

Coal in North Carolina



At the late meeting of the American Association for the advancement of Science, held at New Haven, the following communication was made by Prof.

"Walter R. Johnson upon the coal-formation of Central North Carolina : Coal-Formation or Central North Carolina. The coal-field referred to lies partly in the County of Chatham and partly in that of Moore, very nearly in the geographical center of the State of North Carolina. Geographically, it appears to repose directly but unconformably upon the upward edges of the gold-bearing rocks; but of the degree of conformity between the two formations, Prof. J. was unable to speak with entire confidence.

On proceeding from Pittsboro, in Chatham County, toward the north-easterly portion of the coal-field, we cross the edges of slates, many of which are highly indurated until within about half a mile of the openings, which expose the coal. The underlying sandstone which reposes almost horizontally upon the metamorphic slates, has a slight southerly inclination of not more than 6 degrees.

The Coal is here about three feet in thickness, and is covered with a friable

bituminous slate, in which but few distinct organic remains could be detected but many coprolites of fishes or reptilia, and many minute shells, are observed. In this slate are also observed thin laminae of carbonate of lime.

The analysis of this coal proved it to be of the highly bituminous kind, yielding volatile matter 32.83; fixed carbon 62.78, and earthy matter 3.40 per cent. The fixed carbon consequently bears to the volatile ingredients of the coal the ratio of 1.94 to 1, or in round numbers, 2 to 1. The color of this coal is brownish black. Specimens occur on which are cavities of considerable depth, in which were once contained cave-shaped fossils."

Source: The North Carolina Standard, September 25, 1850.