

State inspector of coal mines reports

Section 56, Pages 1651 - 1680

These reports of the Kansas State Mine Inspector mostly concern coal mining, though by 1929 the scope of the reports broadens to include metal mines. The content of individual reports will vary. The reports address mining laws and mining districts; industry production and earnings; fatal and non-fatal accidents; accident investigations and transcripts of oral interviews; labor strikes; mine locations; mining companies and operators; and proceedings of mining conventions. The reports document the political, economic, social, and environmental impacts of more than seventy years of mining in southeastern Kansas.

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Through the courtesy of Wm. Rogers, I am permitted to use the records of the following drilling, which was done by the Commercial Club, of Weir, to determine the possibilities of another workable seam of coal in the vicinity of Weir. This hole is about two and three-fourths miles southeast of Weir City.

Feet.	Inches.		Feet.	Inches.
		Soil and clay	2	
11		Sandstone, 2 feet; yellow clay, 7 feet.	9	
21		Slate	10	
23	6	Blue slate	2	6
24		Coal		6
32		Gray, sandy slate	8	
32	6	Coal		6
38	6	Fire-clay, 2 feet; gray slate, 4 feet	6	
40	6	Blue slate	2	
41	8	Coal	1	2
52		Fire-clay and slate	10	4
55		Sandstone	3	
88	6	Blue slate	33	6
89	9	Coal	1	3
92		Fire-clay	2	3
97		Blue slate	5	
98	2	Coal	1	2
101		Fire-clay	2	10
117		Blue slate	16	
118	2	Coal	1	2
121		Gray slate	2	10
132		Blue slate and hard bands	11	
148	4	Blue slate	16	4
150	8	Coal	2	4
153		Fire-clay	2	4
158		Gray, sandy slate	5	
169		Blue slate with streaks of mindic	11	
171		Gray slate	2	
174		Sandstone	3	
177		Limestone and flint	3	
		Total depth	177	

Located on north side of barn on Thompson farm.

[Signed] JOHN DUNCAN, Driller.

There have been several other holes drilled in the same neighborhood, and all are reported to have gone through from twenty-eight to thirty-six inches of coal at about the same depth,

The Central Coal and Coke Company also drilled two holes, one a half a mile east of Weir, and one a quarter of a mile north of the first one, but no records of those holes have been made public as yet.



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at the time during the shot-firing period. He is naturally boss of the situation there. We use all diligence and care for the protection of his own life, as when he is protecting his own life he is protecting the property at the same time.

Q. Do I understand by that, that the instructions that is given to shot firers is to use their own judgment about firing these shots, or do I understand you mean some rule? A. Every man has instructions to fire a regular section of the work, and they will start and fire that section of the work that will be best suitable for the men.

Q. I understand that, Mr. Fletcher; but have you any rule for your shot-firers or any orders to them as to what kind of shots they shall fire or not fire? A. They are instructed from time to time not to fire any shot that is against their judgment, and if a shot is too heavy not to fire.

Q. Now, when a shot-firer has been in the habit of firing shots on the solid, what could you do with him—anything? A. We would n't know it if they had fired the shots that was on the solid.

Q. What was the condition of that mine that night after it blew up, from what you saw in going over it, was it dry or wet? A. Some portions of the mine, running through there, I would consider in a damp condition. Of course, with the explosion going through there you could n't expect anything else but that it would be heated up, on account of the temperature that would be obtained from that explosion.

Q. I understand you to say that you found some parts of the mine damp that night where you was going around? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What part was it? A. Take the west entry and take the northwest entry.

Q. That is the diagonal entry going north off of the west? A. The diagonal entry off the west. I did n't go up the diagonal entry.

Q. Well, in your opinion, what was the cause of that explosion? A. Well, I would think there was an over-powerful shot or a ground shot, which would cause flame, and flame extending through the mine ignited powder that had been in boxes. It would have added to the trouble.

Q. Then you don't think the dust had anything to do with the explosion? A. Why, take the tamping alone would make a little dust.

Q. Well, of course the tamping alone would make some dust. What I want to ask you is, do you think the dust had anything to do with it? A. I don't think there was any dust there. It might add to it.

Q. You think the probable cause of the explosion was a shot put in on the solid. A. I think so.

Q. Well, do you believe that if there had not been a great many other elements there that that would have caused the explosion itself? A. In firing so many shots there lately, it had formed a combination of elements there that might have added to it.

PETER MCCALL, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

By Mr. Casselman: Ques. Peter, you can state your name, residence, and occupation. Ans. Name is Peter McCall; reside in Frontenac; my occupation is superintendent of No. 5 and No. 8 mines for the Mount Carmel Coal Company.

Q. You have charge of the pit bosses at the mines? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What authority have the pit bosses at No. 8 in regard to hiring, discharge of men, and the general control of the mine? A. Full power.

Q. Full power to hire and discharge, and he is then practically boss of the mine? A. Boss of the mine.

Q. You was down in the pit the night of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Helped to get the men out? A. Yes, sir.



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derstand my position, I have full charge of the mine; acting of course, under the instructions of my superior officers.

Q. Both top and bottom? A. No, sir.

Q. What orders, if any, did you give the shot-firers when they went down there that night? A. That night?

Q. Yes sir. A. I don't recollect that I gave them any specific orders other than to each set of them to fire their own side, of course; and I don't just remember that I cautioned them that night, but I think I did. I know that hardly a night passed that I did n't caution them not to light a shot if in their judgment it was dangerous.

Q. These men were the old shot-firers, or what were they? A. Three of the men that fired on the night of the explosion were regular shot-firers in No. 8. One man, Joe Baldoni, was firing in place of John Perero.

Q. How long had these other men been firing shots for you? A. I don't exactly know the length of time to the day. I think the rest had been firing in the neighborhood of two months; would n't be positive of the exact time, however. The other man had been firing in the neighborhood of one month; Ginardi two or three months.

Q. Do you know anything about their ability as shot-firers; whether they knew what a bad shot was from a good one, or not? A. I had the utmost confidence in the men; they seemed to be giving good satisfaction, and on different occasions they had carried shots back that in their judgment were dangerous.

Q. This man Rossler, whatever his right name was, do you know of his ever carrying a shot back? A. I am not certain that he ever carried a shot back.

Q. Do you know whether he ever shot-fired before he started there or not? A. Am not positive that he did. Heard that he did when the mine first started.

Q. Ginardi was an old shot-firer, was he? A. Yes, I know positively that he was an old shot-firer.

Q. This other man that was with Ginardi, do you know whether he was a shot-firer or not? A. He, I think, had fired shots in No. 8 when it first started, occasionally.

Q. Do you know whether he was experienced at it or not? A. I don't know.

Q. Did he represent himself to you, when you put him on that night, as a shot-firer or not? A. He applied to me three different times to get a position as extra on firing.

Q. Did he represent himself as being a shot-firer; did he want to learn? A. Yes, sir; and his partner, Ginardi, was highly pleased to have him go with him.

Q. What I want to know is, did he represent himself as being a shot-firer? A. Yes, sir; he did.

Q. That was the first work he ever did for you, that night? A. In that mine, yes, sir.

Q. He was digging for you though? A. Yes, sir.

Q. For how long? A. Digging there before I took possession.

Q. Did you have any rules with your shot-firers, where they should go and where they shot-fired first; any rules laid down for them to go by? A. You mean, by rules, their starting point?

Q. Yes, and where they should start from? A. Their instructions were two: to fire each side of the mine; to not fire any dangerous shots, or anything that, in their judgment, was dangerous, and to fire to the best advantage to themselves.

Q. Then, if I understand you right, Francis, there was given two to each



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Q. Yes, sir. A. The fire from that heavy shot in the room just mentioned.

Q. Well, the fire from that shot would have done it in your opinion; did it set something afire, or do you think it made the explosion in itself? A. I think that portion of the mine was pretty well heated on account of the number of shots that were fired in the short intervals of time.

Q. What do you think that flame did? What did it set afire? That shot, within itself, would hardly make the explosion would it? A. That was all that was necessary.

Q. The one shot? A. If it was bad enough; strong enough.

Q. To make an explosion within itself? A. Without that shot, or something like it, there could be no explosion.

Q. If there was no other elements there, would the shot alone make the explosion? A. What do you mean by elements?

Q. If there was no dust, nor no gas, or no powder smoke, or anything that was combustible beside the shot itself, would it itself make the explosion? A. I don't know whether it would; but I do know it is necessary to have something of that kind to make an explosion.

Q. Then you think that was the start of it? A. Yes, sir.

Q. But you don't mean to say that that shot was the cause alone of the explosion, the one shot? A. It is possible there were three, and highly probable there were two, shots that went off at that time.

Q. Well, do you think the mine was in such a condition that the dust had anything to do with the explosion? A. I think the mine was in good condition, and that the dust was not there in sufficient quantities to cut any figure in that explosion.

Q. Where was this top man that got hurt, do you know that? A. I cannot tell you only from what I heard. I can tell you that I heard that he was on the cage.

Q. If he would be on the cage, by whose authority would he be on there? A. He has charge of the top and the repair work to be done on the cages; everything on the top in the way of repairs, and full charge of the top, in other words.

