

ROTHBURY: THE 50th ANNIVERSARY

Rothbury Fight—Pages 2 and 3
CHAMPION



103 PHILLIP STREET
Phone: BW2471 (3 Lines)

DAILY TELEGRAPH

PICTORIAL

NET SALES EXCEED 141,045 DAILY



No. 15,607 Registered at the General Post Office, Sydney, for transmission by Post as a newspaper. SYDNEY: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1929—28 PAGES. Price 5/6d. (including postage) ONE PENNY

:: SMOKING REVOLVERS IN FIGHT AT ROTHBURY ::



AT YESTERDAY'S DAWN AT ROTHBURY an army of miners advancing upon the colliery was met by a strong force of police. At 5.45 a section of the miners, behind a barrage of stones and bricks, charged towards a fence near the colliery gates. Police drew their revolvers and fired over the heads of the crowd. A visiting cameraman was in the midst of the riot with his camera, and pluckily snapped the unique pictures on this and the inside pages, at great risk of injury.

December 16, 1929-1979

THE NEWCASTLE SUN

NEWCASTLE N.S.W. MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1929.

'Phone: 1730 (Seven Lines).

BLOODSHED — FIERCE RIOTS AT ROTHBURY

POLICE FIRE ON MOB

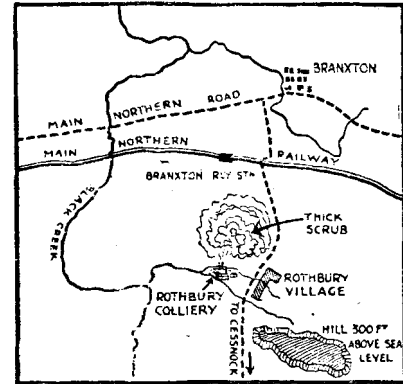
Loss of Life and Many Wounded Reported

BULLETS AND STONES

Fierce Fights at Rothbury Colliery Gates

ONE MAN KILLED: 45 WOUNDED

FOUR THOUSAND MINERS IN BUSH



Scene at Rothbury Colliery.

gain complete control of the situation. Like a vast human tide the miners swept down a road which runs at right angles to the pit and bounds the mine property. Some of the more militant spirits were uttering threats but were restrained by the older men.

For a time they were completely cut off, so far as securing information was concerned.

It was learned that the second big clash occurred about 9.20, when a car approached the Rothbury mine gates from the Branxtown end. It was considered to be the official car of some of the officers.

How the first clash was precipitated is not clear.

Press representatives at the big meeting were surrounded by a mob, armed with sticks, and hurriedly fled away from the scene.

Fierce rioting, in which there was loss of life, occurred at Rothbury this morning in intervals between miners and police.

ROTHBURY: THE DAY THAT SHOCKED THE NATION

"The events of the early morning of December 16, 1929, have now become legendary in mining communities and indeed throughout the labor movement in Australia ..."

That is how Dr. Robin Gollan, in his history *The Coalminers of New South Wales*, refers to the Rothbury affair, in which a miner was killed and others were wounded by police gunfire. It was a grim happening, which the *Sydney Daily Telegraph Pictorial* the next day described as "the most dramatic industrial clash that has ever shocked Australia." From it, Rothbury — like Eureka of 1854 — became an indelible name in the history of the Australian working people.

Now, after half a century, the 50th anniversary of Rothbury is being commemorated in northern NSW coalfields areas on the weekend of December 15-16, 1979.

★ ★ ★

At Rothbury on that December morning in 1929, when northern NSW mineworkers had already been locked out for over nine months by wage-cutting mineowners, police drew their pistols and fired on the workers who were demonstrating against the introduction of scabs for Rothbury mine by the anti-Labor Bavin State Government. Edgar Ross writes in his *History of*

the Miners Federation: "Whether the police fired into the crowd, at the feet of the men or over their heads, as various accounts of the happening claimed, or all three, there is little doubt that they ran amok ...". Some who were there have spoken of having seen deliberate aim taken, and shots fired at close range. Harry Cockerill (who later was the Miners Federation's Northern District vice-president and then a member of the NSW Legislative Council) said in a 1978 interview with the Miners Federation's journal *Common Cause* that, while there were indications that at least some of the police fired low, he believed that some of the shooting was directly into the crowd. (The point has been made that most of the police had been brought in from other areas and that their actions on that day and subsequently upset local police.)

