

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 4th. March 1854

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Advert - Just Published, Price 6d., boards.

Shaw and Sons, Fetter Lane, London.

A Treatise on the Derbyshire Mining Customs and Mineral Court Act, 1852, (15 and 16 Vic., cap. clxii), analytically and practically arranged, embracing, firstly, the Mining Customs, Articles, Duties, and Officers of the Wapentake of Wirksworth, and of the Manors or Liberties of Crich, Ashford, Stoney Middleton and Eyam, Hartington, Litton, Peak Forest, Tideswell, and Youlgrave, in the County of Derby. And, secondly, the practise and proceedings of the several Great and Small Barmote Courts of the above mentioned places, with notes, cases, references and a copious index. By Thomas Tapping, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, author of treatises on the Writ of Mandamus, the High Peak Mineral Customs, and the 2nd. edition of Manlove's rhymed chronicle of the Wirksworth Lead Mines. The Readwin prize essay on the cost-book principle as applicable to mining, etc., etc., etc.

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Advert - To be Sold by Private Contract.

One third share of a colliery in full work, in the Parish of Dronfield and County of Derby.

For further particulars and to treat for the same, application to be made to Mr. Cutts, solicitor, of Chesterfield.

March 1st., 1854.

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No Headline.

A fatal explosion of carburetted hydrogen gas took place on Wednesday morning at the Lady Shore Colliery, near Bolton. Repairs were required nearly at the bottom of the shaft, a stage had been erected about 12 yards from the bottom to accommodate the workmen. The workmen worked with naked lights, conceiving that they were perfectly safe, but the stage so far stopped the ventilation as to afford a lodgement for the gas underneath, and the flame of a candle igniting it, a tremendous explosion resulted, by which the underlooker of the colliery, was killed, and four other men were severely burned.

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No Headline.

The report of the discovery of gold on the "Braes of Balquidder" has been confirmed. It appears that, sometime since, on a farm called the Letters, in Balquidder, possessed by Mr. Cameron, Kings House, and belonging to the Marquis of Breadalbane, a lead mine, which was known long ago to have existed, has been opened by his Lordship's orders. Miners have been very successful in getting lead ore, richly impregnated with silver, and lately with gold. The first nugget found was about the size of an ordinary breast pin's head. It was sent to his Lordship, at Taymouth Castle, and on being tested, pronounced to be first rate gold. A second nugget found weighed about 6 ounces, the third about 5, and the fourth about 4 ounces. His Lordship was at the "diggings" last week, for the purpose of making arrangements regarding the working of the "diggings", and also fixing on a proper site on which to build suitable houses for the gold diggers of Balquidder. The rock is Mountain Limestone, imbedded with quartz. It is curious that there has been a local tradition here for generations that there was gold in the district.

Dumfries Courier.

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Town Hall, Glossop (part).

Samuel Ford Carter and George Knott (the latter an over-looker at a coal-pit), were charged with being drunk and fighting on the 18th. ult. Fined 5-0d. and costs.

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New Colliery at Shireoaks, near Worksop.

A great boon is about to be conferred on the inhabitants of this district, by the opening of a new colliery at Shireoaks (so called from an oak tree which marked the boundary of the three shires of Nottingham, York and Derby). It is situated about 2 miles from Worksop, on the Worksop Manor Estate, and is the property of his Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

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No Headline.

The north-western portion of the Principality of Wales is rather excited for the now authenticated fact of the existence of gold in the prevailing strata of the County of Merioneth, but which are bound most rigidly in quartz in the various mines within a ten mile circle of Dolgelly.

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Supplement - Page 1 Col. 2-3

Cart Accident.

On Wednesday, an accident occurred, that might have been a fatal one; but which we are happy to find far less serious than might have been anticipated under the circumstances. A little child was sitting in the road in West Bars, when an empty cart, belonging to Messrs. Goodwin and Parker, of Brampton Colliery, was passing, and the driver not observing the little "obstructor", the cart partially passed over it, causing some injury, but we are gratified to hear that the poor child is not likely to experience any material injury therefrom. Parents would do well to be more cautious about allowing children to roam unprotected into the streets.

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Supplement - Page 1 Col. 3

Letter - Mineral Discoveries in Derbyshire.

