

REPORT

—OF—

C. H. HAMILL,

INSPECTOR OF MINES

—FOR THE—

COUNTIES OF ALLEGANY & GARRETT.



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—♦—REPORT—♦—

FROSTBURG, MD., December 31, 1887.

Hon. E. E. Jackson, Governor of Maryland.

SIR: I have the honor to submit my report as Inspector of Mines for the counties of Allegany and Garrett.

When I say there has been no violation of the mining law brought to my notice; that I have always found, on the other hand, an honest disposition manifested by the superintendents of mines to respect the law, and treat fairly with employes, and that all the mines are in good working order and condition, evidenced by the unprecedentedly large output of coal for the year now drawing to a close, and that I have no further legislation affecting the mines of this coal region to suggest, I will have met all that the requirements of the law and the necessities of the situation impose upon me, save the routine statements of output and accidents.

The output of this coal field for the year just closing is two million nine hundred and twenty-six thousand nine hundred and two tons, a sum largely in excess of any previous year. This immense total required an expenditure in the State of Maryland of six million seven hundred thousand dollars for labor, supplies and transportation.

The year has been, therefore, one of unprecedented prosperity so far as our working people are concerned.

I regret, however, that I am unable to say as much for the employers. It is true there was a small advance during the year in the price of coal, but that improvement was nearly, if not quite all, distributed between labor and transportation.

On the first of March last, the coal companies operating in this region advanced their miners wages twenty-five per cent., the largest voluntary addition, perhaps, ever made to the pay of any industry in this state. This, with the increased cost of transportation, absorbed about all the advantage there was gained in the market from the increased demand for the product of the region, leaving no adequate return to the owners for the capital invested and the depletion of their property.

On the 30th of December, this year, the companies advanced the drivers wages twelve per cent. This voluntary act on the part of the companies has not only been appreciated by the drivers, but by the miners and the general public as well.

I mention these facts mainly to show to your Excellency the kind feelings and amicable relations that exists here now between employer and employe. Moreover, while labor troubles have distracted business in many coal districts in other states, our people have been blessed with peace, contentment and prosperity.

Our mines, as before indicated, also are in better order and condition, in my judgment, than any other coal workings in this country. The superintendents in charge are doing all they can to keep them in the

best possible state of operation, in order to promote their capacity to supply the highest probable demand, to preserve their property, and to protect the health and lives of their operatives.

In view of these facts, I repeat, it does not seem just that this industry, that has done, and is doing so much for the state and its citizens, should be vexed at every session of the legislature with proposals looking to the amelioration of whimsical grievances.

By reference to the accompanying tables you will find that we have two thousand three hundred and eighty-two miners, whose aggregate earnings for the year were one million four hundred and thirty-six thousand four hundred and twenty-six dollars and fourteen cents, or a fraction over six hundred dollars *per capita*. At some of the mines, however, this latter sum was largely exceeded.

The entire amount disbursed in the region to this industry for labor and supplies was two million three hundred and forty-one thousand five hundred and twenty-one dollars and sixty cents, all of which is paid monthly in cash with unfailing regularity.

If there is another coal field in this or any other country that can exhibit an income like this I am unaware of it.

IMPROVEMENTS.

There have been improvements made at nearly all the mines during the year, with a view to a largely increased production of coal during the coming year. Prominent among these may be mentioned the Georges Creek Coal and Iron Company, who have made a new

opening called the "Pine Hill Mine," with double siding, incline, and all necessary buildings for large operations.

The New Central Coal Company has added about forty feet to the height of the ventilating stack, terminating in an increase of about one-third of its former power. The operations inside have been extended by the completion of a plane five hundred feet long with the requisite machinery, and relaying of the tram road, two miles in length, with steel rails.

The Consolidation Coal Company has effected very extensive improvements during the year at their Ocean mine. The entire arrangement of the yard has been changed so as to economize labor in the handling of props and timber, and to render possible the handling and unloading a larger number of mine cars with a view to future increased output. The inside boilers, used to supply steam to the pumps, have been covered with substantial brick arches.

The drainage tunnel being driven through the rock at Midland, for the purpose of draining this mine, has reached the coal, and it is contemplated to begin immediately driving a heading through the coal to reach the present workings of the mine.

At Hoffman mine a large winding engine has replaced the one in use one year ago.

At Eckhart mine a ventilating fan has been erected. The fan is a modified form of the Guibal pattern; wheel sixteen feet diameter, with blades four feet wide. Blades are curved backwards, *i. e.*, with their convex sides in the direction of the motion of the wheel. It has more than met expectations in accom-

plishing greater work than designed. It supplies abundance of air to three mines—Eckhart, New Hope and Allegany. In this mine a Rider Hot Air Pumping Engine, using coal oil as fuel, has been in very successful operation. This engine stands beside one of the regular hauling ways, and the products of combustion are imperceptible in the ventilation.

