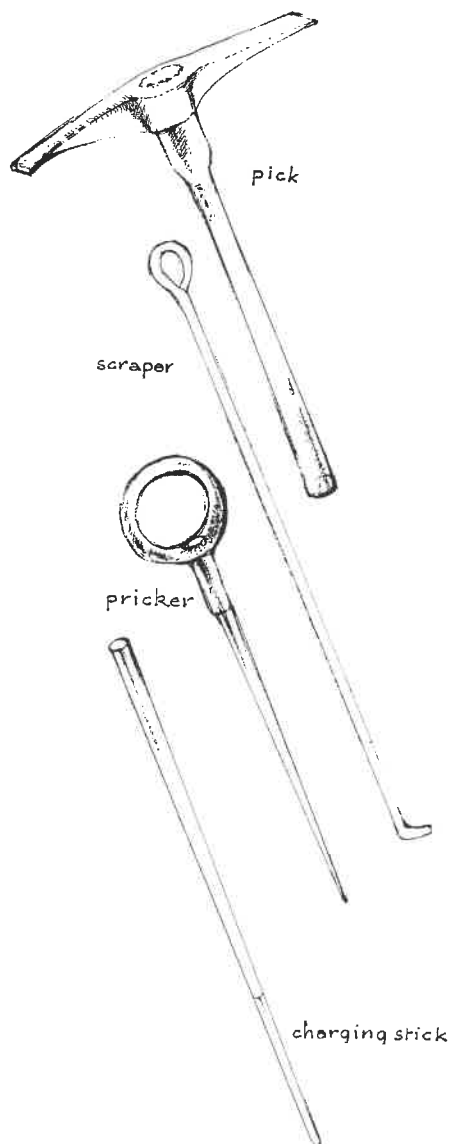


2(D) prohibits the use of an iron or steel stemmer for the first part of the wadding. It was our neglect that we did not get a wooden swab-stick for our pitch. I have never seen them supplied, but everything required is supplied when asked for; and we have since the explosion, been supplied for the use of this pitch. There was good air in this pitch. The smoke, after the explosion, was not long clearing. there is a good draught there. In my opinion I think that straws are safer than fuse for setting off a blast. I think it would be an improvement in all ordinary holes that the powder used for blasting should be put into paper bags, and thus put into the holes.

Mona's Herald 9th September, 1875



A collection of mining tools.

Explanations

'Binnin': timber platform upon which rubbish was thrown.

'jumper': an iron bar used in boring holes. The steel tip was forged into a chisel shape.

'Overhand Stopping': working upwards to cut away a vein.

'pricker': a slender tapering rod used to make a hole in tamping so that the charge could be fired by a straw.

'Scraper': a thin iron rod with one end flattened and turned up, used to clean the dust from a borehole before putting in a charge.

'swab-stick': a wooden stick with fibres at one end frayed into a sort of mop for removing sludge from a wet borehole.

'Metalliferous Act': an Act of Parliament applying to the Isle of Man in 1872. After this date Mines Inspectors reported on the Manx mines. Amongst other things, it was required that gunpowder be carried underground in special canisters of not more than 4 pounds capacity. Prickers and stemmers made of iron were condemned.

'leek seed powder': a very fine gunpowder for use in straws.

Questions

- 1 What age would Edward Kelly have been when he started working at Great Laxey Mines?
- 2 How many men were working together on this 'bargain'?
- 3 Two classes of workers are mentioned. What were they?
- 4 How deep was an ordinary borehole for blasting?
- 5 What probably caused the fatal explosion?
- 6 Three substances were put into the drilled holes. What were these, and in what order were they inserted?

