

again?—When we came back to examine that place we found it in the same condition as it was before.

203. When you came back the same condition prevailed; you could not tell whether the gas had been removed or not?—When we found there was no gas there we came to the conclusion that it had been removed.

204. If the brattice had been put there it would still be there?—Yes, it was still in No. 7 south when I was there last.

205. Then the defect must have been somewhere else in the mine?—It must have been.

206. *Mr. Brown.*] Were you there when the manager and Mr. Wear went into those bords in No. 7 south, where you claimed there was 33,300 ft. of gas? You said somebody went with you: How much farther in the bords did he get than you?—I should say, about 50 ft.

207. Then you made your calculation from where you stood?—Yes, that is so; but I allowed another 100 ft.

208. But if the manager could get in much farther than you had got in there could not have been that quantity in those bords? I was standing on a form, and they went up the bord and were sitting down and had their lamps on the floor.

209. Did you assume that the bords were full of gas from a given point?—Yes, from where they tested.

210. Is your calculation based on from where they tested?—Yes.

211. Now, I think you said that you were afraid that it was dangerous?—Yes, I was a bit afraid. I admit I did not like it.

212. In the interests of all concerned do you not think it was your duty to make some special report upon this matter?—No, I was not worrying about that trouble much.

213. I think you led the Commission to believe that possibly you would get a bad time for overstepping your duty if you reported these things?—I still think that.

214. Are you aware that there is provision in the Coal-mines Act whereby you could lay a complaint to the Inspector of Mines—sections 50 and 51?—Yes, probably; but a man would be very officious to do that.

215. I wish to draw your attention to the fact that there is a clause to protect you even if you desired to inform the Inspector of Mines that there was danger there. You could do so, and he would investigate it?—I was not the Inspector—I was simply assisting him. I do not see how I neglected my duty. I will humbly admit it if you can point it out.

216. *The Chairman.*] You know the provisions of sections 50 and 51 of the Coal-mines Act?—Yes, but I still hold that we have done our duty.

*Mr. Tunks:* I would like to place it on record that the 23rd March was a Monday, and that the 14th April was the Tuesday after Easter Monday.

ALEXANDER PENMAN, Acting-manager, Ralph's Mine, sworn and examined. (No. 9.)

1. *Mr. Wilford.*] Were you down to the locality of bords Nos. 4, 5, and 6, shown on the plan marked AA, last Friday?—Yes.

2. Were you in the place last Friday, near No. 6 bord, where Martin's body was found?—Yes, I accompanied Mr. Morgan and Mr. Reed.

3. Were you in the vicinity of the new fall?—Yes.

4. Were you where the old fall was?—Yes.

5. I have marked a point on this plan [Exhibit AA] WX. Is that about the position where you saw the rails that day?—No, they were here [point indicated] at AP.

6. That is where you saw the rails last Friday?—Yes.

7. Clear of the fall?—Yes. The position of the fall is not strictly accurate, as the batter comes down to the point marked AP, and covers the end of the rails.

8. *Mr. Tunks.*] Are these rails torn up ready to be taken away, or lying in their ordinary position?—They are lying in the position in which they were used.

9. Do they go right down the whole way?—The sweep rails are lifted out.

10. And is there a large quantity or a small quantity?—There are only two rails to be seen.

11. Had you ever worked in Ralph's Mine before the explosion?—Four years ago.

12. But not immediately before?—No.

13. *The Chairman.*] What do you mean when you say that there were only two rails to be seen? Are there more rails there?—The batter of the fall is over the end of the rails. Nobody knows how many are there.

14. You can only see two?—Yes.

15. *Mr. Brown.*] How much of the rails are showing out from under the fall?—10 or 12 ft.

16. And what length rails are they?—About 18 ft. rails.

17. You do not know?—No.

18. There is 10 ft. or 12 ft. showing clear of the fall?—Yes.

WILLIAM WOOD, Manager, Extended Mine, Huntly, sworn and examined. (No. 10.)

*Witness* reads evidence given by him at Coroner's inquest, as follows:—

“WILLIAM WOOD, sworn, saith: I am a certificated mine-manager, and manager of the Extended Mine at Huntly. I heard of the explosion at Huntly on the 12th September, about 7.45. I organized a search-party and went down Ralph's shaft. I went to the top of the little dip, and could not get any farther for smoke. One of the deputies told me he thought the air was short-circuited, and three or four of us went down to the little dip and found that some of the doors had been blown away. These were the doors in the horse-road, and they were blown to pieces. We had to come back to the top of