The police bullets at Rothbury killed 29-year-old miner Norman Brown and wounded many others ("how many it is impossible to tell, as the wounded were hurriedly got away in case their wounds were used in evidence against them," Dr. Gollan's book says.)

Press reports the next day gave an incomplete casualty list of wounded miners which named David (Jackson) Brown, Walter Wood (who in August 1979 was one of the veterans who figured in an ABC *Broadband* radio session on "The Battle of Rothbury"), Robert Hunter, William Harrison, George Lindsay, Keith Elliott, David Walton, Robert Cameron and William Gorton.

The reports spoke also of numbers of "minor casualties," and Edgar Ross writes (in *History of the Miners Federation*) of "upwards of 40 men" having been injured that day.

Some police, too, were hurt but, — unlike the bullet wounds suffered by miners — the injuries among police were confined to cuts (very likely from stones), abrasions and the like.

As well as the shooting, police — including mounted men — used their batons ferociously. The late William Mahon, who was there that day (he later became general secretary of the Miners Federation; he died in 1967 while holding that office) said afterwards: "I will never forget the viciousness displayed; in fact, I was a victim of it." One of those who was batoned was Jack Baddeley, who had been the Miners Federation's first general president and who was a Labor member of Parliament at the time of Rothbury (he later became a Minister for Mines). In the fury of one of the clashes, Tom Flannery, a Rothbury miners lodge member, collapsed and died.

Meanwhile, as a sideshow to the main demonstration, a group of miners embarked on the task of pulling up the railway line near the colliery. Police turned up, and 11 of the men were arrested.

★ ★ ★

Against the guns and batons used by police that morning, miners had no weapons, other than any sticks or stones which they might gather. One who was there, Wal Dawson, said in a 1978 *Common Cause* interview recalling the Rothbury events: "We swung our fists as best we could and some maybe had waddies — but no guns." Alf Purcell (who later became Rothbury miners lodge president) told *Common Cause* in 1979: "There were no guns on our side — no one expected shooting to happen." Alex Watters (who had been locked out from Aberdare Extended), in recalling Rothbury, said: "I was standing just behind one chap who had a shanghai: that was the only weapon that I saw on the miners' side."

In the fiery debate in Parliament which followed the Rothbury affair, George Booth (who had been a miner before his election to Parliament as MLA for Kurri Kurri) declared: "Let me tell the House and the country — and I would say this if I knew I were about to be called

before my Maker — that the miners never fired a shot at all. I was there from the start to the finish."

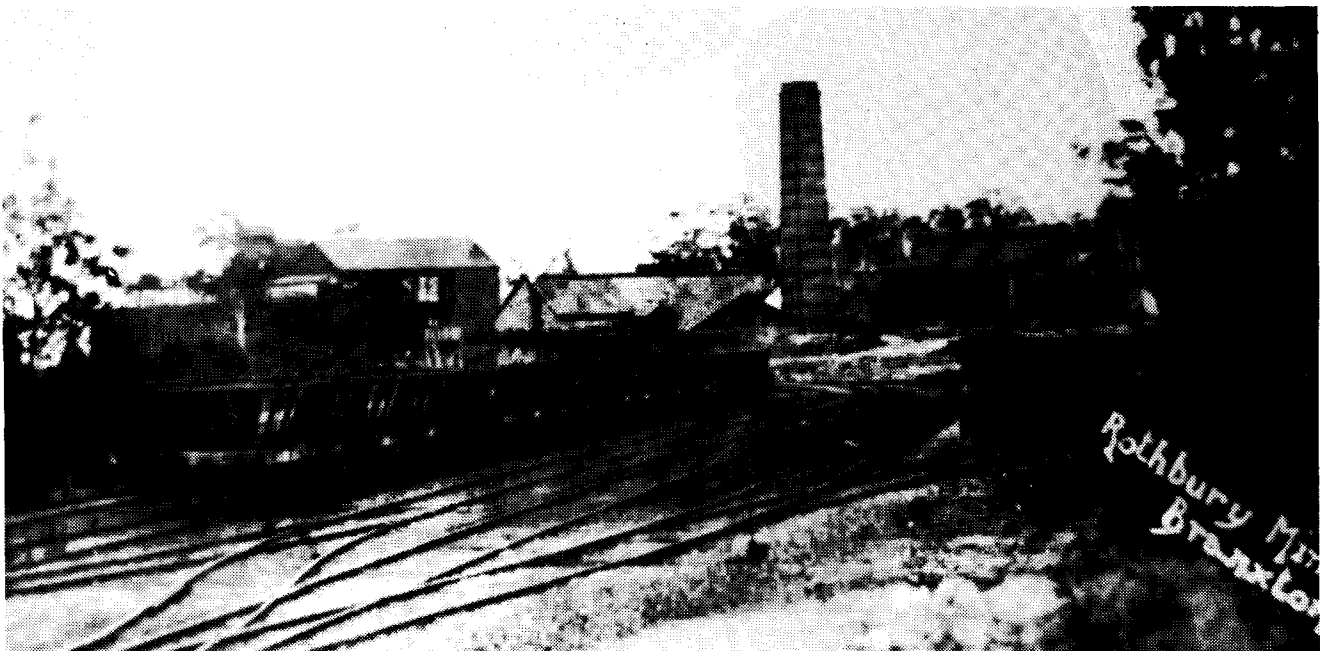
The funeral of Norman Brown in Greta cemetery was attended by what the *Cessnock Eagle* described as "the largest crowd that has ever been in Greta." Business houses in Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and some other centres were closed in the afternoon, and the *Cessnock Eagle* said that the occasion was "a remarkable tribute to the memory of a comrade, cut off in the flower of his life."