Sir,

Having observed in the journal of last week a paragraph, to the effect that the recent mineral discoveries in Derbyshire, resulted from observations made by Professor Ansted when on a tour in this county, are in the southern division, I, therefore, presume to correct the statement in that particular, by informing you that the High Peak was the scene of the Professor's labours when accompanied by Sir Joseph Paxton, and Mr. Currey, and the remarks which led to the recent discoveries were made; and as the writer of this, along with other parties interested in the welfare of North Derbyshire, was present at the time, he, consequently, can assure you that the remarks of the Professor, had reference entirely to this immediate locality, and more especially to those parts where the various discoveries have recently been made.

Thomas Burgoyne, Eyam, near Bakewell. March 7th.

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Geology - Its value to the Miner.

Some months ago, in walking over a large tract of mineral sett, of North Derbyshire, Professor Ansted was led to remark that the result of scientific operations, energetically conducted, would inevitably lead to the discoveries of ore, and would amply reward the proprietary disposed to carry out his remarks: the opinion expressed was not lost upon some of those to whom it was given, and after a few spirited operations had been made, rich deposits of lead ore have been laid open, that are exciting the wonder and admiration of geological theories having led to such a speedy and practical development of the mineral resources of the district. The professor's remarks on the want of enterprise in such a widespread mineral district, where only superficial workings up to the present time have been made, have inspired the Calver Sough and Wren Park proprietors with unbounding confidence of success, and they are actively preparing for the spirited working of their valuable property to it's upmost limits.

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Saturday 25th. March 1854

Supplement - Page 1 Col. 4-5

Coroner's Inquest at Staveley.

On Thursday morning last at 9 a.m., the adjourned inquest on the bodies of Henry Gott, aged 29, and George Shaw, 26, miners, who were killed by foul air, in one of the pits belonging to R. Barrow, Esq., called the Victoria Pit, situate at Staveley, was held at the house of Mr. James Lee, before H.E. Walker, Esq., M.D., deputy coroner, and a respectable jury. Charles Morton, Esq., Government Inspector of Mines, was also present, and by his superior judgement connected with mining affairs rendered good service in eliciting a great deal of information which very materially assisted the coroner and jury in arriving at the true cause of the melancholy catastrophe, which led to the cause of the death of the unfortunate deceased. The first witness called was -

John Hill, who said that he was working on Thursday the 16th. instant at the pit called the Victoria Pit, when at about half past four in the afternoon, the two deceased persons were also in the pit in question, and at the bottom of what is called No. 1 Incline, they went up his gate or incline, for the purpose, as he supposed, of measuring some work. This incline is situated near the wheel leading up to the face or working. George Shaw, one of the deceaseds, went forward with a measuring tape. Previously to this Gott and Shaw had been talking together. Gott remained near the wheel, but Shaw went further forward. Gott shouted to Shaw two or three times, but the latter made no answer. Gott then called to Thomas Harris, who came to them - he had a safety lamp with him. He kept shouting Shaw', Shaw' all the way, but received no answer. Gott gave the lamp to Thomas Harris, who was near the wheel, and went to seek Shaw. He called out Shaw's name several times, but there was no reply. He did not say he was ill - this was whilst he was going up the incline. Witness could hear Shaw moaning piteously - he then looked for assistance and got Samuel Barlow and Mr. Burgoyne - they then got some brattice boards, which were standing close by, near the incline, in fact one of the brattice boards was just behind the wheel which was down, thereby letting the gas through. He, witness, then got another and nailed it up. They then got their shirts and wafted the air with them, to get the gas out: they had safety lamps with them, but no naked ones. William Hinchcliff next put a chain around himself and went up the incline towards the face, but did not reach Gott, having fallen: witness got him back by means of the chain; he next put a chain round himself and reached Gott, who was distant about 15 or 20 yards from the wheel; he was lying down dead. This was nearly half-an-hour after he (Gott) went in; he could not reach him before on account of the gas; on reaching him he could not speak to him, he with the deceased was pulled back by the chain. Witness did not go up to fetch Shaw as he was completely exhausted. Other parties pulled Shaw out. Gott was sent out of the pit immediately. Gott's occupation was that of the underground steward, and he ordered workmen what to do. It was Shaw's duty to ??? boards, brattice-work, etc., and he acted under Gott. He afterwards saw Shaw quite dead, having, he should say, been in the dangerous part of the pit for nearly three-quarters of an hour. They always worked with safety lamps at the face, but with candles at the genny gates. Witness: Has never before seen much gas, or heard of it; he came to work about a month before Christmas; he received no orders from Gott not to go about the brattice-work with the candles; was not aware that it was dangerous in particular; he had no knowledge how the brattice board had been down, but he was sure it was more than a fortnight. Gott has never during that time ordered a fire board to be put up, warning of danger. It was Gott's duty to order about such matters; witness could not act without Gott's orders, and he had never received instructions to put up the brattice-board which caused danger. There were plenty of boards close at hand to have done it with.

