

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 5th. November 1859.

Page 2 Col. 5.

No Headline.

We are informed that the North Derbyshire Mining Company have recommenced pumping and sinking operations at Calver Sough, the work having been stopped by an accident.

The Mill Town and Mill Dam mines are doing well; the latter company have just had a sale of ore, we believe 60 loads. There is very little doing in mining shares, and but a few transactions took place "on 'Change".

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Page 3 Col. 1.

Staveley Collieries.

A communication between the Old and New Hard Coal collieries, by an engine plane driven simultaneously from the Speedwell dip workings and the Seymour shaft, has just been effected; the two portions of the plane meeting with the most perfect precision. The distance underground between the pits though a mile and a half nearly, by a circuitous and rugged passage. Credit is due to Mr. W.F. Howard, the resident surveyor, for so successfully a result.

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Page 4 Col. 3.

No Headline.

There was lately an exhibition at Sydney, Australia, a set of horse-shoes, made of native gold, weighing 24 ounces, and worth about 500 dollars. They were made for a favourite pony.

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Page 4 Col. 3.

No Headline.

On Tuesday afternoon, a young man, named James Mellor, of Green Acres Fold, Oldham, was working in the Stampstone Colliery, when a piece of coal from the roof fell on his left leg, and broke it a little above the ankle.

Illustrated London News

Saturday 5th. November 1859

Gunpowder Explosion.

A terrible accident occurred on Monday morning in the house of a "butty collier" of Harriseahead, named Booth. This man had to keep in his cottage the powder required in the adjacent mine, and serve it out as it was wanted. It appears that on Monday morning Booth was taking some powder out of a cask in his kitchen, where the cask had been brought, when a spark from the fire flew across the room and alighted in the cask. In a moment the house was a perfect wreck. Booth himself, being close to the barrel, was terribly injured by the shock and dreadfully burnt, and now lies in a precarious state. His wife escaped without injury; but one of his children, who was lying on a sofa in the same room, was very badly burnt about the face.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 12th. November 1859.

Page 2 Col. 1.

Advert - To Potters.

Wanted, a good, steady, brown earthenware burner.

Apply at Messrs. Lowe, Blake, and Knowles, Alma Potteries, Brampton, Chesterfield.

N.B. None but an experienced workman need apply.

11th. November 1859.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 12th. November 1859.

Page 4 Col. 3.

No Headline.

The pit at Sneyd Green, the property of the Silverdale Company, was inundated on Wednesday morning. When the men went to work at six o'clock in the morning, they were met by a rush of water, and one man, it is feared, has lost his life. At Ubbberley Colliery, too, the water from an old working broke into the pit and engulfed four men. The principal part of the colliers had just left, but these four men were left behind, and as the water has risen to within twenty yards of the top of the shaft, there is very little hope of extricating them.

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Page 4 Col. 4.

No Headline.

A most valuable discovery of diamonds has recently been made at the foot of the Oural Mountains, Russia. One specimen brought the lucky owner £60,000. There is every reason to believe, says the account before us, that a mine of inexhaustible wealth has been discovered.

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Page 4 Col. 4.

The Strike at the Wharncliffe Silkstone Colliery.

- which had lasted upwards of half a year, was brought to an amicable termination on Wednesday. A conference between the masters and men took place, at which mutual concessions were made. The only matters in dispute were with regard to coal and oil, the masters asking the men to pay one penny per day for oil and the full price instead of half price for their coals. The masters agreed to forgo their charge for oil, on condition that the men paid the full price for their coal, which was agreed to, and the whole of the men, we understand, will resume operations at once.

Illustrated London News

Saturday 12th. November 1859

A Fatal Colliery Accident

- occurred at one of Lord Granville's pits in the neighbourhood of Hanley, in the Staffordshire Potteries, last Saturday. Fourteen men were being drawn up to the surface, when the skip was drawn over the hoisting apparatus, and the poor fellows were thrown out. Ten of them were killed on the spot, and the remaining four were badly injured. An inquest was held on the bodies last Tuesday, and the jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against Galland, the engine-man.