★ ★ ★

In defiance of the facts of what had happened at Rothbury, the Bavin Government set out to blame the miners for it all, even to the extent of falsely claiming that there had been shooting from the miners' side. Newspapers dutifully peddled the Government and the police versions, distorting the facts by using such headlines as "Rioters fired first shots" and "Miners attack police" and quoting claims of "commendable restraint and discretion" by the police. One newspaper, in an editorial, took it on itself to accuse "extremists and revolutionaries who seek to white-wash unionism itself" of having caused the trouble!

Contrary to the lurid Government propaganda against the miners over the Rothbury events, one of the things which Rothbury veterans have recalled in *Common Cause* interviews and elsewhere in the past couple of years is that the miners had had no presentiments or forebodings about what was to happen at Rothbury that day. The miners had, in fact, gone there almost lightheartedly, despite the desperate seriousness of the issues which they faced in the lockout and then the introduction of scabs.

For instance, Henry Scanlon (later Northern District vice-president and president of the Federation) recalls that, when the Cessnock contingent set off for Rothbury on the night of Sunday, December 15, "the women saw us off at the School of Arts corner; it was as if we were going off on a picnic." Mick Frame (who was later Deputy Mayor of Cessnock for seven years and who is still a Greater Cessnock alderman) says that the Sunday night at Rothbury was spent in a festival spirit, with songs and ditties and yarning; another referred to it as being "a night of bonfires, fun and singing." In the morn-



The Rothbury mine.

ing, when the demonstrators moved towards the minesite, they were headed by the Kurri Kurri pipe band, which the previous night had piped the Rothbury-bound marchers. Frank Mattocks, coalfields correspondent for the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, described the 5 a.m. assembly of some thousands of mineworkers as being like nothing so much as a picnic crowd.

Then the police guns and batons came out . . .

★ ★ ★

Government use of police against the miners continued after Rothbury. For example, when the Rothbury affair was debated in the State Parliament in Sydney and a huge assembly of miners and others gathered outside Parliament House, police were there in force and they made a baton charge to disperse the crowd.

Big numbers of police, brought from Sydney and elsewhere, were retained on the northern coalfields in the period after Rothbury. Miners saw them as a virtual army of occupation, implementing a reign of wanton and unprovoked violence, under cover of Government legislation against "unlawful assemblies." As Dr. Gollan records (in *The Coalminers of New South Wales*), police "seem to have conducted themselves with an arrogance and brutality that went far beyond the requirements of maintaining order. Demonstrations and even meetings were broken up by baton charges, in which many miners were severely injured." Groups of miners standing or sitting talking would find themselves suddenly set upon by predatory bands of police. Mick Frame (later Deputy Mayor of Cessnock) recalls an occasion when he and others were sitting beside the railway line at Neath; a band of police came up, and Mackay (later Police Com-

missioner) told his men: "Into the bastards!"; Mick Frame himself was one of those who were hit and kicked.

