

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 8th. April 1854

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Inquests.

On Wednesday last, at Handley, on the body of James O'Connor, who was killed at the bottom of Hopewell Pit, Handley. The jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against John Murt.

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Saturday 15th. April 1854

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Two men killed at Wirksworth.

A serious accident occurred at the Ravenstall lead mine on Monday last, which resulted in the death of two of the workmen, named Thomas Swift, and Samuel Allen. Swift was engaged at work when a large block of stone got loose and fell upon him, crushing him to death on the spot. Allen, on seeing his comrade buried beneath the huge mass, went forward to his rescue, when another block fell on him and injured him so severely that he died in about half-an-hour afterwards. An inquest was held on the bodies, and verdict of "Accidental Death" was returned in both cases.

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Saturday 22nd. April 1854

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Recent Discovery of Gold and Silver in the High Peak of Derbyshire.

About three years ago, a few persons in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth agreed to commence mining operations on a very extensive scale, in the mineral liberties of Calver, Hassop, Rowland, and Ashford. Uniform and almost unparalleled success having attended their efforts, they resolved still further to extend their operation, and with that view crossed the River Wye, in order to try their fortunes on the banks of the Lathkill, when, at the foot of an immensely elevated mountain range, they commenced driving a day level, in splendid maiden ground, in order to cross-cut the celebrated Alport and Magpie veins. Before their object was accomplished, they came to a mineral, extensively diffused through the entire strata, having every appearance of silver, which, on being carefully assayed in Sheffield and London, proves to be the purest native silver; and the proprietors have since discovered, by Berdan's machine, that the mineral also contains a portion of finest gold. The most remarkable feature of this affair remains to be told. When this venture was being commenced, a few of the leading trades people of Chesterfield, like their neighbours in Sheffield, resolved while diversifying their avocations, by having a little mining intermixed, and, consequently, made application to Mr. Burgoyne, of Eyam, and Mr. Jepson, of Chatsworth, to purchase the right of this sett, and were told they could be accommodated with the same, at a mere nominal price. However, in consequence of procrastination, the startling discovery was made before the minds of the good people of Chesterfield were made up, and the adage was again fulfilled - that a slight miss was as fatal as a mile. We hope our neighbours will have more luck next time. Our readers will shortly be favoured with statistics.

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Advert - Far Cliff Mine.

Notice is hereby given, that a Special General Meeting of the Proprietors of this mine will be held at the Peacock Inn, Bakewell, on Monday, the 1st. day of May next, at eleven o'clock, a.m.

Thomas Broomhead, Jnr., Secretary

Calver, April 25th., 1854.

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Suffocation from Choke Damp at Bradwell, Derbyshire.

The village of Bradwell, about twelve miles from Sheffield, was thrown into consternation a few days since by the death of four men from choke-damp. Many inhabitants are miners, and rich veins of lead ore, running from east to west, are worked at a distance of three miles from the village. Most of the ore is smelted at the village, where there are several cupolas for the purpose. A correspondent of a daily paper says - "Four men lie dead at the works, erected near the old cupola, about four or five years ago, for the purpose of extracting lead from the "slag", or refuse from the old smelting furnace, by some improved process. These works have been out of operation for twelve months, and were reopened on Wednesday. In consequence of the pump which supplied the engine with water not working properly, the manager of the works, a man named Mitchell, was obliged to descend the well and open a valve to allow the air to escape. This valve was fixed to a stage which was about six feet and a half from the bottom of the well, and reached from above by a ladder. It appeared that Mitchell had performed this operation several times during the day, and between ten and eleven o'clock on Wednesday night, he went down again, for the same purpose. Being absent for some time on this occasion, one of the workmen named Hallam descended the well to see what was the matter. Hallam was heard by some others of the workmen calling to Mitchell, by presently his voice ceased. The workmen became alarmed, and on one of them descending the well, he found both Mitchell and Hallam senseless. This man was unable to render his companions any assistance, such were the overpowering effects of the air, being highly charged with noxious vapours. He made his escape with the aid of parties at the mouth of the well, with considerable difficulty. Some of the workmen set off to the village for assistance, and on their way met two young men, named John Dernelly and Joseph Elliot, to whom they communicated the fact that Mitchell and Hallam were lying in the well nearly dead, but unfortunately without adding a word of caution as to the danger of descending the well. Dernelly and Elliot hurried of to the well, whilst the workmen went forward to the village. It appears that on arriving at the well Elliot descended, and being a powerful young man, he succeeded nearly in reaching the mouth of the well, being one of the bodies in his arms. Suddenly he wavered and let go his burden to save himself. Dernelly caught hold of him, but the superincumbent weight dragged him from his feet, and he and his companion fell to the bottom of the pit. It was sometime before the well was sufficiently cleared of choke-damp to permit of it being explored; but when this had been done the four unfortunate men were found lifeless. Mitchell has left a wife and four children; Hallam a wife (who is near her confinement), and four little ones; Elliot and Dernelly were not married men.

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Cutting Pit Ropes, at Speighthill Colliery.

Sometime during the interval between Tuesday night and Thursday morning, some miscreant, either maliciously or wantonly, cut the pit ropes of the above colliery, belonging to the Wingerworth Iron Company. George Kays, who went down first, had descended only a few yards, when the rope broke, and he was precipitated to the bottom, and was very seriously injured. An act of so base a nature deserves the severest punishment the law can inflict.

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No Headline.

About three years ago, a few persons in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth agreed to commence mining operations on a very extensive scale, in the mineral liberties of Calver, Hassop, Rowland and Ashford. Uniform and almost unparalled success having attended their efforts, they resolved still further to extend their operations, and with that view crossed the River Wye, in order to try their fortunes on the banks of the Lathkill, where, at the foot of an immensely elevated mountain range, they commenced driving a day level, in splendid maiden ground, in order to crosscut the celebrated Alport and Magpie Veins. Before their object was accomplished, they came to a mineral, extensively diffused through the entire strata, having every appearance of silver, which on being carefully assayed in Sheffield and London, proves to be the purest native silver, and the proprietors having since discovered, by Berdan's machine, that the mineral also contains a portion of the finest gold.

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Literary Notices - A Treatise on the Derbyshire Mining Customs and Mineral Court Act, 1852, by Thomas Tapping, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, Author of "The High Peak Mineral Customs", etc. London: Shaw and Sons, Fetter Lane.

The author, in his preface, says, "The present volume on the Derbyshire Mining Customs and Mineral Customs Act, 1852, (15 and 16 Vic. cap. clxiii), has relation to the mining customs and mineral customs of the Soke and Wapentake of Wirksworth, and of the manors or liberties of Crich, Ashford, Stoney Middleton and Eyam, Hartington, Litton, Peak Forest, Tideswell, Youlgreave, also in the County of Derby". All who are interested in the raising of lead ore minerals would do well to consult this excellent treatise on the Derbyshire mining customs, which was has been framed with a view to elucidate a subject, which, in this part of the kingdom at least, absorbs more than a usual degree of interest. There is much that is curious as well as instructive in this book, and in the higher parts of this county, where the customs referred to in it prevail, it is a work of indispensable necessity to the mineral wealth. At the end of the work is an appendix containing the act relating to the Mining Customs and Mineral Courts Act, passed in 1852, which will be useful to parties engaged in mining operations to refer to. We have not space for more than the following extract, which will serve to give the reader interested in such matters, a fair idea of the valuable content of the work, which we doubt not, as a local work, will gradually find its way into the hands of the parties seeking information in connection therewith.

It carries on with a long and tedious quote.