Illustrated London News

Saturday 12th. November 1859

No Headline

An explosion of firedamp occurred on Monday in an ironstone pit belonging to the Wingerworth Company, at Speighthill, near Chesterfield. One man was instantly killed and three others seriously injured.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 19th. November 1859.

Page 4 Col. 2-3.

The Late Colliery Explosion at Speighthill.

The inquest on the body of George Hays, ironstone miner, who met with his death on the 7th. inst., by an explosion of foul air, at Hunger Hill Pit, in Birdholme Valley, some particulars of which were given in last weeks Derbyshire Times, was resumed on Tuesday morning last, before C.S.B. Busby, Esq., at the Municipal Hall, Chesterfield, when the following evidence was adduced as to the causes which had led to this deplorable accident. Mitchell, one of the men who received such severe injuries on the occasion, is still in a very precarious condition, and but faint hopes exist as to his recovery therefrom. Cullen, who removed to hospital, is progressing favourably, but several weeks must elapse before he can resume work again, the injuries about his hands and arms being of a most severe kind, the skin and flesh having been dreadfully burnt. The first witness called was,

John Renshaw, who said: I am underground bailiff to the Wingerworth Iron Company. I assist in inspecting the underground works. I have not a copy of the Company's Rules by me. I am not always in the underground headings. I inspected the work on Tuesday before the accident. This was on the 1st. of November. Enoch Goodwin is deputy of this particular pit. His duties are to go around every morning, and also during the day to see that nothing wrong exists. The depth of the pit is 94 yards. It is ventilated by a furnace. There are also two shafts about 28 or 30 yards apart, one of which is an upcast shaft. There has not been much gas in this pit. I was not there when the accident occurred. I went down the pit about two hours after, but found the ventilation all right, and there had been little disturbed in the headings - a puncheon or two were down, but whether displaced by the explosion, I cannot say. There was a little water in the heading, but, notwithstanding it was well ventilated. I can't say how the explosion happened. There was a little bind fallen into the water, but not sufficient to choke up anything. The explosion occurred in No. 4 Board (Bord) gate. There was no water there. A plan of the workings was here put in, and the spot where the accident happened pointed out. Evidence continued: The men work with naked lights. It is possible for a man to pass with a "Geordie" light and not discover the gas. There is plenty of air in the mine.

It was here stated that the coalpits are worked with naked lights.

Mr. Pendleton, manager of Company's pits, etc., stated that they might go into the pit a hundred times, but find no gas.

By the Jury: We use fireboards occasionally when danger exists.

Thomas Cullen, ironstone getter, said: I had worked in the pit a week when the accident happened. I saw no gas before the fire - we left work on the Saturday before, at half-past three. I went to work at half-past six on the morning of the accident. I worked at No. 4 Board (Bord) gate with Joseph Mitchell, and six or seven others. There were three of us when the accident occurred - we had all naked lights. I had not seen Enoch Goodwin in the pit that morning. The accident happened about a quarter past seven. The first thing he noticed was a blaze of gas on fire. I do not know whether I was knocked down. Mitchell was by the side of me. Hays was fifteen yards out. I called Mitchell but he made no reply. Some of the stuff had fallen against his head, and I tried to lift him up, but I could not. I stopped two or three minutes and then went a short distance and shouted, and one or two came with lights. I told them I was burnt bad, and

bade them go and look for Mitchell. I told them he was dead. I was taken to the pit-bottom, and conveyed up the shaft. I can't say whether there was plenty of air after the explosion, nor can I say how the accident happened. The gas fired as soon as Hays got to the spot - we had all been chatting just before it fired.

By the Jury: I was in the middle of the gateway when it was fired. There appeared to be the usual quantity of air, when we went up the heading. The air sweeps through the gate end. I smelt nothing before the ignition took place.