In the aftermath of Rothbury, miners moved to form a Labor Defence Corps. One writer on Rothbury (Miriam Dixson) has said: "Indeed, for a few weeks after Rothbury, some of the northern coalfields communities were caught up in something like guerrilla war. At any rate, a Labor member in the Senate described the situation as one of impending civil war." Neither the Government of the day, nor other instigators of police violence, can claim any credit for the fact that that ultimate stage of conflict did not eventuate.

The northern lockout itself, which had begun on March 1, 1929, lasted into its sixteenth month before the alliance of Government and mineowners, together with the growth of real poverty among the locked-out miners and their families, forced the workers back on reduced contract and other pay rates. But the design of John "Baron" Brown and others, through the lockout, to smash the Miners Federation as a fighting union was defeated: the Federation remained intact, and with its great traditions reinvigorated and embellished.

★ ★ ★

So now, 50 years on, in 1979, we extend our respect and gratitude to all those whose efforts and sacrifices in the past went into making our Miners Federation what it is, and helped to defend and to better the conditions of mineworkers.

A commemorative plaque in the Miners Federation's Northern District office is dedicated to the memory of Norman Brown, to the many miners who were wounded at Rothbury and to the rank and file "who endured 16 months lockout in defence of their conditions." Similarly, a tablet being unveiled by the Minister for Mineral Resources & Development (Mr. Ron Mulock) at Freeman's Waterhole miners memorial in the commemorative ceremony there on December 16, 1979, is dedicated to the memory of Norman Brown "and in tribute to all mineworkers and families whose sacrifices and courage laid the basis for all our gains."

On this Rothbury anniversary, we recall with gratitude and pride the stirring deeds and struggles by mineworkers of past years.

— For the NSW Northern District Board of Management of the Miners Federation: Bill Chapman (president), Jim Hayes (vice-president), Ken Fogg (secretary).

THESE CEREMONIES WILL MARK THE ANNIVERSARY

Ceremonies arranged by the Miners Federation's Northern District for the 50th anniversary of Rothbury are:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 11 a.m., at the graveside of Norman Brown in the Greta cemetery.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1.30 p.m., at Freeman's Waterhole miners memorial music shell and museum; this ceremony will include the annual commemorative service for all those who have lost their lives in the mining industry.



The grave of Norman Brown in the Greta cemetery.

* Eyewitnesses' Stories of Tragic Mine Riots *

CASUALTY LIST

Police and Miner Riot Victims

Victims of the rioting at Rothbury were:

KILLED

ORMAN BROWN (28) of Greta, shot through stomach; died after admission to hospital.

INJURED

DAVID BROWN (42) of Aberdare Road, Cessnock.

H. WOOD (22) of Kurri.

ROBERT HUNTER (53) of Millfield Street, Kurri; bullet wound in right shoulder; condition not serious.

WILLIAM HARRISON (23) of Banker Street, Kurri; bullet wound in left thigh; condition fair.

GEORGE LINDSAY (26) of Maitland Street, Kurri; bullet wound in left thigh and shock; condition fair.

KETH LELLIOTT (26) of Cessnock; bullet wound in left shoulder; treated and allowed to leave.

DAVID WATSON of Cessnock; grazed bullet wound on chest.

W. GORTON, flesh wound on wrist.

POLICE CASUALTIES

SERGEANT MOORE, of Broadmeadow, several wounds, caused probably by stones. Sent home.

SERGEANT RYAN, of Newcastle, injuries to back and head, and bruises about body. Sent home.

SERGEANT BOOTH, of Cessnock, wound on cheekbone and discolored eye. Still on duty.

CONSTABLE SWINNEY, of Tichie's Hill, injuries to back and bruises about body. Still on duty.

SERGEANT MONDAY, of Newcastle, probable fracture of the wrist. Still on duty.

CONSTABLE WOODLANDS, of Mayfield, abrasions on face, loss of one tooth, injuries to mouth. Sent home.

There were 41 minor casualties.

In Serious Condition

CRESSWICK (Monday) of Cessnock, 42, of Cessnock, after being wounded in the riot, was taken to the Maitland Hospital. The condition of his wounds is reported to be serious.

