From the point of view of the Kent miners, the shortage of labour in the coalfield, particularly in the years 1914-20 and 1927-35, was largely responsible for their being amongst the highest paid in the industry. At the same time the more favourable employment opportunities prevailing in Kent compared with other mining districts, enabled the Kent Mine Workers' Association to develop into a well organised union that on the whole was able to look after the interests of its members fairly successfully.

Although its importance in relation to the British coal industry as a whole was small, the development of the Kent Coalfield did have considerable significance locally, particularly as between 1932 and 1938 no factories were opened and only one was extended in east Kent[1].

Since nationalisation the fortunes of the Kent Coalfield have not improved. Output, after reaching a postwar peak of 1.8 million tons in 1951, has steadily declined, while financial losses have been incurred in every year except 1950. With the continuing decline in the demand for coal and with rising costs, the National Coal Board decided in 1969 to close the Chislet Colliery. The future of the other three mines looked less certain when soon afterwards the new Richborough power station was converted to use oil fuel only. Somewhat ironically, however, plans are now being worked out to see if the coalfield can survive by supplying the lucrative steel coking market[2]. In Kent's favour are the suitability and quality of the coal produced, but against it are the high transport costs to the north of England. The coalfield still exists today, therefore, as in the past, very much at the margin of the British coal mining industry.

1. Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (H.M.S.O. 1945), p. 35. No industrial development took place in east Kent during the war as the area was too vulnerable to attack.

2. Dover Express, 25 August 1972, p. 1.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Companies that owned the Dover (Shakespeare) Colliery and Associated Companies, 1896-1955.
Appendix B	Borings in the Kent Coalfield, 1886-1945.
Appendix C	The Kent Coal Concessions Group of Companies, Details of Share Capital and Debentures Issued, 1904-1924.
Appendix D.1	The Kent Coalfield: Output of Coal, 1921-26.
Appendix D.2	The Kent Coalfield: Costs of Production, Proceeds and Profits Per Ton Commercially Disposable, 1921-26.
Appendix D.3	The Kent Coalfield: Workpeople Employed, Manshifts Worked, and Output and Earnings per Manshift, 1921-26.

Appendix A: Companies that owned the Dover (Shakespeare) Colliery and Associated Companies, 1896-1955

(* Indicates that the company actually owned the colliery)

Company	Date of: Incorporation	Date of: Commencement of Liquidation	Date of: Final Winding up	Total Share Capital Raised before commencement of Liquidation	Total Debentures outstanding at commencement of Liquidation
				£	£
The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd.*	1896	1897	1901	164,793	-
The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd.	1896	1899	1936	3,048	-
Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd.(1)	1897	1899	1905	8,379	-
The Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd.(1)	1897	1899	1905	170,077	-
The Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd.(1)	1897	1899	1905	75,211	57,000(5)
Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd.*(1)	1897	1899	1907	1,118,818	112,000(5)
The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd.*(2)	1899	1905	1921	1,391,138	94,620
Kent Collieries Ltd.*	1905	1917	1928	379,411	433,162(5)
The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd.	1910	1917	1919	322,900	149,489(5)
Channel Steel Co. Ltd.*(3)	1917	1949	1955	741,860(4)	-

Notes: (1) These companies combined to form the Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd.

(2) The Dover Collieries Ltd. was formed in 1902 to acquire Consolidated Kent Collieries assets, but it did not do so and was dissolved in 1905.

(3) This company was formed to acquire the assets of Kent Collieries Ltd. and the Channel Collieries Trust Ltd.

(4) As at 31st December 1948.

(5) Includes secured creditors.

Sources: The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/6730/47311 and BT 34/1180/47311;
The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/31796/49634;
Mid-Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7316/51795 and BT 34/1315/51795;
The Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7376/52299 and BT 34/1328/52299;
The Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7437/52840 and BT 34/1343/52840;
Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/7623/54422 and BT 34/1386/54422;
The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/16237/62956 and BT 34/2892/62956;
Kent Collieries Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/17393/83668 and BT 34/3160/83668;
The Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., P.R.O. BT 31/19534/110343 and BT 34/3574/110343;
G. M. Fotheringham, 'Report on the Channel Steel Company Limited and Subsidiaries' (March 1949);
Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., B.O.T. 184836.

