

47. Do you suggest there had been any tampering with the dams, or that any of the work that had been recommended by you had been interfered with by any private person?—All I can say is this: In renewing the dam after leaking—I am simply giving you now the statements as I heard them—the evidence went to show that where there was a solid foundation when the dam was first put in, when taken out it was found that the ground had every appearance of having been blasted; not only that, but an unexploded plug of dynamite was found. This looks as though there had been tampering, but who it was who tampered with the dam I cannot suggest.

48. Then, you consider that some one had suggested a certain way of putting the fire out and, as this was not carried out on the lines suggested, they might have interfered with the dam in order to put the fire out?—That would be a rational inference, but I do not say it is so.

49. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] You said the dam had been tampered with?—I said that from the evidence it appeared as though the dam had been tampered with.

50. Did you see the ground yourself?—No; we did not pull it all down to get in, only as much as enabled us to get over.

51. I want a plain answer to my question: you state that this dam was tampered with, and a charge of dynamite found there?—That is the information I have received.

52. What was the date of the discovery of this charge of dynamite?—I could not say exactly from memory; I should say it would be some time in July. I could get the date by reference to the papers in the office.

53. Was the dam tight up till then?—The dam had ceased to be tight before I went there.

54. You cannot tell us when it was discovered that this dam had been tampered with?—No, I could not.

55. Was this tampering with the dam discovered after Alison reported?—The actual thing was only fully discovered when it was taken down, but Mitchell told me that some time before this he noticed the water was running away, and he went into the tunnel to look, and found that water was coming from under the dam.

56. Are you satisfied this dam was holding water when Alison reported?—No, not when he reported; it was leaking then; Shore told me so.

57. And are you satisfied it was tampered with at that time?—The tampering must have been previous to that, I think.

58. Would not they have seen it then?—It is not at all likely.

59. And you did not see it for some time afterwards?—The actual condition was not seen, and could not be seen, until the dam-framing was all taken down.

60. Would it surprise you if Mr. Shore would swear on oath that they pulled this dam down?—They did not pull it all down; they pulled down only sufficient to enable them to get inside. They, I believe, got through the dam, but not through the last air-stopping, because that last air-stopping was not penetrated till I was there myself.

61. What was the distance between them—the air-stopping and the dam?—Only a few feet.

62. You maintain the dam was always watertight at the bottom?—No; all that I can maintain is that it must have been watertight at the bottom when it was running over at the subsidence. Bear in mind I did not see it.

63. But then you state definitely that it was watertight?—It could not have been otherwise; if water was running over at the subsidence the bottom must have been tight.

64. Alison, who pulled the dam down, says that it was never watertight from the day it was put up: could you convince him that was not so?—No, I do not know whether I could convince him to that extent. They pulled a portion of the dam down to get in.

65. But Messrs. Shore, Alison, and Foster are prepared to give evidence that they pulled that dam down and got to the inner stopping, and after that the inner stopping did not hold water?—It was not put there for the purpose.

66. You are satisfied that the inner stopping never held water?—Yes.

67. All the water that the dam could hold, then, would be the depth between the top and the bottom—I may say 5 ft. or 6 ft.?—If the water ran over at the subsidence the dam must have been holding.

68. You say that this dam had been tampered with?—I do not say it had been. I say that the evidence of the weakening of the bottom made it appear as though it had been blasted—that looks like tampering. This was not seen until the dam was absolutely pulled bodily out, and that was since I was there.

69. Was it tight when Alison and Shore were there?—No, I think not.

70. Was it ever tight?—I understand it was so; it must have been.

71. Did you see the water running over at the subsidence?—No; I was there before the dam was put in, and not again till after Alison and Shore had been there.

72. Have you seen the lease between the Crown and the Cardiff Company?—No.

73. Are you familiar with the conditions of this lease?—I have not seen it.

74. You are in a superior position to the Inspectors: are they responsible to you?—Not under the Act.

75. Do the Inspectors take their instructions from you?—I cannot say that they do. Inspectors take their instructions from the department.

76. What is your official position?—My position is that of Engineer to the department. Inspectors have charge, under the Act, of their various districts.

77. They are not under the instructions of the Engineer?—There is no provision made for it in the Act. An Inspector of Mines is directly responsible, according to my reading of the Act, to the Minister for the time being.