

**OFR-94-019**

**REPORT ON  
MISCELLANEOUS MINE WORKINGS  
IN THE  
PICTOU COALFIELD**

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**1994**

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h<sub>2</sub>

## **Introduction:**

This report is intended to outline some of the coal seams in the Pictou coalfield that were prospected and mined to a limited extent .

Although the workings are not extensive, subsidence has been a problem in some areas, especially where urban development has taken place. This is the case in the town of New Glasgow where several small subsidences have occurred. Old mined areas, within town boundaries, have caused problems to water mains and sewage conduits with accompanying property damage.

## **Location:**

The prospects discussed in this report include the Haliburton Pit, Dawson Workings, Merigomish Road Workings, Mount William Workings, Sproull Slope, and the Clay Mine near the town of Westville (Figure 1).

Information on the prospects is limited. Where mine plans are available, it is difficult to establish the exact position, as some do not have a co-ordinating system. Therefore, the best fit is used based on site investigations, old map locations, written descriptions, and mine blueprints.

The information given for each prospect was taken from the Nova Scotia Department of Mines Annual Reports.

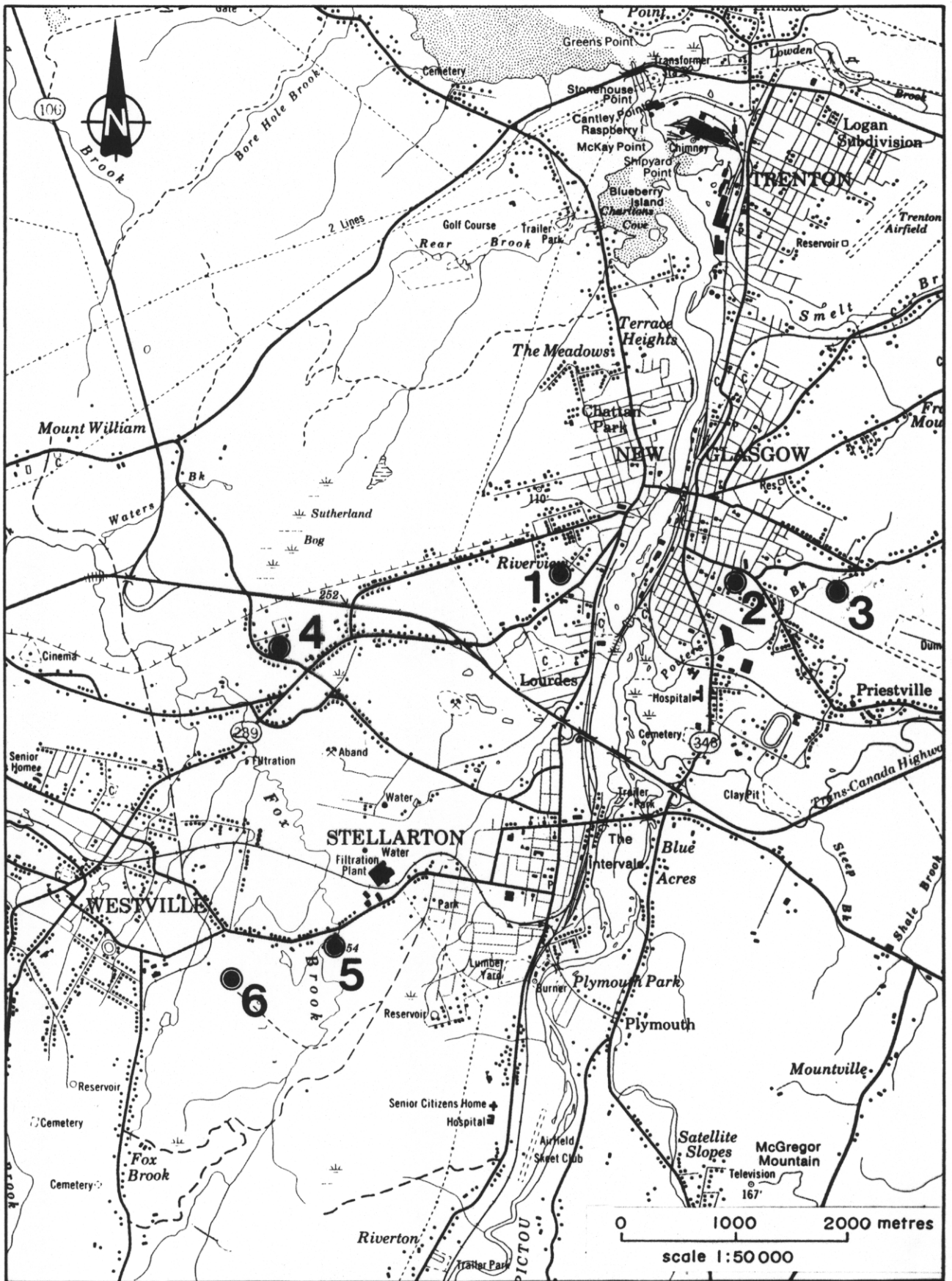


Figure 1. Location of Miscellaneous Mine Prospects.

## Prospects:

### The Haliburton Pit (1)

The Haliburton Pit is located in the town of New Glasgow, on Ellis Street, near the intersection of said street and Balfour Street. Co-ordinate positions (ATS-77 values) are N5049931.0 m; E4400961.0 m with an approximate elevation of  $\pm$  38 metres (Figure 2).

