

and to have fired the shot. His body was found, with those of the men working in the bord, near the entrance to the place. The shot in the stone had been fired. This, coupled with the direction of the course of the explosion, showed with reasonable certainty that it had its origin in the bord, and that the shot fired by Wilson was the direct cause of the explosion.

The suggestion was made by Mr. Madden, the Deputy Inspector, who was at hand at the time of the explosion, and rendered valuable aid to the rescuing and exploring parties, that the immediate seat of the explosion was to be sought in the stone itself. After examining the bord in question with him, I am of opinion that his suggestion offers the readiest explanation of the source of the catastrophe.

The bord is 14 feet wide, and the stone is carried by a row of props in the middle. These props were set by the miners as they advanced the face, to hold the stone, which was not of a specially strong character, consequently, as the stone was not blown down until it became troublesome to move the tubs, there were always props along the side of the shots, and between the shots and the face. The effect of these props was to partly confine the shots to the low side of the bord.

As the stone was in layers, and had streaks of coal in it, examination showed that it was more or less fissures across the bord, and hung on the props, the natural effect of the shots being to blow in along the layers, to compress the props and to cause the stone to bag between the props and the high side. That this effect was produced is shown by the fact that large quantities of this stone fell in the workings of No. 7 balance, the props being knocked out by the explosion, although very short, and partly supported by the stone stowed in the high side. The hole that was fired in No. 3 bord was, so far as could be estimated, from 2 feet 9 inches to 3 feet long. The end of the hole was in stone. The charge of powder appeared to have filled 18 inches of the hole. The shot threw down about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the stone it was designed to dislodge, and left the balance split by the heel of the shot, and a prop near the back of the hole. There was a lype in the stone