Q. If he would be on the cage, then he would be there through his own authority? A. Pretty much so. Yes.

Q. Any other statements you wish to make in regard to the cause of the accident? A. No, I think not. The reasons I have given are about all I have to say. So many shots being fired.

By Mr. Cliggitt: Ques. In firing the shots, where they go on, a number of shots fired, does n't it always produce more or less dust in a mine, anywhere? In any mine, necessarily? Ans. Yes, sir; necessarily.

Q. Were there any other shots that were loose that were not tamped, in your examination of the mine that night? Did you discover any that had not been tamped? A. That had n't been tamped?

Q. Yes, sir. A. Oh, yes, there were several that had n't been tamped.

Q. Was the powder that was left there, was that exploded or burned, or did the powder still remain there? A. Some of the shots, the powder was still remaining there.

Q. Did you notice anywhere the powder had been burned or exploded? A. Not particularly; in a case where powder is burned that way, a person can't very well tell unless they know whether the powder was standing there before where the powder had been burned there, only by the evidence.

Q. What I mean, did you find any open shots that had n't been tamped? A. Yes.

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Q. The supposition would be that if the hole was damp, or wet, or anything of that kind, they would n't put in the powder would they? A. Yes, sir.

Q. They would leave the powder there for the shot-firers to put in themselves? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Now, did you find any holes in that condition; were there any places there with open holes where the powder had n't been tamped? A. I believe there were.

Q. What was the air-current that night? A. The air-current?

Q. Yes, sir. A. It was reduced to the minimum.

Q. What would that be? A. That would be the fan making twelve revolutions per minute.

Q. How many shots, do you know, were to be fired that night? A. On the east side of the mine there were only seven places to fire, I think.

By Mr. McCall: Q. He means the aggregate; how many were there fired, approximately, in the mine that night? A. In the mine that night there would be almost 350 shots.

By Mr. Cliggitt: Q. What is your best judgment of how many there had been fired up to the time of the explosion? A. There must have been 250 of the shots fired.

Q. Now that air-current that is in there to carry out the smoke; do you know of any way in operating the mine, Mr. Keegan, by which you can prevent dust particles or powder smoke being prevented from being carried along in a less or greater quantity during firing time. A. I know of no other way to produce the air-current and allow the shots to be fired. Even had we the dust in circulation from those shots the smoke was there.

By Mr. Casselman: Ques. You say that so many shots being fired, Francis, makes a lot of dust; where does the dust come from? Ans. Where does it come from?

Q. Yes, sir. A. It comes from the coal that has been shot out.

Q. It don't stir up any dust that is there? A. If there is any dust there it would stir that up, too.

Q. What do you sprinkle the roads with, Francis? A. The water boxes.

Q. How many water boxes have you, one or two? A. Two.

Q. One for each side? A. Yes.

Q. You say there was some shots tamped, or some shots left; that the indications were that the powder was put up there to tamp the holes with, and that the explosion set that powder off; is that what I understand? A. That is correct.

Q. Did you find any place in the pit where there was open powder-cans, in making your rounds; that the powder was there in the cans, open, and not fired? A. No; I found one place where a can of powder was setting with a stop tight in it.

Q. Don't you recollect when you went up that north diagonal on the west side, there was a powder-can laying open with some powder that had not went off? A. That night of the explosion?

Q. Yes, sir. A. I think it possibly was there; I believe it was there; but I will say that I found several powder-cans that had no powder in them that were thoroughly demolished; looked like they had been burnt; that they had had powder in them that had exploded.

Q. Where was these rooms where the holes had been left to tamp and there was no powder to tamp them with? A. Rooms? Did I say rooms?



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Q. I believe you told Mr. Cliggitt that there had been powder left there to tamp them with and that the explosion had failed to set the powder off. Can you recollect of any room? A. Any rooms?

Q. Yes. Where there was shots laid to be fired and no powder there to fire them with? A. I think it was at the face of the first south entry where there was two holes drilled and no powder there; there was no powder there; whether they had exploded or not I do n't know. It is only a supposition.

Q. Who works in that entry? A. I do n't know the gentleman's name.

Q. How many men is there works in that entry? A. How many works in that entry?

Q. Yes, in the entry. Was it in a room where this happened, or in an entry? A. Close to the face of an entry. I think the gentleman is here who works in that entry. I don't know who worked in the room.

Q. You don't know who works in the room? A. I don't know his name.

Q. What I would like to know is, if there was powder in those cans, whether it had exploded or not? A. I am not in a position to prove whether there was powder in those cans. If there was, I know it exploded.

Q. Is there any other statement you wish to make, Francis? A. That is all I can think of.

Mr. Casselman asks Peter McCall the following:

Q. Pete, I would like to ask you a question; this man who was on top, who was top boss, by whose authority was he on top of the cage? A. He was there attending to his duty repairing the cage.

Q. Was he top boss? A. Yes, he has charge of all that kind of work.

Q. Of all that kind of work? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was he there on his own orders, or somebody else's? A. The standing order is that when anything is broken that is necessary to be repaired, that he is the man to give the order to the carpenters or blacksmith, or whoever needs it, to make the necessary repairs. I might state as to that question of the powder coming up, I might state that the two back entries, the entry that was straight north, and the one that was turning in the north back entry, that I visited those places and found there several holes, wet holes, with the dummies—that is, the tamp dummies—and no powder, and also evidence that that powder had been consumed.

EDWARD FLYNN, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. You may state your name, occupation, and residence. Ans. Edward Flynn, mine inspector; reside at Chicopee.

Q. You were at the mine the night of the explosion, Mr. Flynn? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Helped to get the men out? A. I think so.

Q. What was the condition of the mine that night, in your judgment? A. Oh, well, a man can't tell anything about that the night after the explosion. It was very fair looking for a night after the explosion.

Q. Did you find any dampness in any place? A. Yes, sir; in some places.

Q. Where at? A. You could go almost any place on the north or south entry. Some entries you would not know that there was an explosion.

Q. I am speaking of the places you went that night. Did you find any dampness in any place that night? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where did you say you found it? A. Up in the south diagonal, up almost to the face where I was. Up to the face of the third south. Was you up there?

Q. Yes, almost there, within a room or two; and the first section northwest,



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and up to the face of the south diagonal. You seen those men when they were gotten out, Mr. Flynn? A. After they were gotten out?

Q. Yes. A. I saw them as they were getting them out.

Q. From what you seen that night, have you knew, or had any reason to believe it was in that entry—they could have been gotten out in time to be saved?

A. I could not say about the saving. They might have got there sooner.

Q. You was over the mine the next day to make the examination? A. Yes, sir.

Q. In your opinion, where did this explosion start from? A. Well, I think it started from that room; that shot I called you in to see there.

Q. Do you think there is where the explosion started from? A. Yes.

Q. And do you believe that was the only cause of the explosion—that one shot? A. Well, I do not know; of course it is hard to tell. I think something else helped it along.

Q. What was the something else? A. I think some powder there.

Q. Some powder? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Anything else? A. Not that I know of.

Q. You remember of speaking of those three cans, and picking one of them up in the back southeast; if there was powder in those cans, where did it go to? Then don't you think the dust had anything to do with the explosion? A. I examined that mine on the 20th of February.

Q. On the 20th of February? A. Yes, sir, and she was in good condition. The road was well dampened and in good condition on that day.

Q. Well, do you believe if that mine had been, well, we will say real wet, that the explosion would have happened just the same? A. I think if it had not been damp it would have been more severe.

Q. But what I mean is this. So the dust had nothing to do with it, in your opinion? If the mine had been real wet, as we find mines around here, do you believe the explosion would have happened? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And it would have happened just the same? A. Yes, sir; I do not believe that would have hindered a windy shot.

Q. You do not mean to say that that one shot alone caused the explosion? A. No, sir, I do not say so.

Q. It is your opinion that that windy shot threw a lot of flame out and set some powder that might have been setting around there afire, and that that caused the explosion? A. Smoke and other causes together with it.

Q. Have you any other statement to make in regard to it? A. This powder can, where Mr. McCall spoke of, I found one place myself, the powder being there, on the south side.

Q. Did you notice some shot right about there, in the face of the west entry, where there were two holes drilled in the room, and the dummies was there, and there was no shots there, and no powder? If I understand you right though, Mr. Flynn, you say the explosion started on the other side of the pit? A. Yes, sir.

Q. But that those shots that should have been lit were on the opposite side of the pit where you believe the explosion started. A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see any indications of fire on the west side of the pit, any props burned, or anything? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where at? A. There was indication of fire on the props in the air-course on the south, following the south diagonal on the west side.

Q. South diagonal on the south side? A. Yes, sir.



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Q. And it indicated there had been some fire there? A. I found the props stripped there.

Q. That would be about how far from where those men were found dead? A. The way the air would travel?

Q. Yes. A. Well, probably up between 600 and 700 feet, the way the air would travel.

Q. Before blowing all those toppings out, would n't the air make a shorter cut there? A. Yes, sir.

Q. They would possibly cut through about the same time? A. I think they would.

Q. As you say that made fire enough there to burn the props, would n't it carry fire enough around to those men that were killed to burn them? A. Coming from there, the explosion would be going against the air, would n't it? Suppose so.

Q. Which way was the stoppings thrown? A. Thrown east.

Q. Thrown east? A. Yes, sir.

CASTELLANE ALBERTO, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Where do you live; what is your name? Ans. Castellane Alberto, Chicopee; miner.