The Haliburton Pit was opened in 1866 by Mr. R. G. Haliburton and most of the excavation was completed in that year. The pit was reported to have a double shaft and oak lined. The Provincial Mines Report for the year 1867 indicates that work had been suspended and the pit flooded. The company formed to work the mine was the Montreal and Pictou Company.

There is no extant copy of the Haliburton Pit working in the possession of the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

The mine workings and cross-section (Figure 3) drafted for the Haliburton Pit were made from a description given by a Mr. Edward Hartley in a report entitled "The Pictou Coalfields" and represent the best estimate of the extent of the Haliburton workings.

The position of the Haliburton Pit from the maps of Poole (1904) and Bell (1940) indicate a discrepancy. The position on Poole's map coincides with the subsidence that occurred on Ellis Street around 1960 and again in 1982. Therefore, the site on Ellis Street is considered to be the most probable location of the Haliburton Pit.

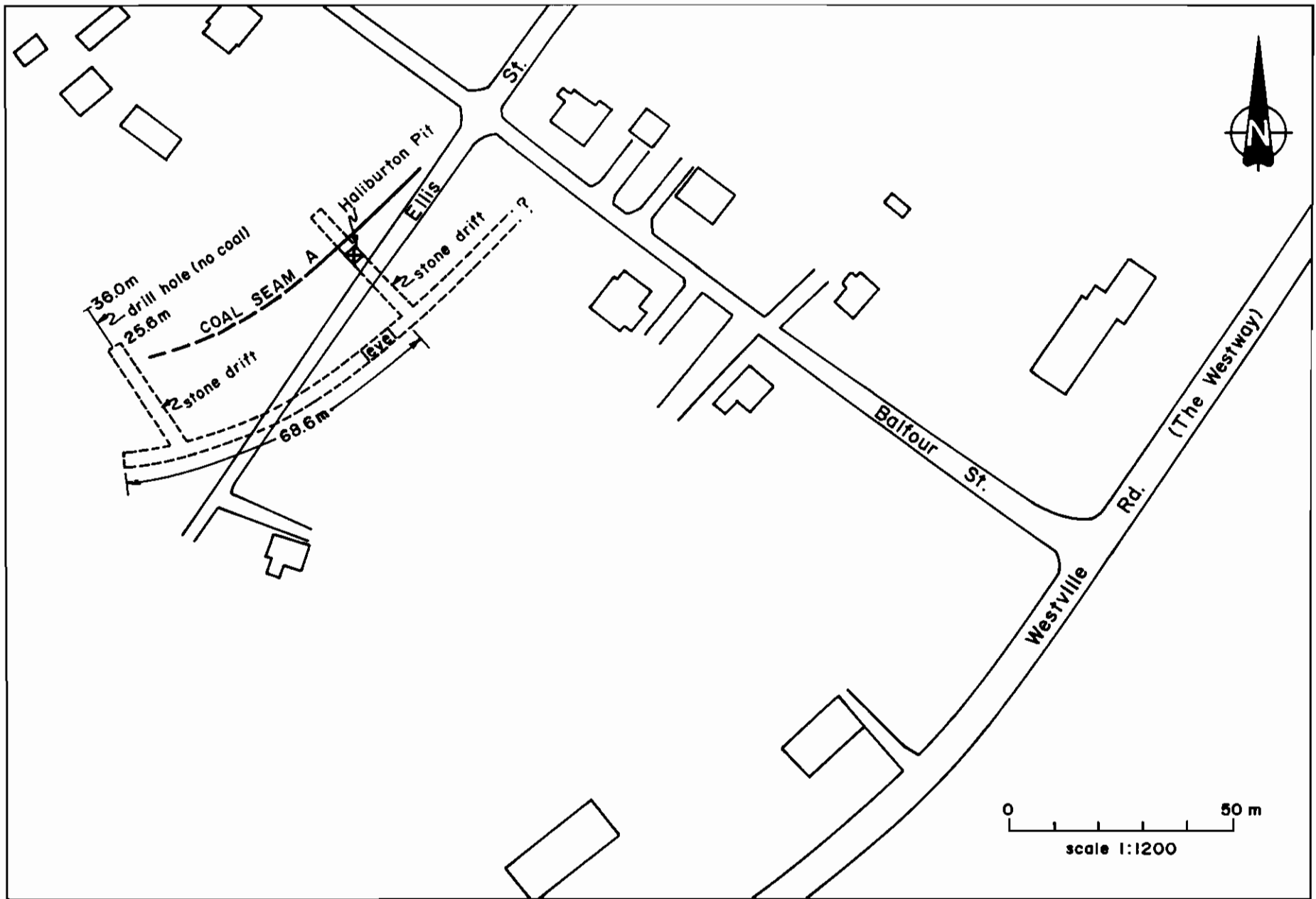


FIGURE 2. Location of Haliburton Pit Workings.

