

Bristol Mirror

Saturday 2nd October 1852

Fatal Colliery at Coal Pit Heath

An inquest which had been adjourned for the purpose of the Coroner communicating with the Government was concluded by W. Joyner Ellis, Esq., on Tuesday last^[1], at the Ring of Bells, Coal Pit Heath on the body of Joseph Lawrence, who was killed by being precipitated over the spiver wheel^[2] at Ramshill Colliery^[3], the property of the Coal Pit Heath Company, in whose employ the deceased was, and it appears that the accident was mainly caused by the negligence of the engineer. It appeared from the evidence of three witnesses who were examined, that on the day of the accident the deceased went to work as usual, and when he had finished gave the ordinary signal to be hauled up. The engine was set in motion and the ascent had been partly accomplished when the engineer's attention was attracted by a man in the road, who had with him a pig, which had been purchased for the engineer. He at once gave his son the handle of the engine to conclude the task of hauling up the deceased, whilst he himself went to look at the pig. The lad it was said had been accustomed occasionally to haul up the cart, but unfortunately this time he mistook the reversing handle and the result was the deceased man with the bucket was carried over the spiver wheel and precipitated a distance of 50 or 60 yards. He expired soon afterwards. The jury, after a brief deliberation, returned a verdict of manslaughter against the engineer, who has accordingly been committed on the coroners warrant to Gloucester jail to await his trial at the next Assizes.

[1] Tuesday last would be Tuesday 28th September 1852

[2] Spiver wheel - presumably the winding wheel at the top of the shaft

[3] Ramshill Colliery - Ram Hill Colliery - Coalpit Heath