BLANKETS AND FIRMS AT BATHURST

BATHURST (Monday) - The police at Bathurst, after being informed of the rioting at Rothbury, were alerted to be ready to deal with any disturbances.

A Special Force of Constables from Bathurst was sent to Rothbury to assist in the rioting between the miners and the police.

* PLAYED ON BY PIPERS, MINERS ATTACK POLICE

One Killed and Many Wounded in Desperate Riot at Dawn

(By Special "Pictorial" Representative, who was on the scene of the riots)

The Rothbury tragedy, when one miner was killed and many on both sides injured in a sensational fight between police and pickets, stands out as the most dramatic industrial clash that has ever shocked Australia.

Nine thousand miners stormed the colliery, which the Government is determined to open and work, and were driven back by batons and automatics.

"We want Weaver!" "That — Weaver, where is he?" rose the shout. The roar rose and swelled like a great windstorm.

Up to the fence they marched in the grey dawn, in their thousands, led by the skirling of the Kurri Pipe Band, in full kit. In a tremendous wave, to the tune of "The Campbells Are Coming," they surged over the colliery fence and ran to rans the colliery.

The Minister for Mines (Mr. Weaver) was throughout at the colliery office calmly carrying out his self-appointed task of supervising the camp arrangements.

The Zero Hour

All night long the men had been gathering in the nearby scrub, where hundreds of camp-fires, glowing throughout the night, ominously presaged the tragic dawn.

By daylight the men were cold, listless, weary, and ill-tempered. At 4.40 a.m. the grey army was seen topping the hill and pouring down to the colliery. Police at vantage points gave the warning and fell back.

About 20 police under Superintendent Beattie ranged themselves in slight cover about 50 yards within the fence. The first rush they attempted to stem without recourse to arms. They were forced back and drawing their batons, clubbed the men. During this attack three shots were fired by the miners.

Savage Attack

One landed between Sergeant Moore's feet; the next splattered Sergeant Munday's forehead while the third passed between the two of them.

Out with your guns and into 'em!" said one of the police, but Superintendent Beattie cried out: "No don't fire!"

Sergeant Moore had worked his way up to the fence, driving the attackers before him, and was attacked from behind. He was knocked to the ground with a badger. Half a dozen, with sticks and stones, commenced to club him mercilessly.

The sergeant's cries of pain brought Detective Sergeant Ryan running to the aid, and Ryan dashed into the mêlée, but he too was knocked down by the mob.

There were cries of, "Kick his guts out!" and Superintendent Beattie, seeing the position, ordered, "Fire!"

Previously the police had been instructed only to fire into the ground up to the air, and now the batons came out, and along the serrated police lines swept the rattle of a volley.

The Line Breaks

The miners, perhaps there were 400 actually in the fight, wavered and broke back for the fence. About 50 who had penetrated past the police towards the colliery 300 yards away, came tumbling back, dodging between the lines and swarming over the fence.

The last to get over the fence was Mr. Bandleby, M.L.A., deputy-leader of the Opposition. He had great down with the police, and he was now seen to be shouting and shouting out to the police: "Why don't you be a bit more out out the firing!"

A big lamp on the forehead showed up the eyes of a miner who was hit with a baton and for heading

The police, shoving him on his way, moved him still protesting, outside the fence. He mingled with the crowd and disappeared. Within three minutes there was not



POLICEMEN ENTRAINED FOR Rothbury were quietly farewelled.

one of the miners' army within the colliery grounds.

The police formed into line and advanced towards the boundary, revolvers in hand. Beyond the fence was a tumultuous sea of miners, those in front yelling out in fear: "Don't fire!"

Nevertheless, when the police came near the fence, they were met with a sudden barrage of sticks, stones, horsehoes, and every kind of missile that the miners could find.

Shots in the Air

Sergeant Munday was struck first, his wrist dropping as though broken. It was a knot of timber, about three feet long that got him. About half a dozen others were hit, and then, without any apparent order, the police started firing again—into the air.

Sergeant Ryan, weak from loss of blood, stood up, clutching his revolver in both hands, firing.

It was during this stage of the fighting that three men were wounded. They fell back among their companions outside the fence, and

were taken back on to the hill, to where the majority of the men retreated, leaving about 300 at the fence. The barrage of missiles continued, but in a more or less desultory way, for well over two hours, while about 40 police patrolled the grounds.