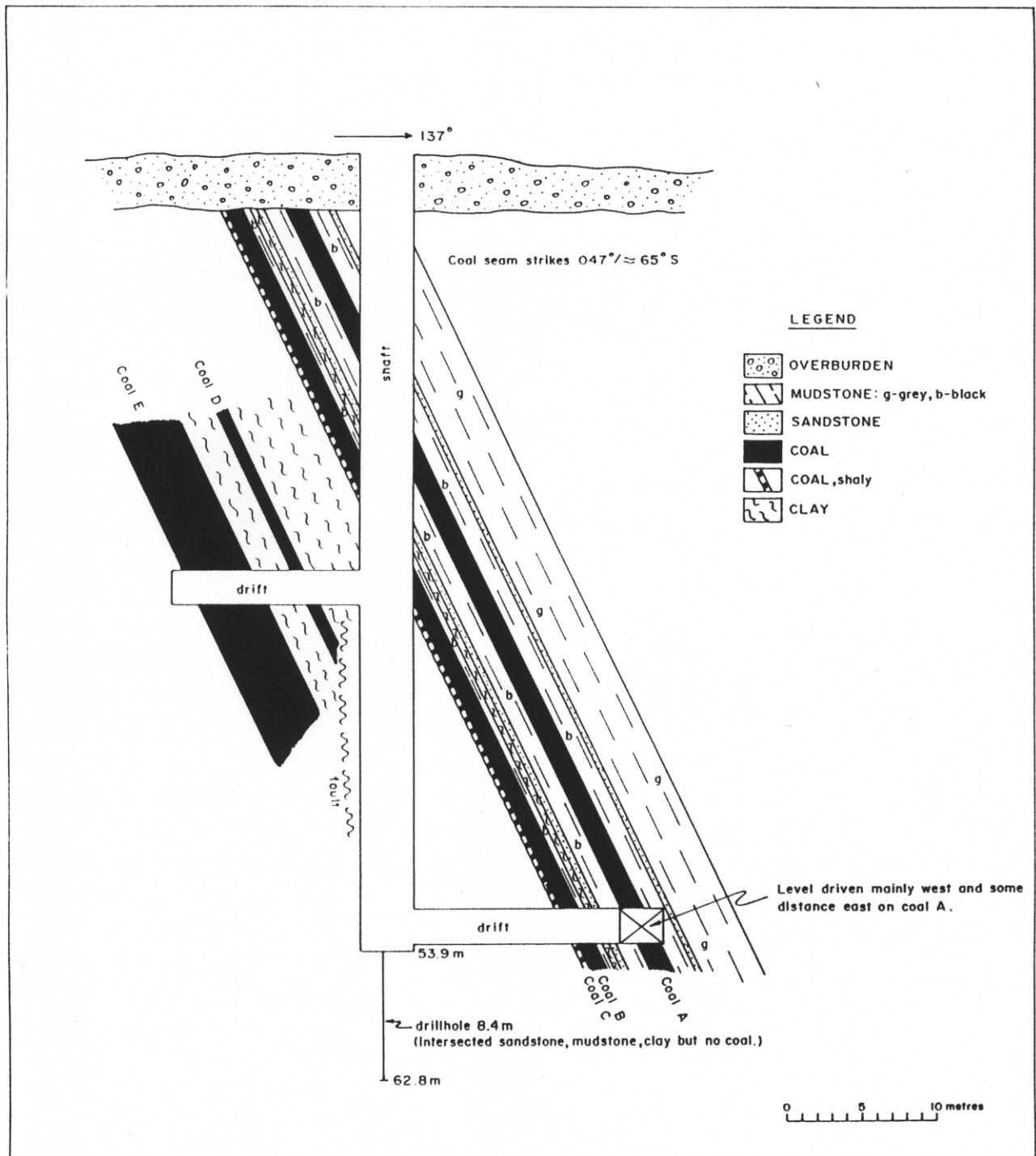


Figure 3. Cross-Section of Haliburton Pit

## DAWSON WORKINGS (2)

The mine prospect in the town of New Glasgow, herein called the Dawson workings, is found in the vicinity of Albert Street, New Glasgow. (Figure 4) A second prospect in the area underlying the Aberdeen Mall, is also indicated on the map.

The workings are referenced in the Provincial Mines Reports as prospects that were worked intermittently and to a very limited extent. The location of the slopes or pits are identified only by area and so the exact locations are left in doubt. There is also confusion as to which seam was being mined as it appears that there may have been two seams prospected in this area: the seam worked by the Dawson workings, and the seam worked by the Pottery pit.

The first workings in the area, tentatively identified from the Mines Reports, were started in 1870 by the Crown Coal, Brick and Pottery Company and were referred to as the Pottery Mine. This company drove a slope on a seam reported to be less than 1 metre thick called the Richardson seam. The main slope was down at least 48 metres and levels driven on either side at 41 metres. In 1872, the operations were very limited and they appeared to have concentrated more on extracting fireclay than coal. There is no further reference to this mine until 1893 when a William P. MacNeil opened up the old Pottery mine which subsequently closed in 1894.

There is some discrepancy in seam name and dates as indicated on a mine plan in the mine archives of the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. The workings shown on the mine plan are referred to as "Dawson Workings on Stewart Seam, New Glasgow" and is said to have been operated in 1892-93 by William P. MacNeil.

The map by H. S. Poole (1904) indicates a seam in this area but without a name. A pit, on this map, in the immediate vicinity is called the Pottery pit. However, this pit appears to be an overlying seam from that worked by MacNeil since the Pottery pit is not in the vicinity of Albert Street.

Bell's map (1940) does not indicate the seam or the mine. The Acadia Coal Co. plans (1956) refer to the mine as the Dawson slope.

The only indication of the extent of the workings is from the archival mine plan and even this is subject to interpretation. There is no scale on the plan and the workings are delineated by underground measurements. It is assumed that the plan represents actual measurements and not a surface projection or plan view of the mine. Therefore, the plan view is extrapolated using a 20° dip, the actual dip of strata in that area.

The mine workings indicated on the map are oriented by a raised mound in a field, taken to be the shaft indicated on the mine plan, and a subsidence site, beside the middle house in a row of three houses as indicated on the plan, taken to be the slope portal.

