

358. Are you on good terms with Mr. Twining?—Yes; I do not think he is a man I have passed half a dozen words with in my life.

359. Have you any opinion as to his abilities?—I do not know anything as to his abilities.

360. If you know nothing about him, why do you say his surveys are carried out in a spirit of vindictiveness?—From Binns's and Twining's behaviour.

361. We are not talking of Binns?—When you talk of Twining you must talk of Binns. When you talk of one man you talk of the other.

362. What experience have you had of submarine workings?—None of submarine workings; though I have been connected with works with large swamps over head.

363. Do you know when Mr. Twining's survey was made?—Some time in 1883.

364. How long afterwards was it you made your survey?—I made mine in July, 1883.

365. You say there were one or two inaccuracies in Mr. Twining's plan that were pointed out, can you state what they were, or whether they were corrected?—He showed the pillars thin, and the bords wide. I stepped the bords and found them the ordinary width, 16ft.

366. Was that in one or more places?—In a dozen instances.

367. How long was it after the survey was made that you stepped the places?—July 1883; I do not know when the survey was made.

368. Had the work been going on to your knowledge between the time of Twining's survey and yours?—Yes; there was a little work going on the south side by the extension of bords.

369. In the part that you examined?—In the extreme south parts I examined.

370. Would it have been possible for the men, working in the places you saw them, within the space of four months to have widened the bords?—No; they would not do that.

371. You saw Mr. Cox with reference to his report on the mine?—He called on me.

372. Was that after he had been to visit the mine?—Yes.

373. Had he written his report then?—No; not that I know of.

374. Have you seen Mr. Cox's report?—Yes.

375. I understand you to say that, after you had spoken to him, he expressed a very different opinion to what he had before, and, the report having been written after he saw you, I presume he wrote it upon what he had heard from you, as well as from his knowledge of the mine?

375A. The report does not look like that. [Mr. Cox's report read: *vide* Appendix I.] That report was written after Mr. Cox had spoken to you. Did you discuss the question of the influx of the sea with him?—Yes.

376. How long have you known Mr. Cox?—Ten years.

377. Would pressure from the overhead covers upon the pillars raise the fireclay floor round the pillars?—Of course it would.

378. Pressure on the pillars and the effect on the floor—apart from water being allowed to accumulate—would it have any effect in raising the floor if the water was not in?—If there was no water in, the shales might swell with dampness.

379. Would not that of itself raise the floor?—Yes; that would raise the floor a little bit, but it would choke itself in its own thickness if free from water.

380. And would eventually rise to the roof?—Yes; and be all the better for it.

381. That is when it is dry?—That would be the effect where water was excluded.

382. What did I understand you to say the average of the pillars was: did you take an average?—No; I said I found them 15ft., 20ft., 25ft., and, I think, 30ft., some of them.

383. You cannot speak as to the average?—I am telling you how I found them; I am not averaging them at all.

384. You say that you were intimately associated with Mr. Cox: what was your opinion of his ability to report upon a case of this kind?—The report is just consistent with my opinion of his ability.

385. You say you were associated with him in the Geological Department. If he is a man of ability that is a very valuable document?—I do not know; I think it is a very great riddle myself, trying to save a brother officer. That is just what I would do myself if I were similarly situated; I would do my utmost to save a brother officer. The last clause of his report says, "If it should be decided;" that shows the doubt that existed in his mind.

386. *Mr. Chapman.*] Do you know what date Mr. Cox called upon you?—No.

387. How long after he had visited the mine?—A day and a half, or so. He had come in the day before.

388. Do you know if he had been into the mine: did he say he had?—He led me to understand he had.

389. Was it before or after your visit?—After; I could not say how long.

390. You do not know whether he had reported at that date?—He had not.

391. I see there are some phrases in Mr. Cox's report which seem to have taken your attention—the last passage—"I fail to see that any definite advantage to the mine is to be gained by keeping the water out of the present submarine workings; and in the event of it being settled that these are themselves unsafe"?—That shows the doubt in his own mind.

392. That it was not a decided matter?—He could not decide.

392A. "It is evident from Mr. Binns's report that he had no idea of allowing the lower seam of coal to be worked below the area which it is proposed to shut off from the main shaft by dams, as he gives instances where a greater cover than would exist between the two seams have proved unsafe, and resulted in accidents and loss of life." Do you see there that Mr. Cox at that date assumes that Mr. Binns was, in reality, closing both the upper and lower workings?—Yes; but Mr. Binns's correspondence shows he was not.

393. But is it not evident, from Mr. Cox's report, that it was a matter of very little moment whether the water went into the mine or not, seeing that the whole mine, upper and lower, was to be abandoned?—No. Mr. Binns says there is to be 150 feet of cover over the upper seam; no future workings of upper seam to be continued unless present works are flooded with water. Mr.