Charles Morton, Esq., here took up a copy of the rules and asked the witness if he had received a copy of them; receiving an affirmative reply, he proceeded to read Rule 19, which specifies that if any party shall know that any part of the works is defective he shall immediately give notice to the proper authorities, so that the same may be attended to. This it appeared, had in disregard of the excellent regulations, been neglected to have been done. Not only this witness, but all others having looked upon Gott as the proper party to whom they ought to look for instructions. Witness had seen Gott try the works with a candle. Mr. Morton again referred to Rule 19, relating to the guidance of underground workmen; this had also been disregarded; at this stage it was elicited from the witness that a culpable laxity had all along prevailed with respect to the observance of anything like regulations in the management of the works in consequence of the negligence of the unfortunate Gott who had paid the penalty of his folly by the sacrifice of his own life, and also that of one of his fellow workmen. Witness was quite aware that he ought to have attended to the Rules, but left everything to Gott, without whose authority he could not act, and who was entirely to blame for not having had the brattice-board put up. Witness deposed that he was under no fear whatever from giving information to parties in authority from whom he always received every attention.

The evidence of the fore-going witness was corroborated in the main points by William Illsley, who assisted ?????????, having gone up the incline for the purpose of getting Shaw out. This witness had a near escape, the gas having proved too much for him - he had dropped down, the sensation being described as one of dizziness and sleepiness, accompanied by a humming noise in the head, resembling the buzzing of bees. Charles Vardy, it appeared, fetched Shaw out of the incline, but he was quite dead. This witness also deposed to the gross negligence on the part of the deceased Gott, with respect to the brattice-boarding.

John Shaw, brother, of the deceased George Shaw, was then examined. He stated that he was not in the pit at the time of the accident, having gone home about ten minutes before four o'clock; he had been near the spot at about eight or nine in the morning; he then went to work to try the ventilation with his lamp, to see if the gas was right; he went into No. 1 Incline as far as he could get with the lamp, which might be about four or five yards from the brattice towards the top end; he found the sulphur issuing out of four gates; thought it was so dangerous, that he did not go any further, for the gas firing in the lamp. This witness also deposed of the brattice-board being down, and had been so for some fortnight back, if not more; the incline was full of gas to the very entrance; witness's business was bratticeing; he received his orders from Gott, but could not act without them; had received no orders whatever respecting fastening at the boards, which led to the fatal accident; witness told Gott about the danger at half-past-twelve. Gott told him he knew about it. Witness distinctly heard Mr. Blackburn tell Gott to repair the board and put the fire-board up; the reason he had told Gott the danger was, that he was afraid someone would be stifled; he was told it did not matter as it had been so for some time. The time he heard Mr. Blackburn tell Gott about the brattice-boards and the fire-board was about eight or nine in the morning. Mr. Blackburn told Gott that if anything occurred, "he (Gott) must bear the rigour of the Law". Gott said he would have it put up, or something to this effect; he considered nobody to blame but Gott who received his orders from Mr. Blackburn, but did not regard them. Mr. Morton then read the rules to this witness as he had done to the first witness, but it would appear that no regard had been paid to them. He (witness) had been told by Gott to mind his own business, when he complained of anything to him; had he told Mr. Blackburn of the danger, Gott would likely have sacked him. In answer to questions to Mr. Morton, who conducted the inquiry with great skill in mining affairs, it was elicited that the bratticeing had been removed by Gott's orders some four or five months, and this had been chiefly instrumental in causing this part of the pit to be so dangerous at the time the accident occurred. The two deceaseds were engaged at the time in measuring the length of the incline, with a view to deceased Shaw's fixing fresh bratticeing, it is surmised, which he was in the habit

of putting up by measurement. At this stage of the proceedings the jury were quite satisfied with the evidence, and after retiring for a few minutes, returned a verdict of "Accidental Death, caused by the culpable negligence of Henry Gott".