A second subsidence site, 10 metres vertically to the old workings, is also indicated. This subsidence, on the property of Mr. Russell Breen, was reported by him to be approximately 15 metres in depth.

Mr. Breen, a life-long resident of Albert Street, also stated that the three houses, indicated on the plan, were erected after the Second World War and no houses were on the site prior to the war. It is assumed then that the mine plan was drawn sometime after 1945, and before 1951, when the Acadia Coal Company, the original owner of the mine plan, ceased operations.

No definitive reference could be found concerning the slope driven on the Stewart seam in the vicinity of the Aberdeen Mall. In the Mines Report for 1888, reference is made to pillar work in the Haliburton Mine from this area and that the mine closed the same year.

### **MERIGOMISH ROAD WORKINGS (3)**

The mine prospects, herein termed the Merigomish Road Workings, include all the workings in the vicinity of the Merigomish Road - Lorne Street intersection and lying approximately one kilometre to the east of the town of New Glasgow.

The first reference to mining in this area was in 1866 when a Mr. Kirby drove a slope on the crop of a seam reported to be 1.2 metres thick. Several operators worked sporadically over the years in the same area. Operators included such names as Grant and Muir, Muir and Son, MacNeil and Sutherland. The last operation, run by a Mr. Edward Hughes, closed in 1962 and was referred to as the Linacy Mine.

Four seams were worked in the area and were reported to have been structurally disturbed by faulting. The coal seam locations were taken from Poole's map (1904) of the Pictou Coalfield.

The workings on the map (Figure 5) were taken from the archival mine plans. In some instances, they represent the best fit attainable since some of the mine plans have no co-ordinate system.

## MOUNT WILLIAM WORKINGS (4)

Coal was discovered in the vicinity of Mount William in 1874, when the area at that time was called Smokeytown. A trial pit was put down on the Hardscrabble seam that was reported to be 1.4 metres thick. The test pit was 4.6 metres deep.

No further references could be found on any exploration for coal on this seam.

The coal locality is indicated on the maps of Poole (1904) and Bell (1940). In 1992, the coal seam was uncovered by an excavation at the junction on the Mount William Road and the Westville Road (Figure 6). The coal seam exposed was 55 cm thick.

The seam was reported to have been "bootlegged" to a limited degree over the years but the workings were probably not extensive due to the high dip of the strata which is 45 - 55 degrees North in the area. The workings were locally referred to as the Wheatley Mine.

Three subsidence sites were reported in 1992, one of which had definitely been a slope as rails and winch remnants were observed at the subsidence sites. This slope was last worked in the late 1930's, just prior to the Second World War.

There are no plans available for the workings on the Hardscrabble seam, and so, their extent is not known. The only evidence is the location of the slopes and subsidence site.

## **SPROULL SLOPE (5)**

The Sproull Slope (Figure 7) also referred to as the Bear Brook Mine is located approximately mid-way between Westville and Stellarton, and near where Acadia Avenue-Drummond Road crosses McCulloch Brook (a.k.a. Fox Brook and Bear Brook). The slope is located approximately 83 metres south of the road and lies on the south side of McCulloch Brook.

The slope was opened by a W. E. Sproull in 1927 and closed the following year.

The slope extended a distance of approximately 34 metres at a 22 - 26 dip and was connected by cross-cut to a 15 metre shaft.

The coal seam was reported to be 91 cm thick. No additional work was recorded for this area.

## **CLAY MINE (THIRD SEAM - WESTVILLE) (6)**

The first reference to workings on the Third Seam (Figure 8) in Westville was in the year 1900 when a shaft was sunk from the Scott Seam and levels driven a short distance. The stratigraphic separation between the Scott and Third Seam is approximately 34 metres.

The coal was found to be of inferior quality and never mined. A clay seam, immediately underlying the Third Seam, was found to be of good quality for clay products and fire brick and thus, the clay was mined for that purpose. The mineable height was 137 centimeters and the mining method was room and pillar.

The Clay Mine was connected to the Scott Seam by a 143 metre tunnel, and the clay taken out by the Scott Seam slopes.

