

37. Why did you not go further?—Mr. Dixon would not allow us. He said he was the first man there, and the last man to leave. The smoke was then over our heads. We could not put our heads up among the smoke, or it would have knocked us down.

38. When you went back you say that part of the roof had fallen at the fire?—We retired when the flames came into the drive. We were standing at the apron looking at the fire.

39. You retired to the apron, and while you were there resting the fall came?—Yes; we had the brattice down when the fire occurred.

40. When you finished on the Friday afternoon Mr. Dixon had left, and Mr. Tennent was not there, was he?—Mr. Tennent did not come until the Monday morning's train arrived.

41. When you left the mine on the Friday was the mine sealed up awaiting Mr. Tennent's arrival?—There were brattice stoppings put in on each side of the tunnel, and the one in the back heading of the long jig was rolled up to let in the current going through.

42. What was the effect of the brattice at each end: what were the stoppings put up there for?—I suppose it was to block off the air from going in.

43. Were those two brattices secure when you left the mine on Friday?—Yes; McIndoe and I finished it.

44. Have you had any experience of fires in mines?—No; this was the first fire I had ever been at. I have been in mines that were on fire, but never worked at them.

45. When did you form an opinion of what was the proper thing to do: since the fire?—I had my opinion all the time. I do not know whether I suggested to Mitchell to bring in a mid-wall, so that we should not have so much damp.

46. You did not think of that when you went in with Mr. Dixon?—I had an idea that I would do it that way if I had no other means.

47. Having had no experience, were you quite satisfied to bow to Mr. Dixon's opinion?—Not having had any experience, I gave credit to the older man for knowing what he was doing, and being a mine-manager I thought he would have more knowledge about ventilation.

48. *Mr. Corby.*] You say it was very difficult to get stoppings in through being knocked over: was the fan erected?—The fan had no effect, because there was a big fall in the tunnel.

49. Was there any brattice ahead of you?—Not that I am aware of.

50. Could not the men stand to put in a brattice stopping quickly ahead of you, to keep back the volume of smoke and black damp?—That might have been done.

51. It was not done?—Not that I am aware of.

52. *The Chairman.*] There was a brattice ahead of you, but it was rolled up?—Yes.

53. Why was it rolled up?—It was to prevent the air going up the back heading.

54. *Mr. Corby.*] I am not speaking of that place. Where you were at the main entrance, if a brattice had been put up would it not have stopped the smoke going from you?—Yes, but it was going through the bords and clay stoppings in front of us.

55. With regard to going up to the fire and putting in the overcast brattice, what good could have been effected by your going up to the fire?—We were there as workmen, and Mr. Dixon did not tell us what he was going to do.

56. Do you think any good could have come from going up to the fire?—I suppose he thought we could shovel it out.

57. Do you think that with a hose and pump you could have forced the water that half-chain?—Yes, if I had been sure that was all the fire. I was not in a position to see, because Mr. Dixon was away on the left-hand side. If that was all the fire that we saw I think it could have been taken out.

58. When the fan was erecting, before you attempted to go up the heading to the fire, would you not have been able to put brattice in by having the main tunnel free?—We went up about half a chain.

59. Could you not have confined the fire to the area it was then located in?—I believe that stopping could have been put in. If I had been in charge I might have done that. That is what I said, by taking in brattice I would have sealed off all the old workings as I went on.

60. *Mr. Cottrell.*] Who gave you orders about the dam?—Mr. Mitchell.

61. Was Mr. Martin there too?—Yes.

62. Did he give you any orders?—No.

63. *Mr. Lomas.*] When you and Mr. Dixon went into the mine, where did you put your first stopping—on which side of the bord?—On the right-hand side.

64. Across the main heading?—No; we went into the main heading. On the same side of the back heading there was a shaft and a bord. Mr. Dixon gave me instructions to put in a tight stopping.

65. That was the first stopping?—No; the first stopping was on the main road.

66. On which side of the bord did you put the stopping up?—I entered from the No. 1 drive, and got to the bord where the fire was. I put up a tight brattice stopping just beyond the bottom of the bord. We went up this bord about a pillar-length, and put a stopping up on the right-hand side. It was just a screen across.

67. Was it ordinary brattice?—It was not an overcast brattice.

68. It was simply an ordinary brattice?—It was a half-stopping across the drive, the air travelling along the top.

69. You say you got within a chain of the fire: was the fire in the back heading or in the bord?—It was in the heading, and the bords were to the right and left.

70. Which side of the back heading was it: was it between where you put the stopping, next to the shaft?—No; it was up the heading a bit. The fire was ahead of that.

71. The air did not have to go over the heading to get to the shaft?—No.

72. You said that if you had been dealing with this fire you would have put in brattice in the