

THE PROPOSAL FOR DEEP BORING AT COLEBROOK

Coal has been mined at two places in the Colebrook field, viz. along Coal Mine Rivulet in the north and near Colebrook in the south. In the northern part, shafts, old workings, one bore and numerous outcrops enable a fairly good section of the seams containing strata to be obtained. Six seams appear to be present and their respective thicknesses from top to bottom are 24, 38, 24, 9, 15 and 33 inches. The strata underlying the bottom seam have been proved to be barren of coal seams for 146 feet. It was the lower 24 inch seam (third from the top) that had been worked.

In the southern part, (in which Mr. Fox's property is situated) the strata have been proved by the shaft and workings of the Tasma Mine, the Government bore of 1891, and according to Mr. Fox's letter a bore somewhere near the Tasma Coal mine. The Government bore gave the following section

	Thickness	Depth
No. 1 seam	3 ft. 0 ins.	98 ft. 9 ins.
No. 2 "	4 11½	151 11½
No. 3 "	2 10	162 11½
No. 4 "	0 4	227 3½
Diabase met at		337 0½

In the Tasma shaft three seams were cut at depths of 100, 160, and 180 feet respectively, and these correspond generally to those in the Government bore. According to Mr. Fox's letter the private bore cut three seams and also passed into diabase (greenstone).

The No. 3 seam almost certainly corresponds to the lowest one known in the northern part of the field.

It is to be noted that the strata have been explored to depths of 146 feet in the northern, and 175 feet in the southern part, below the bottom seam. Further that a thickness of at least 337 feet of the coal-bearing strata have been tested. Allowing for some 100 to 200 feet removed by denudation the result is that practically the whole of the remaining thickness (say 600 feet) of the coal-bearing strata (the felspathic sandstone series) have been tested.

For these reasons alone I would not recommend testing to greater depths. In addition another very powerful reason is that the thickness of the diabase which occurs at shallow depths is not known. Personally I am of the opinion that it is a fairly thick sill, if not the main one. Deep boring would therefore involve costly boring through hundreds of feet of this rock.

Finally, because good seams of coal may occur under greenstone sills in Scotland, does not mean that similar geological conditions exist in Tasmania. As a matter of fact, if such a theory were partly true, the essential feature of it would be the position of the sills (which we know in Tasmania are variable) with regard to the good coal seams.

Deep drilling for coal at Colebrook is therefore not recommended.

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