Q. Where do you work? A. At No. 8.

Q. What do you work at? A. Dig coal.

Q. What part of the mine do you work in, or what part of the shaft? A. Work on the west, back south of the shaft.

Q. How long have you been working there? A. About seven months.

Q. What was the condition of the mine, wet or dry, where you was working? A. At the place where I was traveling, it was kind of damp; but right close where I was working, it was a little dryer.

Q. When did they water the roads up there last? A. The last time they sprinkled the roads was when we had a cold spell, about fourteen or fifteen days ago; about twenty days—I do not know exactly whether it was fourteen or twenty days.

Q. How often did they sprinkle the roads? A. I saw them sprinkle the roads lots of times, but I do not know exactly how many times.

Q. Did they sprinkle the roads enough to keep the dust all down? A. I never watched them things; can't tell much about that. There was a little dust where I was working.

ANTONE LESJACK, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. What is your occupation? Ans. Miner.

Q. Where do you live? A. In Chicopee.

Q. Whereabouts do you work in the mine? A. I work in the northwest diagonal on the east side.

Q. That would be up where the explosion is supposed to have started? A. I do not know.

Q. You have heard what those other fellows testified to? A. That is all I would know.

Q. What was the condition of the mine up in your part of the pit? A. In that part of the pit it was all right, what I can say. There is a horseback there about 100 feet that cannot be dry; not so deep.

Q. Any water there? A. There was water before, but not now.

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Q. All dried up, is it? A. Yes, sir.

Q. When did they sprinkle the roads up there last? A. I do not know as I can say. I did not watch. Sometimes I do not know how long.

Q. Did you ever take notice in the morning when you went in, or had ever noticed? A. No, no, no.

Q. On coming out at night did you ever take notice? A. I could not say when was the last.

Q. About how often did you take notice? A. I do not know that. I cannot say. Of course, I did not take no notice of that.

Q. Was they sprinkled as much as once a week? A. I do not know. I cannot say exactly. Of course, if I say, might lie, and can't do that.

Q. What is your best guess about it? A. Fourteen days.

Q. In traveling in your entry you traveled from the bottom, or did you go down in the shaft? A. I come to the bottom.

Q. What is the condition of the main entry, wet or dry? A. The main entry is some dryer than this one.

Q. Some dryer than what your entry is? A. Yes, sir.

Q. About how long has it been since the main entry was sprinkled, do you recollect? A. I do not know.

Q. Well, it has not been sprinkled very much, has it? A. No, I think not.

JOSEPH SCHEE, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Do you work in No. 8 mine? Ans. On the first northwest.

Q. What is the condition of the mine up there, towards dryness? A. The road from the bottom right up to the first door was dry, but it was naturally damp because it was close to the work on that horseback.

Q. Do I understand that now, that from the bottom up to the first door it was wet? A. Yes, wet from the bottom. They sprinkled the road from the bottom right up to that door, as far as they needed it, but the inside was naturally a little wet.

Q. Where was this door at? A. Yes, sir; the first door on the first northwest.

Q. Then, as I understand you, the roads are sprinkled from the bottom up to the face of your entry? A. Yes, sir; inside there was some places where it was wet, and some places where there was dust in it.

Q. When was they sprinkled up your way last? A. Can't tell, for I have been sick for a while before that explosion; I only worked three days afterward.

THOMAS GRESSALANE, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Thomas Gressalane.

Q. Where do you live? A. Chicopee; close to No. 8.

Q. Do you work at No. 8? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What do you do—digging and mining? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What part of the mine? A. Second south on the east.

Q. Second south on the east side? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is the condition of the mine up there with regard to dryness? A. It wasn't very wet or very dry; it was a little damp; never put in any water.

Q. Never sprinkled the roads up there? A. No, sir.

Q. But it was a little damp, you say? A. Yes, a little damp.

Q. How damp was it; was it damp enough to wet your shoes? A. It was damp.



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JOSEPH CONOVA, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Joseph Conova.

Q. Do you live here in Chicopee? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you work at No. 8? A. Yes.

Q. What do you do at No. 8? A. Dig coal.

Q. And what part of the mine do you dig in? A. First south on the west.

Q. What is the condition of the mine up there for dryness? A. I can't tell very much about it—only about the west. From the bottom, as you go in my entry, it was pretty fair in there, and dry in on myself. Sometimes inside lots of water come out; and again it is pretty dry—I mean up to the edge. The rest of the entry is dry.

Q. How long has it been since they sprinkled the road, Joe? A. Do you mean since they put water in it?

Q. Yes, sir. A. I do not know, but would say that I never saw them take any water in that entry.

Q. Never saw them take any water in that entry? A. No.

Q. In going out and in, could n't you see where it has been sprinkled, the roads? A. No.

Q. Was you one of the committee up there, Joe? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you wait on the mine boss in regard to getting another shot-firer on? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was his objection for putting one on? A. Well, I cannot speak.

Q. Let me put it in a different way. Did he claim putting another shot-firer on would cause an explosion? What I want to know is just in regard to the danger part of it; don't care anything about the rest. A. No, never told him. In regard to my part, he never said nothing to me about that.

Q. You was one of the committee that waited on him? A. Yes, I was one of the committee.

Q. If I understand you right, Joe, he never said anything about the danger of putting five men on? That the way you want to testify? A. I heard it that they said that, but I can't prove it.

Q. You did n't say anything yourself? A. No.

FRANCIS KEEGAN, recalled:

Ques. Did I understand you to say that when they wanted a fifth shot-firer on, that the fifth shot-firer would cause an explosion? Ans. No, sir; I did not say it.

Q. Did you say anything that would cause the committee to think there was danger? A. I said that if they put on another man it would add to the danger.

Q. Do you believe it is possible to blow up a well-ventilated mine where a great quantity of blasting powder is used and where it is fired rapidly. A. I certainly do.

Q. Do you believe the rapid firing of shots would make it possible to blow up a mine? A. It would have a great tendency to do so.

Q. How many men would be required to do it? A. The more men that were employed in firing shots, the more danger there would be in firing them.

Q. How long does it take to fire those shots? A. How long does it take to fire the whole mine?

Q. Yes. A. The men have to register as they go down and come up. The record at the shaft shows that they go down and come up anywhere from half past four to five.

Q. Is there any rules in regard to firing shots? Well, there is no rule that



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could be established to make them fire those shots slower is there? A. I wish there could be. I believe the slower they are fired, the more safe it is.

Q. You do not quite understand my question. I asked you if there could be a rule established to make them go slower. A. If they had followed my advice that night—my instructions were to be careful and slow.

Q. Was there any reason why you could not enforce your instructions? A. I could not be present with the shot-firers when they were firing their shots to see how fast they lighted them, or how slow.

JOHN MCCABE, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. You live here in Chicopee, Mr. McCabe? Ans. No, sir, I live in the country.

Q. Where do you work? A. In No. 8.

Q. What do you do in No. 8? A. Driver.

Q. Driver? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What part of the mine do you drive in? A. First and second north entries on the west.

Q. What is the condition of the mine there, Mr. McCabe? A. Damp.

Q. Does your trips make any dust up there? A. No, sir.

Q. When was the road sprinkled up there last? A. The road was sprinkled last—I do not remember whether it was just before or just after Christmas.

Q. Well, that must make some water up there. A. The sprinkling that was done in that entry was done by the entry man.

Q. Is that all the part of the mine you drive in? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You don't know anything about the condition of any other part of the mine then, just those entries? A. That is all.

FRANK KRANTZ, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Frank, you were firing shots the night of the explosion? Ans. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you have any different orders from the pit boss that night than any other night? A. No different directions, I guess.

Q. What is your orders from the pit boss in regard to firing shots? A. They have orders not to fire any dangerous shots.

Q. You had orders not to fire any shots that you supposed were dangerous? A. Yes.

Q. And did you ever refuse to fire any shots that were—that is, did you ever take the cartridges back and not fire them? A. No.

Q. You fire everything you come to? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he ever make any complaint to you about firing shots you had n't ought to fire? A. No.

Q. In firing shots there, Frank, did it make any fire? Did the shots throw out any fire? A. When there is a good bit of powder it throws a good deal of fire.

Q. Did you ever have any light explosion there before? A. No.

Q. Never had any light explosion there? A. No.

Q. How long have you been firing there? A. Between two and three weeks.

Q. Did you ever fire any shots before you fired there? A. No. 8 is the first place I fired.

Q. Well, have you no knowledge what a dangerous shot is, and one that is not dangerous? A. Yes.

Q. What would be a dangerous shot? A. Drilled on the solid.



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Q. Could a shot be dangerous without being drilled on the solid? A. A shot ain't dangerous if it ain't drilled on the solid.

Q. If you take a shot that is six feet long, and ten or twelve feet thick, it would not be dangerous because it was not drilled on the solid? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Then it would be dangerous without being drilled on the solid? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Then you fire all the shots that are made? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know what the law is in regard to—the law about firing shots? A. No.

Q. Then you don't know whether the shots you were firing were made according to law or not? A. No.

Q. How were most shots? Was there any way of telling whether they were on the solid or not, or were they all tamped with the fuse? A. There were not many wet holes there.