Peter Dean, a miner, who stated he had been a fortnight on the works, said: I descended the shaft at half-past six. I went on the level with Hays, Mitchell and Cullen, to No. 4 Board (Bord) gate bottom, and then went up the gate forwards to No. 5 gate. I heard the explosion take place. John Baggaley and I went to the spot, where we found Thomas Cullen. I asked him where the two men were, but he could give me no answer through being terrified. I went to get a safety lamp, and bring the fireman, who was hastening to the spot with two safety lamps, and we returned. When we got there, they were bringing Mitchell away. Three or four of us then went to seek Hays, and we found him about nine feet from the top of the Board (Bord) gate. He was lying on his side, hidden between a corve of ironstone and a "punch" - he breathed twice after we found him. Enoch Goodwin and I went afterwards through the works to see that all was right, and everything was in its place, and no gas appeared. It was always considered a well ventilated place, but I never heard any complaint about gas. The general complaint while I have been there was, "too much wind". My opinion is that as the place had always been safe, Goodwin did not test it with a safety lamp. The most practical man might run over the works without detecting, a small quantity of gas, no previous gas having existed.

By Jury: A man might go with a naked candle, and not fire it provided he held it low. Had the mine been proved, as a dangerous mine before, it might have been detected before the accident occurred. I can't see how Goodwin was to blame. It was only a slight explosion, or the doors must have gone. Three-quarters of a hour I do not consider sufficient to stir the fires, tender the horses, and go round the works.

By Jury: The men were always crying out it was too much air, as it blew their candles, and caused them to "sweal", The fire at the bottom of the upcast shaft is raked on Saturday night, and, consequently, lies dormant on Sunday. This partially impedes the ventilation.

Here the coroner asked if deceased's brother, who was present at the inquiry, would like to ask witness any questions, when an angry discussion arose as to the quantity of gas that had accumulated, the former contending that Goodwin had never gone through the Board (Bord) gate or he must have detected it. Cullen also supported this view of the case.

Enoch Goodwin said: I am deputy at the Hunger Hill Pit. I went down at a few minutes past five in the morning. The first thing I did was to light my lamp. I then stirred up the fire. I went along the south side of the pit. No. 4 Board (Bord) gate is on the side. I then foddered the horses, and went to the north side. I can do all easily in 35 minutes, when everything is clear. I had my safety-lamp with me. I examined in No. 4 Board (Bord) gate carefully, holding the lamp up to the roof, but I perceived no gas. I found there was a little weight (a fault in the strata) which had forced the "pack" down. It is quite possible for the gas to have been in the packs, and when a greater current of air was created for it to have escaped from the faults. I examined the pits that morning the same as on every other. I had never detected any gas before in the pit. I fancied the corve had wedged the deceased against the punch and killed him. (Cullen here challenged him with having never been in the place). This witness denied, and said he had made his inspection as closely that morning as he had usually done. Had gas ever existed before, he

should have taken more minute means to detect its existence, but he had not the least suspicion that any existed in the pit, as the air currents were all good.

Mr. Pendleton, chief inspector of the Company's mines, said he had never seen the slightest traces of gas in the pit but once since he had been in the Company's employ. Both Mr. Cooper, the Company's managing clerk, and Mr. Pendleton spoke in high terms of Goodwin's steady conduct and efficiency in the duty which he had to discharge.

The coroner then addressed the Jury as to whether they considered sufficient evidence had been offered to enable them to arrive at a verdict, and the latter having expressed their desire that the enquiry should proceed no further, briefly recapitulated the main features of the statements of the various witnesses pointing out in his opinion where the apparent neglect lay, imputing the accident to too slight an inspection of the underground works, especially on a Monday morning, when the works had been standing for two nights and a day. The Jury after a brief deliberation returned a verdict of "Accidental Death", which they accompanied with a recommendation that a more rigid examination should take place, especially on mornings after the works had been suspended for some hours previously. This, Mr. Cooper assured them, should be done as the proprietors of the works were most anxious to guard against accidents of so lamentable a nature.

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Page 4 Col. 4

No Headline.