Near the close of the year a new company was organized under the name and style of the Barton and Georges Creek Valley Coal Company, composed of the following gentlemen, viz.: H. C. Black, Lloyd Lowndes, Owen Hitchins, Adam E. Hitchins and John Sheridan. This company have a splendid coal property, and already have a plant second to none in the region. They will have a working capacity next year of at least a quarter of a million of tons of coal, which amount will no doubt stand to the credit of the mine at the close of next year.

PROSPECTS.

From present indications, with a continuance of the pleasant relations between the employer and employe, we may confidently expect a total output of fully three and a half millions tons of coal the ensuing year, which is about the present productive capacity of the region.

ACCIDENTS.

The tables of fatal and non-fatal accidents will be found in their appropriate places.

For the twelve years ending with this date, there

have been seventy-two fatal accidents, or one for each 342,000 tons of coal produced.

For the last two years—the period covered by this report—there have been thirteen fatal accidents, or one for each 398,000 tons of coal produced.

My attention has just been called to an article in the *Philadelphia Times*, under date of January 23d, 1888, which I will reproduce for the information of those who do not examine statistics on this subject.

“Last year in Inspector Blewitt’s (Pennsylvania) district there were about 8,000,000 tons of coal mined, and a life lost for every 135,000 tons.

“In 1886 the same district (Blewitt’s) mined 7,112,295 tons, and a life lost for every 118,538 tons.

“The adjoining district (McDonald’s) mined in 1886, 4,233,456 tons, with a loss of 33 lives, or one life for every 128,286 tons.”

OBSERVATIONS.

For purposes of comparison I regret that no record exists of fatal and non-fatal accidents in this region prior to 1876, the year the first mining law went into operation. But it is easy for all observant contemporaries of our mining history to remember that the mortality from accidents was greater then than now. Not only has life been saved under the present law, but the number of non-fatal accidents has been steadily reduced. Nor is this all. The requirements designed ostensibly for the protection of life and health have wrought a far superior system of economies in underground work. For the increased expense at first

incurred in properly carrying out the provisions of the law, the companies have been fully indemnified for the measures which limited accidents to the unavoidable, also saved valuable property from loss. There is, therefore, a disposition abroad among the owners of coal properties here to respect and obey the law fully in spirit as in letter.

Under these circumstances I will say, in concluding this report, that I very gravely doubt the wisdom of legislating further upon this subject, certainly at this time. Sincere, earnest study of all the issues and interests involved in proposals looking to radical changes in the law governing the mining operations of this region, and comparison of methods with the object of ascertaining the best results, will show the only impregnable evils with which we have to contend are natural, not artificial. The same consideration extended to the propriety of introducing legal regulations which are not demanded by our mining conditions, which do not apply to our methods, and which, where they are in force are attended with more fatality than exists here, make their importation and adoption, as law for this region, a matter of more than grave concern.

I am, sir, with great respect, etc.,

Your obedient servant,

C. H. HAMILL,

Inspector of mines for Allegany and Garrett counties.

APPENDIX.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

1. Mesheck Preston, a miner in Potomac mine, killed by a fall of top coal.
2. James Mansfield, a miner in Koontz mine, killed by a fall of top coal.
3. John Greenhorn, a miner in Potomac mine, killed by a fall of breast coal.
4. Patrick Campbell, a miner in Hoffman mine, killed by a fall of breast coal.
5. John Schuyler, a miner in old Coney mine, attempted to stop several loaded cars coming down the heading of the mine. In his efforts to put down the brakes he fell under the wheels and had both legs broken. He died soon after.
6. William Cruise, a miner in New Hope mine, was instantly killed by a fall of top coal.
7. George R. Ingles, a miner in Coney mine, was hurt by a fall of roof coal. He died soon after.
8. John Yates, a driver in Ocean mine, fell under the car he was driving and was instantly killed.
9. Albert Nichols, a miner in Coney mine, was instantly killed by a fall of coal.
10. David Peebles, a trapper boy in Coney mine, was run over by a train of mine cars and instantly killed.
11. William Hausman, a miner in Jackson mine, killed by a fall of top coal.
12. Robert McInnis, a miner in Koontz mine, killed by a fall of top coal.
13. Thomas Broderick, a miner in Franklin mine, was hurt by a fall of top coal. He died soon after.

Non-Fatal Accidents.