Q. And can't you tell whether they were on the solid or not? A. Yes, sir.

Q. If a shot was on the solid, you left it alone? A. Yes, sir.

Q. If you found them on the solid, you did not fire them? A. No.

Q. Can't you recollect when you did not fire a shot—what room? A. I do not know the place now; I can't remember the place.

Q. Can't you locate where the place is? A. I suppose on the west side.

Q. And what shape was the shot in that you did not fire? A. It was drilled on the solid.

Q. And you could tell it was drilled on the solid? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Then the reason you missed it was because it was drilled on the solid? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you fire any that were one quarter feet? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You never fired on the other part of the pit? A. No.

Q. Did you know how long that man Rossler had been firing shots there? A. Two weeks before me.

Q. Do you know where he fired shots before he fired at No. 8? A. No, I do not know.

Q. Do you know whether he ever fired any shots before or not? A. No, I don't.

Q. You don't know whether this man Rossler was a shot-firer or not? A. No, I don't know.

Q. Do you know any other shot-firers who fired shots on the other side? A. I knew one.

Q. Which one was it? A. The one that was off.

Q. What was your occupation before you went to firing? A. Digging.

Q. Digging coal? A. Yes.

Q. How long have you been digging coal? A. Two or three years.

Q. Two or three years? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you fire shots in your life before? A. Yes, I fired shots in No. 8.

Q. What I mean is, before you started shot-firing in No. 8. A. No.

Q. That is the first shots you ever fired in your life? You fired once before this, did n't you, at No. 8? A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long did you fire once before? A. I do not know how long I worked at that work there.

Q. You testified when you was working day work? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you fired shots in No. 8? A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long? A. Do not know as I can say.

Q. About how long? A. Guess it was a year; anyway four or five months.

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- Q. Four or five months you fired shots? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Then you did n't fire any more shots until you started here again? A. No.
- Q. What was the condition of the mine in that quarter of the pit where you are, wet or dry? A. My quarter of the pit what I fire, everything in good condition.
- Q. Was the pit wet or dry, damp, or how was it? A. The north way, kind of damp there.
- Q. And how often did they sprinkle the roads, do you know? A. Can't tell you just exactly how often.
- Q. Can't you recollect when they sprinkled last? A. I do not know just the day when they sprinkled last; believe it was somewhere about the 16th or 17th of February.
- Q. 16th or 17th of February? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Well, now, that explosion, do you know where it started? A. No, I don't.
- Q. Did it start from your entry where you were firing? A. No, sir.
- Q. Did you see any fire that night at all? A. No, sir.
- Q. You saw no fire at all? A. No, sir.
- Q. How did you know there had been an explosion? A. I did not think there was any explosion: just thought it was a windy shot.
- Q. It made no fire? A. No.
- Q. And did it blow any dust up? A. It blew a good deal of dust up.
- Q. But it did not ignite—there was n't any fire in that part of the pit, was there? A. No, sir.
- Q. What did you do after this happened—did it knock you down? A. I was tamping up two holes in 16 room when it happened; went back in 15 and lit two shots after I tamped those two.
- Q. You did? A. Yes; and I came back and got lost in 16 room.
- Q. Lost in 16 room? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Did it blow your light out? A. Yes.
- Q. Did you light the shots after the explosion went off? A. I do not know for sure.
- Q. Where did you go after you left 16 room? A. Went into the entry; don't know which way I went.
- Q. Do not know which way you went? A. No.
- Q. Then you did not have a talk with the other man when you came out? You did not know whether the explosion started in his place or not? A. No, sir.
- Q. And you seen no fire? A. No, sir.
- Q. It would not have been possible for any fire to have been over there without you seeing it? A. No, sir.

JOE LESJACK, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

- Ques. Where do you live; here in Chicopee, Joe? Ans. Yes, sir.
- Q. What are you doing, driving? A. I am teaming.
- Q. Your work takes you all over the pit? A. Just on the west side.
- Q. You are teaming on one side? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What is the condition of the mine on the east side, with regard to dryness and dampness? A. Where I work it was wet on the face of the entries; but of course in some places it was a little dry sometimes, before they sprinkled it. I sprinkled myself a couple of times.
- Q. How long ago has that been? A. I sprinkled them about two weeks ago, or may be it was longer than that.



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Q. Do you know about how often they sprinkled the roads? A. Well, they sprinkled them a good many times, but I can't tell how often it was.

Q. Have you got any idea about how often they sprinkled the roads? A. Every week, or about every Sunday or so. After they have been hoisting all day they put a water-box on and go over it.

Q. How much did they sprinkle, all of it or just the main entries? A. They sprinkle where it is necessary, as some entries are wet and do not need to be sprinkled.

Q. What entries are wet? A. The north entries are pretty good and wet, but the south side is more dry than the north.

Q. Is there mud on the road? A. Mud on the south diagonal.

Q. Is there mud on any of the other roads? A. Well, just on the fourth north.

Q. Mud on the road? A. It is damp right along there.

Q. And that diagonal entry on the north has got mud on it, and the rest of them are damp? A. On the south side?

Q. Yes. A. Yes, anybody could see that.

Q. Don't get very muddy does it, Joe? A. Yes, there is only a place there.

Q. Have you been on the other side of the pit, too? A. I have not been there for about three weeks.

WILLIAM GRAHAM, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Well, you may state where you live, and what your occupation is.

Ans. I live half a mile south of Chicopee, rural route No. 2. My occupation is farming.

Q. You have been a miner a good many years. A. Yes, a miner.

Q. For how long? A. Eight years, up to the present time.

Q. You was in the mine the night of that explosion. A. Yes, sir.

Q. Helped to get those two men out who were dead, and the men on the other side? A. Yes, sir.

Q. If there had been a rule established so that they would have had an idea where those two men were who were found dead, do you think they could have been saved? A. Mr. Casselman, I am not here to give any information at all. I rendered my assistance there to relieve the dead—my assistance to the best of my ability. I am not here as to why I did make rules or whether I did not.

Q. I am just asking if such rules had been established, if it could have been determined which quarter of the pit the men were in, do you think they could have been found quicker than they were? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was the condition of the mine that night with regard to dryness? A. It was very dry, to the best ability I can say. Of course, after an explosion, you know, no matter how wet it was before, it would seem dry to any one.

Q. If the mine had been well sprinkled within the last five or six or eight days, would you have noticed any dampness in traveling around the mine? A. A mine is almost dry right after it is watered. I have watered the mine at half-past five, when I came out, and went in there at seven o'clock and did not know whether there was a place that had been watered on it or not.

Q. I would take that to mean that if a mine had been recently well sprinkled it would have been something like the condition that this was in after the explosion. A. She seemed dry.



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FRANK GUIDO, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Frank, do you live here in Chicopee? Ans. Live in Chicopee.

Q. Work in No. 8? A. No. 8.

Q. What part of the mine do you work in? A. First south on the west.

Q. First south on the west? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is the condition of the mine up there in regard to dampness? A. Well, in that entry where I have been working, I have never seen any one put any water there.

Q. How long have you been in there, Frank? A. Nearly four months.

Q. Overdry up there, or not? A. Not overdry.

Q. Did you ever notice—does a mule going in and out there raise any dust? A. Raises a little dust.

Q. You say, now, that you have never seen them sprinkle up there? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you have been there about four months? A. Yes sir, about four months.

Q. You walk in and out? A. Yes sir.

Q. You would know if they had been sprinkled since you have been there? A. Yes, sir.

Q. If you go out early at night and it is sprinkled, you would know the next morning, would n't you? A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. McCall: Q. You work on the first south? A. On the first south.

Q. Your coal comes out of the second? A. Yes sir.

Q. Well, when that second south door is open, don't the air that escapes go to the face of the second south; don't that cold air going in there from the roof sweat drops of water? A. No.

Q. Did you ever look at that? A. I do not know what you mean.

Q. Have you ever noticed that? A. I never noticed it.

PETER MCCALL, recalled.

Ques. The cold air going into a mine, do I understand that that makes it damp? Ans. You understand me to say that the air that is on the inside of that door has made the circuit of the mine, and it becomes, to a certain extent, heated. When that door is open it goes up through, and when the heated and cold air comes together, I do claim that it forces the moisture out of the cold air. You can see it on the inside of the doors.

Q. If I understand you right, when this fresh air comes down into a mine, the fresher it is the more dampness it takes? A. I say when it comes into contact with the cold air it is of the higher temperature.

Q. This air going down into the mine, that makes the dampness down there? A. I say it makes the moisture where it comes in contact.

JOHN PERERO, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Do you live here in Chicopee? Ans. Yes, sir.

Q. Where do you work? A. Work at No. 8.

Q. What do you do? A. Shot-firer.

Q. What part of the mine do you fire? A. West side on the north.

Q. West side on the north? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What are your orders from the pit boss in regard to go firing shots? A. Well, the pit boss orders when the shot is on the solid not to fire.

