

ACCIDENTS

There were no catastrophes during the year 1929 and only one during 1930, which occurred at the Gilberton Colliery of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. A catastrophe is an accident in which five or more lives are lost.

The report of the Mine Inspector, who has supervision over this colliery, and the report of the Committee of Inspectors who investigated the accident, with the verdict of the coroner's jury, are given herewith:

REPORT OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR

August 11, 1930.

Hon. Walter H. Glasgow,
Secretary of Mines,

My dear Mr. Glasgow:

At 4-45 P. M., August 8, 1930, one of the worst mine accidents in this part of the coal region in many years occurred on the old Furnace or No. 1 Slope, Gilberton Colliery, of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company, in Gilberton Borough, Schuylkill County.

I received notice of the accident at 5-15 P. M., and at 6 P. M. was at the colliery and a few minutes later was at the scene of the accident. Three of the dead bodies and all of the injured had been removed from the mine; one body was recovered shortly after I arrived. After checking up all the names of the men who were at work at the time of the accident, it was found that one man was missing; but before a search could be made below the 3rd lift it was necessary to place some temporary relief props under the bad ends of the rock where the fall occurred, and also to build a temporary battery across the slope at the 3rd lift to protect the men while searching for the missing body. This work was finished at 9-30 and a search made below the lift; 75 feet below the lift two bodies were found instead of one, making six bodies recovered, and two of the injured men died while the search was being made for the missing men, making a total of eight lives lost.

After the last bodies were recovered I ordered four men to make a complete examination of the slope from the 3rd to the 6th lift to make sure that all the bodies were recovered. After this examination was made I stopped all work on the slope until after the cause of the accident was investigated.

I called on Inspectors Bottomley and Golden to meet me at Gilberton Colliery the next morning to make an investigation for the purpose of determining the cause of the accident and placing the responsibility therefor.

Very truly yours,

JAMES QUIGLEY

Inspector of Mines—22nd District

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF INSPECTORS

August 11, 1930.

Hon. Walter H. Glasgow,
Secretary, Department of Mines,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Dear Sir:

We, the undersigned commission of inspectors, who investigated the cause of the accident that occurred August 8, at 4:45 P. M., on the Furnace or No. 1 Slope, Gilberton Colliery, of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company, Gilberton Borough, Schuylkill County, submit the following report:

On the morning of August 9 we examined the slope at the place where the fall of rock occurred below the 1st lift and then examined the slope 50 feet above the 3rd lift, where all the men who were killed and injured were working repairing the track when the fall occurred. After this examination we questioned the following persons in the colliery office who had been working on the slope before the accident occurred: Harry Morgan, inside foreman at Draper Colliery, who had charge of the slope from the 3rd lift to top of slope, Philip Hahn and William Roberts, assistant foremen, who assisted Mr. Morgan from 3rd lift to top of slope, John Walunas, Charles Eckert, Joseph Kazoulskie and Andrew Krull, all repairmen on the slope. We also interviewed the following company officials: William E. Jones, colliery superintendent, P. J. Quigley, general superintendent, Morgan Bevan, former division superintendent, Frank Sluzalis, safety inspector of the coal company, and James Quigley, state mine inspector of the district.

After visiting the place of the accident and where the fall occurred and taking the voluntary testimony of the above-named persons, particularly that of Harry Morgan, inside foreman, that he examined the roof with an iron bar on the afternoon of the day of the accident, and of assistant foremen Philip Hahn and William Roberts, that they both examined the top at the place where the fall occurred after the blasting was all done on Wednesday at 6 P. M., and on Friday at 1 A. M., and the testimony of the four repairmen John Walunas, Charles Eckert, Joseph Kazoulskie and Andrew Krull, that the place was safe after the top was taken down to make height for the boat to pass at the place where the fall occurred, we have unanimously come to the conclusion that the accident was unavoidable; also that the accident was due to a fall of rock below the 1st lift on the slope, about 650 feet above the 3rd lift where the men who were killed and injured were repairing the slope, and on account of the pitch on the slope it carried down the slope, gaining momentum as it rolled and tumbled down until it reached the place where the men were working; with no chance to escape they were caught in the rush and crushed to death. Eight are dead, three seriously injured and two slightly injured. Six persons were killed instantly and two died after they were admitted to the hospital at Shenandoah, Pa.

Through the courtesy of the officials of the coal company, we are able to furnish you with a typewritten report of all that took place at the meeting in the colliery office and a blue print of the slope showing

the different points where the men were working, where the bodies were found, where the fall occurred, and the different lifts and elevations.

Respectfully submitted,

BERT GOLDEN

Inspector, 20th Anthracite District

WILLIAM R. BOTTOMLEY

Inspector, 21st Anthracite District

JAMES QUIGLEY

Inspector, 22nd Anthracite District.

**VERDICT RETURNED AUGUST 16, 1930, BY CORONER'S JURY IN
ACCIDENT AT GILBERTON COLLIERY—
THEO. C. FEGLEY, CORONER**

“Death was caused by a fall of rock from the roof of the Gilberton Slope. It is the judgment of the Jury that the above-named eight men met their death through failure of the employer to provide safety measures by the placement of a temporary battery above the point where the men were working.”

**MINE FOREMEN'S AND ASSISTANT MINE FOREMEN'S
EXAMINATIONS, 1929-1930**

In 1929 the examinations of applicants for certificates of qualification as Mine Foremen and Assistant Mine Foremen were held in six districts designated by the Secretary of Mines on April 16 and 17. The places where the examinations were held, the Mine Inspectors in charge as Chairmen of the Examining Boards, and the successful applicants who were granted certificates by the Department of Mines, are as follows:

HAZLETON

DAVID J. RODERICK, MINE INSPECTOR,
15th DISTRICT

MINE FOREMEN

Stanley Vincent Cherescavich, William Brynley Davies, Nicholas Dellisanti, George Dzara, Wesley Forrester Geyer, John Harvilla, Harold W. Heycock, William Kelps, Reynold Marvin Meneeley, George Francis Novotnak, Robert W. Parfitt, Frank J. Poklemba, Hopkin Reese, Herman J. Roinick, Elmer E. Shelly, William Smith.

ASSISTANT MINE FOREMEN

Simon Bechtold, William H. Boyd, John Boyder, Jr., John Boyko, John Contrady, John Cossman, Joseph H. Cuning, Alvin E. Daubert, James Davis, Wallace Wilbur Davis, Joseph Derench, Peter Fusesick, Michael Gaidish, James F. Garrett, George S. Hart, Walter Hildebrand, William Henry Hunsinger, John Jarrett, William H. Jenkins, John G. Jones, Thomas O. Matas, Philip McGran, James Joseph McKinley, Thomas Paisley, John Prebula, Norman Richards, Michael Staeskin-sky, Nicholas Tier, George Joseph Tomko, Michael Waskovich, John L. Watkins, Edward Weyhenmeyer, Leslie Williams.