# VAST BEDS

Largest Holdings Under One Ownership in United States Are in Colfax County.

INCREASED OUTPUT

Two Million Tons Annually to Be Produced by the St Louis, Rocky Mountain and Pacific Railway.

The Mining and Engineering Journal for this week has an illustrated and authoritative write-up of the coal properties in the Raton district, Colfax County, acquired from the Maxwell Grant Company by the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain and Pacific Railroad Company, which is building a railroad from the eastern boundary of the Territory, at Des Moines, Union County, on the Colorado & Southern, to Elizabethtown, Colfax County. The following is taken from this article:

Having acquired the property of the Raton Coal and Coke Company, in northern New Mexico, the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain & Pacific Company, which was incorporated in New Mexico a month ago, has matured plans for a noteworthy increase in the output of steam and domestic bituminous coal and of coke. The company has in operation two new and well-equipped coal mining plants; one, with a single drift opening, at Blossburg, four or five miles west of Raton, New Mexico; another with three drift openings, at Van Houten, about ten miles southwest of Raton. The Van Houten plant dates from 1902, and the Blossburg plant from 1903. The former has electric haulage, the latter the tailrope system; in both operations the maximum possible use is made of

These mines, now served by a branch of the Atchison, Topoka & Santa Fe Railway, will have similar connections with a new railroad, 120 miles in length, to be constructed by the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain & Pacific Company. The railroad is to burg district, changing to sandstone in extend from Des Moines, New Mexico, the Willow or Van Houten Canon. on the Colorado & Southern Railway, 80 miles south of Trinidad, Colorado, to the Elizabethtown gold mining district in the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains, about 70 miles

The company's mineral property

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again as all of the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania, and five times as large as the entire Connellsville basin. This property is the largest body of coal land under one ownership in the United States. The coal lies in horizontal seams, mostly from to 13 feet thick, and is mined by adits and entries along the seams into the mesas or foothills. The mines are dry and non-gaseous.

Examinations of the coal field have been made in behalf of Fisk & Robin son of New York by three well-known geologists and engineers, viz., Professor Orestes St. John; E. V. d'Invilliers, of Philadelphia, and William Griffith, f Scranton, Pennsylvania. With regard to the character and extent of the coal these engineers say:

"The property is not only extensive, but is well located and combines nany of the principal factors which vouchsafe the integrity of a coal and coke proposition, and insure its commercial success.

"The geology, structure and topography of the Raton coal tract are all coal and for its economical mining. There are certainly three commercial coal seams, all outcropping above water level along the eastern escarpment of the mountain plateau, and therefore subject to drift mining.

"These three seams occur within an interval vertically of 800 feet. All yield the fact that no occasion has arisen good mining sections from 4 to 8 feet to do more than establish the integrity in thickness, the lowest, or Raton, seam being the only one now commer-outcrop of 48 miles back from the cially developed, and, within the scope of existing mines, yielding 6 to

"The coal lies at very gentle angles of dip, often quite flat and rarely exseeding an inclination of more than dikes have been encountered and some intrusion of basaltic material causing the coal seam on either side, above or below, to be converted into a natural coke; but the region, as a whole, s singularly free from such effects and such small dikes as have been met with have, in no case, caused any change in mining plans.

"Because of the thickness of the eams, the roof and floor ordinarily are not disturbed, either in driving entries or in working coal in the rooms. The floor is usually a hard slate, supported by massive Trinidad white sandstone below, and the roof is largely a tough slate in the Bloss-

"At Blossburg the coar seam nominally ranges from 5 to 7 feet, but the roof is comparatively poor and the timbering required is much greater than elsewhere in the field. The present limited average output is 500 tons per day. Such an enlargement consists of 184,470 acres of coal land of plant is justified as to secure an in fee simple, and coal rights and sur-face necessary for mining in 314,300 At the Van Houten mines an output acres. The area controlled, about 800 of 200 tons per day can be readily square miles, is one-half as large secured from three mine openings, de

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livering to one tipple. The thickness of seam, absence of water, an excellent roof (requiring a limited amount of myorable to the regular occurrence of prop timber), large development, and thoroughly well equipped and efficient mining plant, all combine to render the mining of coal here rapid and economical.

> "The areas which these coal seams occupy are very great; how great it is not possible to assert now, in view of of the principal seam throughout its eastern edge of the coal field.

"As thus defined this limited area of 42,700 acres of this one coal bed ought to yield about 300,000,000 tous of coal, with an assurance of 50,900; 000 fons more in the higher seams on 11.5 degrees. Some slight faults and this property within only one-tenth of their known area of occurrence.

"Aside, therefore, from the enermous reserve tonnage in the remainde. of the tract-460,000 acres-the available coal tonnage of the eastern ea carpment of the field, open to drift mining, is 350,000,000 gross tons.

"As the coal beds are thick and generally free from faults or dislocations, they can be mined cheaply. Moreover the coal on this property is as thick, as accessible and as good as in any of the competitive fields, and should therefore command as good a market and serve the same purposes as the best New Mexico and Colorado coals.'

The results of numerous chemical analysis show a remarkable uniformity in the character of the coal in the Raton district, as now more or less developed over an area extending for fix you out, by our quick method. E. some 25 miles southwest of Raton. All show notably low percentages of sulphur, 0.75 per cent, and a high ash. averaging about 15 per cent for the run of mine. In comparison with the Colorado coals the results are normal. alysis, the first being the average of three mine sections taken from the Blossburg mine, and the second the from the Van Houten mine:

Water, Blossburg, 0,764 per Van Houten, 1,280 per cent.

Volatile matter, Blossburg, 34.416 per cent: Van Houten, 34,870 per cent Fixed carbon, Blossburg, 49.986 per ent; Van Houten, 50.152 per cent. Sulphur, Blossburg, 0.644 per cent Van Houten, 0.638 per cent.

Ash, Blossburg, 14,170 per cent; Van Houten, 13.060 per cent.

Total-Blossburg 100; Van Houten

The present output of the two commercial mines is about 400,000 tons per annum. The capacity of the existing plants with the expenditure of perhaps \$100,000 on new equipment and enlargement, could be quickly brought up to 1,000,000 tons per annum. But a property of this size, having an abundance of raw material and facilities for developing its resources rapidly and economically, can hardly be fulfilling its destiny on an output of 1,000,000 tons, especially as the construction of the requisite plants could enlarge production to a point limited only by the market, hence an annual output of 1,-500,000 to 2,000,000 tons within the next five years is confidently anticipated. A large and rapidly increasing demand exists to the southward in territory served by the Santa Fe Railway. and to the east and west in areas that will be brought within competitive reach through the construction of the proposed new railway.

With regard to the output of coke, now amounting to about 42,000 tons per annum, from 84 ovens, situated at Gardner, near Blossburg the engineers say that, excepting only the Crested Butte and Cardiff (Colorado) cokes, which plants produce less than 100,000 tons annually, and the Sunnyside (Utah) coke of the Utah Fuel Company, the coke made from the Raton field ought to compare favorably with any local cokes now seeking a market in the great smelting and foundry districts of southern New Mexico, Arizona and northern New Mexico. The company is planning 200 additional

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