The Tragedy

Several small rushes were made during the morning, and the position was critical, but the police had it well in hand till 9.30. That was when Government Mines Inspectors Jack McGeachie, and Hayes got through to the gates in Mr. Jack's car. Here they were rushed by the miners, firing bullets and hurling stones.

Every window of the car was shattered, the back tyres deflated, and the bodywork damaged in a few seconds. Mr. McGeachie received slight cuts, and a bullet-graze across the back of his neck.

The strikers strove to drag out the occupants of the car, but the police came running up, firing automatics into the air and the ground.

One man, Norman Brown (28), of Greta, dropped, shot in the abdomen. His mates got him into a car, and he was taken away to Kurri Hospital, where he died. Two other miners also cried out in pain as police bullets hit them.

After this the men fell back, and the police got the car and its occupants into the beleaguered colliery.

Another move was then noted from inside. A large detachment of miners were seen to break off from the main army and make their way round to the back of the colliery office. A posse of police was rushed up, and kept guard in that quarter, where the men, seeing they were observed, skulked for the rest of the morning.

Railway Pulled Up

Yet another detachment, of about 50 hurried away across country, and began pulling up the railway line, about three-quarters of a mile from Rothbury, and within 100 yards from Braxton station.

Mounted droopers and foot police who were on railway patrol rushed them. There was a sharp struggle and shots were fired, resulting in one man being wounded and 11 arrested. They were lodged in East Maitland Gaol. The rest escaped into the bush.

(Continued on Page 3)



THOUGH THEY ARE ON THE (Central Railway) Station, they are bound for Rothbury.

POLICE CHIEF REPORTS

"Commendable Restraint" He Says

A terse and vivid narrative was handed to the Premier last night by the Commissioner of Police (Mr. Childs). It is an official police statement of the disturbance.

"WHEN portion of the fence was knocked down the crowd forced their way into the mine property. Superintendent Beattie met them with about 40 police and asked them to retire. They took no heed. They were armed with sticks, and kept forcing the police back," states the report.

Fusillade of Stones

"The Superintendent ordered the police to draw their batons and charge the crowd, which was forced back to the fence.

"Three shots were fired by the miners, who indulged in a fusillade of stones.

"They advanced again, using the sticks. Superintendent Beattie instructed the police to draw their revolvers and fire into the ground.

"The mob then retired, and matters remained quiet until about 9.30 a.m.

Continuing the report states that when two mining inspectors attempted to replace a gate which had been torn down they were rushed and their lives were in danger.

"Shots were fired by the mob, but the inspectors could not be identified.

"The crowd made a further attempt to rush on to the ground, not only from the end where the car was standing, but from the opposite end," states the report.

"The police again fired into the ground. As stones were again being thrown at the police, the latter fired again. Shortly after this the crowd dispersed.

"Some time afterwards (probably about an hour) the local police at Braxton discovered about 25 men in a cutting on the railway line (the Rothbury line), about 300 yards from Braxton station. They had torn one

PRODUCTION TO-DAY?

The Minister for Mines (Mr. Weaver), at Rothbury yesterday, stated that the colliery might produce coal to-day, as everything is in readiness.

line up. The police arrested 11 of them after a chase, and these men are now charged at Braxton Police Station.

"Acted With Restraint"

"Adequate police reinforcements," said Mr. Childs, "have been despatched, and the force now at Rothbury should be sufficient to prevent any recurrence of the disorder. The last reports received inform me that the crowd has dispersed and matters are quiet.

"I am satisfied, from the information I have received, that the individual members of the force have acted with commendable restraint and discretion."

ON OTHER PAGES

Birds, Deaths	7
Broadcasting	18
Casual Comings	8
Finance and Commerce	16
Free Insurance	16
Law List	18
Mails	13
Flemington	11
Popular "Pop"	21
Puzzles	24
Rural	17, 18
Serials	24
Shipping News	12, 13
Sporting	25, 26, 27
Women	22, 25
Wool Sales	18



During the Rothbury affair — From the Daily Telegraph Pictorial of December 17, 1929.

Sensational Happenings at Rothbury Colliery

**FIVE THOUSAND MINERS
ASSEMBLE AT COLLIERY GATES**

RIOTING, SHOOTING, AND LOSS OF LIFE

**DEMONSTRATION AGAINST INTRODUCTION OF
FREE LABOUR.**

Ugly scenes were witnessed at Rothbury Colliery yesterday morning.

