Introduction

Until the early 19th century mines were largely unregulated, but by the end of the century there was considerable government control from legislation supported by an inspection structure. Legislation often followed from government enquiries, which also provide a detailed contemporary assessment of those aspects of mining within their remit. This guide gives background material on government activities and extensive lists of laws and official enquiries mostly held in the Institute Library.

Legislation

History

books
Boyd, R.N. Coal pits and pitmen: a short history of the coal trade and legislation affecting it. 1895.
Hutchins, B.L. and Harrison, A. A history of factory legislation. 1903, 1907, 1911, 1926.
[Not in NEIMME Library. First 3 editions online at the Open Library: https://openlibrary.org/works/OL6576367W/A_history_of_factory_legislation
Mining Association of Great Britain Historical review of coal mining. 1924, 301-320
– D. Morrah, ‘A Historical Outline of Coal Mining Legislation’
Royal Commission on Mines 2nd Report, 1909, 2-11 has an outline of legislation
Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines 1938, 11-33 Development of safety legislation in coal mines

articles
Bryan, A. Legislation relating to safety and health in British coal mines – history and development Mining engineer 134 1974-5, 197-203, Discussion 203-6
Turton, F. Colliery explosions and fires: their influence upon legislation and mining practice Mining Engineer, 141 1981, 57-164
[Researchers may wish to find Mills, C. Regulating health and safety in the British mining industries, 1800–1914. 2010, which is not available in the Institute Library.]

Text of Acts

The Institute Library does not have many Acts, but law books noted below will discuss,
summarise or have excerpts of those in force at the time of publication.

The Coal Mines Regulation Act 1872
The Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act 1872
Explosives Act 1872 – text
Mines and Quarries Act 1954
Coal mines Acts 1911-1954 Tracts 16
Mines Department Coal Mines Acts 1887-1949: The Abstract of the Metalliferous mines regulations acts, 1872 and 1875 and other acts relating to metalliferous mines and the metalliferous mines general regulations, 1938 required to be supplied on application to persons employed. Mines and Quarries Form No. 126 1953
[Ministry of Power; Health and Safety Executive] Regulations and orders relating to health and safety various years 1953 has Mines Act 1911 and SIs
Health and Safety Executive Health and safety legislation that applies to mines Online at http://www.hse.gov.uk/mining/legislatlist.htm
A list – not full text. Last revised 2008

The text of Acts still wholly or partly in force can be found online at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/

Law books

These may have the full text of Acts or a summary or comments or all these. They may note relevant legal cases. The general books like Bainbridge or Fowler will mostly just discuss the law in force at the time of publication.

Bowen, D. The Mines and Quarries Acts. 1923
Home Office The law relating to mines under the Coal Mines Act 1911. 1914
Kennedy, G.G. & Sandars, J.S. A guide to the Coal Mines Regulation Act 1887. 1888
Peace, M.W. The Coal Mines Regulation Act 1887.
Sinclair, J. Coal mining law. 1958
Willis, W.A. Workmen's Compensation Act 1897. 1897
Willis, W.A. Workmen's Compensation Act 1925-1940. 1941
Mining Acts of Parliament

As well as Acts specifically about mines, there was other broader legislation that affected mines, eg boiler explosions, compensation, education, factories and workshops, industrial injuries, national insurance, rating, wages, (miners) welfare, women employment. The list below is very selective on this latter group.

Main Acts:
1831 Truck Act
Prohibit payment in goods rather than money.

1842 Mines and Collieries Act
Restrictions on the employment of women, girls, boys. Allowed an Inspector to be appointed.

1850 Coal Mines Inspection Act.
Inspectors, report accidents, mines keep plans (Only in force for 5 years)

1855 Coal Mines Act
To amend 1850 Act; define standards of safety, 'rules' New Inspectors powers; produce an annual report. (Another 5 years)

1860 Regulation and Inspection of Mines Act

1862 Coal Mines Act
Amend 1860 Act 2 shafts required (following the Hartley disaster)

1867 Factory Acts Extension Act
Existing laws – primarily for textile industry - extended to all factories with more than 50 people.

1867 Workshop Regulation Act
Extended laws to workshops employing fewer than 50 persons.

1872 Regulation of Coal Mines Act
More Inspectors; accurate plans; exams for all managers; hours of work; more rules; miners could do an inspection.
Summarised in Bainbridge *Law of mines and minerals*.