An accident, which might have proved serious, happened at the Elm Tree Colliery, on the morning of Sunday last about a quarter to nine o'clock, by the explosion of a small feed boiler, which was used occasionally, in case of the regular working one being out of repair or wanting cleaning. Fortunately there was no-one seriously hurt. The only sufferer was a man, who was scalded on one side of his face, and who received a blow on his head from some bricks, but not of so serious a nature as to render him unfit for work for more than two days. Had this explosion happened on a weekday, it would have undoubtedly have been attended with a more dangerous result.

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Saturday 19th. November 1859.

Page 4 Col. 4

No Headline.

A lad, aged 14, named Kay, of Camborne, Cornwall, has been committed for trial on a charge of robbery. He was sent by the clerk of the Camborne and Wheal Frances Mine to the Bank of Redruth to cash a cheque for £480. The boy cashed the cheque, and started off for Truro, and was about to be off by railway for London, when he was apprehended by the police. Most of the money was found in his possession.

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 26th. November 1859.

Page 3 Col. 1

The Iron and Coal Trades of Yorkshire and Derbyshire.

The coal trade is very active, and the demand continues to increase weekly. The competition among the South Yorkshire coalowners for the London trade continues, and we learn that the pits in general are yielding more than an average supply. The coal trade in Derbyshire is much brisker than at any period during the last few years. The Staveley collieries are now yielding about 200 tons per month more than at this period last year. Mr. Barrow, the proprietor of these works, is a tolerably good customer to the Midland Railway, paying them in carriage alone something approaching £50,000 per annum. These figures will show the gigantic nature of these works. Messrs. Firth, of Whittington, Chesterfield, who manufacture a steel under a German patent are enlarging their works. The metal is highly approved, and we understand Messrs. Firth have purchased the sole right of using it in England. Messrs. Bainbridge and partners are working a colliery in the same locality which was commenced by Messrs. Harrison and Muschamp. We are glad to observe that the Midland Company intend to apply to Parliament in the ensuing Session for powers to enable them to construct a line between Rowsley and Buxton. The line will, if made, open out a large mineral field in Derbyshire, and will give rise to a widespread speculation in our lead-mines. In the present circumstances, the principal objection to augment lead-mining operations in Derbyshire, is the great expense of coal, owing to its having to be conveyed to the mines from very long distances, but should the present line be made we should have an abundant supply of coal at a cheap rate, and steam engines will soon increase and multiply in the Peak of Derbyshire. The late rains have inundated many of the Derbyshire lead mines, in those shafts where there is no steam power some time will elapse before it can be got out. Mill Dam Mine shares have been sold this week at 20-0d. each premium. The half yearly meeting of the Mill Town Lead Mining Company will be held next Wednesday. On Friday there will be a sale of ore, when it is expected that from 120 to 140 loads will be measured. The accounts of this Company for the past half year are very satisfactory, £3,835-14-5d. having been received for lead ore, etc., £1,200 paid in dividends of 5-0d. per share, and £208 carried to the next half year. The mine is now looking well, and doing well. At length the long strike amongst the miners in the employ of the Wharnccliffe Silkstone Colliery terminated on Friday night, the whole of the "black-sheep" were driven by force from the colliery. The police were called in a large body to preserve order. All is now quiet.

Mining Journal.

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Page 3 Col. 1

Milltown Mining Company (Limited).

The general half-yearly meeting of this company was held at the Commercial Hotel, on Wednesday the 23rd. inst., C. Binns, Esq., in the chair. The secretary (Mr. Wilkinson) read the statement of accounts, from which it appeared that after paying a dividend of 5 per cent. in October, there remained a balance of £308-7-10d. The sum of £3,835-14-5d. had been received for lead ore and belland during the half year. The reports of the directors and agent (Mr. Boden) were brief and satisfactory; in substance they stated that the mine on the whole was the same as when they last reported to the shareholders, and that, whilst on the one hand they desired to conceal nothing which tended to show the value of the property, whilst on the other, having regard to the risks attending all lead mine speculations in Derbyshire they did not wish to raise the venture unduly in the opinion of the shareholders, thus excite hopes which might not be realised. At the close of the proceedings, a vote of thanks was unanimously passed to the chairman and directors for their valuable services.

