

1151. Will you measure this centre pillar (on A 2)?—It is about 7ft.; its length is about a chain and a half.

1152. What is the width of the top bord?—Seven yards. I should like to state to the Committee that Mr. Taylor submitted this small plan to me, and I told him then that it was not right—that he had made a mistake, and that there was some part of the mine, shown according to this one, that showed 21ft. of coal taken out.

1153. *Mr. Chapman.*] Does it represent a survey, or only a sketch?—Only a sketch; which I would not have put on the plans.

1154. *Mr. Reid.*] In these matters, were you supreme in the matter of survey, or was your surveyor: did you dictate to him what measurements to take?—Only if I found they were wrong.

1155. Why was this plan made?—For the purpose of putting into position the bord that was taken through the chain pillar.

1156. That is not shown on the trig. plan?—No; it was taken out afterwards.

1157. There is a good deal more shown on the plan at the mine than on this tracing?—No; only one bord.

1158. Why did you not bring with you the working plan of the mine, which shows the latest working up to date?—I understood that it would not be wanted; that Mr. Binns's—or, rather, Mr. Twining's—plan would be taken.

1159. What experience have you had besides at the Shag Point Mine?—I have had none besides at Kawakawa from 1869 to 1878.

1160. *Mr. Chapman.*] As to this tracing, A 2: Mr. Taylor made a survey with the object of putting in one bord to the rest of the plan; it is only a sketch?—Yes; I told Mr. Taylor that he had made a mistake in it.

1161. Did he go down to look at it afterwards?—I went down with him and showed him the place.

1162. Did you measure it?—Yes; the widest part was where the pillar was splitting, and we took off some 6ft. or 7ft.; this would make it about 21ft., where the pillar split, of about half a chain in length.

1163. *The Chairman.*] This cannot be said to be a special survey?—No.

1164. *Mr. Chapman.*] I understand that at the first, when Mr. Binns ordered you to take the men from the seaward workings and let the water in, you refused to obey that portion of the order?—I distinctly refused to stop pumping. I said, whatever the consequences might be, I would not stop the pumping.

1165. And he assented to that until Mr. Rich's return?—Yes.

1166. And you constantly protested against the idea of letting in the water?—Yes; each time I saw him.

1167. Did you ever try pumping at a later date?—Yes.

1168. When?—For some months before February, 1884.

1169. And what could you do with the pumping?—I kept the water back, and took it from the upper seam by a syphon to the lower seam, and kept it back from rising against the dams. My whole fear was that when once it got to the dams we should be stopped.

1170. And up to the time the water got to the dams you had no reason to suppose that the sea-water had come in?—No.

1171. With reference to Mr. Twining's survey, you called attention to an inaccuracy complained of by Mr. Taylor?—Yes.

1172. Did other complaints of inaccuracies reach your ears?—During the survey Mr. Taylor told me that they were making the places far too wide.

1173. Any notes that Mr. Taylor took were of the same measurements that Mr. Twining entered in his book?—Exactly.

1174. Mr. Taylor was not making measurements to check the others?—No.

1175. When Mr. Denniston required the Government plan, do you know if he got it at once?—After a little difficulty; he had to telegraph to Wellington, and then to me to get an order to get it, although Mr. Binns knew that he was acting for the company.

1176. When did you come to know first that the plan had been made at all; for there is no plan mentioned in his letter ordering the closing of the mine?—When it was required for Mr. Denniston.

1177. Mr. Binns has said something about your agreeing with him in the construction of the dams or flood-gates: will you tell the Committee what passed between you with reference to the flood-gates?—When Mr. Binns wanted me to put in dams I told him that I did not see the use of them, and said that we might put in some flood-gates; so that, supposing the water to rise rapidly, we might lower them in a few minutes and check the water; not that I expected them to be of any use.

1178. Something has been said about the weighting of the mine; about a noise that was heard in the mine: what importance do you attach to hearing noises in a mine?—Very little; there is no mine in the world that noises are not heard in. On the men sitting down to dinner—and especially in coal the same as Shag Point—they would try to hole to a back, and the coal would split off from the back and make such a noise that strangers at any rate would want to get out of the mine.

1179. Were there any symptoms of weighting in this mine?—Never; not of any consequence; no more than a bord breaking down. The only weighting that took place was as the water rose up the incline.

1180. With regard to the safety of this mine generally: have you had a considerable number of accidents?—No; I have had very few.

1181. *Mr. Reid.*] Do you know the number of accidents in mines recorded for the year 1882 or 1883?—Not from memory.