

Report of Mr. J. N. Patterson, Mine Inspector, and testimony taken as to the cause and result of explosion at Adrian Mine, Monday morning, March 23, 1896.

In company with Hugh Ross, mine foreman, and Mr. Frew, a miner, I proceeded from the mouth of the slope into the place where the mine was supposed to be on fire on Sunday night. I went through all the rooms in company with Mr. Ross and Mr. Frew. We went through all the rooms from 5th room to the face in the 5th left heading, and failed to find any gas in any of the rooms. I inquired of Mr. Ross if there had been any gas found in any of those rooms heretofore at any time, and he said "No." In rooms 23, 24 in 5th and 6th north, gas is found when they are cutting clay veins. In the 5th left main and back heading, gas is found occasionally. After going over the territory, my judgment from the manner in which the dust was found through the cross cuts, cross headings, etc., I am of the opinion that the trouble originated around either 14th, 15th or 16th room in the main 5th heading. I was informed that there were no persons in the mine at this time, at least none were known to be in the mine, except the men who were timbering on the narrows, the pump men on the main slope, and the assistant fire boss. I am of the opinion, in view of the fact that there was no one in the mine at the time, that there must have been a shot fired previous to the miners going home on Saturday, which ignited a small blower of gas which remained burning until the place became full of smoke and coal dust, and when it became mixed with sufficient oxygen and had reached the explosive point, caused the explosion. There is no doubt in my mind but that coal dust suspended in the air contributed to the force and extent of the explosion.

Testimony of Witnesses.

Mr. Gregory, acting mine superintendent:

Mr. Gregory said he was notified about three o'clock in the morning by the night watchman that the mine was on fire. He went for Mr. Dunsmore, fire boss. They then together proceeded into the mine. They went until they were overcome by after-damp, when they concluded to retrace their steps, seeing that some of the brattices were blown out, and the ventilation interfered with. When they came back they found Mr. E. W. Robinson, general superintendent. Then they made another attempt to find out the location of the trouble. They naturally supposed at first that the coal was on fire. He then went down in company with Dunsmore, Robinson, Gregory, Law-

rence and Jones. Gregory and Dunsmore told Mr. Robinson, Lawrence and Jones that it would not be safe for them to advance any further. Mr. Jones was told by Mr. Robinson not to go any further. Jones and Mr. Lawrence did however follow him, and when they reached the 5th left they were overcome by after-damp, and were found lying on the floor of the mine. They were all carried out, but before Lawrence and Jones reached fresh air, both were dead.

Mr. Dugal Dunsmore.

His testimony was the same as Mr. Gregory's.

Mr. Brunnett.

Testifies that he went into the mine as stated above, became unconscious and was carried out, and remembers nothing further on the subject.

Mr. Alex. Wise, assistant fire boss:

He says that there was supposed to be no one in the mine at the time except those stated above. His usual time for making the examination was 2 o'clock in the morning. At 10 o'clock Sunday evening he felt a slight concussion, but did not know from what part of the mine it came. When he went at the time stated, 2 o'clock, to make his usual examination of the working places previous to the miners entering, he found the brattices blown down and smoke coming out. At first he did not know where it was coming from or what the trouble was. Then he came out and notified Mr. Gregory, and the fire boss, Mr. Dunsmore, and Mine Foreman Ross. He said that no gas had been found at any time in any of these rooms with the exceptions of the rooms above noted where they were cutting clay veins. In the 5th main and back heading, gas was found occasionally. I asked him to give me his opinion as to the cause of the accident. He said he could not account for it in any way, except that the men working there had ignited a small blower of gas when they quit work Saturday evening. This was all the information he could give.

Mr. John Wallace, trackman:

His testimony was about the same as Mr. Gregory's and Mr. Dunsmore's, as he was with them the second time when they returned into the mine to look up the cause of the accident.

Mr. Ross, mine foreman:

He was notified by Mr. Nichol, watchman, that the mine was on fire. He dressed hastily and went to the scene of action. After being in the mine a little time, he was overcome and went home. He made several attempts but was unable to do anything.

Mr. Andrew Nichol, night watchman:

He said that at 2 o'clock Monday morning he was at the pit mouth and smelled fire. This being the outlet, the smell from the fire was very strong, and he came to the conclusion that some part of the mine was on fire. He notified Mr. Gregory and Mr. Ross, also Mr. L. W. Robinson and Mr. E. W. Robinson, the latter at Punxsutawney.