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Page 3 Col. 2

No Headline.

George Oldfield, collier, was charged by William Buxton with leaving the service of Mr. Barrow, of the Staveley works, without giving the notice required by the colliery rules. Committed for 28 days hard labour, and a further term of 14 days, if the costs, 19-6d., be not paid.

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Page 3 Col. 3

No Headline.

Jonathan Parker, collier, was brought up charged with leaving the service of Mr. Barrow, of Staveley, without giving proper notice. He pleaded guilty, and was committed for seven days with hard labour, and a further terms of 14 days, if costs, £1-7-0d. be not paid.

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Saturday 26th. November 1859.

Page 4 Col. 3

No Headline.

On Sunday evening last, a boy named Daniel Gutteridge, about 10 years of age, was drowned by falling into a "sump" in one of the pits of the Ash Leasowes Colliery, Tipton, belonging to Mr. E. Williams. The occurrence was quite an accident and no blame is attachable to any person.

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Page 4 Col. 4

Falling into a Coal Pit.

On Wednesday afternoon, a dead body of a man was found at the bottom of an old coal pit shaft in a worked out coalfield, at the back of the New Inn, on the Bilston road, near Wolverhampton. Thomas Sabin, a workman at Messrs. Dixon, tube-makers, aged about 30, left the New Inn between 8 or 9 o'clock on Monday night, under the influence of drink; but as he had not reached his house, and as nothing more had been heard of him, a search was on Wednesday being made for him in the canal over which he would have to pass. Whilst the search was being made, a woman discovered appearances about the pit referred to which raised suspicions that Sabin might have fallen in there. The efforts of the searchers were turned in that direction, and Sabin's dead body was found in the bottom of the 8 feet of water which had accumulated in the shaft. The only protection which the pit had against such an accident was a covering of boarding first, and then earth. The boarding had rotted until it could not bear the weight of the earth, and had gone in sufficiently to allow the man to fall through. The pit lies within 15 yards of the road, along which Sabin would have to go from the Inn to his home, and there is but little doubt that he missed the pathway, and wandered, unconscious of his danger, to the fatal spot.

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Page 4 Col. 4

Coal Mine Fire at Haydock.

The two coalpit shafts, the Queen Pit, and the Leigh Pit, descending to the Ravenhead Main Delf Coal, in Haydock, at which the fire took place, still remain closely covered up, and it is stated it will not be safe to open them for two or three months; consequently a great number of hands employed in and about the colliery will be thrown idle. The headgearing is still standing, although the thick wood was burned in several places to a few inches in diameter, and the engine house and outbuildings appear to have received little damage from the red-hot cinders which were thrown from the burning mine, and fell completely covered the roofs. This, no doubt, is owing to the exertions of Superintendent Bell and the Fire Brigade, who continued playing their water engines until Sunday at noon. Several of the Fire Brigade men and persons assisting, were burned about hands, face, and body, by the red-hot cinders falling upon them, and Mr. Bell was burned on the left eye, but no-one appears to have received a serious injury, and the total escape from loss of human life may be considered an Act of Providence. Ten ponies were hoisted from the mine, up the Queen Pit, during the fire, and, so far as is ascertained, there are only the two ponies that were stabled near the eye of the Leigh shaft that have perished. Various conjectures are raised as to the probable cause of the fire, and the earthquake like rumbling noise heard in the workings, the sudden emission of the huge flame of fire, and the eruption of tons of red-hot cinders, causing the suspicion that an explosion of firedamp had occurred; whilst some think it possible it has been caused by the furnace beneath, other scientific and practical persons are of opinion that it was caused by a spontaneous combustion in a portion of the old workings, the coal which had been left had been germinating heat in the former; but the real facts cannot be ascertained until an examination of the mine is made, which will, no doubt, be effected as soon as practicable.