

Cascade Coal Plant At Sykes Abandoned By B. & S. Coal Co.

Jan. 2, 1939

Another of the old reliable mining operations of this section passed into history on Saturday when the Buffalo & Susquehanna Coal Company abandoned the huge Sykesville shaft, known as the Cascade plant, after an active span of more than a third of a century during which time approximately 15,000,000,000 tons of coal were removed from the bowels of the earth. In the earlier years of its production, most of the output was converted into coke at the nearby coke ovens, but in recent years its product has been marketed direct.

More than three hundred miners of Sykesville and surrounding territory who were employed at the shaft, received orders to remove all of their tools when they completed their day's work on Saturday, and arrangements were made immediately to cease operation of the power house, permitting the vast

underground cavern to be flooded.

The abandonment was said to have marked the natural end of the operations. The company holdings available through the main opening had been stripped practically clean and officials were given no alternative, other than to cease.

The closing of the mine comes as a blow to the community of Sykesville and the district in general, inasmuch as the 326 men who have been employed there will be forced to seek other work.

The B. & S. also operates a large shaft at Sagamore, but it is doubtful whether any of the Sykesville men can be placed there.

Offices of the B. & S. will be retained at Sykesville for the present time.

The Sykesville shaft was opened in 1904 by the Cascade Coal & Coke company, the operations being continued by that concern until 1927 when taken over by the Buffalo and Susquehanna. The manufacture of coke was discontinued at the time the Cascade Co. ceased its operations. The Cascade Co. was controlled by the Powhatan Coal & Coke Co.

J. R. Casely has served as general manager of the B. & S. operations at Sykesville and Sagamore, and will continue to direct the operations of the Sagamore mine. At one time the B. & S. also had extensive operations at the No. 1 mine at Shaffer and No. 2 mine in DuBois, and at Tyler, all being abandoned more than a decade ago.

During the peak of its operations the Cascade Co. employed about 500 men. It is estimated that close to fifteen million tons of coal have been removed from the Sykesville mine during its 35 years of operation.

The B. & S. has an annual payroll of over \$600,000 for the Sykesville mines.

The mine has had one serious accident since it was opened, an explosion on July 15, 1911, claiming the lives of 21 men. In recent years it had been comparatively free from fatalities.

Robert Bruce has served as general mine foreman and George Plant as superintendent of the mine for a number of years.

Announcement has been made that the store operated by the mine mill also be closed after the first of the year.

Machinery and tools will be removed at once, the mine stripped clean of all material that can be salvaged, and the shaft will then be permitted to flood.

The Sagamore operations of the concern are extensive, with sufficient coal available for many additional years of operation.