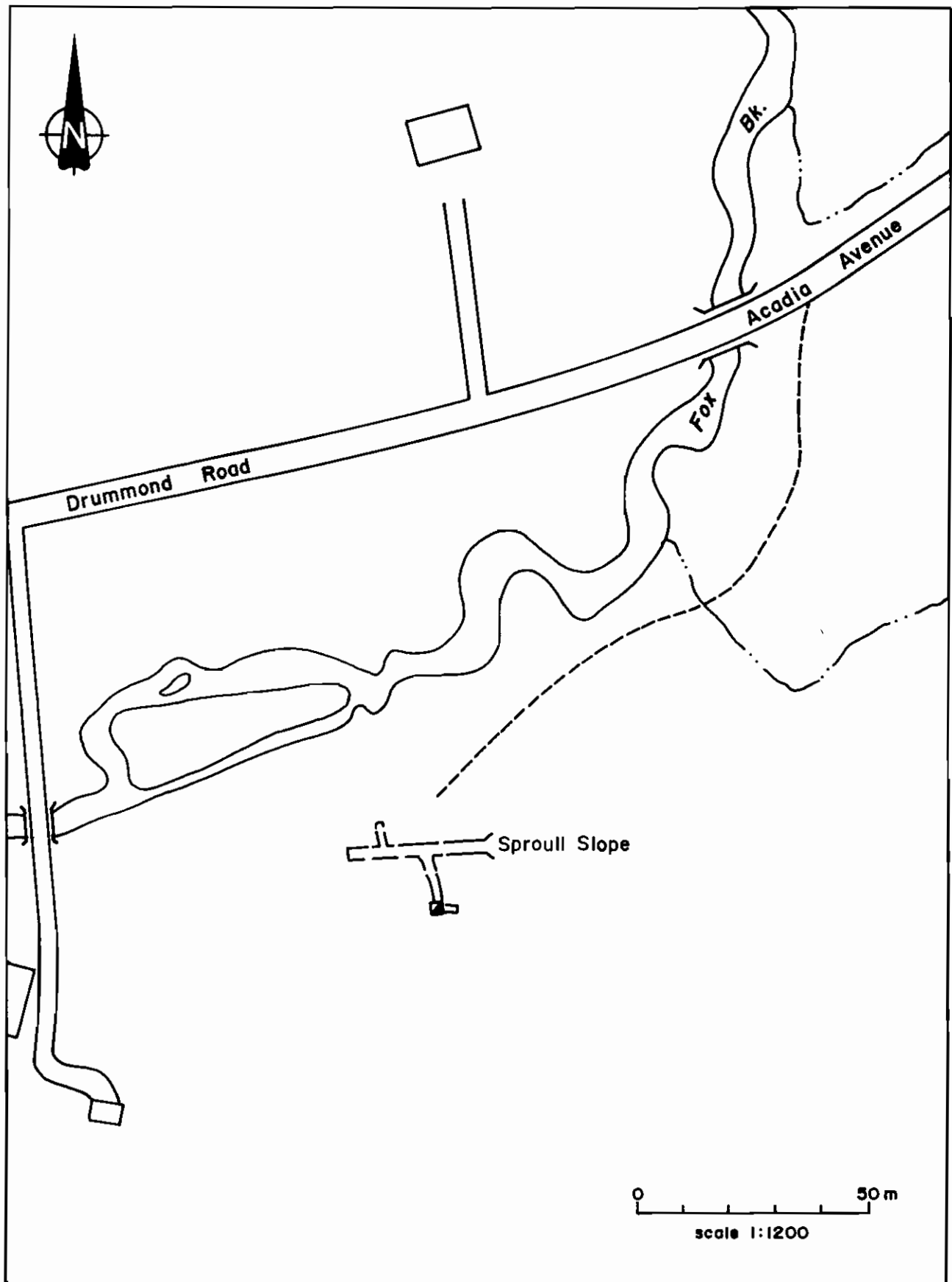


Figure 7. Location of the Sproull Slope.