Q. How long have you been firing shots? A. Over three weeks.

Q. Have you fired shots over three weeks here? A. Yes, sir.



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- Q. Where had you been firing shots before? A. At No. 5.
- Q. How long did you fire shots there? A. About three months.
- Q. Do you know what the law is in regard to making shots and in regard to firing shots? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know when a shot is made according to law? A. Two shots in the room and three in the entry.
- Q. That is not what I mean, John. Do you know when a shot is made according to law? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know when you make a shot whether it is made according to law? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know when you make a shot whether it will throw fire? A. Yes, sir, when there is not enough powder it makes fire.
- Q. When there is not enough powder it makes fire? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. If a shot is on the solid, and it has got plenty of powder in, does it make fire? A. Sometimes it does.
- Q. Some of them do? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you ever fire any shots on the solid? A. No.
- Q. You do not fire any shots on the solid? A. No.
- Q. How is the mine in that part of the pit, is it wet or dry, Joe? A. There is a part that is not so wet, but there is a part that was awful dry. The entry ain't so dry.
- Q. Did you ever complain to the pit boss about it not being sprinkled? A. Yes, sir; they sprinkled it the same night. Had an explosion afterward.
- Q. And as soon as you complained to him he went and sprinkled the roads? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Did he sprinkle them good? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Did he sprinkle from the cross-entries? A. No, sir. The cross-entry was n't so dry.
- Q. Cross-entries were not so dry? A. No, sir.
- Q. What do you think was the cause of that explosion? A. Think it was the dust.
- Q. Think it was the dust? A. Yes, sir. A shot goes out and catches it afire.
- Q. A shot goes out and catches it afire? A. Yes, sir; that is what I think of it.

ROBERT GILMOUR, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Bob, you was out here once when they had some trouble about shot-frers, was n't you? Ans. Yes, on the 15th of January, I think it was.

Q. In settling that trouble, did the pit boss make any complaint of the danger in putting on another man? A. He gave several reasons why he did not want to put on another man.

Q. Well, what were the reasons? A. He said there was liable to be danger if they had another shot-frer down there.

Q. What did he think would cause danger by putting that man on? A. His reasons were that there would be more shots if they had another man, and, in the event they put on a fifth shot-frer, it would add to the danger in firing the mine.

Q. He did not say that by putting on another man it would cause an explosion? A. No, sir.



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ELMER PORPHIER, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Elmer Porphier.

Q. Where do you live, Elmer? A. Here in Chicopee.

Q. What is your occupation? A. Miner, by occupation.

Q. Did you ever fire shots in mine No. 8? A. Yes, sir; I did.

Q. How long? A. Well, it has been about five weeks.

Q. Fire shots here five weeks? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Ever fire shots before you worked at No. 8? A. Yes, sir; I did.

Q. When did you fire? A. Four months at No. 5.

Q. How does it come you quit firing at No. 8? A. The men came out for an advance.

Q. How long did it take you to fire the shots? A. Seven fifteen, and sometimes half-past seven and eight o'clock.

Q. Did you always come out back? A. Always come out back.

Q. How about the other side? A. I don't know anything about it; I never waited on them.

Q. Never waited on them? A. Waited on my own buddy.

Q. What are the instructions from the pit boss in regard to firing shots? A. To wait on one another.

Q. In regard to firing, do they have instructions how not to fire and to fire? A. He told us not to fire any solid shots.

Q. What was the condition of the mine in regard to dust? A. Part of the time in the rooms it was damp. The rooms were generally damp.

Q. Were the roads sprinkled? A. Every time we wanted the roads sprinkled we generally made it a point to ask for them to be sprinkled.

Q. Then, if I understand you right, when you asked for the roads to be sprinkled they were sprinkled? A. Yes, sir.

Mr. JOSEPH FREER, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. Do you live here in Chicopee? Ans. Yes, sir.

Q. Where do you work? A. Working at No. 5 now.

Q. You used to fire shots at No. 8? A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. How long since you fired there? A. Five weeks; both quit together.

Q. Is the statement that he made in regard to the conditions and the orders that he had from the pit boss, etc., correct? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Any other statement you wish to make in regard to it? A. Not that I know of.

Q. Has he stated just as it was? A. Yes, sir.

JAMES A. ORR, being produced, sworn, and examined, testified as follows:

Ques. James, you may state where you live. Ans. Weir City, Kan.

Q. Your occupation? A. Miner, at present.

Q. I will ask you if you was in the mine (mine No. 8) the night of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Help to get out the men that were in the explosion? A. Well, I was n't right in where they were exactly lying, but then I was within 50 or 100 yards, I suppose.

Q. Well, you helped make an examination of the mine two days after that? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was the condition of the mine two days after that explosion, with regard to being wet or dry? A. My estimation two days after the explosion, and the vicinity that I was in the night of the explosion, it appeared to be very dry and dusty.



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Q. Well, you was up the third south entry on the east, or was it the angle entry that went out there; it was damp, was n't it Jim? A. The third south.

Q. On the east side? A. I believe it was one of those south entries; I won't say whether it was the third or not that showed to have considerable moisture in it.

Q. You was up on the angle; the north angle on the east side, the first place we went there? A. Yes, that is where Mr. Flynn went in. The first entry we went in there; that is the angle entry I understand.

Q. Did you see any shots there that had been made and apparently fired that you believe would cause an explosion? A. Yes, there seemed to be several shots there that looked like, according to theory laid down for explosions, would be apt, under the conditions of the mine, to cause an explosion.

Q. Do you believe that any shot there, within itself, would have caused that explosion; that the shots themselves would have caused the explosion if there had been no other elements? A. I don't know as to whether they would have or not. There was some shots in very bad shape, but had the condition of the mine been wet, or like a good many others where they are wet, or pretty damp, the probabilities are that there would have been no explosion.

Q. Do you believe that if there had been ten or fifteen shots lit there together, do you believe those shots, if the mine had been recently well dampened, would have caused what damage was done to the mine? A. No; I suppose there is as many shots fired in other mines as there are in this mine, or as rapid firing probably, in damp, wet places, that seemed to have no bad results. I don't see why it would n't have acted in this case as well as others.

Q. Do you believe that the dust had anything to do with that explosion? A. Well, of what little I have read, and little knowledge I have, I believe that dust has been the big element in the explosions.

Q. You believe the dust has been the big element in the explosions? A. One of the big elements; yes, sir.

Q. Do you believe that if there had been no other element there but just the dust and, we will say, one shot, do you think that one shot would have started that explosion with what dust there might have been there, or would it have taken the powder smoke? A. I could hardly say as to that. It takes a small percentage of gas along with the dust to make an explosion more terrific or more severe.

Q. Well, from what you seen in looking over the mine, do you think that that was a very severe explosion? A. Well, it did n't seem to have any real heavy force with it, any more than that it seemed to take all over the shaft.

Q. Well, do you think it would be possible for them shots and the powder smoke, without igniting any of the dust, to cause the damage that was done to that mine. A. I would n't hardly know how to answer that question.

Q. Give it as your opinion. A. I believe that there is mines in the district that fires shots as rapidly as they do, and as a consequence the gas that is given off by the smoke is likely to be as great as it was in that mine, and there does n't seem to be any bad results from them, and I believe that all the combustion of powder and gas given off in the explosion, and the dust together, is what caused the explosion.

Q. Well, do you believe, then, that if the mine had been, we will say, well sprinkled or made wet, do you believe the same explosion would have occurred? A. I don't believe it would have been so terrific.

Q. Don't believe it would have been so terrific? A. It probably would have been as powerful in the vicinity where it originated.



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CERTIFIED COPY

OF THE CORONER'S INVESTIGATION OF THE DEATH OF WILL AND HENRY WORF,
BY DROWNING, IN MINE No. 9, ABOUT MAY 19, 1903.

STATE OF KANSAS, CRAWFORD COUNTY, SS.

The State of Kansas to C. D. Rea and H. W. Barton:

You are hereby commanded to be and appear before me, the undersigned, coroner of Crawford county, in said county, at mine No. 9, in said township, on the 23d day of June, 1903, at 10 o'clock A. M., to give testimony at an investigation then and there to be held. Hereof fail not, at your peril.

Witness my hand, at mine No. 9, this 23d day of June, 1903.

[Signed] L. E. STRODE, Coroner.

TESTIMONY OF C. D. REA.

C. D. Rea has been working in mine No. 9 about two years.

About the 20th of May, 1903, the following, Will Worf and Brooks Worf, were working in mine No. 9, and had been for two days, this being the second day. I warned them four different times, telling that the water was coming in two places on the north side, and that the bottom was already full, and that it lacked only five inches of running over the dam just above the cave hole; also, told them that the water had broke into room just east of cave hole. They insisted on borrowing fuse to tamp two shots; told them that they did not have time to tamp the shots, as they would only have time to get out, if they had that. The oldest one said that he had been in mines drowned out before, and that he did n't think it would come in so fast but that they could get out.

Their ages are about thirty-four and twenty years, respectively.

[Signed] C. D. REA.

TESTIMONY OF H. W. BARTON.

H. W. Barton. Was working at mine No. 9 on May 19, 1903, on ground. At this time the Worf boys and Morgan boys came to the mouth of the cave. Both Worf boys went back into the mine, also one of Morgan boys, but the Morgan boy returned and came out after awhile, but the Worf boys remained to finish the shots which they put in.

[Signed] H. W. BARTON.

REPORT OF CORONER.

I, L. E. Strode, coroner of Crawford county, Kansas, hereby certify that I did hold an investigation on June 23, 1903, in regard to the drowning of Will and Henry Worf in mine No. 9 about May 19, 1903.

