

With reference to the dip-workings under the sea the following are the regulations to be adopted:—

1. No coal to be wrought under less than 180 feet of solid measures, provided that the owner or lessee may drive passage-ways to win the coal under less cover than 180 feet, but not under less than 100 feet of solid measures.

2. A boundary of 66 yards shall be left between the present submarine workings and any future workings.

3. A proposed system of working shall, before work is commenced, be submitted to, and approved of by, the Inspector or Viewer appointed by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, or by the Minister of Mines, and no change shall be made in the approved system without the written sanction of the Inspector.

4. A report shall, once in each month, be sent to the Inspector, stating fully the condition of the works, and any other particulars which may be required.

How do you propose to ventilate the district to the west of the plane when the shaft is stopped? By the old furnace shaft?

I have, &c.,

W. H. Williams, Esq.,

GEORGE J. BINNS,

Manager, Shag Point Coal Mine, Shag Point.

Inspector of Mines.

F.—Mr. G. J. BINNS to the MANAGING PARTNER, Shag Point Coal Company.

SIR,— Dunedin, 24th February, 1883.

I have the honour to call your attention to my letter dated the 14th instant, *re* submarine workings, and to inform you that I am unable to recommend that men should any longer be employed in this district.

Will you therefore be good enough to withdraw the miners and other workmen from this part of the mine, and prepare—if you have not already done so—to place double dams in all roads connecting with the shaft.

If the existing plan does not show all the workings in the main seam in the neighbourhood of the shaft, will you have them, so far as is possible, put on before closing.

It is with much regret that I find myself obliged to take this step.

I have, &c.,

W. H. Williams, Esq.,

GEORGE J. BINNS,

Managing Partner, Shag Point Coal Company.

Inspector of Mines.

G.—Mr. W. H. WILLIAMS to Mr. F. D. RICH.

SIR,— Shag Point Colliery, 30th June, 1883.

I have to bring before your notice a very serious matter in connection with our submarine workings.

You are already conversant with the correspondence, as well as what transpired at the interviews with Mr. Binns with reference to closing the workings in the district marked A on the tracing attached and dotted with a red line; also my strong objections to doing so, and which I shall name in order presently.

On the 19th March Mr. Binns stopped me from working in this district, and further obliged me to put in two very expensive balk-timber wedge-dams at the shaft-openings connecting with our upper seam, and also other very stringent conditions as to any future working under the sea. (See letter attached of 20th March, to which on the 28th March I sent him a reply accepting the conditions.)

You will see that the district worked and now stopped, and the boundary rib of 66 yards round it, occupies a space of 21 chains, out of a frontage of 46 chains, with a width of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  chains. This large space has to fill with water, and will cover when the dams are in, and the water reaches to its level, which is only 40 feet from the surface, marked on tracing B at the shaft about 20 acres, with a perpendicular height from the bottom of the A District of 200 feet, with a pressure of 100lb. to the square inch, as against a pressure from the sea over the abandoned workings of 25lb. to the square inch.

This large body of water would be right in the centre of our workings; and the lower seam being only 70 feet from the upper seam, it is a much more serious consideration with a pressure of over 100lb. over only 70 feet of cover, than 25lb. pressure over at the shallower part, 86 feet; and, if the water is allowed to fill the closed workings, I shall have to leave a large block of the lower seam unworked to keep it safe; and this means a serious loss to the company, as we should have to work all round it both to rise and dip, and we should lose a larger quantity of coal, and also have a lot of deadwork to do round it.

I would therefore ask that the area marked as A District should be kept open, the company guaranteeing to keep all fallen places well timbered, and put either stone or wood-packs as required. I could then open the upper seam to the dip of the A District, and work according to the Inspector's directions as to size of bords, pillars, &c.

This is the more important as our coal is 12 feet thick in the face of the dip-heading marked C, and at that spot is still maintaining the regular dip of 1 foot in 4; and the sea is only 55 feet deep one mile out in the same line, and at the mark C. We now have 156 feet of cover, and would gain 16 feet more in every chain.

By doing this we do not make any more connections between the two seams now being worked than the one now open at the shaft, and the new upcast shaft, which has to be sunk during the current year, will be available for a return of both seams.

I cannot put it too strongly in saying that if closed I shall have to abandon my present lower seam workings, which are immediately under this large body of water.