

## *Fire at Thorncliffe Colliery*

### *Damages £1,500*

A serious fire occurred this morning at Thorncliffe Colliery, which belongs to Messrs. Newton, Chambers, and Co., Limited. Shortly before five o'clock the watchman went round the buildings connected to the colliery, and saw all was safe. Less than a quarter of an hour afterwards he saw flames issuing from the wooden structures near the pit head. He at once raised an alarm but owing to the inflammable nature of the material the fire spread very rapidly. Some time ago there was a Volunteer Brigade at Chapletown, but this appears to have been almost disbanded. The hose pipes and other articles have, however, been preserved, and these were brought into requisition as quickly as possible. Fortunately there was a plentiful supply of water, and several jets were soon at work, the flames by this time having assumed alarming proportions. About seven o'clock it was thought wise to summon the Brigade from Sheffield. The screens and the crusher had been destroyed, and a quantity of valuable machinery had been badly damaged, and the fire was making rapid progress along the "staging" on which the corves are run in order to "shoot" the coal brought out of the pits. There are other buildings close at hand, and it was feared that unless the flames were speedily checked the fire would become even more serious.

It was 7.10 a.m. when the call came for the Sheffield Fire Brigade. Superintendent Pound and his men were quickly off with the manual, and they were at the colliery about an hour after they were summoned. Luckily by this time the fire had been brought under control, and the work of extinguishing the flames being satisfactorily proceeded with. Mr Pound and his staff gave what assistance they could, leaving the colliery shortly after half-past nine, all danger being then at an end.

The cause of the fire has not been ascertained. Some think that a spark from the coke ovens, which are close at hand, ignited the woodwork, while other advanced the theory that the fire was the result of spontaneous combustion. Whatever the cause, the effect was serious. A large amount of machinery has been damaged, and several wooden buildings destroyed. The firm, who are insured, fix their loss at £1,500. It is not likely that the fire will interfere to any great extent with the working of the colliery, though naturally some inconvenience will be caused until the various appliances that have been burned are replaced.