	NAMES.	MINES.	REMARKS.
1	James Watson	Koontz	By fall of top coal; no bones broken.
2	Thomas Wilson	Jackson	By fall of top coal; no bones broken.
3	Wade	Eckhart	Very slightly.
4	Michael Nelson	National	Hand mashed.
5	James Broadbeck	Blane Avon	Fell between the cars; had his leg cut off; since died.
6	James Bucklew	Phoenix	By fall of breast coal; severely squeezed.
7	Joseph Robinson	Koontz	Leg broken by fall of breast coal.
8	Edward Lewis	Eckhart	By fall of roof coal.
9	Thomas Brennam	Franklin	By mine cars whilst walking out of the mine; since died.
10	Joseph Wilkes	Jackson	Slightly.
11	Herman Laushbaugh	Potomac	Slightly.
12	George A. Summart	Borden Shaft	By fall of breast coal; no bones broken.
13	George Rushton	Jackson	By fall of top coal; broke one leg and several ribs.
14	David Harris	Hoffman	By fall of top coal; no bones broken.
15	Abraham Thompson	Old Coney	Slipped, fell and broke one leg.
16	Joseph Nichols	Koontz	Lost one finger by trip cars running away.
17	Robert Cook	Koontz	One leg broken at the same time and by the same cause as above.
18	Edward O'Brien	Phoenix	Though painfully hurt no bones were broken.
19	James Welsh	Hoffman	Slightly.
20	John Richardson	Jackson	Slightly.
21	Welsh	Hoffman	One foot slightly mashed.
22	Joseph Coleman	Jackson	Foot hurt by the cars.
23	Robert Noel	Allegany	Foot mashed by fall of coal.
24	James Fisher	Koontz	Hand bruised.
25	John Cain	Jackson	Not serious.
26	Robert Love	Kingsland	Slightly.
27	James Murphy	Coney	Leg broken by fall of coal.
28	George Hadley	Koontz	Rib broken by fall of coal.
29	James McGan	Hoffman	Slightly.

NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS—CONTINUED.

	NAMES.	MINES.	REMARKS.
30	James McIntire.....	Hoffman.....	Severely hurt by fall of top coal.
31	William Kirby.....	Eckhart.....	Arm broken at bottom of slope.
32	Robert Boyd.....	Koontz.....	Leg fractured by fall of breast coal.
33	Greeks Baker.....	Potomac.....	Ankle mashed by fall of coal.
34	John Williams.....	Ocean.....	Slightly by the breaking of a rope.
35	John Brady.....	Hoffman.....	Both legs broken by fall of coal.
36	John Retallick.....	Pine Hill.....	Hurt about the head and shoulders by fall of coal.
37	David Koontz.....	Ocean.....	Hand hurt between bumpers of cars.
38	Jacob Hernan.....	Hoffman.....	Arm broken by the cars.
39	Miner Martin.....	Jackson.....	Leg broken by the cars.
40	James Campbell.....	Koontz.....	By fall of top coal; he has since died.
41	Lewis Kreiling.....	National.....	Slightly by a falling prop.
42	Thomas Hawthorn.....	National.....	Leg broken by fall of coal.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE MINES OF ALLEGANY AND GARRETT COUNTIES, MARYLAND,
FOR THE YEAR 1887.

NAMES OF COMPANIES.	Output of each Com- pany.	Number of miners employed by each Company.	Amount paid miners by each Company.	Number of other em- ployes.	Number of days worked.	Amount paid other employees.	Amount paid for sup- plies and improve- ments.	Total amount paid by each Company.
Consolidation Coal Company.....	936,799	826	\$463,715 50	257	255	\$131,737 92	\$153,995 78	\$749,439 20
Georges Creek Coal and Iron Co....	394,012	256	195,035 94	89	283	45,840 34	74,333 32	315,209 60
Maryland Coal Company.....	316,518	279	156,676 41	64	243	28,304 64	68,233 35	233,214 40
American Coal Company.....	259,632	190	128,517 84	49	280	24,000 00	55,177 76	207,705 60
Potomac Coal Company.....	209,793	168	103,847 53	48	290	24,360 00	39,626 87	167,834 40
Borden Mining Company.....	193,636	180	95,354 82	40	231	16,354 80	42,399 18	154,108 80
New Central Coal Company.....	181,906	160	90,043 47	54	198	18,233 32	37,198 01	145,524 80
National Coal Company.....	117,775	89	58,398 62	19	291	9,675 75	26,245 63	94,220 00
Swanton Mining Company.....	61,610	50	30,496 95	13	270	5,616 00	13,175 05	49,288 00
Maryland Union Coal Company..	148,523	123	73,518 93	54	260	24,570 00	20,729 47	118,818 40
*Davis and Elkins.....	82,667	61	40,920 16	..	..	..	..	66,133 60
†James Ryan	3,608	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,886 40
†Union Mining Company.....	7,500	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,000 00
†Blane Avon Coal Company.....	11,934	..	..	..	..	..	..	9,547 20
†George M. Hansel	1,989	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,591 20
	2,926,902	2382	\$1,436,426 14	687	2601	\$328,742 77	\$531,144 42	\$2,341,521 60

*Owing to sickness of clerk could not get full returns in time for this report.

†Went out of existence the beginning of the year.

†Local operators; unable to get returns in time for this report.