After examining C. D. Rea and H. W. Barton, I came to the conclusion that an inquest, was unnecessary, as the evidence tended to show that the Worf boys were warned at least four different times, but paid no attention to them, and insisted on finishing two shots which they were putting in.

[Signed] L. E. STRODE, Coroner.

STATE OF KANSAS, CRAWFORD COUNTY, SS.

I, John Viets, county clerk of Crawford county, do hereby certify that I am the lawful custodian of inquest and investigation proceedings; and I further certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the evidence, testimony and findings of the coroner of Crawford county in the investigation of the death by drowning of the persons respectively named herein.

In testimony whereof, I have herennto set my hand and affixed my official seal, this 9th day of July, A. D. 1903.

[SEAL.]

JOHN VIETS, County Clerk.



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INSPECTOR OF COAL-MINES.

STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION

OF THE EXPLOSION AT THE WEIR JUNCTION COAL COMPANY'S MINE No. 2, ON
DECEMBER 15, 1903, TWO MILES SOUTH OF CHEROKEE, HELD DECEMBER
18, 1903.

TESTIMONY OF LEWIS SCHWAB.

- Ques. What is your name? Ans. Lewis Schwab.
- Q. Are you one of the owners of the Weir Junction Coal Company's mine No. 2? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know who had charge of the mine on December 15, 1903. A. Definitely, I do not.
- Q. You do not know who had charge down below? A. I do not know whether there was any one under Jonathan Schwab.
- Q. Was Jonathan here in charge? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Well, he would have charge? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. He is superintendent of the company? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Was you at the mine yourself that day? A. No, sir.
- Q. Was you here to help get the men out? A. I come shortly after six o'clock.
- Q. Were all the men out? A. No, sir; three were out.
- Q. You was not down below? A. No, sir.
- Q. Then you do not know anything about the cause of the explosion, only what you have heard since? A. No, sir.

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM JONES.

- Ques. What is your name? Ans. William Jones.
- Q. You are working at mine No. 2 of the Weir Junction Coal Company? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Was you working here at mine No. 2 on the 15th of December? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What was you doing that day? A. I was shot-firing.
- Q. How long have you shot-fired there? A. I have been shot-firing about two months the 15th of this month.
- Q. Have you been shot-firing steady right along? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Is any one firing with you? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Who was firing with you on that day? A. Ralph Ridley.
- Q. How long had he been firing with you? A. Off and on for a month.
- Q. You say that you have been firing shots for two or three years? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know how long he had been firing? A. No, sir.
- Q. When did you fire shots that day? A. We fired at noon, and started firing fifteen minutes after four o'clock.
- Q. What is the regular time for firing shots? A. 4:30 and 11:30.
- Q. Who hired you to fire shots? A. Pat Brown.
- Q. Was he pit boss at that time? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. What were your instructions in regard to firing shots, if any? A. We did not have any instructions whatever.
- Q. Did you have any instructions about firing until the men were all out of the pit? A. We were supposed to wait until the men were out.

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Q. Were you told to wait until the men were out? A. Pat told us to wait until the men were all out.

Q. Were the men all out when you fired shots on the 15th? A. All but Geo. Knighton and his brother.

Q. Do you know how many men were in the mine when you fired the shots? A. There were eight, counting us.

Q. What is the reason that the shots were fired early that night? A. Ralph wanted to go home early, and he was wondering if we could fire early. I said: "Well I do not see any hurt, and that I would go down and let Bill Baker and Alex Orlea know we were firing"; so I went down and let them know. They said: "All right, go ahead." Fred Vanveller went up to see about working two hours overtime. Then I went in and tamped Bill's shot and lighted it and walked up to the bottom.

Q. When you told these men that you were going to fire shots, did anybody tell you to wait till they got out? A. No, sir.

Q. Who was boss that day? A. Jonathan Schwab.

Q. Did you notify him that you were going to fire the shots? A. No, sir; but Ralph Ridley's brother did.

Q. You did not notify him yourself? A. No, sir.

Q. Well, now, you fired that shot in this place; was it on the first south on the east side? Where did you go to from there? A. I went out to the bottom at the air-shaft and sat down. We were sitting there talking, and pretty soon Ralph walked up in second south to shoot Geo. Knighton's shot.

Q. Did you go along up there? A. No, sir. He went up there and fired the shot himself.

Q. Where did you go when he went up to fire this shot? A. He went and left me there at his place with the understanding that he would go ahead firing, and he went on. I went on to light his shot in the first south.

Q. Were they in the air-shaft? A. They were in the main east entry, about half way up to the air-shaft.

Q. If I understand you right, they were sitting about fifty yards east of the air-shaft. A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you sat down with them. How long did you sit there? A. Ralph just went. I walked up there, and waited a minute or two, and I heard Ralph running out to the second south entry. I hallooed at him, and then I never heard of him till after the explosion came.

Q. You do not know where he went? A. No, sir; I suppose in the back east entry.

Q. Then you were there until the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You heard both of these shots? A. Yes, sir. The first shot caused the explosion, and the second went before the rebound came.

Q. You say that the first shot caused the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And the second shot was not the one that caused the explosion? A. No, sir.

Q. Was there much fire with the explosion, or was there any? A. I could not say.

Q. Did you see any fire? A. No, sir. I saw a few sparks, but think they were from my lamp.

Q. After the explosion, how did you get out? Where did you find Ralph? A. I found him on the bottom. Jonathan found him first, as he was in the lead going out.

Q. After the explosion, was there anybody with you that was hurt? A. None that I know of.



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Q. You got up and started for the bottom? A. Yes, sir. We started, but Jonathan said it was too strong, and went to the face of the straight east entry, and we knew that we could not stay in there very long; so we went to the back entry.

Q. You came out the bottom from there? A. No, sir. I crawled down the entry and found I could not make it; so I came back out, and we all sat up in the face of the back entry for a few minutes that seemed like a few hours to us.

Q. Then you started for the bottom? A. Yes, sir. Jonathan took my lamp.

Q. And you got to the bottom? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And where did you find Ralph? A. I found him laying about five feet from the sump on the west side.

Q. And was he still living? A. Yes, sir. He talked.

Q. What did he say? A. Alf., his brother, asked him where he was. He said: "This is where I found myself."

Q. He did not say where he had been? A. No, sir.

Q. Did he say how he got there? A. No, sir. He did not know.

Q. What happened after that? A. Jonathan hallooed up, "Why did n't they start the fan?" They said the fan was broken, steam-piped isconnected; and somebody said to go up the manway. He went to the manway and said, "My God! boys, its shot out, too." Then he said to turn the fan by hand, and they were turning it then. I said, "Jonathan, how are you feeling?" He said, "I'm going, I'm going." That was the last I heard him say.

Q. Did Ralph talk any more after that? A. I could not say for certain, but I think he did.

Q. You did not hear him say where he was when the explosion happened? A. No, sir.

Q. And they got you out by hoisting you out in a barrel? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And did you see Ralph after you came out? Was he still living? A. I could not say for certain.

Q. Did you look at him to see whether he had any blows? A. No, sir; I went over and looked at him in the face for a minute or two.

Q. You do not know whether he came to his death by the after-damp or was hit on the head by flying timbers? A. No, I do not know.

Q. What condition was the mine in regard to dampness? A. In some places it was dry and some places damp.

Q. How was it from the air-shaft to the other? A. From the air-shaft to the first south it is pretty dusty.

Q. How is it in the first south? A. It is dry, but has not been going long enough to be dusty.

Q. In that second south, where they started from, was there water enough along there or was that dusty? A. Well, from the face back fifteen or twenty feet, from one switch to another, back to the switch it was damp. After that would break through all the rooms would become dry. Then, on down to the turn in the road by the sump, that caused another wet spot.

Q. The sump is how far from the face? A. I cannot tell; about 400 feet, I should judge.

TESTIMONY OF MILES M'NAMARA.

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Miles McNamara.

Q. Where were you working on the 15th of December? A. Working here at No. 2.

Q. In what part of the mine were you working that day? A. I was working at the main shaft.



Q. What was you doing? A. I was cleaning up and brushing on the east side of the main shaft.

Q. Did you have to fire any shots that day? A. No, sir.

Q. What are the rules in regard to firing shots? A. I am not very well posted on that.

Q. Well, did they have any regular time to fire shots? A. Generally a little after 4:30.

Q. And did they fire twice a day or once? A. Twice a day.

Q. What time, at noon? A. About a quarter till twelve, or somewhere around there.

Q. And the men were out about 4:30? A. Yes, sir; sometimes a little after.

Q. And were the men all out of the pit when the shots were fired? A. Yes, sir; that was the order.

Q. Did you get orders from any one to get out of the shaft when the shots were fired? A. Not as I know of; but it was just a rule.

Q. And was it generally well observed? A. Well, I do not recollect of any of them staying down.

Q. Do you know who was shot-firing that day? A. I believe the regular shot-firer was Billy Jones, and Ralph Ridley helped that day.

Q. Do you know the reason of the shots being fired while the men were down in the mine? A. They gave us no reason.

Q. Well, was it quitting time when the shots were fired? A. No, it was not quite quitting time when they were fired.

Q. Were you notified that they were going to fire the shots? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who notified you? A. I believe it was Alf. Ridley, Ralph's brother.

