

# INSPECTORS MAKE REPORT ON MATHER MINE

**Report Indicate Cause Was Gas  
Explosion, But Its Origin Is  
Unknown.**

## MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

The coroner's jury holding the inquest into the explosion in the mine of the Pickands-Mather company at Mather, on May 19, which claimed 195 lives, last night rendered the following verdict:

"We, the coroner's jury sitting in the investigation of the cause of an explosion which occurred at the mine of Pickard-Mather & Co., located at Mather, Greene county, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, May 19, 1928, at or about 4:07 p. m., after hearing the testimony of various witnesses and a further study and consideration of the thorough report made on the disaster by the State Mine Inspection commission find that this disaster was caused by an explosion of explosive gas and coal dust in the north side of the mine, the primary cause of which explosion is unknown."

The finding of the State Mine Inspection commission, of which Alexander McCand, of this city, was a member, occupied 11 typewritten pages, and indicated that the mine was one of the best operated and safest in Pennsylvania. The commission filed its report yesterday before the coroner's jury, which was in session at Waynesburg investigating the cause of the explosion.

The report reviews the accident and then reads: "And now after a careful survey of the findings, viewed from every angle, your commission is unanimously of the opinion that the disaster was the result of an explosion of coal dust, affecting in one way or another the entire operating area, including its attending passageways, on the north side of the mine instituted by an accumulation of explosive gas, occasioned in all probability by an interruption of the air circulation in No. 12 face north on No. 24 entry on the west side of the north mains. While the evidence as to the source of ignition is inconclusive, we are of the opinion that the proximate cause lies in the storage battery locomotive positioned at a point from which the lines of visible force appear to radiate."

The commission then made five recommendations, as follows:

First—That adequate and dependable ventilation be provided.

Second—All machinery used in working places and return air should be exclusive of a permissible type and it should receive frequent inspections to insure its maintenance in permissible condition and, a record made of said inspection in a book kept at the mine for that purpose.

Third—The use of water on the cutter-bar of all coal cutting machines to allay dust is commended. Water should, also, be used to wet down the coal before it is loaded and at frequent intervals during loading.

Fourth—That supervision be increased in frequency and intensity during the period shifts are being changed.

Fifth—That legislation be enacted at the coming session of the legislature providing for the compulsory rock-dusting of gaseous or dry bituminous coal mines within the commonwealth, said rock-dusting to be of such a standard that the flame from ignition of gas or other sources will be localized or confined to the immediate vicinity where ignition occurs.