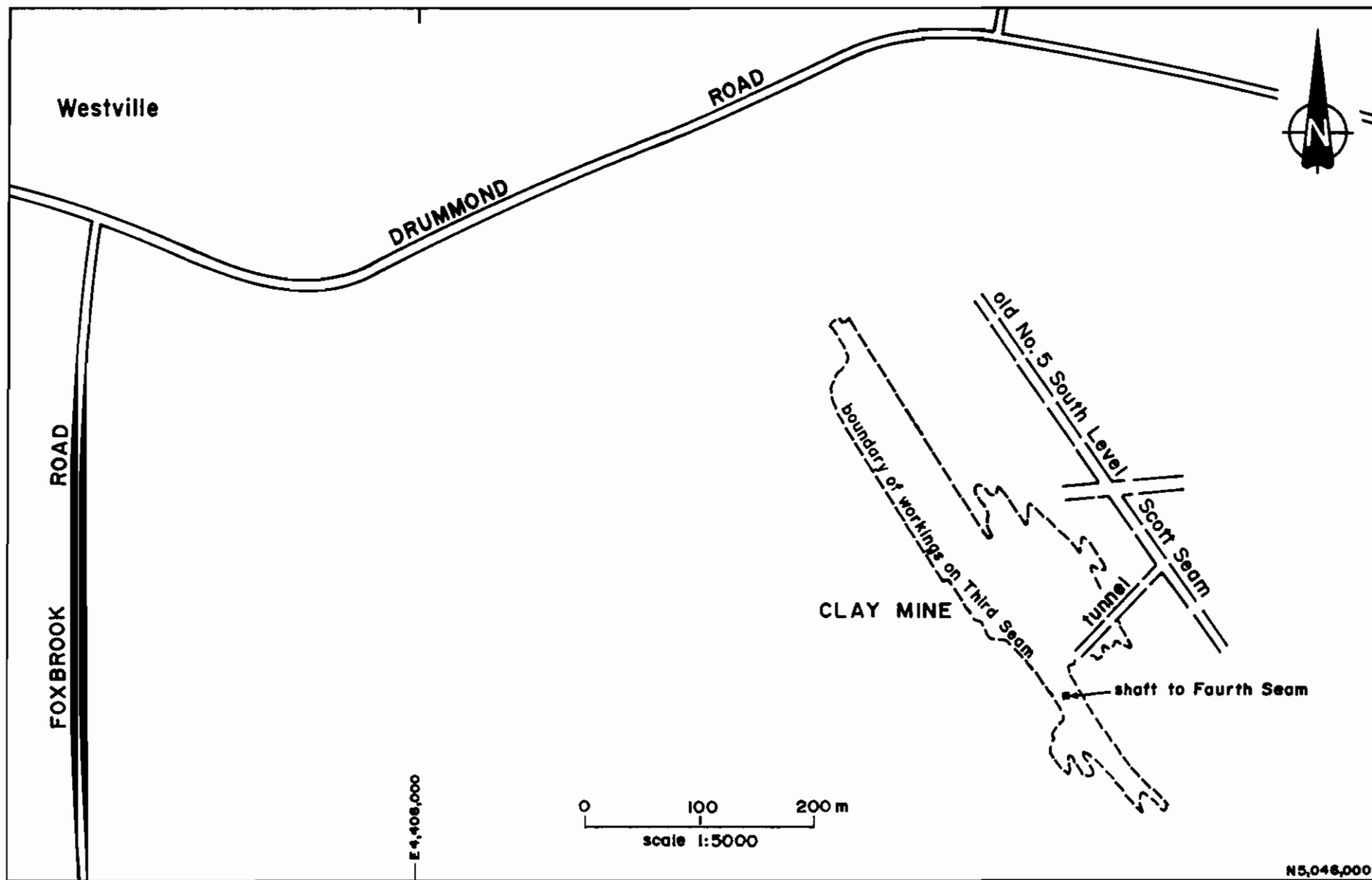


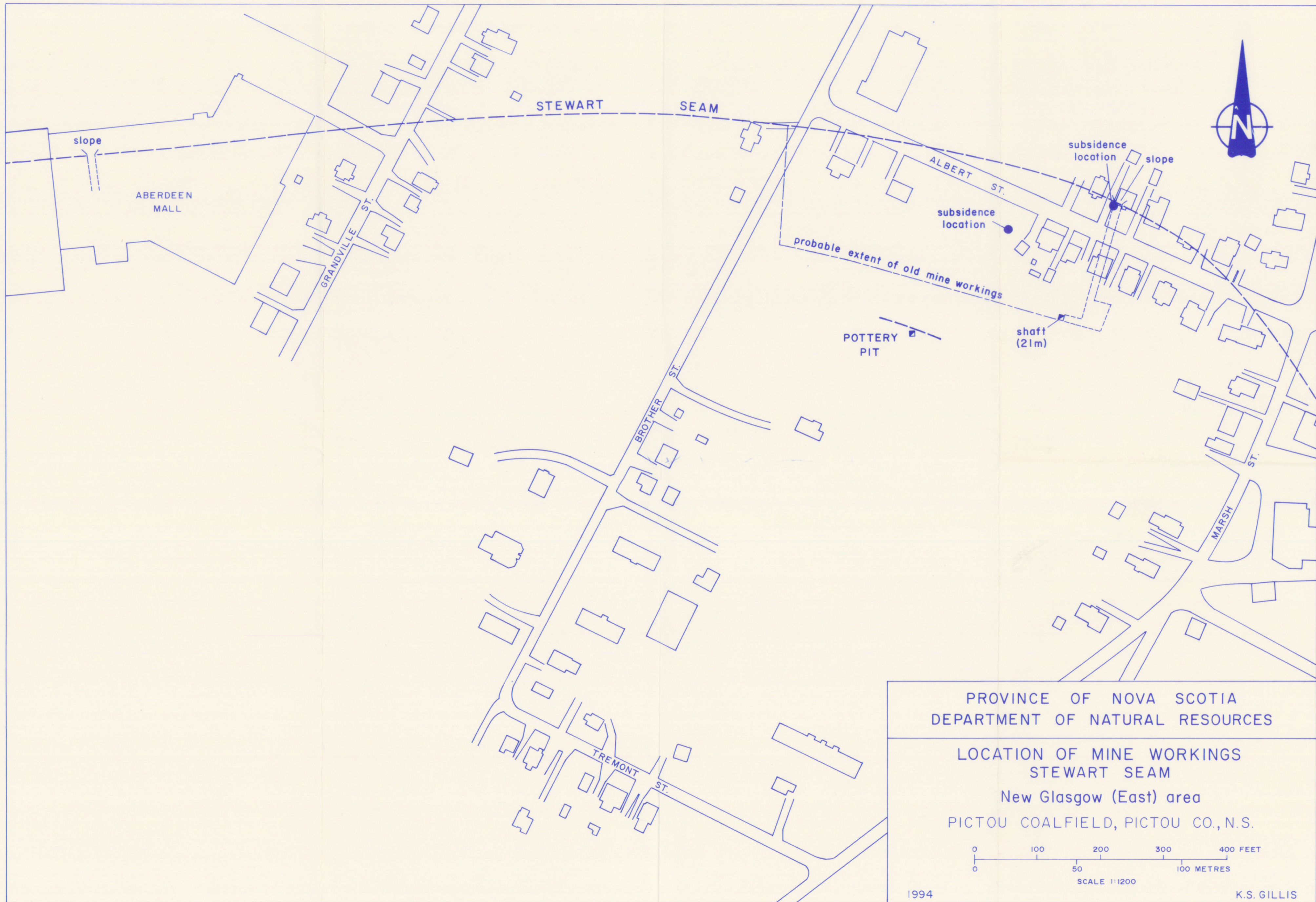
Figure 8. Clay Mine Workings.

A shaft was also sunk in 1906, to the Fourth Seam, lying approximately 34 metres below the Third Seam. No workings are recorded for the Fourth Seam.

The mine produced clay intermittently to meet with requirements of the brick works and other clay sales.

From 1910 to 1921, the average annual tonnage from 6 recorded years was 2,867 tonnes. The highest recorded tonnage in 1911, was 3,382 tonnes.

The last recorded year was in 1921, when the tonnage was listed at 2,134 tonnes. The Clay Mine probably ceased operations in 1921, as there are no references in the Nova Scotia Department of Mines Reports after that date.