Following the decision at Sunday's aggregate meetings, some five thousand miners from Cessnock, Kurri, and other parts of the field, assembled at Rothbury yesterday morning. They went to the

ELEVEN ARRESTS

Alleged Interference With Railway Line.

During the upheaval at Rothbury yesterday the police made eleven arrests.

The men arrested were, it is alleged, engaged in the removal of rails from the colliery railway siding when the arrests were made.

They were charged under a section of the Amended Crimes Act, and will appear at Branxton Police Court on January 18.

The men were charged that they did maliciously remove two rails belonging to Rothbury Colliery, with intent to obstruct an engine and carriages on such railway. They were all released at 4.40 p.m. on bail, self in £200 each.

FUNERAL OF NORMAN BROWN.

Thousands From Coalfields Attend.

The largest crowd that has ever been in Greta—not excepting the time of the memorial mining disaster—found their way to the mining village this afternoon. All roads led to Greta, the reason being to attend the funeral of Norman Brown, a victim of the tragic happening at Rothbury yesterday. Brown, only 26 years of age, was shot in the stomach in a clash with the police, and died in the Maitland Hospital.

Every available lorry and car in Cessnock was placed at the disposal of the miners of Cessnock. Thousands from Cessnock were present at the funeral, and from Kurri Kurri and district the attendance was almost as large.

The tragic death of the young man was referred to with hushed voices by those present.

It was a remarkable tribute to the memory of a comrade, cut off in the flower of his life.

The business houses in Cessnock and Kurri were closed during the afternoon as a tribute to the memory of the deceased.

— From the Cessnock Eagle, December 17, 1929.

VETERANS OF ROTHBURY

In the Rothbury 50th anniversary commemoration, a special place will be held by men who were themselves in the mineworkers' demonstration at Rothbury on that grim December day in 1929 and by widows of men who were there.

In organising the commemoration, the Miners Federation's Northern District Board of Management in September called for Rothbury veterans to get in touch with the Federation so that they could be fittingly involved.

Here, in alphabetical order, is a list of those who (up to the time of printing, in mid-November) had notified the Federation of their having been there, or of their husbands having been there, or who are known to have been there and still to be living in the Northern coalfield areas:

Mrs. **BERYL ARMSTRONG**, the Boulevard, Toronto (before her marriage in 1927, she was Beryl Butler): her husband (the late Bill Armstrong), her father (the late Tom Butler) and brothers took part in the Rothbury demonstration, and she herself watched from the verandah of her home opposite the minesite.

JOSEPH BAILEY, Caldwell Street, Merewether.

EDDIE BUTLER, Millfield Street, Spion Kop, and **ROLAND BUTLER**, North Rothbury, who are brothers of Mrs. Beryl Armstrong. Another brother, Vic Butler, now of Mudgee, started work at Rothbury in 1915; a bullet went through the roof of his nearby house in the Rothbury shooting.

ABE CAULD, Kurri Kurri.

HARRY COCKERILL, Marianne Street, Cardiff (later Northern District vice-president of the Miners Federation and subsequently a member of the NSW Legislative Council).

JIM COMERFORD, Fifth Street, Weston (who became Northern District president of the Federation and who was Federation general secretary in 1968).

ALBERT CRUICKSHANKS, Sale Street, Greta (at various times he was lodge president at New Greta and Whitburn; he describes Norman Brown as having been "the quietest fellow who ever walked").

STAN DAWN, Wallsend Street, Stanford Merthyr.

WAL DAWSON, Samford Road, Leichhardt, Ipswich (Queensland).

NORM DUNNICLIFF, Wollombi Road, Bellbird (he was one of the 11 men who were arrested for pulling up the railway).

MRS. EDITH ELLISON, Faucett Street, Blackalls Park (her late husband, James Ellison, cradled Norman Brown after the shooting: "he came home spattered with blood ... It was a terrible affair, but a lot of good came out of it and all workers should know that they have to stand together ...")

Mrs. **MILLIE ETHERINGTON**, First Street, Weston (her late husband, Bill, was at Rothbury that day).

A. J. ('MICK') FRAME, Harle Street, Abermain (he is a Greater Cessnock alderman and was Deputy Mayor for seven years; he is secretary of the Freeman's Waterhole miners memorial committee).

