

# NEWSLETTER

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**FROM EPITOME of EVIDENCE, NORTH of ENGLAND LEAD MINES**  
**Mr. William Barron,**  
**Craven Moor Mines (Old Cross Mine)**

N.C. & M.R.S. RECORDS.

**HEALTH of MINERS.**

Q. "Is there any particular disease among the Miners?"

A. "Not in: our parts"

Q. "Are they as healthy as other Labourers?"

A. "I think that they are: we have one man 75 years of age"

Q. "But take them as a body, is there any asthma among them?"

A. "There is some, but very little."

Q. "Is there more than among the agricultural labourers?"

A. "Yes, in any mine there is a little more than that, but I think that in the Limestone district there is very little difference between them and the agricultural labourers as they only work six hours per day and all get home to their own houses."

Q. "Do they look as young as other men of their age?"

A. "Yes".

Q. "What do you think most injurious to the miners breathing besides foul air?"

A. "I do not think that powder smoke is very injurious, but still if you do have too much of it you spit a deal of black when you come out,

\* I would recommend a "quib" where" ever 'it can be used for the sake of making less smoke."

**ACCESS.**

Q. "How do the men go to the works?"

A. "They go down ladders chiefly. They go down a shaft 50 fathoms we have only one shaft."

Q. "Which do the men prefer, ladders or stemples?"

A. "Ladders; but I do not prefer having the ladders so long because when you put a ladder 20 or 30 feet long you make a stage so that when a man gets up to it, it is a little bit of relief. If ladders [21] were put up too long the men would perhaps object. I think it is dangerous, it is very hard work and. laborious."

Q. "How frequently are the rests in your ladders generally?"

A. "From 21 to 30 feet."

Q. "What size of hole do the men go through?"

A. "Two feet - the whole of the rest is covered over".

Q. "How long is the floor'?"

A. "It depends on the size of the shaft, ours is 6 feet and we slant the ladders about 5 feet in every 30 feet with 3 feet above the stage."

Q. "That is very steep?"

A. "No: the first 10 fathoms that we go down, we go right down one ladder almost."

- Q. "In case of a man missing his hold, are your stages strong enough to prevent his falling?"
- A. "Yes quite".
- Q. "Is it usual in this district to have ladders'?"
- A. "A good many miners in this district go in by ladders".
- Q. "Do you think they are safer than stemples?"
- A. "Yes a long way, I am confident of it, ladders are considerably cheaper in a permanent shaft."
- Q. "Have you ever been into a mine where stemples had been used and where they had been done away with and ladders introduced?"
- A. "In all permanent roads (and I have been a miner since I was 7 years old) there have been ladders; but little temporary ways which are wanted only for a few months, you merely put in a few stemples, it is not worth while to put in ladders."

### **ACCIDENTS.**

- Q. "Have you any accidents from blasting in your mine?"
- A. "Not here, not in the Limestone, it is very safe for that."
- Q. "Is it the same in other strata?"
- A. "No not in the Gritstone or in the Blue Slate rock, or anything of that sort, it is more dangerous there. I should recommend copper prickers to be compelled to be used at those places."
- Q. "Would it not be equally dangerous with a jumper or tamping rod?"
- A. "No not with the tamping rod. With a copper pricker and an iron tamping rod, very few accidents occur, we generally use shale for tamping material."
- Q. "Do you use fuses at all?"
- A. "No we use straws. We only use a fuse where it is very wet; it makes too much smoke when it can be done without".
- Q. "Is a deduction made from the men for candles and powder, do you use small or large powder'?"
- A. "The small powder is generally used where it is dry work and the other when it is wet. We let contracts and keep a store and find all these things, and we take it out of their money, but we calculate powder and candles, not in average of wages."

### **VENTILATION.**

- Q. "How many levels are you driving from the shaft?"
- A. "Two at present"

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- Q. "How far is forefield from the mouth of the shaft?"
- A. "About 150 fathoms we went out at 42 fathoms deep."
- Q. "How did you get air at the end?"
- A. "The "Old Man" has worked it for several years before, it is a very ancient mine, and we hole up into his workings, there are other shafts from different workings,

so that we can come out very near any place viz. Woodhouse shaft, Longthorn Shaft, Derby Shaft and Cockhill Level”.

Q. “From these levels you hole up into the Old Mans Workings?”

A. “Yes, what we call a rise.”

Q. “What distance do you carry a level before you think it is necessary to put in a rise to the “Old Mans Workings”?”

A. “It depends upon the metal; if we have good batches of metal we cut it all out and get the ventilation behind us.”

Q. “When you drive by the fathom, how far would you drive?”

A. “By using zinc pipes we can drive 100 to 200 fathom and sometimes 300 with fans or pressure of water confined to pipes.

Q. “Do zinc pipes decay?”

A. “I have not found any decay,”

Q. “How are the fans driven?”

A. “By waterwheel generally, none at Craven Moor”.

Q. “What do you use?”

A. “A trap door and 4” to 6” zinc pipes.”

Q. “That gives you sufficient air without having a fan?”

A. “Yes for the distance that we drive,”

Q. “Where do you put the trap door, is the air which is diverted by the trapdoor from the bratticed shaft or from the Old Mans Workings?”

A. “From a level; we have a level which comes in from the Cockhills Mines to take all the water out, at a depth of 56 fathoms and we have a thorough communication of air both into the bratticed shaft and the other way. We put a trapdoor in the main level, and in a change of wind we have it both ways.”

Q. “Then I suppose that the upcast is dependant upon the weather?”

A. “Yes sometimes it draws down the level and sometimes it comes up the level and the shaft and it acts in the same way in the pipes; it is sometimes like a pump forcing the air in and sometimes it is drawing it out; but the furthest level at present is only 48 fathoms from the trapdoor of the main level.”

Q. “And you find the air perfectly good?”

A. “Perfectly”.

Q. “How do you ascertain that?”

A. “By the candle.”

Q. “Not in any other way”?

A. “No; we never think of anything of the kind; if the candle will burn straight up without slanting it we consider that quite good and safe.”

Q. “Supposing you were obliged to incline the candle what would you do?”

A. “We would ‘leave off for a day’,

Q. “Have you ever had to do that?”

A. “No never at Craven Moor.”

\* A “Quib” - fuse made out of paper and gunpowder and ignited by candle which it passed through for delayed action.