

Borough of Archbald, Pennsylvania

At last, the miners were compelled to accept the pay reduction, as the mining season drew to a close, and the winter was closing in. The next mining season, the men refused to work for Mr. Kearney at any price which resulted in his contract being annulled. In 1861 Hosie and Jadwin leased the property and worked the mines until 1863. John Jermyn became the operator for two years followed by the Boston & Lackawanna Coal Company who worked the mine until 1870. It was only when they went bankrupt that the Delaware & Hudson repurchase the land.

In 1859, the Delaware & Hudson Coal Co. began constructing a breaker in Archbald, the only one between Scranton and Carbondale. They did not begin operations until 1860. This breaker, the original White Oak Breaker, was located just south of the Hill Street crossing on the East side of the Delaware & Hudson tracks.

The Breaker had a capacity of 650 tons daily, and by 1880 employed 230 boys and men. There were 38 mules in use at the colliery. Originally the White Oak Creek passed through this area, but the creek bed was moved to make room for the platform and tracks at the No. 1 mine. The original breaker operated until July 14, 1899, when it suddenly burst into flames. By the 5th of August on that same year, 50 men were hired to clear away the debris of the old breaker and on August 21, 1899, work resumed at all Delaware & Hudson mines. On October 13, 1900, the new White Oak Breaker was ready but did not begin operations until November 3, when the coal strike of 1900 was over.

By 1910, new mines were being opened at the southern end of town and production increased at the White Oak mines. The amount of coal to be processed soon became too much for the White Oak Breaker to handle and plans were made to construct a larger, more efficient breaker. It was decided to construct this new breaker in the Dark Valley section of town where new mines were being opened. This breaker was called Gravity Slope Colliery and when it was opened in 1913 the White Oak Breaker was shut down.

At one time there were 1700 men employed at the Gravity Slope Colliery and three full shifts worked day and night. There were 120 mules in use and it used to be a sight every morning, when the boys would drive the mules from the old White Oak Mule Barn down the tracks to the mines. The main mine, which was a slope and was appropriately named Gravity Slope after the colliery, was open in 1911.

The Gravity Slope Colliery was the center of activity in town for many years. In 1942, the conveyor line to the top of the breaker collapsed and the breaker was permanently shut down. The coal from the still working colliery was shipped to the **Powerly Breaker** in Carbondale and the Marvin Breaker in Scranton. Soon afterwards the breaker was dismantled. The mines at the colliery were worked until 1955 when water began seeping through the coal seams into the Delaware & Hudson mines from the shutdown Riverside mines. This became too much for the mine pumps to handle. On October 4, 1955, the Gravity Slope Colliery shut down for good, ending the Delaware & Hudson mining in the Borough, one hundred and ten years after their first mine opened in 1845.