Appendix B: Borings in the Kent Coalfield, 1886-1945

Company	Bore	Dates of Sinking		Depth from Surface	Coal Measures Proved at Depth of	Thickness of Coal Measures Proved * indicates base reached
		Commenced	Finished			
				feet	feet	feet
South Eastern Railway Co.	Brady (Dover)	1886	1890	2,330	1,157	1,173
Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd.	Brabourne	1897	1899	2,004	C.M. absent	
	Pluckley	July 1897	Apr. 1900	1,699	-(6)	
Mid Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd.	Penshurst	Aug. 1897	Feb. 1899	1,867	-(6)	
Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd.	Ropersole	1897	1899	2,129	1,582	547
	Ottinge	May 1898	Oct. 1899	840	-(6)	
	Old Soar	Aug. 1898	Oct. 1899	858	-(6)	
	Hothfield	July 1898	Oct. 1899	809	-(6)	
Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd.	Ellinge	1900	1902	1,800	1,660	140
Kent Coal Concessions Ltd. and Allied Companies (1)	Waldershare (C)	Jan. 1905	Sep. 1907	2,863	1,394	1,469
	Fredville (C)	Aug. 1905	1907	1,835	1,372	463
	Goodnestone (C)	Dec. 1906	July 1907	2,905	1,188	1,717
	Barfrestone (C)	Dec. 1907	May 1912	3,327	1,205	2,122
	Woodnesborough (SE)	Mar. 1908	Mar. 1909	2,633	1,075	1,546*
	Walmestone (SE)	Oct. 1908	Feb. 1913	2,285	1,076	1,200*
	Mattice Hill (SE)	June 1909	July 1912	2,075	975	1,076*
	Oxney (DW)	Apr. 1910	Nov. 1912	3,739	998	2,706*
	Trapham (SE)	Oct. 1910	July 1911	3,220	1,125	1,651*
	Maydensole (C?)	Nov. 1910	Nov. 1911	3,760	1,194	2,566
	Stodmarsh (SE)	Dec. 1910	July 1911	2,263	1,065	1,075*
	Ripple (EE)	Feb. 1911	Nov. 1911	3,317	882	2,388*
	Stonehall (C)	Nov. 1911	July 1912	3,691	1,290	2,401
	Chilton (2)	Aug. 1912	June 1913	3,060?	1,100	1,960?(7)
	Bourne (C)	Mar. 1913	Jan. 1914	3,235	1,313	1,857*
	Ash (Fleet)(C?)	Aug. 1913	Dec. 1913	1,961	1,089	771*
Medway Coal Syndicate Ltd.	Chilham	1910	1911	1,154	C.M. absent	
	Bobbing	1910	1911	1,160	C.M. absent	
Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd.	Ebbsfleet (Richborough)	1910	1912	1,389	1,057	106*
	Lydden Valley (3)	1912	Aug. 1913(4)	2,027	952	1,007*
Betteshanger Boring Co.Ltd.	Betteshanger	Feb. 1913	Dec. 1913	2,930	1,100	1,811*
North Kent Coalfield Ltd.	Chislet Park	July 1912	May 1913	2,901	1,036	568*
	Chitty	Oct. 1912	Apr. 1913	2,015	870?	? (8)
	Rushbourne	Dec. 1912	Aug. 1913	2,491	1,135	415*
	Hoades	July 1913	Nov. 1913	1,246	1,092	154
	Herne Bay (Beltinge)	July 1913	Oct. 1913	1,964	C.M. absent	
	Reculver	May 1914	June 1914	1,029	C.M. absent	
Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd.	Harmansole	Mar. 1914(5)	July 1914(5)	1,730	C.M. absent	
Channel Collieries Trust Ltd.	Bere Farm	Mar. 1913	Oct. 1915	3,008	1,361	1,647
	Abbotscliffe	July 1913	Dec. 1913	777	-(6)	
	Lower Standen	Oct. 1913	May 1915	1,076	-(6)	
	Farthingloe	Mar. 1914	May 1914	801	-(6)	
	Elham	Apr. 1914	June 1915	2,346	1,598	641*
	Folkestone	Oct. 1915	Dec. 1916	3,400	1,487	1,913
Downs Colliery Co. Ltd.	Adisham	1922	1923	3,261	1,211	2,025*
Unknown	Herne	1912	1912	1,187	C.M. absent	

Appendix B: continued

Notes: (1) (C) Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.; (SE) South-Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.; (DW) Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.; (EE) Extended Extension Ltd.

(2) Initiated by Arthur Burr in conjunction with the Canterbury Coal Co. Ltd.

(3) Jointly with Betteshanger Boring Co. Ltd.

(4) This boring may have continued until 1914.

(5) Ritchie gives this as 1913 to Aug. 1914.

(6) Only post Carboniferous rocks penetrated.

(7) Record unsatisfactory.

(8) Coal Measures Doubtful.

Sources: A. E. Ritchie, The Kent Coalfield: its Evolution and Development (1919); Evidence of W. Boyd Dawkins, Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, Final Report, 1905, P.P. 1905 (Cd. 2362) XVI, pp. 270-79; Evidence of E. O. Forster Brown, Coal Industry Commission, P.P. 1919 (Cmd. 360) XII, p. 717; Evidence of T. H. Bailey on behalf of the Pioneer Companies, Royal Commission on the Coal Industry (1925), Vol. 3, Appendix No. 13, Statement D; H. G. Dines, 'The Sequence and Structure of the Kent Coalfield', in Summary of Progress of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and the Museum of Practical Geology for the Year 1932, Part II (H.M.S.O. 1933), pp. 15-43; Ministry of Fuel and Power, Kent Coalfield: Regional Survey Report (1945), Table II; Memoirs of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, Geology of the Country around Canterbury and Folkestone (H.M.S.O. 1966).