1872 Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act
Provisions as in the Coal Mines Act.

1874 Factory Act

1875 Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act
Extends returns to production, employment (not just accidents). See *Public General Statutes* 1875.
Bainbridge *Law of mines and minerals* summarises 1872, 1875 Metalliferous Acts

1875 Explosives Act
Manufacture, sale, use of gunpowder

1878 Factory and Workshop Act
Consolidated previous Acts. Safety of machinery, metal working, employment of women and children – above ground at mines; in quarries.

1880 Compensation Act
Extended liability for personal injuries.

1883 Factory and Workshop Act

1886 Coal Mines Act
Powers for formal investigation.

1887 Coal Mines Regulation Act
Consolidate 1872, 1886 and Stratified Ironstone Miners (Gunpowder) Act 1871. 1872 requirements more specific; lamp investigations, 2nd class certificate of competence; age restrictions. Based on Royal Commission 1879-86.

1887 Truck Amendment Act
Inspectorate to enforce.
1891 Factory and Workshop Act

1894 Quarries Act
Extended coverage.

1895 Factory and Workshop Act
Local authority inspection.

1896 Coal Mines Regulation Act
Preventing explosions, especially from coal dust.

1897 Workmen's Compensation Act
Employer liability.

1900 Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Act
Minimum age.

1901 Factory and Workshop Act
Working age, education; fire escapes.

1903 Coal Mines Regulation Act
Technical education - amend 1887 Act

1906 Notice of Accidents Act
Amend 1894 Notice of Accidents Act.

1906 Workmen's Compensation Act
Consolidation; industrial diseases now included.

1908 Coal Mines Regulation Act
'Eight hours Act' Limited miners' hours to 8/day.

1910 Mines Accidents (Rescue and Aid) Act
Maintain rescue appliances; training.

1911 Coal Mines Act
Superseded all previous legislation for coal and ironstone.

1912 Coal Mines (Minimum Wages) Act
Ironstone too.

1914 Coal Mines Act
Extension of 1911; amended details; certificate of competence.

1917 Coal Mines Regulation (Amendment) Act
Suspension of 1908 Act in war extended to other types of mine.

1918 Coal Mines Control Agreement (Confirmation) Act
Repealed by 1920 Coal Mines (Emergency) Act.

1919 Coal Mines Act
Reduction of hours if Parliament agreed economic circumstances permitted.

1919 Coal Industry Commission Act
Constituted the Sankey commission.

1920 Mining Industry Act
Mines Dept created; tax on coal for miners welfare fund; pit and district committees.

1923 Workmen's Compensation Act
Insurance; notification; ambulance services.

1923 Mines (Working Facilities and Support) Act
Working of minerals.

1925 Workmen's Compensation Act
Compensation and procedures.

1926 Coal Mines Act
Amended temporarily hours of work.

1926 Mining Industry Act
Schemes for reorganisation; welfare fund.

1930 Coal Mines Act
Production and sales.

1931 Coal Mines Act
Extending 1930 Act re hours.
1932 Coal Mines Act
   Extending 1931 Act.
1934 Workmens Compensation (Coal Mines) Act
   Insurance.
1934 Mines (Working Facilities) Act
   Extended to other minerals.
1937 Coal Mines (Employment of Boys) Act
   Hours underground at night.
1938 Coal Act
   Coal Mining Commission to unify royalties.
1939 Public Health (Coal Mine Refuse) Act
   Refuse liable to spontaneous combustion.
1943 Coal Act
   Repealed part of 1930 Coal Mines Act.
1946 Coal Industry Nationalisation Act
   Creation of National Coal Board.
1949 Coal Industry Act
   Amendments to 1946 Act.
1951 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1954 Mines and Quarries Act
   All classes of mines – revision of 1872/5 Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts, 1894
   See Sinclair, J. Coal mining law. 1958, 113-322
1956 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1957 Coal Mining (Subsidence) Act
   Payment and remedial work.
1958 Opencast Coal Act
   Authorisation, compensation.
1960 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1961 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1962 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1965 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1967 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1969 Mines and Quarries (Tips) Act
   Post Aberfan.
1971 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1971 Mines Management Act
   Management structure.
1973 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1974 Health and Safety at Work Act
   Coalmining including Inspectorate came under the HSE.
1975 Coal Industry Act
   Compensation, open cast.
1977 Coal Industry Act
   Financial.
1982 Coal Industry Act
Financial.
1983 Coal Industry Act
Borrowing, redundancy.
1985 Coal Industry Act
Grants, redundancy.
1987 Coal Industry Act
British Coal Corporation.
1990 Coal Industry Act
Finance, open cast.
1991 Coal Mining Subsidence Act
1992 Coal Industry Act
Grants, repeal of 1908 Coal Mines Regulation Act.
1994 Coal Industry Act
Coal Authority; privatisation.

