

The Oaks Colliery Disaster 1866

Fact sheet 2 – Some Mining Terminology

This is not a definitive list but should help with understanding the disaster where the terms are used.

Engine Plane – an underground tunnel (roadway) along which tubs are conveyed to and from the “workings” to the pit bottom by engine power.

Cage/Trunk – the “lift” that travels up and down the shaft carrying men, coal and materials into, and out of, the mine.

Lamp Cleaner/Lamp Cabin – men who are in charge of safety lamps in the colliery. The cabin is where safety lamps are allowed to be opened underground and cleaned or repaired. Naked flames are not allowed outside the cabin.

Inbye – going into the mine away from the shafts.

Outbye is going back out of the mine towards the shafts.

Drift – a horizontal passage underground following the bed of coal. This can be at a gradient.

Fire Damp – Methane gas. If mixed with the right quantity of air (8%) it will ignite/explode, if exposed to a naked flame.

After Damp/Black Damp/Choke Damp – Are terms for Carbon Dioxide which displaces oxygen after explosions of fire damp leading to asphyxiation.

Underviewer – A supervisor of the coal mine. He receives orders from the manager and directs underground operations.

Viewer - is the old name for a mine manager.

Level – another name for an underground roadway.

Jinney – a method of using the weight of a full tub to raise an empty tub self acting on inclines underground.

Overcast – an important ventilation bridge where one airway passes over another.

Passbye – a siding, or widening of the roadway that allows tubs of coal to pass one another underground.

Roadway – a tunnel underground which men and materials travel to and from the pit workings.

Engineman – a miner who controls an engine for hauling tubs.

Engine Plane – an underground roadway that the tubs are hauled along to and from the workings.

Shaft – a vertical hole in the ground which air, men and materials are taken in, or out of the mine.

Furnace Shaft/Upcast Shaft – shaft with a large fire near to the bottom which enables a current of air to be drawn around and out of the mine.

Head Gear – the pulley frame erected over a shaft.

Pit Mouth or **Pit Bank**– top of the shaft.

Cribs- cast iron or wooden rings that support the shaft sides.

Sump – the bottom of the shaft below the lowest inset.

Banksman – the man who works in the pit mouth area.

Lundhill – an area near, Wombwell, Barnsley. The site of a colliery which exploded on February 19th 1857. A total of 189 men and boys were killed in the Lundhill Colliery disaster.