Appendix C: The Kent Coal Concessions Group of Companies, Details of Share Capital and Debentures Issued, 1904-1924

		1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.	*(a)	22,129	19,557	13,951	65,122	697	47,687	9,004	21,450	42,296	- 3,647	8,647	-	-
	(b)	10,823	8,890	13,951	58,949	697	(42,852)	9,004	21,450	27,031	- 3,647	8,647	-	-
	(c)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000	152,997	151,415	165,209	170,418
Sondage Syndicate Ltd.	(a)		3,146	1,854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(b)		3,146	1,854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(c)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fonçage Syndicate Ltd.	(a)			8,714	11,184	-	-	-	15	-	9	27	-	-
	(b)			8,714	11,184	-	-	-	15	-	9	27	-	-
	(c)			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd.	(a)				182,009	5,205	11,832	23,043	166,015	78,665	12,553	(9,639)	(-)	144
	(b)				(4,509)	5,205	11,832	23,043	166,015	78,665	12,553	(9,639)	(-)	144
	(c)				-	5,000	25,000	23,130	19,820	18,446	4,190	172,395	172,395	199,181
South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.	(a)				3,165	12,634	6,598	16,958	963	5,519	80	14,999	3,355	(38)
	(b)				2,210	12,634	6,598	16,958	963	5,519	80	14,999	3,355	(38)
	(c)				-	-	-	-	-	79,447	80,000	83,778	91,048	95,999
Guilford Syndicate Ltd.	(a)				8,726	11,607	(4,470)	(4,470)	2,858	7,795	(75)	-	-	-
	(b)				8,726	11,607	(4,470)	(4,470)	2,858	7,795	(75)	-	-	-
	(c)				-	-	-	-	-	45,021	79,886	87,199	94,513	101,826
East Kent Contract and Financial Co.Ltd.	(a)					19,296	- 17	15,559	8,594	6,610	-	5	-	-
	(b)					19,296	- 17	15,559	8,594	6,610	-	5	-	-
	(c)					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,083	(2,300)
Snowdown Colliery Ltd.	(a)					8,060	15,545	128,126	26,131	1,760	18,828	12,543	6,759	633
	(b)					8,060	14,795	20,067	26,131	1,760	18,828	12,543	6,759	633
	(c)					-	-	-	-	-	125,075	123,206	142,750(4)	161,702
Extended Extension Ltd.	(a)							42,203	1,741	1,456	-	415	- 103	26
	(b)							41.203	1,741	1.456	-	415	- 103	26
	(c)							-	-	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.	(a)								28,519	(?)	11,627	236	595	-
	(b)								24,519	(?)	(14,774)	-	- 2,316	-
	(c)								-	-	10,000	17,091	2,150	(2,150)
Intermediate Equipments Ltd.	(a)							34,572	9,729	19,892	8	1,264	32	957
	(b)							34,572	9,729	19,892	8	1,264	32	957
	(c)							-	-	-	18,337	119,565	119,980	(137,237)
Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd.	(a)								100,000	100	1,150	-	-	-
	(b)								-	100	1,150	-	-	-
	(c)								-	-	-	-	-	-
South East Kent Electric Power Co. Ltd.	(a)									810	-	- 1	(-)	(-)
	(b)									810	-	- 1	(-)	(-)
	(c)									33,390(6)	38,091	41,428	(?)	(?)
East Kent Light Railway Co.	(a)									56,130	95,615	6,946	1,508	-
	(b)									(56,130?)	(95,615?)	(6,946?)	(1,508?)	-
	(c)									-	76,850	80,240	80,310	80,310
United Coalfields of Kent Ltd.	(a)													
	(b)													
	(c)													

* Row: (a) Total share capital issued in the year.
(b) Total share capital issued in the year and paid for by cash.
(c) Debentures and Mortgages outstanding during the year, including accumulated interest.

