

1953. Or by the check-weighman?—As far as I know it was never complained against.

1954. It was an agreement, as through the Association, and none of the men objected to it?—Yes.

1955. Do you think that represents a fair average quantity of stone coming from the mine?—I believe Mr. Bishop wanted more.

1956. *Mr. Brown.*] How is it in the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner Mines respectively, as regards stone?—I should explain that in the Brunner there is no stone deducted.

1957. Did you work at Wallsend at all?—I was weighman two years for the men.

1958. How did that seem as regards stone?—There was a good deal of stone.

1959. What do you mean by “a good deal”?—I think there was more than 26lb. I think it would average more than that.

1960. *Mr. Moody.*] More than in the Coal-pit Heath?—I think so; but it was only guesswork.

1961. *Mr. Brown.*] The same class of stone, but not so much stone?—Not so much white stone in the Wallsend Mine as in the Coal-pit Heath. There is a sort of grey mixed with it in the Wallsend; there is some like that in the Coal-pit Heath, but more white stone.

1962. How do you come to keep the books separate?—We have to, because we want to get the amounts from the different mines.

1963. How did you manage if the men happened to be sharing for any period?—I could not give you the exact differences. It was perhaps for a month or six weeks. I might have ascertained if I had known it would be required.

1964. How do the sharing men appear in these books?—There was no sharing of work from January to the 8th March, nor again until the 19th July, when the lock-out took place; in fact the only sharing has been during the September previous to the last strike.

1965. Then, there were three, four, or five men in a shift during September?—There were three men in a place where two had previously been. There were not four, but always, I think, three; it was owing to some misunderstanding if there were not three.

1966. *The Chairman.*] In a shift there might be three different men, or often the same three men, on the same day, I suppose?—I will furnish as nearly as possible the total number of individual miners drawing wages from the mine during September.

1967. Could the men make as good wages three in a place as two in a place?—No; but the total wages would perhaps be greater.

1968. Can you tell me now why this sharing of work became necessary in September?—I think some parts of the mine were drowned out.

1969. You are aware that there was a stoppage on the 19th July, called a “lock-out”?—I could not be correct about the date.

1970. And the work apparently began again about September. Did the same number of men get back again that left in July?—I would not be sure. It took a considerable time for some of the places to get ready; but so soon as they could get ready they put men on after the stoppage. The men had been idle so long.

1971. When you refer to the water getting in, do you mean to the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes. I will not say that was the only cause of the stoppage, but especially where they are taking the pillars out I have seen them literally close. Then the sharing of work becomes incessant.

1972. In consequence of that, do you think?—Yes; partly in consequence of that, and partly from the fact that the water was in the Coal-pit Heath Mine, so that the same number of men could not get to work afterwards at the same time.

1973. Have there been any more places opened up since?—Yes; after they had been out for awhile they opened out as quickly as they could.

1974. So this sharing was only a temporary measure until they properly opened the mine?—There is a difficulty yet in reference to getting out the water.

1975. Is the water rising during that stoppage?—I could not say.

1976. Is it flooding out places?—I could not say. The Wallsend was another case as well, whilst the men were occupied with places up to July when the stoppage occurred.

1977. Were many of the men unemployed about the place wanting admission to the mine?—I am just wondering whether they did not share when the Wallsend was stopped.

1978. They had to share in order to find work for these men?—Yes.

1979. That was the middle of August?—I think so. I remember distinctly before the mine stopped a part of the men had been out of employment in the Coal-pit Heath, and some of them were drafted off to share work with the men in the Wallsend Mine. I would, however, not be sure about what I have said in reference to the sharing of the work with the Wallsend men, because we had done very little when work was stopped.

1980. There has been really no sharing up to the middle of July?—No. By far the greater portion of the men that would share the work would come from the Wallsend.

1981. And what was the date of the last pay in the Wallsend?—26th July, 1890.

1982. Your position, I think, exempts you from being a member of the union?—Yes; that is a rule throughout the coal trade all over the world—that the masters' weighmen must not join a union.

Mr. RICHARD NEWTON sworn and examined.

1983. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A coal-miner; but I have also been quartz-mining for a long time in New Zealand.

1984. How long have you been at the Grey mines?—Five years last July.

1985. Were you employed putting in the stone drift, to prove the second fault in the mine?—Yes.

1986. How long were you working at that?—I was two spells at it—two months the first spell and three months the second spell.