The coroner, at the suggestion of Mr. Morton, called the witnesses in, and in a very appropriate manner addressed them on the necessity of firmly adhering to the rules, which were excellent for preventing accidents, and on no account for the future to allow anything to go wrong without giving information in the proper quarter, as thereby they would, instead of meeting with rebukes, merit the approbation of their employers. In these remarks Mr. Morton fully concurred, as well as the Jury, and a general feeling prevailed that Mr. Morton's excellent advice given during this important inquiry, should be as widely spread as possible among the workmen, who could not fail to be incalculably benefited thereby.

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Supplement - Page 4 Col. 5

The Coal and Iron Trade in Derbyshire. - Chesterfield, March 18th.

The great demand for coal and iron during the last few months has given a marked impulse to the mineral trade in the county of Derby. Between Masborough and Derby a considerable number of collieries and iron-foundries have recently sprung up. In the immediate vicinity of Chesterfield, in addition to the well-known large works at Clay Cross, there has been an extensive colliery opened by the Lings Company in the same neighbourhood. Another colliery has been opened by the Grassmoor Company, and a large iron foundry has been erected at Wingerworth by Messrs. Yates and Company. Preparations are amaking for the opening of a new colliery at Hasland, by Messrs. Knowles and Company, and numerous individual proprietors are engaged in new colliery operations. The extensive works of R. Barrow, at Staveley, near Chesterfield, now afford employment to upwards of 2,500 men; and the premises are still being considerably enlarged. Altogether the mineral trade in this part of the country is in a more active and thriving state than it has been before. We may add, that nearly the whole of the additional hands engaged on these new works are Irish; and great numbers of them have located themselves in the town of Chesterfield and the neighbouring villages. Many new cottages have been built for their accommodation; nevertheless there is still a great deficiency in this respect; and the native filth and squalor and the intemperance in which the new population live render it extremely probable that the town and neighbourhood of Chesterfield will before long be visited by that fatal epidemic which has again commenced its ravages in various parts of the country. A low fever is already prevalent in Chesterfield, and the rate of mortality in that once healthy town is considerably increasing.

Times.

[With the above remarks, we to some extent concur. Chesterfield is certainly on the increase, and we hope ere long to see our old town rise to a pitch of greatness, our excellent position in the midst of a mineral district, scarcely equalled, all things considered, in the district, entitled her to. Our hopes for Chesterfield, with respect to the future are bright - her welfare will ever claim our most serious consideration, and her progress onward will, on all occasions, meet with our hearty co- operation. But that Chesterfield is either so dirty or so disregarding of sanitary regulations, as peculiarly to endanger the health of the inhabitants, we must beg to take exception]. Ed. D.T.

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Supplement - Page 4 Col. 5

Inquest at Chesterfield.

On Wednesday an inquest was held at the Blue Bell, Chesterfield, before H.E. Balk, Esq., M.D., deputy coroner, on the body of Charles Green, who met with so severe an accident on Tuesday last, that he died in the few hours afterwards. From the evidence of the only witness, William Metcalfe, who was examined, it appeared that the unfortunate deceased was spending his dinner hour about the station; and had joined him (Metcalfe) whilst he was shunting wagons onto the branch line, leading to R. Barrow's, Esq., works at Hady. Deceased, it was supposed, had driven on the horse, whilst witness was away for a moment or two, and in unfastening the chain was caught between the buffers, from which he received the severe injury, resulting in his death. Dr. Black was immediately in attendance, and gave but little hope of his recovery from the very first, the injury being internal. Verdict, "Accidental Death".

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Supplement - Page 4 Col. 5

Fatal Coal Pit Accident.

On Monday the 13th. instant, a young man named Gregory, from Mosborough, coal-miner, aged 19 years, was killed at the Silkstone Main Colliery, Mosborough, belonging to Mr. Richard Swallow, by a quantity of coal falling upon him while at work in the pit.