Appendix C: The Kent Coal Concessions Group of Companies, Details of Share Capital and Debentures Issued, 1904-1924

		1904 £	1905 £	1906 £	1907 £	1908 £	1909 £	1910 £	1911 £	1912 £	1913 £	1914 £	1915 £	1916 £
Kent Coal Concessions Ltd.	*(a)	22,129	19,557	13,951	65,122	697	47,687	9,004	21,450	42,296	- 3,647	8,647	–	–
	(b)	10,823	8,890	13,951	58,949	697	(42,852)	9,004	21,450	27,031	- 3,647	8,647	–	–
	(c)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	150,000	152,997	151,415	165,209	170,418
Sondage Syndicate Ltd.	(a)		3,146	1,854	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	(b)		3,146	1,854	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	(c)		–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Fonçage Syndicate Ltd.	(a)			8,714	11,184	–	–	–	15	–	9	27	–	–
	(b)			8,714	11,184	–	–	–	15	–	9	27	–	–
	(c)			–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd.	(a)				182,009	5,205	11,832	23,043	166,015	78,665	12,553	(9,639)	(–)	144
	(b)				(4,509)	5,205	11,832	23,043	166,015	78,665	12,553	(9,639)	(–)	144
	(c)				–	5,000	25,000	23,130	19,820	18,446	4,190	172,395	172,395	199,181
South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd.	(a)				3,165	12,634	6,598	16,958	963	5,519	80	14,999	3,355	(38)
	(b)				2,210	12,634	6,598	16,958	963	5,519	80	14,999	3,355	(38)
	(c)				–	–	–	–	–	79,447	80,000	83,778	91,048	95,999
Guilford Syndicate Ltd.	(a)				8,726	11,607	(4,470)	(4,470)	2,858	7,795	(75)	–	–	–
	(b)				8,726	11,607	(4,470)	(4,470)	2,858	7,795	(75)	–	–	–
	(c)				–	–	–	–	–	45,021	79,886	87,199	94,513	101,826
East Kent Contract and Financial Co.Ltd.	(a)					19,296	- 17	15,559	8,594	6,610	–	5	–	–
	(b)					19,296	- 17	15,559	8,594	6,610	–	5	–	–
	(c)					–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2,083	(2,300)
Snowdown Colliery Ltd.	(a)					8,060	15,545	128,126	26,131	1,760	18,828	12,543	6,759	633
	(b)					8,060	14,795	20,067	26,131	1,760	18,828	12,543	6,759	633
	(c)					–	–	–	–	–	125,075	123,206	142,750(4)	161,702
Extended Extension Ltd.	(a)							42,203	1,741	1,456	–	415	- 103	26
	(b)							41,203	1,741	1,456	–	415	- 103	26
	(c)							–	–	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd.	(a)								28,519	(?)	11,627	236	595	–
	(b)								24,519	(?)	(14,774)	–	- 2,316	–
	(c)								–	–	10,000	17,091	2,150	(2,150)
Intermediate Equipments Ltd.	(a)							34,572	9,729	19,892	8	1,264	32	957
	(b)							34,572	9,729	19,892	8	1,264	32	957
	(c)							–	–	–	18,337	119,565	119,980	(137,237)
Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd.	(a)								100,000	100	1,150	–	–	–
	(b)								–	100	1,150	–	–	–
	(c)								–	–	–	–	–	–
South East Kent Electric Power Co. Ltd.	(a)									810	–	- 1	(–)	(–)
	(b)									810	–	- 1	(–)	(–)
	(c)									33,390(6)	38,091	41,428	(?)	(?)
East Kent Light Railway Co.	(a)									56,130	95,615	6,946	1,508	–
	(b)									(56,130?)	(95,615?)	(6,946?)	(1,508?)	–
	(c)									–	76,850	80,240	80,310	80,310
United Coalfields of Kent Ltd.	(a)													
	(b)													
	(c)													

* Row: (a) Total share capital issued in the year.
(b) Total share capital issued in the year and paid for by cash.
(c) Debentures and Mortgages outstanding during the year, including accumulated interest.

Appendix D.1: The Kent Coalfield: Output of Coal, 1921-26

Year	Quarter ended	Tonnage Raised	Mine Consumption	Miners' Coal	Tonnage disposable commercially	Comment
1921	30 September	89,456	14,928		74,528	
	31 December	71,198	14,774	1,560	54,872	
1922	31 March	83,451	11,295	1,572	70,584	
	30 June	99,539	11,968	1,300	86,271	
	30 September	98,095	13,163	1,130	83,802	
	31 December	119,418	14,597	1,751	103,070	
	1922	400,503	51,023	5,753	343,727	
1923	31 March	131,363	15,232	1,873	114,258	
	30 June	127,167	14,082	1,559	111,526	
	30 September	121,762	13,225	1,248	107,289	
	31 December	98,583	14,599	1,666	82,318	Chislet Strike Nov.-Dec.
	1923	478,875	57,138	6,346	415,391	
1924	31 March	117,818	11,999	2,055	103,764	
	30 June	109,598	11,747	1,607	96,244	
	30 September	43,084	9,169	571	33,344	1924 stoppage
	31 December	47,645	8,299	666	38,680	
	1924	318,145	41,214	4,899	272,032	
1925	31 March	89,100	10,921	1,250	76,929	
	30 June	93,703	10,700	1,165	81,838	
	30 September	91,540	11,254	1,162	79,124	
	31 December	91,751	11,077	1,549	79,125	
	1925	366,094	43,952	5,126	317,016	
1926	31 March	95,165	10,820	1,725	82,620	
	month of April and last 8 months of 1926	31,019	3,099	568	27,352	1926 strike
	1926	126,184	13,919	2,293	109,972	

Source: See Chapter 4, p. 215, fn. 101.

