

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Seventeen serious accidents occurred during 1936:—

On 28th January, 1936, Walter O'Keefe, miner, Wallace's section, Cascade Mine, Denniston Colliery, received a fractured left forearm when he was struck by a prop which had been knocked out by falling top-coal.

On 10th February, 1936, Wilfred Coates, miner, Wallsend Colliery, dislocated his left ankle when retreating from a fall of stone in his working-place and was struck by a loose bar, which imprisoned his foot.

On 3rd March, 1936, R. McTaggart, miner, Duggan and Party's Mine, received a fractured skull by a fall of coal off a concealed back.

On 3rd March, 1936, J. Brown, miner, Schultz Creek Mine (Marshall and party) was struck by a prop which had been knocked out by a fall of stone, the injuries received being a fractured rib and slight injury to the ankle.

On 6th March, 1936, Arthur Prosser, deputy, Stockton Colliery, slipped and fell, fracturing a rib, when attempting to avoid a fall of roof-coal.

On 23rd March, 1936, James Fairley, miner, Whareatea section, Denniston Colliery, received a fractured jaw by a fall of top-coal.

On 12th May, 1936, George Blyth, jun., trucker, Whareatea section, Denniston Colliery, while trucking struck a prop which caused a fall of coal, and he received back injuries and a fractured rib.

On 25th May, 1936, James Medlin, shiftman, Liverpool Colliery, while engaged timbering in the return airway from Anderson Section, was struck by a piece of falling side stone and received a fracture of vertebrae.

On 22nd June, 1936, James Doherty, Miner, Liverpool Colliery, received a fractured jaw and spine in the Morgan West Section by a fall of coal from a concealed back near the roof of his working-place.

On 26th June, 1936, Charles Harris, Miner, Liverpool Colliery, was struck by a piece of falling roof coal, causing a fractured left leg.

On 22nd July, 1936, A. Thompson, shot-firer, Cannel Creek Section, James Colliery, was struck by a jig rope, causing a fractured right arm.

On 11th September, 1936, J. Forsyth, Miner, Dobson Mine, whilst lifting a truck on the track was caught between the buffers of two trucks, causing a simple fracture of the right leg.

On 9th November, 1936, Thomas Jackson, miner, Millerton Mine, sustained a fracture of both bones of the right leg about 3 in. above the ankle and a dislocated left ankle, caused by a piece of falling roof coal while he was preparing to erect a prop.

On 9th December, 1936, R. Scott, miner, Wallsend Colliery, received back injuries when he was struck by a slab of falling roof stone.

On 10th December, 1936, E. Henderson, miner, Wallsend Colliery, when attempting to jump clear of a runaway truck, was struck by a prop knocked out by the truck, sustaining a fractured right leg 6 in. above the ankle.

On 15th December, 1936, J. Dunn, miner, Dobson Colliery, received a simple fracture of the right leg and back injuries when he was struck by a fall of coal from near the roof.

On 21st December, 1936, James Ruane, miner, Dobson Colliery, sustained a fractured right thigh when a piece of stone fell from the roof.

DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES IN COAL-MINES (Regulation 82, Coal-mines Act, 1925).

On 6th April, 1936, evidence of heating in panel G, fifth west section, Mine Creek Mine, Millerton Colliery, was reported. Water was sprayed on, and the position was normal in about two hours.

On 5th August, 1936, a notification was received from Mr. W. Lee, secretary, Brunner Miners' Union, that there was a large accumulation of gas in the Wallsend Mine and that the mine was idle on that account. The accumulation was in the bore by Creagh's place, near the north-west barrier of No. 2 panel. On inspection the place was quite clear, there being no trace of gas.

On 5th August, 1936, a message was received that an inrush of water had occurred at the Surprise Mine, Reefton. On inspection it was found that the lower part of the dip was flooded up to approximately 3 chains from the dip-face, the water having entered the mine from the roof of the bottom level. It is believed that the water came from the Perfection Dip. A larger pipe-line was recommended to be used, and the manager agreed to put in a 3 in. line to replace the 2 in. line which was being used. No danger was involved, but nine miners were temporarily stopped owing to shortage of places.

On 10th July, 1936, the miners working in panel H of the fifth west section, Millerton Colliery, reported to the management a wood-smoke smell in the panel. Investigation revealed a small smouldering heap of wood dust on the outbye side of the panel. Someone has carelessly thrown down a lighted cigarette end on to a small patch of decayed wood dust.

On 22nd August, 1936, due to the abnormal rainfall, an inrush of water through a fissure in Tomasi's place adjacent to Cannel Creek, James Colliery, overcame the pump and flooded the bottom of the new dip section. The rain eased off in the evening, and pumping was continued until 3 p.m. the next day, by which time the accumulation of water was removed.

On 5th September, 1936, it was reported by the mine-manager of the Wallsend Colliery that on the previous day at 11.30 a.m. an accumulation of gas (approximately 3,500 cubic feet) was found near the fault to the rise in No. 2 panel. The men were immediately withdrawn. By 2.30 p.m. the place was free and the ventilation restored.

On 10th September, 1936, panel B of the third west section, Mine Creek Mine, Millerton Colliery, showed slight symptoms of spontaneous combustion. A haze developed, with a faint smell. There was no rise in temperature and no moisture evident. On the 14th September the haze became thicker with a stronger smell, but actual fire could not be found. The return opening into the panel was closed, and the result was a thick haze of inert gases which would not support combustion. The other opening was closed and the area was sealed off. The mine-manager advised his intention of adding a further thickness of concrete to the stoppings, putting water in to a reasonable height, and thus forming a water-seal.

On 21st September, 1936, it was reported by the mine-manager of the Blackball Colliery that owing to heating in the goaf, inbye from No. 14 bank, it had been necessary to seal off those places to the dip and one place to the rise at this area. Inspection of these stoppings showed that none were leaking.

On 29th September, 1936, the Workmen's Inspectors of the Millerton Colliery reported that fire-stink was very noticeable in panel N, third west section. The mine-manager considered in his report that this smell was not really fire-stink, but a sulphur smell from smoke fumes or very faint traces of H₂S given off from falling water coming through or from a fire area or when coal is being filled away. The mine was inspected thoroughly by the mine officials, who were satisfied that no fire-stink was prevalent.

On 7th October, 1936, a report was received from the mine-manager of the Millerton Colliery that a serious fire had occurred in panel H, fifth west section, Mine Creek Mine. The area was sealed off and made safe.

On 7th October, 1936, indications of heating were detected on the return side of No. 3 bank, Kimbell East Section, Liverpool Colliery. There was no rise in temperature, but a distinct kerosene-smell was noticed in the return air from the section.

On 22nd October, 1936, owing to an accumulation of gas near the working-places and the unsatisfactory state of the ventilation in Spark and Party's Mine, the acting mine-manager was instructed to cease operations until adequate ventilation was provided. On inspection some days later it was found that a Booster fan had been installed at the top of the new stone dip-drive and the ventilation was in order. The mine was clear of gas.

On 28th October, 1936, the mine-manager of the Millerton Colliery reported evidence of spontaneous combustion in panel K, sixth west section, Mine Creek Mine. Water was played on, and conditions were soon normal.

On 13th November, 1936, the mine-manager of the Wallsend Colliery reported that an accumulation of gas, approximately 3,000 cubic feet, had been found in the rise-working in the second panel caused through a crush coming on the working. The workmen were withdrawn. The section was later cleared and the ventilation restored, two new stoppings being erected.