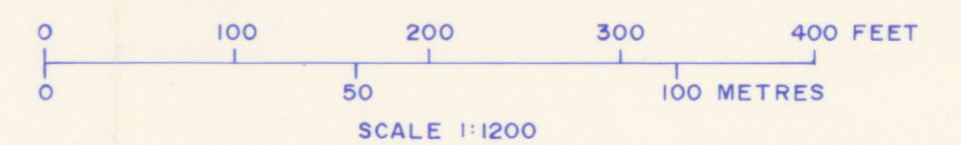


PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA  
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LOCATION OF MINE WORKINGS  
STEWART SEAM

New Glasgow (East) area

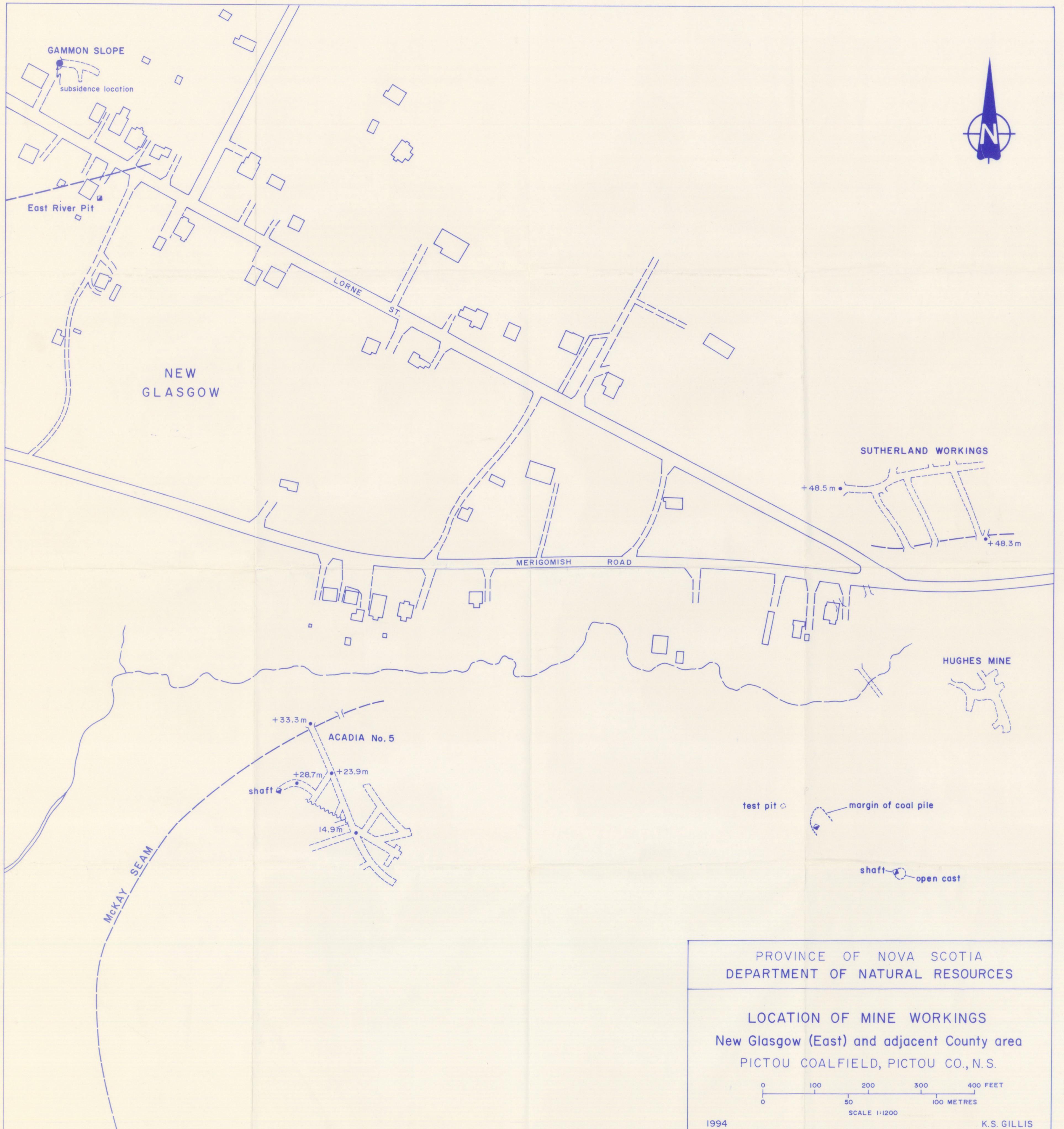
PICTOU COALFIELD, PICTOU CO., N.S.



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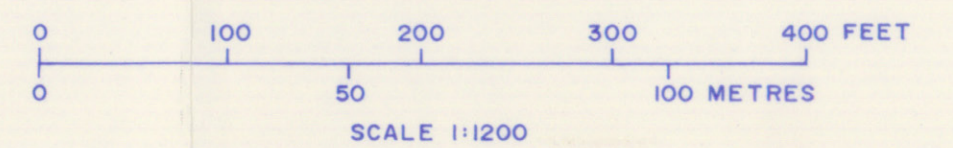
K.S. GILLIS