Appendix D.2: The Kent Coalfield: Costs of Production, Proceeds and Profits Per Ton Commercially Disposable, 1921-26

Year	Quarter ended	Wages	Stores and Timber	Other costs[1]	Miners' Welfare Fund Contributions	Royalties[1]	Total Costs	Deduct Proceeds of Miners' Coal[3]	Deduct Subvention	Net Costs	Proceeds per ton on Commercial Disposals	Balance: Debits	Balance: Credits
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1921	30 September	20. 3.05	4. 4.66	6. 1.64		1. 2.78	32. 0.13	0. 0.95	-	31. 11.18	31. 10.69	0. 0.49	-
	31 December	23. 2.53	4. 7.29	5. 9.45	0. 1.29	1. 4.08	35. 1.14	0. 1.50	-	34. 11.64	24. 10.00	10. 1.64	-
1922	31 March	16. 0.05	2. 11.14	4. 0.09	0. 1.14	1. 0.36	24. 0.78	0. 2.24	-	23. 10.54	19. 9.71	4. 0.83	-
	30 June	14. 2.72	2. 5.44	3. 4.66	0. 1.15	0. 10.81	21. 0.78	0. 1.10	-	20. 11.68	17. 6.88	3. 4.80	-
	30 September	15. 2.44	2. 7.53	3. 6.82	0. 1.17	0. 9.70	22. 3.66	0. 0.55	-	22. 3.11	18. 5.23	3. 9.88	-
	31 December	14. 2.58	2. 4.68	2. 8.70	0. 1.15	0. 9.02	20. 2.13	0. 0.98	-	20. 1.15	18. 1.77	1. 11.38	-
1923	31 March	13. 8.41	2. 1.04	2. 4.44	0. 1.15	0. 8.38	18. 11.42	0. 0.96	-	18. 10.46	18. 2.31	0. 8.15	-
	30 June	14. 1.64	2. 1.92	2. 5.93	0. 1.14	0. 8.49	19. 7.12	0. 0.77	-	19. 6.34	18. 10.25	0. 8.10	-
	30 September	15. 1.98	2. 1.11	1. 7.05	0. 1.13	0. 8.89	19. 8.16	0. 0.57	-	19. 7.59	20. 4.80	-	0. 9.21
	31 December	17. 2.50	2. 3.89	3. 3.72	0. 1.19	0. 10.43	23. 9.73	0. 0.95	-	23. 8.72	19. 3.14	4. 5.64	-
1924	31 March	14. 6.45	2. 1.83	1. 11.44	0. 1.14	0. 7.50	19. 4.36	0. 1.17	-	19. 3.19	21. 0.72	-	1. 9.53
	30 June	15. 0.13	2. 0.25	2. 1.94	0. 1.14	0. 7.69	19. 11.15	0. 0.91	-	19. 10.24	21. 2.82	-	1. 4.58
	30 September	16. 7.94[4]	2. 9.36	5. 6.12	0. 1.30	1. 7.56	26. 8.28	0. 0.45	-	26. 7.83	19. 10.71	6. 9.12	-
	31 December	15. 6.10	2. 3.09	2. 10.72	0. 1.23	0. 11.72	21. 8.86	0. 0.27	-	21. 8.59	19. 4.50	2. 4.09	-
1925	31 March	13. 3.27	1. 10.78	2. 4.09	0. 1.16	0. 6.91	18. 2.21	0. 0.62	-	18. 1.59	20. 4.33	-	2. 2.74
	30 June	14. 2.24	1. 11.72	4. 3.76	0. 1.15	0. 8.24	21. 3.11	0. 0.67	-	21. 2.44	21. 3.05	-	0. 0.61
	30 September	15. 8.60	2. 0.74	2. 8.13	0. 1.13	0 9.76	21. 4.34	0. 0.68	1. 2.76	20. 0.92	19. 10.52	0. 2.04	-
	31 December	16. 9.00	2. 4.08	2. 9.82	0. 1.18	0. 9.24	22. 9.32	0. 0.94	3. 1.64	19. 6.74	19. 5.65	0. 1.09	-
1926	31 March	16. 1.97	2. 4.29	2. 9.06	0. 1.15	0. 8.80	22. 1.27	0. 1.09	4. 10.12	17. 2.06	17. 9.28	-	0. 7.22
	month of April and last eight months of 1926	15. 10.31	1. 9.73	2. 11.17	0. 1.13	0. 8.85	21. 5.19	0. 1.17	5. 11.16	15. 4.86	17. 11.27	-	2. 6.41

Notes: (1) Management, salaries, insurance, repairs, office and general expenses, depreciation, etc.

