

46. It is rather misleading, is it not?—It is usual for civil engineers to do it that way, in order to show up these small places.

47. Did you find any gas in that new fall?—No.

48. None at all?—No.

49. Did you find any gas in the old fall?—At the north end and at the south end.

50. There is no indication to show that any gas which caused the explosion came from the new fall in No. 6 bord?—None whatever.

51. It must have come from the fall in No. 5 bord?—That is my opinion.

52. Did you see any loose rails about there?—There are rails projecting there.

53. They are sticking out at the north end of the old fall now?—Yes.

54. Which way do you think Martin entered No. 6 bord—by the north end?—From the position of his coat I think he must have come from the north end.

55. Did you not say at the Coroner's inquest that you thought he came from the other end?—No, there is certainly nothing in my evidence to that effect as far as I know.

56. Your opinion now is that Martin may have entered by the door?—Yes, and I believe he was going to work in connection with the removal of the rails.

57. It is higher ground at the door than at the north end?—Yes.

58. Do not you find the most gas at the highest point?—Certainly.

59. How would he have got from the door to the position where the body was found—he would have had to go downhill?—I cannot say.

60. The highest point is where you find the most gas?—That is so.

61. Therefore if the door is the highest point there would be much more gas there than lower down?—Yes, there would be, provided always there was sufficient to fill up the workings.

62. *The Chairman.*] It would depend upon the height of the bord?—It depends on whether there was sufficient gas, and my opinion is that there was not. The gas was met by Martin either at the crosscut, where the letter "B" is placed, or at the crosscut marked "P" on the plan.

63. *Mr. Wilford.*] Then, if your suggestion has any merit in it and he met the gas at B, he must have been hurled a tremendous distance, and how would you find his coat where it was?—There was a small quantity. He may have reached a certain distance and then have got the second blast. If there was a large quantity of gas he would never have got through the door.

64. Are you suggesting seriously that he may have run with the first blast and then been caught with the second one?—He may have.

65. Is it not a more reasonable theory that he threw his coat away when he was struck?—It is more reasonable.

66. And if that is more reasonable, then it is also more reasonable that he entered at the north end?—That is so.

67. That is axiomatic?—Yes.

68. Will you tell me what merit there is in your suggestion?—I am not assuming any merit, but that is the position as far as I can understand it.

69. It is not only because you found the other men down that way?—Yes.

70. And taking the position of the coat, and the position of the body, and the ordinary condition that gas obtains in largest quantities at the highest point?—Yes, there is something in that.

71. Now, if it took a week and a day to remove most of the gas from those bords, that is certainly proof that there was considerable difficulty in removing it on account of the dead ends, or that there was a very great quantity of gas present?—There would be a large quantity of gas after the explosion, because the ventilation was all disarranged.

72. How would they get it out—by bratticing?—By renewing the stoppings and carrying the air to the workings. The whole of the stoppings in the mine were practically knocked out and had to be replaced, and the gas could not be displaced until many of the stoppings had been rebuilt. This done, two full days sufficed to clear away the bulk of the gas.

73. How near would you think those rails are to Martin's body?—About 100 ft. from the body.

74. And about how much less from the coat?—About 10 ft.

75. Then we may take it that if Martin was standing where his coat was found at the time of the explosion he had got within 90 ft. of the rails?—Yes.

76. On this plan we have got marked "No. 4 bord 29,540 cubic feet": what does that mean?—It means that there was space for that quantity.

77. And the total space in bords Nos. 4, 5, and 6 and the stentons is 79,685 cubic feet?—That is so.

78. That is to say, measuring the whole space to the roof, it would hold practically 80,000 cubic feet?—Yes.

79. Did you go up from the main haulage-road along No. 5 section?—Yes.

80. And is the road which comes to a dead end on the right side of the door—is that a travelling-road?—I could not say that. I do not know what their practice was regarding the use of that road.

81. There is a dead end and the door on the right. You are going due west to the dead end, and then you come to the bord: is that not the travelling-road to No. 5?—I do not know which are travelling-roads there. When I entered this section and made the discovery of the body I came from the north.

82. Can you tell me the height of No. 6 bord?—It is very irregular—in some places it is 10 ft., I should say.

83. What do you think is the highest point?—It is about 6 ft. or 7 ft. high at the end of the bord and 10 ft. or 11 ft. in other places.

84. *Mr. Napier.*] With regard to your remarks as to the percentage of gas present, you said that you considered that any percentage of gas in the return airway would be dangerous?—Yes, I do.