Q. He notified you that they were going to fire, and did you object to them firing when you were down there? A. No, sir. I just made the remark that it was not quite quitting time.

Q. Where did you go? A. We went over west of the run-around.

Q. And you stayed there until how many shots were fired? A. We stayed there until we heard one shot go, and when we heard the next one we fell, and the next was the explosion.

Q. And after that where did you go? A. We never moved for a few minutes, and then we crawled up to the bottom of the shaft and called for the tub.

Q. And you came on top? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And where did you go then? A. Well, we went over to the air-shaft, and run around like chickens with their heads off, I suppose.

Q. And how did you go to work to get the men out? A. We went from the main shaft over to the air-shaft, and I tried to get light down there and some water, and Alf. Ridley was calling for a light, and I went to get the water, and the carpenters came over with ropes, and one of them gave me a 6x6, and we pushed that through over the shaft, and then we got the ropes on and one of them asked me if I would go down and I told him "Yes," and I went down to the bottom, and when I found myself getting to the bottom I saw some of them lying there. As near as I can describe the man it was Jonathan Schwab, and I tried to get hold of him down in the sump, as the timbers were all piled up and I could not get near him. I saw I could not do anything, and felt myself going, so I told them to hoist me up on top. After everything had cleared off from this side we tried to get down on the west side and got Alex Orlea to go down.

Q. You did not go down after that? A. No, sir.

Q. You stayed on top till they were all out? A. Yes, sir.

Q. When Ralph was brought up, was he alive or dead? A. I believe he was dead.



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Q. Well, did you examine him in any way to see if he had any bruises? A. No, sir.

Q. You do not know whether he came to his death by suffocation, or was hit on the head? A. No, sir.

Q. Since the explosion, you have been over the mine more or less? A. No, sir; not until to-day.

Q. Have you been over it to-day, up in the second south? A. I have not been further than the bottom.

Q. Do you know anything of the cause of the explosion? A. No, sir.

Q. You have been working here ever since the mine opened, or for several months? A. Yes, sir.

Q. How was the mine in regard to windy shots or explosions prior to this? A. There has been but one that I know of, a little windy shot came up out of the shaft.

Q. When was that, do you remember? A. No, I could not say; it was quite a while ago.

Q. Do you remember who was doing the firing? A. Yes. Pat Brown and Alf. Ridley.

Q. Do you remember any incidents that you can recall in regards to it? A. No, sir.

Q. Do you remember the time Brown's coat was blown up out of the shaft? A. No, I do not.

Q. How has the mine been in regard to dampness? A. It has been favorable as far as I have worked. It has been pretty dry.

Q. Would it be your opinion that the dust had something to do with the explosion? A. I did not work in that side of the mine.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN ARCHER.

Ques. What is your name? Ans. John Archer.

Q. How long have you been working at mine No. 2. A. I have been working here for three months the first of this month.

Q. What are you doing? A. I am driving entries in the fault going east.

Q. You are working in one of the east entries? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You were in the mine on the 15th, the day of the explosion? A. Yes, sir. I laid a switch down in the mine, and I went from there and laid a turn for Ridley. In the entry that I laid the switch would be called the second north on the east, and in the entry that I laid the turn for Ridley would be called the first south on the east. I got through with the turn about 3:30, and Jonathan Schwab and myself were going over the pit, for he wanted me to see after it, as he was not going to be here for a few days. He was showing me what he wanted done while he was gone.

Q. And did you know that they were going to fire shots that day before the men were out of the shaft? A. Mr. Schwab and myself were up in the second south, in Mr. Gore's room. Brown came up there and asked Mr. Schwab if he wanted him to work two hours overtime. He did not know whether the boys were joking or not, so he said "Yes," he wanted them to work overtime. He said: "What are you going to do about the shots?" Jonathan says: "We will let them go till we get through." Just then Mr. Brown, Jonathan and myself came out on the main east entry, and we met the two Ridleys and Billy Jones, and Billy came up and said he had those shots lighted up in Ralph's place; so one of them made the remark that we had better get on top, and I says: "Boys, let us go up before they fire the other two"; but Ralph said: "I will run up and light these two and we will all go up together; these two shots are not going to

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do any hurt." So we went up into the straight east, just above the second north, and Ralph went on up and was gone a very short time, and, as he came back by us, Billy Jones called to him to come up there and sit down, and he did not make any answer at all; and the difference between the two shots could hardly be distinguished—they nearly went together.

Q. Where were you sitting when he passed you? A. We were sitting east of the second north, about sixty or seventy feet.

Q. The second east north is east of the second south, is it not? A. Well, there is a little difference in the two entries.

Q. You were sitting about sixty or seventy feet east of the south entry? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And do you know where he went to? A. We never paid any attention, because we did not think anything about him, and it was a very short time till we heard the wind of the shot.

Q. And did the shot throw any fire? A. There was no fire came where we were—only a little light dust after the explosion.

Q. Where did you find Ralph after the explosion? A. Alf. was uneasy about his brother, and he tried to go to the bottom, and found he could not make it, and one or two others tried it. I borrowed Billy Jones's lamp and went ahead with it, and they followed me. I went up around the run-around on the bottom where Ralph was, calling for a light, and I found him lying up against a rib or a car, or a pile of timbers, I could not see which. By that time I was pretty near exhausted myself.

Q. Do you think he was blown down there? A. I said, "How did you get here Ralph," and he said, "I do not know. This is where I found myself." I asked him if he was hurt, and he said he did n't think he was, but he was smothering, and wanted some water, and just then the rest of them came up, and I held a light up for them to come in. I gave Alf. the light, and he and Alf. were talking the last I remember.

Q. You was overcome with black damp? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You do not remember anything after you were taken on top? A. Yes, sir. They helped me into the barrel, and I can remember all after I got a drink of water.

Q. Now, in regard to the mine, has it been dry or wet? A. There have been places in the mine that have been too wet, and I have not heard any complaint about the mine being dusty at all.

Q. If I understand you right, while a good part of the mine has been dry, it has not been dusty? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you been over the pit since the explosion? A. Yes, sir; partly.

Q. You was up in the second south entry? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And up in the first south entry? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You say the stoppings were blown out? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Now, have you any idea what was the cause of the explosion, from what you have seen? A. Well, we have two or three reasons, all running together. In the first place, it seems the shot was not properly tamped, or could not have been, because those shots were both wet; or it might have been that he got the paper off the powder and the powder got damp before he got fire into it with the fuse. He was gone a very short time to dry out two holes and tamp them, and any further than that I could not say.

Q. Well, do you not think there was any gas had anything to do with it? A. From what I have seen in the mine these three months I have been here, I have not noticed enough gas that I would think it would ever damage to shots.



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Q. Then, it would be your opinion that the explosion started from that shot in the second south entry? A. My opinion is that that shot was the cause of the explosion.

Q. But in what way? A. I do not know.

Q. If the mine had been watered all over like it is in some places, do you think the explosion would have occurred? A. I think the dust had something to do with it after it got started, but there has never been any complaint of the dust.

Q. Do you know that they are putting any water on the roads to keep the dust down? A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Well, now, in regard to Ralph Ridley, where did you find him? A. He was either in the car or against a pile of timbers, or the rib; I could not see what it was. I climbed over that car to them, and that is the last I remember of seeing him until I got ready to go out; he was lying right at the bottom of the air-shaft.

Q. You do not remember of hearing him say anything while he was here at the air-shaft? A. No, sir.

Q. Nor he did not make any remarks about getting a blow or being blown up against anything? A. The last I heard him talking was with Alf.

Q. You do not remember anything he said? A. No, only he told Alf. that he was gone—he could never live.

Q. Have you any idea as to the cause of the explosion? A. Well, I think it was that shot that started it on account of the break it appeared to have from the shot, and I presume force was added as it went through and gathered up the dust.

TESTIMONY OF GEORGE KNIGHTON.

Ques. What is your name? Ans. George Knighton.

Q. Are you working at mine No. 2 of the Weir Junction Coal Company? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was you working here on the 15th, the day of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where in the mine were you working? A. I was working in the second south entry.

Q. And was somebody working with you? A. Yes, sir, my brother.

Q. Do you know who was shot firing that day? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who were they? A. Ralph Ridley and William Jones.

Q. They have been firing for some time? A. William Jones has been shot-firing ever since about the first week I was here, and Ralph has just been firing at odd times, when they have no shot-firer.

Q. Do you know whether Ralph ever shot-fired before? A. Yes, sir; he fired shots before.

Q. Well, then, he would be what you would term a shot-firer? A. Yes; he was an old shot-firer.

Q. Well, do you know any reason why the men were in the mine that day when the shots were fired? A. I do not know any more than what I have heard since.

Q. You and your buddy were working by the yard? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was you in the mine at the time of the explosion? A. No, sir.

Q. Was you there shortly after? A. No, sir; I did not hear of it till the next morning.

Q. You made them shots in the second south entry? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Wish you would state the shape the shots were in. A. The shot on the

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left was a six-and-one-half-foot hole, and it had about seven and one-half feet chance, and I gave it three and one-half feet powder. The right shot I drilled four feet, and gave it two and one-half feet chance and one of powder. I left both holes for him to tamp. They were wet.