JIM GILLIARD, Maitland Road, Mayfield West.

WILLIAM J. GOODWIN, Cruickshank Street, Bellbird (he and his father-in-law, the late William Stothard, were both at Rothbury).

LES HARRIS, Northcote Street, Kurri Kurri.

BILL HARRISON, Maitland Street, Kurri Kurri (he was shot in the leg).

BILL JOHNS, Northcote Street, Kurri Kurri.

MRS. MURIEL MALAM, Lavender Street, East Cessnock (her late husband, James Malam, was at Rothbury "and in other protest marches of that ghastly period of the lockout").

JIM MAYBURY, Harle Street, Weston.

PATRICK O'KEEFE, Anstey Street, Cessnock.

JIM PEARCE, Northcote Street, Kurri Kurri (he was wounded in the back by a bullet at Rothbury).

HENRY PICKERING, Deaken Street, Kurri Kurri.

ALF PURCELL, Cessnock Road, Branxton (after the eventual resumption of work, he became Rothbury lodge president).

PAUL RILEY, Mulbring Street, Kurri Kurri ("I was one of the 11 men who were caught pulling the railway line up at Rothbury - I didn't run fast enough").

DICK ROSTRON, Victoria Street, Kurri Kurri.

H. RUSSELL, Challice Street, Beresfield.

HENRY SCANLON, Halcyon Street, Cessnock (later vice-president and president of the Northern District of the Miners Federation).

JAMES SPICER, Tiriki Street, Blacksmiths.

MRS. ADA (MILLIE) STOKES, Price Street, Greta (her husband, Henry Stokes, who died about three years ago, was at Rothbury; their daughter, Mrs. Val Randall, is a member of the Greater Cessnock City Council).

HARLEY TANNER, Turnbull Street, Merewether.

MRS. SARAH TILLEY, First Street, Weston (her late husband, Bill Tilley, was at Rothbury).

ALEX WATTERS, Lewers Street, Belmont (he was later secretary of Belmont miners lodge for 13 or 14 years).

ALEXANDER WHITSON, Fisher Street, Neath.

GWILYN WILLIAMS, Cary Street, Toronto.

WALLY WOOD, Coonanbarra Street, Raymond Terrace (he was shot in the throat, and had to have long hospital treatment; later he was for many years secretary of the Raymond Terrace branch of the Australian Labor Party).

As well as mineworkers, another who was at Rothbury that day was journalist **WILF McCLUNG**, now of Fellowes Street, Merewether; he was there as Maitland representative of the *Newcastle Sun*.

Very probably, there are other veterans of Rothbury of whom we do not know; if so, we are sorry that their names do not appear here, and we would be glad to have the chance of including them in later lists.

Memorandum	
FROM THE MANAGER	BRANXTON, <i>14 Dec</i> 1929
Rothbury Collieries	To <i>Mr. Wilf McClung</i>
BRANXTON	
TELEPHONE MAITLAND 306	
<i>Mr. W. H. McClung of the Newcastle Sun has permission to enter the Colliery grounds.</i>	
<i>J. L. Thomas jr</i>	

This permit to enter the Rothbury minesite was issued to journalist Wilf McClung, of the Newcastle Sun, on December 14, 1929 - two days before the Rothbury eruption.

TRAGEDY AT ROTHBURY

*There were sounds of sobs and crying as the daylight floods the sky,
The hour of life has vanished and the long night passes by,
I lift my eyes to heaven and in tears I'll call her son,
Who was taken from his mother by the crack of someone's gun.*

*Yes, in the hour of sorrow there's one thing I can't conceal,
For my heart is always longing and my thoughts will often steal
Across the bush to Rothbury whose surface leaves a track
To the boys who went on picket and the boy who'll never come back.*

*There was music at the graveside and in grief the mourners stood,
Still the wind a hymn was humming with the trees upon the hill,
The sun was shining brightly on sad friends from every town,
And the minister started praying for our dead pal Norman Brown.*

*Yes, in the hour of sorrow there's one thing I can't conceal,
For my heart is always longing and my thoughts will often steal
Across the bush to Rothbury whose surface leaves a track
To the boys who went on picket and the boy who'll never come back.*

(From the song "A Sad Day on the Coalfields", by R. Grant, a miner of those years.)



When Rothbury mine was working: some of the members of the miners lodge.