(2) Including the rental value of freehold minerals where worked by the proprietor.

(3) The proceeds of miners' coal, so far as it is supplied at special prices, are treated as a reduction of the cost of producing the coal disposed of commercially, and the deductions in the "per ton" columns have been calculated by dividing the proceeds of miners' coal by the tonnage disposable commercially.

(4) Excludes arrears of £2,848 paid in respect of preceding quarter.

Source: See Chapter 4, p. 215, fn. 101.

Appendix D.3: The Kent Coalfield: Workpeople Employed, Manshifts Worked, and Output and Earnings per Manshift, 1921-26

Year	Quarter ended	Number of Workpeople employed	Number of manshifts worked (including weekend and overtime shifts)				Number of manshifts lost which could have been worked	Output per manshift worked (cwts.)(5)	Earnings per manshift
			At the coal face	Elsewhere below ground	On the surface	TOTAL above and below ground			s. d.
1921	30 September	1,962	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	31 December	1,887	33,399	29,273	29,816	92,488	6,727	15.40	13. 9.25
1922	31 March	1,381	34,649	28,904	23,128	86,681	8,946	19.25	13. 0.38
	30 June	1,511	39,828	30,902	25,316	96,046	9,247	20.73	12. 9.35
	30 September	1,627	40,530	30,886	27,587	99,003	9,019	19.82	12. 10.42
	31 December	1,762	51,068	34,313	32,229	117,610	9,867	20.31	12. 5.49
			166,075	125,005	108,260	399,340			
1923	31 March	1,798	52,538	35,070	34,442	122,052	12,112	21.53	12. 9.91
	30 June	1,851	54,262	36,965	36,151	127,378	11,038	19.97	12. 4.53
	30 September	1,870	56,039	37,250	36,088	129,377	11,310	18.82	12. 6.91
	31 December	1,895	49,559	34,334	34,166	118,059	8,994	16.70	11. 11.99
			212,398	143,619	140,847	496,866			
1924	31 March	1,763	54,398	42,901	28,591	125,890	11,295	18.72	11. 11.79
	30 June	1,823	48,313	41,960	27,017	117,290	7,746	18.69	12. 3.80
	30 September	1,742	18,929	11,418	13,359	43,706	3,376	19.72	12. 8.54
	31 December	856	20,451	12,060	15,134	47,645	4,518	20.00	12. 7.08
			142,091	108,339	84,101	334,531			
1925	31 March	1,180	33,867	23,495	22,566	79,928	8,350	22.30	12. 9.29
	30 June	1,363	38,793	26,767	24,918	90,478	6,890	20.71	12. 9.98
	30 September	1,388	39,381	30,714	29,838	99,933	9,129	18.32	12. 5.33
	31 December	1,493	40,945	34,507	26,015	101,467	7,357	18.08	13. 0.74
			152,986	115,483	103,337	371,806			
1926	31 March	1,542	41,276	34,274	25,163	100,713	6,610	18.90	13. 3.12
	month of April and last eight months of year	1,539	15,161	10,460	8,256	33,877	2,308	18.31	12. 9.65
			56,437	44,734	33,419	134,590			

Note: (5) The output per manshift worked is based upon the tonnage of saleable coal raised and the total number of manshifts worked, including weekend and overtime shifts.

Source: See Chapter 4, p. 215, fn. 101.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

I: Primary Authorities

1. Statutory Returns made by Limited Liability Companies to the Registry of Companies:

(a) At the Registry of Companies (denoted in the text by the initials B.O.T. before the company number):

Austin Guarantee and Investment Co. Ltd., 115,150.

Betteshanger Holding Co. Ltd., 183361.

The Channel Steel Co. Ltd., 148537.

Channel Tunnel Co. Ltd., 16168.

The Chislet Colliery Ltd., 131988.

Copper Pit Collieries Ltd., 94387.

The Deal and Walmer Coalfield Ltd., 109782.

Dover Coal, Gas and Power Co. Ltd., 243027.

East Kent Colliery Co. Ltd., 92735.

East Kent Gas Co. Ltd., 191983.

East Kent Light Railway Company, 763 R.

Ebbsfleet Holding Co. Ltd., 222836.

Extended Extension Ltd., 106137.

Intermediate Equipments Ltd., 112108.

The Kent Coal Concessions Ltd., 80693.

London City Buildings Ltd., 185667.

London Mortgage Trust Ltd., 120033.

National Metal and Chemical Bank Ltd., 149959.

The National Smelting Co. Ltd., 147115.

The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., 118501.

Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., 184836.

The Share Guarantee Trust Ltd., 78883.

Shires Investment Co. Ltd., 386561.

South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd., 93638.

South East Kent Electric Power Co. Ltd., 115,638.

Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd., 207409.

Tilmanstone Miners Dwellings Building Syndicate Ltd., 148394.

Wingham Holding Company Ltd., 222182.

