

PROSPECTING AND SEARCHING FOR COAL AND WATER

Through the years I have done a lot of prospecting and searching for coal and water in the Bienfait-Estevan district. When I was Mine Manager at the Old Crescent Mine, East of Bienfait we were continually running into faulty coal in the mine so we had to look for another location. The best coal is found from Pinto, Taylorton, Roche Percee, Estevan, North and South of the Souris for three or four miles. The coal seam lay in a North-west and South-east direction generally more cover in the South. There are many places to the North and West where the coal seams are split up very badly. Some sections the seam was split into four small seams and unworkable for mining purposes. Some day they may operate them as gas producers.

In the early years, there was very little drinking water to be found in the district. Most used shallow seepage wells, some river water. In those days there was more water flowing in the Souris River. I found the water in a deep well about 130 feet below ground.

At the Old Crescent Mine, one mile East of Bienfait, there was a good flow of water. It was very soft water and it had a little soda in it, otherwise good for drinking and house use. I found out later that this body of water extended from Coalfields, Taylorton to ten miles North of Lampman. This well was sunk in the year 1920. This was the first well that was dug in the Bienfait district.

When I went to work for the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Coal Co. in 1926, they were using water from the Souris River. In 1928 I put a deep well down for the locomotive and steam engines. Later they got wells sunk at the Western Dominion Coal Co. mine and Briquette plant. I was with the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Coal Co. when the Briquette Plant was sold to Mr. MacDonald of Winnipeg for scrap, then later operated again and it was the first time in 16 years that satisfactory Briquettes were made. The Saskatchewan Government, the Manitoba Government and the Federal Government shared the cost around the year