Q. Now state as near as you can what condition the shots were in. A. Well, the four-foot hole I suppose would be about a foot on the solid, and the other one was not on the solid at all.

Q. Have you been down and looked over the mine since the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is your opinion as to the cause of the explosion? A. Well, I think there was a roll going through the shot, and that was the cause of it not doing its work.

Q. The hole you drilled was at the back of another hole? A. It was the end of another hole.

Q. Do you think that the explosion started from that shot? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think there were any other elements that helped to make the explosion? A. I do not; no, sir.

Q. Should the force of that explosion there trouble the second south and first south. A. Yes, sir.

Q. And it does not appear to hurt anything in the east and the north. And what would be your idea of all the force being in there. A. I could not tell.

Q. Do you think the dust had anything to do with it? A. It might have; there might have been dust in the old rooms that were abandoned.

Q. Were you ever down through any of these old rooms? A. I was once.

Q. Were they dry? A. Yes sir, very dry.

Q. Was the entry dry where you were working? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was it dusty? A. No, sir.

Q. Would it be what you would call a wet entry? A. Well, it was kind of damp.

Q. Well, then, it is your opinion that the dust did not have anything to do with the explosion? A. I do not know, but do not think it would.

Q. Are you an old miner? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think that there are any other elements that would add force enough to that shot to do the damage? A. It does not look hardly possible.

Q. Have you ever noticed gas? A. After I went through the big horseback I noticed gas.

Q. Had it been sufficient that it would ignite? A. When I first went through it I had it up in my cut two or three times. If I stopped cutting and went back it would light up for a minute.

Q. Would you find any accumulated in your place in the morning? A. No, sir.

Q. When you went down through these places did you notice any place where it looked like the dust had been blown along the bottom? A. No, sir; there was quite a little coal left in the rooms that the miners had not cleaned up; that was all I saw.

Q. What kind of tamping did you leave for the shot-firers to tamp the holes with? A. The small coal was left made up in paper into a dummy. I left one for the short hole and two for the long hole. I generally leave a wet hole.

Q. Do the holes get wet with standing? A. Some of them.

Q. After they are drilled, do you leave? A. Yes. I put other coal there for them to tamp with.



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TESTIMONY OF ALEX ORLEA.

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Alex Orlea.

Q. How long have you been working at mine No. 2 of the Weir Junction Coal Company? A. Two months.

Q. Were you working here on the day of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. In what part of the mine were you working? A. West side; over next to the main shaft.

Q. What was you doing? A. I was brushing between the two shafts, close to the main shaft.

Q. Make a statement, as near as you know, about the explosion. A. I worked till 4:30, and I expected to work two hours longer, and the shot-firers were going to light the shots.

Q. What time was that? A. 4:30.

Q. Was it not a little before that time; did you have a watch? A. Yes, sir.

Q. If I understand you right, you worked till 4:30? A. Yes, sir.

Q. You was going to work two hours later? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And did anybody notify you that they were going to fire shots? A. Yes, sir. One of the shot-firers told me that they were going to light the shots. Brown told us to come around the run-around with him.

Q. And you went around there? A. Yes, sir; four of us went on the west side in the run-around.

Q. And you stayed there how long? A. We stayed there maybe ten minutes before we heard the first shot. The first shot was lighted in the first south, and then my buddy and myself started back to work, when we heard the explosion.

Q. Did you see any fire? A. No, sir.

Q. All wind and dust? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And after the explosion, then what? A. Jim McClure called for the bucket, and he got in the first bucket that went up and Wm. Brown and myself got in the second bucket.

Q. Then, when you went up was the gas and smoke coming over to the main shaft? A. Yes, sir.

Q. When you went up on top, then where did you go? A. We ran over to the air-shaft to help down there.

Q. Were you down below after that? A. Well, I was the first man down to the men.

Q. Where did you find Ralph Ridley? A. Alf. Ridley was standing up with his lamp lighted, and he wanted to know if I could stand it, and I told him he could stand it better than I could. I discovered that John Archer was on top of Ralph, and Billy Jones asked me to lift that man off him, that he was smothering, and we lifted him off and put him back; then we raised Ralph up and he was dead.

Q. And did you examine Ralph's head, or any place around, to see if he got a blow? A. No, sir; I did not. I tried to give him a drink, but he did not swallow.

Q. You have been around over the pit since the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long have you been a miner? A. I have been mining for thirty-two years.

Q. What is your opinion as to the cause of the explosion? A. I cannot tell you that, because I have not been around that part of the shaft. My business was on the west side.



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TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM BROWN.

- Ques. What is your name? Ans. William Brown.
- Q. You was working here the 15th, day of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Where was you working? A. I was working about fifty feet from the bottom of the shaft.
- Q. What was you doing? A. Driving brushing.
- Q. You had about how much brushing to shoot through to connect the air-shaft with the main shaft? A. About ten feet.
- Q. Well, before the explosion, how big a space was there at that brushing? A. Only big enough for a man to crawl through.
- Q. Did the explosion move any of the rock out of the brushing? A. From the top of it.
- Q. Now, after you come up on top and went over to the air shaft and went down, where did you find Ralph Ridley? A. When I got down he was laying on the left-hand side on the south side of the bottom, where Alex had put him. Alex was down there ahead of me and he had laid him there, and he was dead when I went down.
- Q. What condition were the rest of the men in? A. Archer was out of his head and talking all the time, and Jonathan Schwab was laying close to the sump.
- Q. And when you got down was the smoke cleared? A. Yes, it was not so bad on the west side; on the east side it was worse.
- Q. Have you been over the mine since the explosion? A. No further than the bottom.
- Q. You do not know where the explosion started? A. No more than what they have told me.

TESTIMONY OF PAT BROWN.

- Ques. What is your name? Ans. Pat. Brown.
- Q. You were pit boss here up till when? A. Saturday, the 12th.
- Q. You had charge of the mine up to that time? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Are you acquainted with this Ralph Ridley that worked here? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Did you hire him to shot-fire? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Did you give them any instructions in regard to shot-firing? A. Yes, I told them not to fire till the men were all out.
- Q. You stayed below or on top and seen that they were all out, until you quit? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. If they had fired shots while the men were down there it would have been against instructions? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Well, do you know both of them to be what we would term shot-firers? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Then it would not be a matter of ignorance on their part if they had tamped one that ought not to have been? A. No, sir.
- Q. You was around the pit to-day? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. You was up and helped measure that shot? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Wish you would state, as near as you can, about the size of the shot. A. We measured it; about four or five feet in thickness; six feet eight inches was the depth of the hole.
- Q. You saw it measured there to-day, did you? A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you recollect how much it was on the head of the cutting? A. I think it was fourteen inches.



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Q. You may state whether the shot on the right-hand side had done its work or not? A. No, it had not.

Q. How much of a crack had it made behind the shot? A. I suppose about one-fourth of an inch.

Q. Did it crack clear to the roof? A. I do not think it did.

Q. Now, give me your idea as to the cause of that explosion. A. That is pretty hard to do.

Q. Do you think that there were any other elements besides that shot? A. No, I do not believe there were.

Q. Do you believe that shot had force enough in it to do the damage that has been done down there? A. It does not look like it.

Q. There were two shots went together? A. I think it was the first that did the damage. I think one went after the explosion.

Q. You remember the time I visited the mine here, we came up through those rooms that were abandoned, you noticed that some of them were dry, and some seemed to be dusty, fine particles of coal lying on the bottom of all these places; and when we got through there I called your attention to the water on the road. Have the roads been watered since then? A. Yes, sir.

Q. When had you watered the roads last prior to this explosion? A. About two weeks ago.

Q. At any previous time had you experienced any explosions of any kind—that is, a windy shot? A. Yes, we had lots of them.

Q. Were they confined to any particular places, or did they generally run all through the mine? A. Just one place.

Q. What place? A. Tom Brown's place, straight west through the air-shaft.

Q. Well, to what extent were they felt at that time? A. They had pretty good force.

Q. Did they last long? No; we could feel it and that was all.

Q. Had you ever noticed any of these shots, just for your own satisfaction? A. Yes; I went right in and seen whose shot did it.

Q. What condition did the shot seem to be in? A. Pretty bad condition.

Q. At this particular time did you look at the shot to see if it originated from the shot or from some other factor in the mine? A. No, I never did.

Q. On firing shots, where did you generally make a place of safety? A. Straight east.

Q. Is that where the shot-firers are always in the habit of getting? A. Yes, sir.

TESTIMONY OF ALF. RIDLEY.

Ques. What is your name? Ans. Alf. Ridley.

Q. You was working at mine No. 2 of the Weir Junction Coal Company. A. Yes, sir.

Q. You was down there at the time of the explosion? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who else was down there? A. My brother Ralph, Vanvellger, Jonathan Schwab, John Archer, Billy Jones, Bill Brown, Jim McClure and Alex Orlea.

Q. Well, now, do you know the reason that the men were down there at that time? A. Well, we were going to work overtime, and they thought there would be no harm in starting and fire them three shots.

Q. Do you know who had charge of the mine that day? A. Mr. Schwab.

Q. Do you know, or not, whether he allowed the shots fired while the men were down in the mine? A. The men said they were not afraid, so we all walked out.