

MARITIME MINING RECORD

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"We have had serious disputes with the P. W. A., but we have always found that organization loyal to any agreement and we must be equally loyal to our contract with it."

SELECTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

PRACTICAL WORKING.

Q.—What precautions would you take to ensure the greatest amount of safety in (a) long wall working; (b) pillar and stall?

A.—There are various items which require careful attention to produce the maximum amount of safety under either of the above conditions.

In (A) long wall, these may be classed:—

1.—Nature and condition of roof. This should be noted, and the method of timbering adopted to suit the circumstances.

2.—A plentiful supply of suitable timber should be kept at a reasonable distance from the face, ready for use when required.

3.—The timber should be withdrawn from the waste in a systematic manner, and dog and chain or other suitable appliances provided for that purpose.

4.—Specified distances should be worked to in the setting of timber, according to circumstances. Chocks should be set at regular intervals. Packs should also be built between the gateways, as well as the gate packs, in the advancing method.

5.—The ventilation should be examined, and all airways, doors, brattice-sheets, stoppings, overcasts, etc. The air should be carefully tested for fire-damp.

6.—If any shots have to be fired this should be done in accordance with the Mines Act on the use of Explosives in Mines.

7.—If the workings are known to be approaching any abandoned workings the C. M. R. A. should be complied with in its reference to such.

8.—Many other small items require attention to produce safety for all persons employed. These are haulage arrangements, man holes, safety appliances for runaway tubs, signals, and electric cables, if any.

(B) Pillar and Stall.—The items which will require attention other than those mentioned for (A) are:—

1.—That the pillars left to support the superiacumbent strata are not too small, for if too small they will be greatly crushed, and the roads take a lot of maintaining.

2.—Special attention must be paid to the work at the face when removing the pillars. The timbering should have careful attention, and the withdrawing of the timber from where the coal has been extracted.

3.—The ventilating of the pillars when being removed

should be carefully attended to, as the ventilation in this class of work is more complicated than in long wall. Under either of the conditions I would use safety lamps, selecting a good type. Where circumstances are favorable for the coal cutter being used I should adopt it, especially in long wall work, where it is a special favourite. By using the coal-cutting machine a systematic method of timbering has to be adopted, which has the effect of producing:—

1.—More safety in removing the coal thus undermined.

2.—A greater output per man is produced.

WINDING ARRANGEMENTS.

Q.—What arrangements are required for safety in winding and landing minerals from a deep shaft?

A.—The arrangements that are necessary for safety in winding and landing minerals from a deep shaft are as follows:

A good pair of reliable engines with equally good steam generating plant. So much of the working parts of these engines as is practically possible should be visible to the engineman working the same, so that, being directly under his observation he will be able to detect any fault or failure in any such part should this occur at any time.

The engineman should be steady, sober, sound and physically fit for his work; should know his duties and all signals as used in his department. He should make the inspections carefully as required by the General and Special Rules, and attend to and see that all the General and Special Rules applying to his department are strictly observed. He should be a trustworthy person, and not less than 22 years of age.

Machinery.—The drum should be provided with a flange to prevent the rope from slipping and should also be provided with a powerful and reliable foot brake. There should be a good and reliable indicator to indicate to the engineman the position of the cages in the shaft, also to ring a warning bell when the ascending cage is 20 yards from the surface, and this indicator should be directly in view of the engineman. The ropes should be of the best quality and strength, examined at least once every shift, tested, re-capped, and renewed as deemed necessary according to fitness and the work done.

In addition to the foot brake above mentioned, I also recommend the visor which works automatically from