

FATAL ACCIDENTS

Five fatal accidents occurred during the year, as follows :—

On 27th April Joseph Morrow, miner, Wallsend Colliery, who was trimming loose coal, was struck by a slab of coal weighing approximately 1 cwt. He suffered a fracture of the base of the skull, from which injury he died on 28th April.

On 24th May Alexander Gennon, miner, Stockton Colliery, was struck by a large fall of coal and suffered multiple injuries, as the result of which he died shortly afterwards.

On 15th October Joseph Rowse, miner, Liverpool Colliery, was struck on the head and shoulder by a piece of stone which fell from a cavity in the roof. He continued to work on to the end of the wet-time shift, but in the evening he became unconscious and was taken to hospital, where he succumbed on the 16th October.

On 22nd October Thomas Brown Wilson, miner, Millerton Colliery, was killed by a fall of coal from an overhanging rib in his working-place.

On 30th October Joseph Davies, timber-cutter, Wallsend Colliery, while walking on the roperoad, was struck by a moving empty truck. He was found lying unconscious with severe head injuries, and succumbed in hospital on the 31st October.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS

On 10th February E. O'Brien, trucker, Dobson Colliery, fell off a trolley used for conveying the men out of the mine and sustained a fractured tibia and laceration of the left leg.

On 17th February E. Bourke, shifman, Strongman Colliery, was assisting a trucker to load a bar on to an empty truck when his foot slipped, allowing the bar to fall on the first finger of his right hand, causing a fracture of such finger between the first and second joints.

On 24th February J. Blair, miner, Stockton Colliery, sustained fractured ribs through being struck by a fall of coal whilst engaged in extracting a stump of pillar and dropping top coal.

On 3rd May J. Mann, miner, Stockton Colliery, received a fractured femur through being struck on the leg by a piece of coal.

On 4th May R. Mollison, acting-underviewer, Wallsend Colliery, while passing a moving race of boxes in No. 2 slant dip, received a simple fracture of the right forearm when his arm was caught between the boxes and the coal-rib.

On 2nd June R. Bell, trucker, Dobson Colliery, whilst unloading rails had his small finger amputated, losing two joints.

On 5th June A. McHardy, manager, Puponga Colliery, sustained fracture of thigh and two ribs when the locomotive in which he was riding fell through the loading wharf 16 ft. to the beach below.

On 11th June W. Wilde, deputy, Dobson Colliery, whilst putting up brattice in Whitfield's Place in No. 5 dip was struck on the arm by a piece of coal, causing fracture of the forearm in two places.

On 16th June J. Corcoran, miner, Stockton Colliery, was struck by a piece of coal which rolled off a loose heap and jammed his leg against a prop, breaking the fibula.

On 22nd June James Hill, miner, Denniston Colliery, received head injuries as the result of a fall of stone in the Extended section, due to roof movement.

On 24th June J. Dowie, miner, Stockton Colliery, while walking towards the magazine at Fly Creek, slipped and fell heavily, breaking his left wrist.

On 30th June Charles Wright, miner, Strongman Colliery, sustained dislocation of the left hip when buried by a fall of roof coal whilst working in No. 2 south section.

On 16th August A. Tikey, trucker, Wallsend Colliery, was struck on the elbow by a box coming from behind whilst he was pushing a full box, and sustained a fractured radius of the right arm.

On 17th November E. Raffle, surface rope-boy, Denniston Colliery, suffered a fractured radius bone when a full box of coal was being steadied around a curve landing on the main roperoad.

On 22nd December S. Braggins, fan attendant, Denniston Colliery, was hit by a full box of coal when passing through Coalbrookdale sheds. He was caught around the legs, and suffered a fracture of the left tibia.

DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES IN COAL-MINES (Regulation 81, Coal-mines Regulations 1939)

Wallsend Colliery.—On 7th January an accumulation of CH₄ was discovered in the top airway of "B" panel (25,000 cubic feet). The men were withdrawn from the place and steps taken to remove the gas. The following morning a further accumulation of 3,000 cubic feet was discovered in a dead-end in the far end of "C" panel, and this was cleared by the end of the shift, the mine being idle that day. The cause of these accumulations was found to be a damaged regulator in the return from No. 2 slant dip.

Jubilee Colliery.—On 18th January gas was found, and one man was slightly burned. Safety-lamps were installed.

Wallsend Colliery.—On 15th February an accumulation of 12,000 cubic feet of gas was found in Uren's heading, caused by a stoppage of fan (motor trouble) and a fall of stone, which knocked the brattice down. The gas was subsequently cleared.

Burnwell Colliery.—On 13th March indications of heating were found in a fall of roof in a portion of the workings at roof level. A temporary stopping was built, which was later reinforced by a permanent stopping.

Wallsend Colliery.—On 24th March a feeder of CH₄ was found in Hales level, No. 2 slant dip, and the men were placed elsewhere. An examination revealed that a heavy blower of gas and water was issuing from a small crack in the roof, there being approximately 2 per cent. of CH₄ in the air. Brattice was tightened and regulator enlarged a further 2½ square feet.

Wallsend Colliery.—On 25th March a further blower of CH₄ was struck in Hales place. The section was knocked off, and as there was still 2½ per cent. in air the following morning, the men were placed elsewhere. However, on examination about 2 per cent. of CH₄ was found in the air with the blower easing off rapidly. Later in the morning the blower was down considerably in pressure.

Wallsend Colliery.—On 29th March a further blower of gas and water was struck in Hales place, making it necessary to again withdraw the men on the return side of the place.

Wallsend Colliery Shaft.—On 20th October a miner was struck a light blow on the head by the descending cage as the result of a misunderstanding of signals given whilst he and another man were unloading timber from a trolley which had run into the shaft bottom.

Liverpool Colliery.—On 26th October a miner was found to be charging a shot before the shot-firer arrived to fire it.

Denniston Colliery.—On 23rd November a heating occurred in Coalbrookdale Mine where pillars had been extracted in a section known as Junction Extended. Sealing operations were carried out, and production was recommenced on 7th December.

Liverpool Colliery.—On 26th November a heating occurred in the Kimbell east section, and sealing operations were carried out.

PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE COAL-MINES ACT, 1925

Eleven informations were laid during the year, and conviction obtained in all cases.

On the 9th March two shot-firers were charged with having committed a breach of Regulation 226 (g) (i) of the Coal-mines Regulations 1939. Each was convicted and fined £10, with costs 10s.

On the 9th March an examining deputy was charged, under Regulation 168 of the Coal-mines Regulations, 1939 with using a defective safety-lamp when making inspections in the mine. He was convicted and fined £2, with costs 10s.

On the 5th April a shot-firer was prosecuted for a breach of Regulation 225 (3) of the Coal-mines Regulations 1939. He was convicted and fined £5, with costs 10s.

On the 28th July three charges were heard against a mine-manager. The first charge, under section 97 (a) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, was that he did use, for the purpose of making his inspection before the commencement of work, a lamp which had not been thoroughly examined. He was convicted and fined £10, with Court costs 10s. On the second charge, for a breach of section 128 (1) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, he was convicted and discharged. On the third charge, under Regulation 221 (1) of the Coal-mines Regulations 1939, he was convicted and fined £5, with costs 10s.