

MANAGING OFFICE—
"Imperial, Manchester."

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HEAD OFFICE BRANCH,

MANCHESTER.

BRANCH MANAGER, F. HOLDEN.

Commercial Union Assurance Company Limited.

IN WHICH IS MERGED THE

HAND-IN-HAND INSURANCE SOCIETY, ESTD 1896.

32, BROWN STREET,

Manchester. 23rd March 1932.

Dear Sir,

Asbestosis Risk.
Messrs Turner Bros. Asbestos Co. Ltd.

As you are aware, we recently arranged for our Mr Davies, the official who is handling your Asbestosis Claims in this District, to visit Messrs Turner Bros.'s Works. We now have pleasure in enclosing a copy of his report, following this visit, which will no doubt be of interest to you.

Yours faithfully,

Holden
Branch Manager.

The Secretary,
Messrs Turner and Newall Ltd.
Spotland.
Rochdale.

TURNER BROTHERS (ASBESTOS) LIMITED.

I visited the Works of Messrs. Turner Brothers (Asbestos) Limited of Rochdale on Thursday, and was received by Mr. V.M. Ellison, their Employment Manager. This gentleman was most helpful and attentive. I should like to record my thanks for his courtesy.

Messrs. Turner have in their employ 602 workers who come within the Asbestosis Scheme 1931. These have all been examined by the Medical Board at a cost of £1.6.0. a head. Ninety-eight were referred for X-ray examination at a further charge of £1.11.6. per head. It will therefore be seen that in this respect alone the cost to the Employer is very considerable.

It has been indicated to the Firm by the Medical Board that they propose to suspend fourteen workers, and I am informed that one other case is not yet decided. The certificates have not yet been completed and the Board propose to re-examine these workers on the 22nd instant before completing the necessary certificates.

Practically all the workers for suspension are or have been employed in the weaving Section of the industry. It would seem therefore that, so far as this work is concerned, the weaving Section is the main danger point.

I commenced my inspection at the Harridge Mill. This is where the Asbestos first enters from the Railway Sidings. It arrives there in bags and is also handled in bags throughout its process in this Mill. I would suggest that the bags should be made of a better

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type and constructed of a material which would not allow the dust to penetrate. The metal feed to the rotary sieve might with advantage be enclosed.

From this Mill to the main Mill the partially treated material contained in sacks which are placed in open iron buckets, is conveyed by an aerial ropeway. On arrival at the ropeway the metal bucket is tipped up and the sacks discharged. Some are stacked on the platform and others are tossed down a concrete incline and stacked below by one or more men. These men working below appear to exist in a cloud of dust and should be provided with complete overalls and respirators.

The Mixing Room appears as free from dust as could be expected but presumably by accident at the time of my visit the fan chamber door was open and one end of the room was shrouded in a cloud of dust. Arrangements should be made to see that this does not occur. In the Fiberising Room the dust bags should be impervious to dust and some better arrangement than the open skips should be provided to remove the dust from under the working lattice. All the fronts of the Crighton openers should be enclosed. The remainder of the Works with the exception of the Weaving Section calls for no comment.

In the Weaving Section the machines are for the most part too close together and the roof is low. Over the work in all cases a metal guard is provided and loose dust is removed by a suction plant, but the worker is always standing immediately over his work and

quantities of dust, which are not removed by the exhaust fans, cloud the air and saturate the clothing of operatives.

Practically all the operatives, both male and female, do not wear a head cover and it would appear to be in the Firm's interest to provide them all with suitable overalls fitted with a cover for the head and neck, because it is obvious that with clothing saturated with Asbestos every time, both in and out of the works, any movement is made by the individual small clouds of this pernicious dust must enter the lungs of the worker.

The ventilation of the Mill is by means of warm air, and, if it could be so arranged that the inflow of air to the weaving Room should take place immediately above the head of each operative, and a suction plant could be fitted under the work and not over it, it would appear possible that at least the employee would have the opportunity of breathing air free from dust. It may well be that this method of ventilation is not practical, and it is only the Firm themselves who can decide on this point.

Messrs. Turner have promised to advise me immediately they have any further information about those workers who are to be suspended, and I have promised to keep them posted as to the amount of compensation to be paid.

M. H. Davis

21ST MARCH 1932.