

*Prospective Mines.*—A company of miners is sinking a shaft one mile east of Lauder Station, in Williamson county, on the Illinois Central Railroad.

A shaft is being sunk by D. N. Prichett in Williamson county, one mile south of Stonefort, on the Big Four Railroad, Cairo division.

*New Mines.*—Jackson county.—The Big Muddy Coal and Iron Company, at Murphysboro, has completed shaft No. 6 and has fitted it up in first-class shape, top and bottom.

Oliver Bailey has opened a new local mine three miles southeast of Carbon-dale.

Johnson county.—The New Burnside Coal Company has opened a slope one mile north of New Burnside on the Big-Four Railroad, close to the old Bald Knob mine, which was abandoned several years ago.

Williamson county.—The Ohio and Mississippi Valley Coal and Mining Company has completed its shaft No. 2, two miles north of Marion on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad, and has three electric chain machines at work.

William Jack has sunk a local shaft two and one-half miles north of Marion. The local shaft at Blairsville has been reopened by W. H. Williams.

*Abandoned Mines.*—One local mine in Hamilton county; two local mines in Jackson county; one local mine in Saline county, and two local mines in Williamson county have been abandoned.

*Escapement Shafts.*—The Big Muddy Coal and Iron Company, No. 7, at Herrins, Williamson county, has completed its escapement and air shaft.

The Williamson county Coal Company has completed its escapement shaft. **The Crab Orchard Coal Company has completed its escapement shaft.**

The Mt. Vernon Coal Company has also completed an escapement shaft which is 850 feet deep.

*Fatal Accidents.*—July 16, 1897, William Mercer, a driver at the Jupiter Mining Company's shaft, at DuQuoin, was found in an unconscious condition in the main entry at 8 a. m., and was conveyed to the surface where he died at 8:15 a. m. It is the custom in this mine for the room drivers to pull their coal out to a place about 800 feet from the bottom on the main entry, and from there out the entry driver pulls the coal to the bottom. William Mercer had charge of all the drivers and was a driver himself. Before leaving the bottom on the morning of his death, with his mule, he sent a boy to ascertain how many cars were lying at this particular point on the main entry. The boy reported 19 loaded pit cars. Mercer then went inside and commenced pulling out the coal, and had brought his trip out to the main entry where the 19 loaded cars were standing. When found he was lying between the rail of the track and the rib of the coal in front of his trip, which was within four feet of the standing cars. His mule was still coupled to his trip. The deceased was 32 years old and leaves a widow and two children. No marks were found on the body. However, at the coroner's inquest, the physician stated that on examination a clot of blood was found on the inside in the region of the bowels. The case is now pending in the courts on a suit for damages; two trials have been had in the circuit court of Perry county, the jury failing to agree at each trial.

July 17, 1897, William Killiam, a miner in the employ of the Illinois Central Coal and Salt Company at St. Johns, was injured at 9 a. m., from the effects of which he died at 11 a. m. This was to be his last day's work at the mine, as he had laid off the day before to secure employment at another mine. He had a standing shot in his room and was mining it off when a piece of slate 9 feet long, 3 feet wide and 8 inches thick fell on him. He knew the place was dangerous, but he wanted to have his place cleaned up and then put up some timbers. Deceased was 38 years old and leaves a widow and one child.

July 31, 1897, Julius Smith, a miner at the Willis Coal and Mining Company's mine at Willisville, was instantly killed by falling slate about 10 a. m., while at work at the face of his room. Deceased was 49 years old and leaves a widow and one child.

August 11, 1897, John Yates, aged 32, single, an engineer in the employment of the Big Muddy Coal and Coke Company at DeSoto, was injured by a boiler explosion at the air shaft at 6:30 a. m., from which injuries he died at 11:45 a. m. The night watchman had been on duty as usual, and had left about 5:30 a. m. He claims to have left everything in good order. John Yates had only been at work about 10 minutes when the explosion occurred which caused his death.

September 16, 1897, Fred Grenhold, a miner employed at the Williamson county Coal Company's mine, at Johnston City, was instantly killed by falling coal. He was mining off a standing shot, and being old he was unable to get out of the way of the falling coal. Deceased was 54 years of age and single.

September 24, 1897, at the mine of the Williamson County Coal Co., at Johnston City, a fire damp explosion occurred at 7 a. m., which proved fatal to Frank Fanaro, aged 45, and single; John Geneli, aged 38, single; Charles Schiller, aged 34, single, and Peter Casper, aged 37, single, also seriously injuring Robert Britton and Joseph Barlow. Barlow has not been able to work since the accident.

On the morning of September 24 the men gathered at the pit top, as usual, for work; the fire boss being sick, the mine had not been examined on this morning. Caleb Davis, the mine manager, claims to have told Peter Casper and others who were working in the first and second south entries on the east side, to remain at the bottom of the shaft till he could come down and examine their working places. Peter Casper, on reaching the bottom, went direct into the first south entry and left his naked light on the outside of the cross-cut and took off his coat and went to the face and started to brush out the fire damp with his coat. After working at this a few minutes he returned and got his naked light and then went and got an empty pit-car and pushed it toward the face. As soon as he was inside the cross cuts a few feet his naked light came in contact with the fire damp, which caused a terrific explosion and the death of the four miners mentioned. The stoppings, doors and timber of the first and second south entries were blown in all directions. Robert Britton and Joseph Barlow were blown several feet along the main east entry by the force of the explosion. Joseph Barlow had his leg broken and the flesh torn, and his head badly bruised. Robert Britton had his left arm broken. Caleb Davis, mine manager, was at the pit top at the time the