(b) At the Public Record Office (the returns of these dissolved companies, which have been transferred from the Registry of Companies, are denoted in the text by the initials P.R.O.):

The 'A' Development Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/20938/124411.

The Adisham Colliery Ltd., BT 31/21543/129705 and BT 34/3910/129705.

The Betteshanger Boring Co. Ltd., BT 31/20904/124075.

Canterbury Drillers Ltd., BT 31/20339/118968 and BT 34/3716/118968. (The original name of this company was Chatham Drillers and Contractors Ltd.)

The Central Trust Ltd., BT 31/4230/27399 and BT 31/32295/156400.

Channel Collieries Trust Ltd., BT 31/19534/110343 and BT 34/3574/110343.

Channel Tunnel Co. Ltd., BT 31/1677/5952.

The Chatham and Sittingbourne Exploration Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/13789/119454.

The Colliery and General Contract Co. Ltd., BT 31/31796/49634.

The Consolidated Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., BT 31/16237/62956 and BT 34/2892/62956.

Dover Coalfield Extension Ltd., BT 31/16626/69839 and BT 34/2986/69839.

The Dover Collieries Ltd., BT 31/9735/72515.

Downs Collieries Ltd., BT 31/26580/174505.

The East Kent Contract and Financial Co. Ltd., BT 31/18303/96059 and BT 34/3340/96059.

Ebbsfleet Coal Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/19653/111802 and BT 34/3597/111802.

Faversham Boring Co. Ltd., BT 31/22419/136903 and BT 34/4032/136903.

The Fonçage Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/17736/88435.

The General Deep Boring and Shafting Co. Ltd., BT 31/20447/120023.

Guilford and Waldershare Colliery Co.Ltd., BT 31/23728/147701 and BT 34/4227/147701.

The Guilford Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/18177/94456.

The Kent Central Coal Estates Ltd., BT 31/20643/121785.

Kent Coal Development Trust Ltd., BT 31/14075/127578.

The Kent Coal Exploration Co. Ltd., BT 31/7376/52299 and BT 34/1328/52299.

The Kent Coalfields Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/6730/47311 and BT 34/1180/47311.

The Kent Coal Finance and Development Co. Ltd., BT 31/7437/52840 and BT 34/1343/52840.

Kent Collieries Corporation Ltd., BT 31/7623/54422 and BT 34/1386/54422.

Kent Collieries Ltd., BT 31/17393/83668 and BT 34/3160/83668.

Kent Freehold and Mineral Ltd., BT 31/20729/122561 and BT 34/3785/122561.

Kent Outcrop Coal Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/20071/116280 and BT 34/3669/116280.

The Medway Coal Exploration Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/12828/10348 and BT 34/2270/103748.

Mid Kent Coal Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/7316/51795 and BT 34/1315/51795.

Mines Construction Co. Ltd., BT 31/19687/112249.

Pluckley Brick & Tile Co. Ltd., BT 31/2343/11450 and BT 34/183/11450.

Sandwich Freeholds Ltd., BT 31/21715/131132 and BT 34/3936/131132.

The Sandwich Haven Wharves Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/20100/116543 and BT 34/3674/116543.

The Snowdown Colliery Ltd., BT 31/18389/97340.

The Sondage Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/17360/83161.

St. Augustine's Links Ltd., BT 31/18278/95736 and BT 34/3336/95736.

Stonehall Colliery Ltd., BT 31/21588/130032 and BT 34/3918/130032.

United Coalfields of Kent Ltd., BT 31/13896/122067 and BT 34/2396/122067.

Venture Trust Ltd., BT 31/21137/126286.

The West Kent Collieries Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/7479/53228.

Whitstable and Canterbury Coalfields Ltd., BT 31/21553/130009.

Wingham and Stour Valley Collieries Ltd., BT 31/19864/114142 and BT 34/3632/114142.

The B.R.H. Syndicate Ltd., BT 31/20984/124877.

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Aylesham Tenants Ltd., 10366 R.

Chislet Colliery Housing Company, 7931 R.

Elvington Tenants Ltd., 10401 R.

Guilford and Waldershare Public Utility Society Ltd., 7913 R.

Snowdown and Betteshanger Tenants Ltd., 10328 R.

Tilmanstone Housing Association Ltd., 7407 R.

3. Records of Companies:

(a) At the National Coal Board, London:

The Chislet Colliery Ltd., Minute Books 1913-40, Box No. 1697 and Cash Books 1913-46, Journal 1913-27 and Ledgers 1913-30, Box Nos. 1773-1775.

The North Kent Coalfield Ltd., Minute Books 1911-38, Box No. 1696 and Cash Books/Ledgers 1911-42, Box No. 1698.

(b) In the possession of Dorman Long & Co. Ltd., Middlesbrough.

Reports and agreements 1913-43 filed under 'Kent: Channel Collieries Trust, Channel Steel Co. Ltd. and Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.', Reference No. A16/.