Figure 4



PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

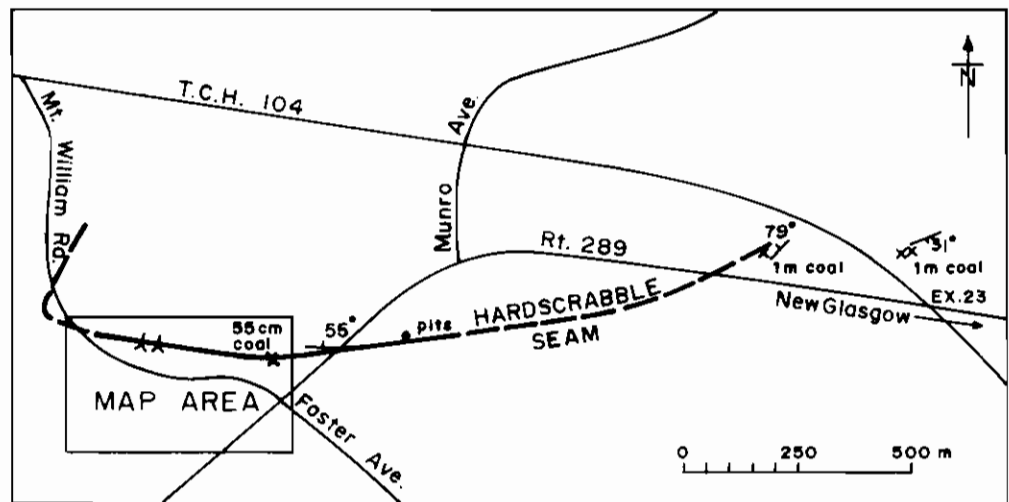
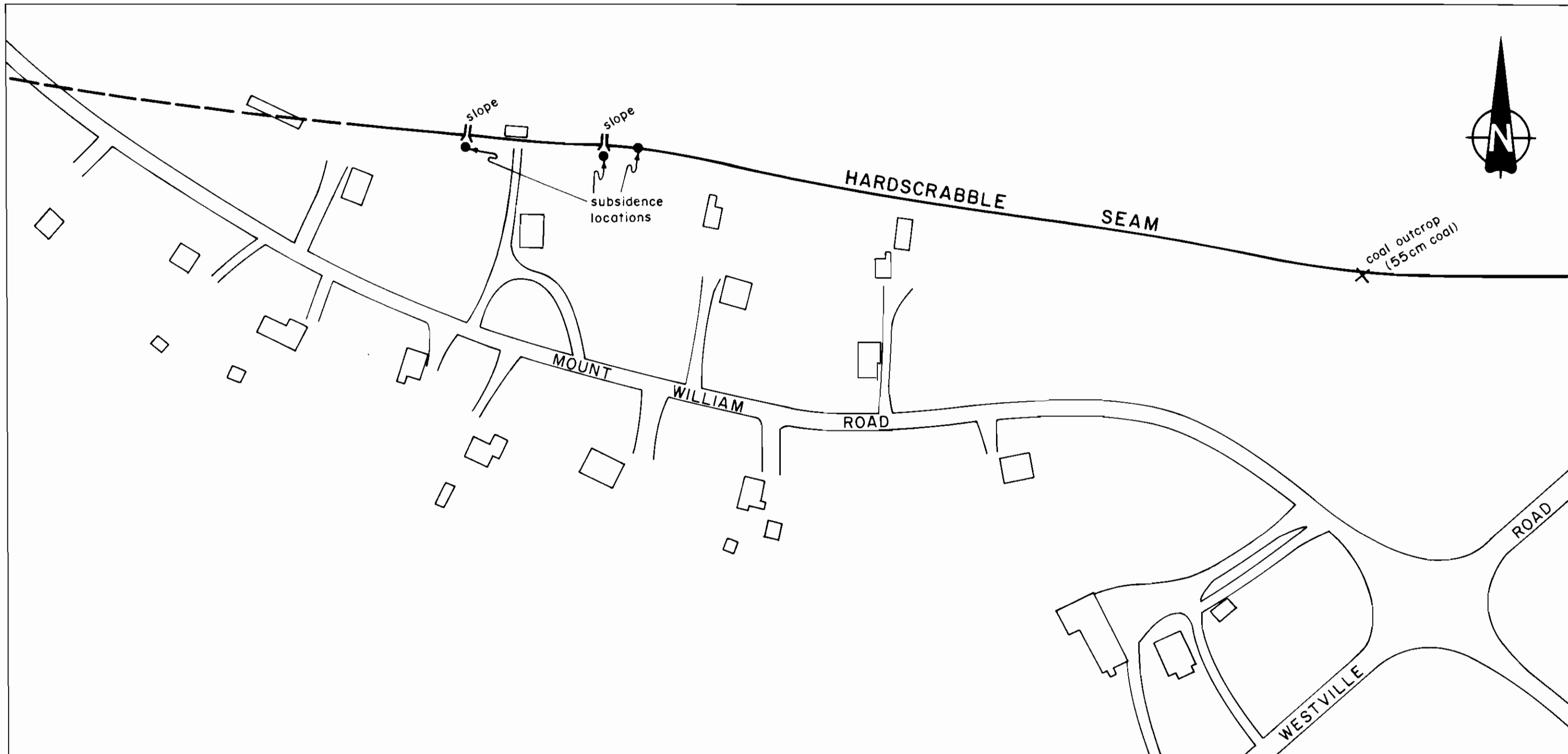
LOCATION OF MINE WORKINGS  
New Glasgow (East) and adjacent County area  
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Figure 5



PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA  
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LOCATION OF MOUNT WILLIAM WORKINGS  
HARDSCRABBLE SEAM  
Mount William Road area  
PICTOU COALFIELD, PICTOU CO., N.S.