**Inspection**

The Inspectorate of Mines was established by an Act of Parliament in 1842. The Coal Mines Regulation Act 1872, the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, 1872 and the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887 further extended the provisions for inspection. These were replaced by provisions in the Coal Mines Act, 1911.

**Books**

*Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines* 1938, 33-44 - Mines and Quarries Inspectorate: its origins and development

**Articles**

Bryan, A. HM Inspectors of Mines: a centenary address *Transactions, Institution of Mining Engineers* 109 1949, 875-888

**Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines**

These began in 1851 – though some of the first ones, including Northumberland, Durham for Jun 1851- Jun 1852 were not published – and initially did not cover all types of mine. Ironstone mines were included from 1872, metalliferous from 1873 and quarries from 1894. They have reports for different regions of the UK with statistical material on employment, production and accidents, with a breakdown by type of accident, eg explosion, rock falls, in shafts, suffocation, trams and tubs, on the surface. There may be a general discussion on safety with more extensive description and illustrations for particular accidents. In later years there was an overview by the Chief Inspector.

The Library has the Inspectors reports for 1850-1923, 1925-1938, [none published for 1939-46], 1947-77

[See the Library's resource guide: *Mines Inspectors reports* for full details.]

**Colliery explosions reports** – some individual ones are bound by year.

**Enquiries - Select Committees, Royal Commissions, etc**

There have been many government enquiries into mining in general or particular aspects like accidents. Usually these take evidence from those concerned and then produce a report with
recommendations. They contain great detail on contemporary working practices.

The reports may be in more than one volume, have a preliminary report a year or more before the final report or include various volumes of evidence. The Institute Library does not have complete volumes for all enquiries.

The list is of the major enquiries, including some - noted by * - that the Library does not have.

*1800 Select Committee on the Coal Trade.
*1830 Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to take into consideration the state of the coal trade in the United Kingdom.
*1835 Select Committee on Accidents in Mines
*1836 Select Committee on the State of the Coal Trade. NE to London, etc.
1842 Children's Employment Commission. First report of the commissioners. Mines. (Only Sub Commissioners reports in stock.)
1843 South Shields Committee for the Investigation of Accidents in Mines. Report of the South Shields Committee appointed to investigate the causes of accidents in coal mines: containing an examination of safety lamps; ventilation; scientific instruments; infant labour in the mines; plans and sections; scientific education of officers of mines; government inspection; and medical treatment after explosion. With plans and appendix. (Tracts 216, 5-107)
1843 Midland Mining Commission. First report - South Staffordshire. Condition of people, education, wages.
1846/7 Report on the gases and explosions in collieries by De la Beche, Henry T. (Sir)
1849 Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to inquire into the best means of preventing the occurrence of dangerous accidents in coal mines.
1850-9 Report by the Commissioner appointed under the provisions of the Act 5, 6 Vict c.99, [Mines and Collieries Act 1842] to inquire into the operation of that act, and into the state of the population of the mining districts. Annual. 1850-9. 1859 report also in Tracts 64, 220-283
* 1852 Select Committee on Coal Mines. (Explosions) Not in the Institute Library.

Available online at Google Books: http://tinyurl.com/SC1852

* 1852-3 Select Committee ...the causes of the numerous accidents in coal mines... 3 reports
1854 Select Committee on Accidents in Coal Mines. Four reports in one volume.
1857 Select Committee on Rating of Mines. Report ... together with the proceedings of the committee and minutes of evidence and appendix.

Also online at Google Books: http://tinyurl.com/SC1857

1865-7 Select Committee on Regulation and Inspection of Mines. 1866, 1867 reports with evidence volumes. 1865 report not in stock.
1867 Select Committee on Mines together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix.
1871 Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the several matters relating to coal in the United Kingdom. Reserves, usage, wastefulness. 3 vols.

