

EXPLOSION OF GAS

March 2, at 5 P. M., I was informed that a serious explosion of gas had occurred in the Clark vein of the Holden mine, of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company. I went to the mine and found that seven men had been fatally burned and others slightly injured. The men were removed to the Taylor Hospital and the next day the following died from injuries received: William Z. Williams, miner, Thomas Williams, miner, Frank Consoski, miner, John Washnock, miner, Chesmas Cosfoski, laborer, Gustave Crocoski, laborer, and John Zerzava, laborer. The explosion took place about 2 P. M. On March 4, in company with District Superintendent E. J. Evans, Assistant W. E. Loomis and Mine Foreman George W. Powell, I made a thorough investigation as to the cause of the explosion, but could find none. The ventilation in this mine is good, and will compare favorably with that in any other mine in the district, but it may be that some doors were allowed to remain open on the day of the accident. Having failed to locate the cause of the explosion, I notified Coroner James Stein to hold an inquest. The inquest was held in the Lackawanna County Court House, at Scranton, March 15, 19 and 21. The jury, after hearing several witnesses, adjourned until the next day, as they wished to visit the scene of accident. On March 22, the jury, after spending several hours in the mine making an investigation, went to the office of Coroner Stein in the Dime Bank Building, Scranton, and rendered the following verdict:

"We, the undersigned jury, find from the evidence adduced and after making a thorough investigation of the mine and place of accident, that the mine is properly managed as to the mining of coal, the ventilation is good, and the mine laws are strictly complied with in every particular.

We find that the gas accumulated very rapidly in the chambers on New F Gangway, and on No. 4 Counter, where the accident occurred, but the cause of this accumulation is unknown, as the explosion itself destroyed all evidence which could prove the cause thereof.

JAMES STEIN, Coroner,
B. T. JAYNE,
WALLACE MOSHER,
DAVID STANFORD,
EDWARD SANDERS,
EVAN WALTERS,
MARTIN LAVELLE,
Jurors."