where the dust and small coal had been driven into the end of a lying-down prop. On both sides you could see that the force had clearly gone pretty well in all directions. The force seemed to have gone outward both ways, but the main force had developed itself upwards in No. 2 incline. [Witness indicated position of blown-out shot hole on plan produced by Mr. Bishop.]

377. Was that the first intimation you had of the likelihood of a blown-out shot in the mine?—At that time we were searching for information as to what was really the cause, and we wished to go over all these places systematically.

378. Did you go on with your survey afterwards?—Yes.

379. Did you find anything else that would lead you to suppose that the explosion was due to other causes?—No; I looked at the thing afterwards and did not see anything else that could by any chance have caused it.

380. Is it at all usual to put a shot into the solid?—No.

381. *Sir J. Hector.*] Is this a correct drawing of the shot [Mr. Bishop's plan, Exhibit 8, referred to]?—Yes; it is signed by Mr. Bishop, and he is a qualified man.

382. *Mr. Park.*] You recognise the general features from the plan?—I do.

382A. And it correctly represents the place?—Yes.

383. You say it was a hole put into the solid?—Yes; it was a blown-out shot.

384. And would that account for the shot being blown out?—Yes; it had no chance, and the shot followed the line of least resistence. The shot was not holed or undercut properly.

385. Did you find out what the "tamping" had been?—No; there was some fuse picked up—"spent" fuse.

386. Did the fuse seem to have been recently fired?—Yes; it was "run" fuse.

387. What was the length of it?—Some pieces were 5in., 6in., and 4in. long.

388. Having made an inspection of the mine, what do you consider was the cause of the explosion?—I consider it was a blown-out shot firing the coal-dust.

389. In your inspection of the mine, did you find that it had been worked fairly well according to the rules?—I was not down the mine previous to the explosion, but as far as I could judge, it was mined in the usual manner.

390. Did you go up the return-air outlet?—Yes, I went up the return.

391. How did you find that?—I thought it was in very fair order, considering the length of the airway.

392. Did you find any accumulation of gas?—No.

393. Did you see any quantity likely to be dangerous?—I do not say dangerous. I found gas in two places.

394. Whereabouts?—At the bottom of Worthley's bord, during the rescuing work, and when the ventilation was not restored. Where a fall had taken place I could just get a trace of it in my lamp.

396. If you had expected any gas, should you have found it in any quantity at the time you made your inspection of the mine?—I think so. I think I would have found it giving off if there had been any gas, as the ventilation was slack. I am surprised we did not find more. I also found gas on the tension-stand, inside the cutting.

397. Did you find any to indicate carelessness in the management of the mine?—Nothing at all, as far as I could see.

398. And the return-airway was sufficient for the number of men working?—Yes; I walked through it with two lamps in my hands, one in each hand. I suppose the lowest height would be about 4ft., and the width of the bottom from 2ft. to 4ft.

399. Where there many places where it was as narrow as 2ft.?—Just alongside the fault it seems to me to be narrow; but you would not have been been able to carry a naked light through the return, the velocity of the air was so great.

400. In what direction would you find the greatest force of the explosion?—In Nos. 2 and 3 inclines. In No. 2 incline, the force had been so strong that it had turned a loaded tub right round. There was no doubt of that, because the chain was on the other end of the truck.

401. How far was that from the blown-out shot?—It would be from 5 to 6 chains, and from that point the evidences as to force were more or less apparent all the way up the incline. The miner, Scott, who was supposed to be at work on the flat-sheet, in all probability was jigging the coal. He was blown just inside the stenton, nearly 3 chains, where he was supposed to be at work. His leg was blown off, showing that he must have gone some distance, and it was afterwards found a chain from the body, on this side [indicated]. The body of another man, named McMinn, was found blown a considerable distance away—upwards of 3 chains.

402. Was that on account of the force of the explosion?—Yes; of course there was something to stop him. McMinn had been thrown a distance of 3 chains, and the other man had hit the coal on the other side of the stenton.

403. Besides those indications, did you find anything else to indicate the force of the explosions?—In No. 3 incline we found the same thing. The tubs were blown away, and the props were slanting up the incline.

404. That would be in a different direction?—Yes; the main force was developed in No. 2 incline. It then went up No. 3, and then up to the top of the main incline. At the top of the incline we saw more coal on the roadway. I might explain that there was more work done here in lowering the loaded coal down than anywhere else. There was consequently a good deal of tramping done about this spot. In the bords we did not find so much force developed as there was in the No. 2 incline, because in some bords the tubs were standing on the rails and were not blown over.

405. You say that in this portion of the mine you found greater signs of the force of the explosion?—Yes, on the main incline. On this side there were three or four tubs jammed together by the force of the explosion; but on the main level on the west side the tub was standing