Also online at Google Books: http://tinyurl.com/SC1871v1
http://tinyurl.com/SC1871v2
http://tinyurl.com/SC1871v3

1873 Select Committee on the present dearness and scarcity of coal; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix.
* 1874 Royal Commission ...best means of preventing pollution of rivers arising from mining operations. Fifth report 2vols
1881 Preliminary report of His Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into accidents in
mines, and the possible means of preventing their occurrence or limiting their disastrous consequences together with the evidence and an index [also in Tracts 107, 537-555] and 1886 Final report of Her Majesty's commissioners appointed to inquire into accidents in mines and the possible means of preventing their occurrence or limiting their disastrous consequences; together with evidence and appendices.

1890-1 Royal Commission on Mining Royalties 5 reports.
1891-4 Royal Commission on Explosions from Coal Dust in Mines. 1st and 2nd reports
1891-2 Royal Commission on Labour
Minutes of evidence. Group A: Mining, iron, engineering, hardware, shipbuilding and cognate trades. 1891
Digest of the evidence taken before Group A. Vol. 1 Mining. Vol. 2 Mining (cont.); iron, engineering and hardware. Vol. 3 Mining, iron, engineering, shipbuilding and cognate trades, with indexes to precis, Vols. 1, 2 and 3. 1893.
Answers to the schedules of questions . Group A: Mining, iron, engineering, hardware, shipbuilding and cognate trades. 1892
Minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission on Labour (sitting as a whole.) 1893
1903-5 Royal Commission on Coal Supplies. First report 1903. Final report, including regional surveys + evidence, appendices. 1905. Also Digest of evidence given before the Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, 1901-1905 reprinted from the Colliery Guardian.

* 1904 Departmental committee on the use of electricity in mines
1907 Departmental committee on probable economic effect of a limit of 8 hours to the working day of coal miners. First report and Final report, with minutes of evidence and appendices.
1907-11 Royal Commission on Mines. 3 reports + v2-5 of evidence.
1909 Royal Commission on Mines. Report of a committee appointed by the Royal Commission on Mines to inquire into the causes of and means of preventing accidents from falls of ground, underground haulage, and in shafts. in Tracts 233, 199-498
1909 Summary of the report of a committee appointed by the Royal Commission on Mines to inquire into the causes of and means of preventing accidents from falls of ground, underground haulage, in shafts. 2 vols Institution of Mining Engineers
* 1911 Departmental committee on the working of the existing special rules for the use of electricity in mines...
1911 Departmental committee on the organisation of rescue and aid in case of accidents in mines.
1912-14 Royal Commission on Metalliferous Mines and Quarries. Reports, minutes of evidence with index and appendices. 3 vols.
1912-15 Departmental committee on explosions in mines 3rd report
* 1914-6 Departmental committee …conditions prevailing in the coal mining industry due to the war
1914/16 Departmental committee on spontaneous combustion of coal in [coal] mines. 1st report; Minutes of evidence. (In Tracts 400)
1918-9 Royal Commission on the Coal Industry [Sankey Commission], 3 vols.
Vol II Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the Second Stage of the Inquiry also online at Open Library:
http://tinyurl.com/RC1919v2
1921 Departmental committee on spontaneous combustion of coal in mines. Final report.
1925 Royal Commission on the Coal Industry. 1925 (Reserves, industry, labour, housing) Vols 2, 2a Minutes of evidence and vol 3 Appendices only.
1926 Royal Commission on Mining Subsidence. Second and final report; Evidence
1938 Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines. Report, Evidence + Appendix
See also Sinclair, J. Coal mining law. 1958, 98-110
1941 Mines Department Report of the committee on the amendment of the general regulations governing the use of electricity in mines under the Coal Mines Act, 1911.
Researchers in universities may have free access to the online Proquest *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (1715-2004)* full text collection which includes these reports.

### Parliament

**Hansard 1803-2005**


Hansard is the official report of debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. This site has the Hansard text itself by volume, Lords sittings, Commons sittings and Westminster Hall sittings as well as Written Answers, Written Statements, Lords reports and Grand Committee reports. Also includes extracted lists of people who are recorded as having spoken, Constituencies, Offices, Acts, Bills and Divisions.