(c) In the possession of Whitehall Securities Corporation Ltd., Millbank Tower, London:

Records of Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd., File No. 584, which include:

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Correspondence between G. M. Fotheringham and other directors of the company, 1949-50.

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(d) In the possession of Stephenson Clarke & Co. Ltd., London:

H. H. Partridge, 'Notes on the Stephenson Clarke Sales Agency for Chislet Colliery Ltd.'

4. British Transport Commission Records:

EKL 1/1 East Kent Light Railway Company, Minute Books, 1911-30.

5. Kent District (Coal Mines) Scheme 1930, Minutes of Executive Board, 1930-33 and Minutes of Annual General Meetings, 1930-43. (In the possession of Mr. L. N. Watts, Sandwich).

6. The Kent Coal Owners' Association, Minute Books 1939-52. (Volume for 1939-46 in the possession of Mr. L. N. Watts, Sandwich, Volume for 1946-52 in the possession of Mr. F. D. Mottram, South Godstone, Surrey).

7. Records of the National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area). (At offices of the union, Dover).

(a) Kent Mine Workers' Association, Minutes of Executive Council Meetings, 1915-19 and 1928-48.

(b) File on A. Peachey and Co. - Colliery Houses in East Kent.

(c) Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Minutes 1921-44.

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(a) At the Public Record Office:

Kent Colliery Officials Association, F.S. 12/289/1767 T.

Kent Mine Workers' Association, F.S. 12/241/1647 T.

(b) At the Registry of Friendly Societies:

Kent Mine Workers' Association, 1647 T.

9. Private Papers:

In the possession of:

(a) Mr. G. J. Davies, Canterbury:
These include 'The Chislet Colliery Limited, Outline of History, 1913 to 1945'. (Referred to in text as Davies, Chislet Memorandum).

(b) Mr. G. M. Fotheringham, Canford Cliffs, Dorset:
These include 'The Kent Coal Owners' Association and the Kent Mine Workers' Association, Wages and Conditions of Employment, Agreement dated 20th January 1934'.

(c) Mr. F. D. Mottram, South Godstone, Surrey:
Correspondence with Mr. D. T. Jenkins and the Secretary of Tilmanstone Holdings Ltd.

(d) Mr. W. Newman, Eythorne:
These include:

Kent Mine Workers' Association, Tilmanstone Branch, Minute Book 1916-20.

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(e) Lord Northbourne, Northbourne Court, Deal.

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(f) In the possession of the author:

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10. Parliamentary Papers and other Official Publications:

Royal Commission on Coal Trade, 1871.

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The Kentish Observer.

Kentish Gazette.

Kencole: the Official Organ of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Limited & its Associated Activities.

(b) National:

The Colliery Guardian.

The Joint Stock Companies Journal.

The Times.

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15. Interviews:

Person Interviewed:	Position Held:
Mr. Stanley Cooke	On the staff of Richard Tilden Smith's companies from 1916. Later Secretary of London City Buildings Ltd.
Mr. G. J. Davies	Secretary, The Chislet Colliery Ltd., 1926-46.
Mr. Jack Dunn	General Secretary, National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area) since 1960.
Mrs. F. Edridge	Daughter of Richard Tilden Smith.
Mr. Richard S. Edridge	Grandson of Richard Tilden Smith.
Mr. G. M. Fotheringham	Accountant (1922-38), Secretary (1938-53) and Director (1948-53), Pearson and Dorman Long Ltd.
Mr. D. T. Jenkins	Accountant, Tilmanstone Colliery, 1927-47; one of the Company's two representatives on the Joint Management Committee of the Colliery, 1928-46.
Mr. John Johnson	Betteshanger Branch representative (delegate) on the Kent Mine Workers' Association Executive Council, 1941-46; General Secretary National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area), 1950-60.
Mr. F. D. Mottram	Private secretary to Richard Tilden Smith, 1920-29; Secretary of Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries, Ltd., 1930-52.
Mr. William Newman	President Kent Mine Workers' Association c. 1921-29 and 1938-39; Secretary Tilmanstone Branch K.M.W.A., 1920-45, one of the men's two representatives on the Tilmanstone Colliery Joint Management Committee, 1928-45.
Mr. H. H. Partridge	Stephenson Clarke's Sales Agent for the Chislet Colliery.

Mr. Cecil Reed — Private Secretary to Lord Cowdray, 1903-27.

Mr. L. N. Watts — Secretary of the Kent Coal Owners' Association, 1927-52.

Mr. B. W. Whitaker — Manager of Tilmanstone Colliery, 1929-60.

16. Written Communications:

Mr. R. Job — Author of a dissertation on the Kent Coalfield, written when a student at Ruskin College, Oxford.

Mr. J. H. Plumptre — Mining engineer and General Manager, National Coal Board (Kent Area), 1956-64.

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