

Derbyshire Times.

Saturday 12th. April 1862.

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Fatal Colliery Accident at Staveley.

Two Men Killed.

A shocking and fatal accident has taken place at Do-Well Colliery, the property of Richard Barrow, Esq., at Staveley, by which two men have lost their lives, and a third is severely injured. On Monday morning last, a miner, named Joseph Smith, was sent into a gate-road to pull down some loose bind, and whilst he was in the act of doing so, another portion of bind fell and killed him on the spot. assistance was procured, when two men, named Henry Goodwin and James Rimington, went to rescue Smith, and whilst they were removing the debris, a further fall of bind took place, and killed goodwin, Rimington only escaping with severe injuries. An inquest was held on the bodies on Wednesday, at the Crown Inn, Staveley, before Mr. Busby, coroner. Mr. Hedley, the Government Inspector, and Mr. Seymour, manager of the colliery, were present.

The first witness called was Enoch Goodwin, of Newbold Lane, Chesterfield, underground steward to Mr. Wyatt and others, of the Tapton New Colliery, near the Toll Bar, at Newbold. My father, Henry Goodwin, one of the deceased, lived at Speedwell Terrace, Staveley, and was a coal miner. He died about seven o'clock on Monday morning, and was sixty-six years of age.

William Smith, of Barrow Hill, Staveley, coal miner: The deceased, Joseph Smith, is my father, and was fifty nine years of age. He worked at Old Hollingwood, in the night time. He was brought home dead just before six o'clock on Monday morning. He was hurt on the head and all over his body.

Samuel Eastwood, a youth fourteen years of age, of No. 44, Old Blocks, Speedwell, said: I am a pony-driver, at Dowell, or Old Hollingwood Pit. I went down to the pit at nine o'clock on Sunday night, and left at five o'clock on Monday morning. I was working with the two deceased, driving a pony to take the stuff from them. One was filling and the other gobbing. The third man at work was named James Rimington. He (Rimington) was taking the stuff from Joseph Smith, who was filling the waggons from the drift, and the waggons were sent to Henry Goodwin, and I took them. Smith was working 150 yards from Goodwin. Rimington was going to and fro with me to help me, if there was anything wrong in the road. The accident happened about three o'clock in the morning. I was close to Joseph Smith up the drift. Smith was filling. He was throwing dirt in the waggons first, and then lumps. I said to him, "Joseph, it is biting" (the roof sinking in). He said, "Yes, my lad". I was about ten yards off when the bind fell upon Smith. I saw it fall. About four of five tons of bind fell upon him and killed him. I shouted James Rimington, who was with Henry Goodwin at the time. Rimington came to me and ran off for Henry Goodwin, who came with him immediately. Rimington ran off for two more men from the next gate. When the two men came, they tried to get the stuff off Smith, and while they were doing so it fell upon Goodwin and Rimington. It knocked Goodwin clear under it. He breathed several times but never spoke. I then ran for Isaac Cable to No. 33 gate. When he came Goodwin was dead and Rimington was not. Bertles and Coffin then got the bind off Smith. Rimington said if they could get the stuff off his back he could help himself. It was a new road which they were clearing out. The roof must have tumbled in on Sunday, as it was down on Sunday night. It was not timbered at all. Examined by Mr. Hedley: I heard the roof "biting", and told Joseph Smith. He said, "It is my lad - I'll go away". Just as he said so, it fell away. He had not got any stuff down. I went to

work about half past one o'clock. We had been working in another part of the pit, shifting stuff that had fallen from the roof. We had taken four or five tubs away.

George Ord, underviewer at the Hollingwood Pit, examined by Mr. Hedley: I received information of this accident at half past three o'clock on Monday morning, and went down immediately. I found a good many stones lying on the floor of the drift. The two deceased were taken out, and were laid just by the place, quite dead. The last time I saw the place was at eight o'clock on Sunday morning, with James Bell. I make choice of that time on account of being able to make better observations. Some bits of bind had fallen from the roof, and I gave James Bell instructions to order Heeley, the night-man, to see what could be done to the place. I thought the roof was shelling off. There is nothing of a regular character dangerous about the roof. When I saw it on Monday, there had been a great fall. During Monday there was some water and gas, and I think the pressure sent the roof down. The effects of the water were not visible until after the accident. The Coroner: Was it not a place which in your judgment ought to have been timbered? Witness, hesitating: No, I think not. I have not seen water in the place before. The Coroner: Considering the contingencies which were likely to arise, did you not think it right to use timber? Witness: We did not see it necessary. Mr. Hedley: There were particular instructions given? Mr. Brooks, a juryman: I, for one, very much object to Mr. Seymour being present when the witnesses are giving their evidence. Mr. Williamson: I'll second that. Mr. Seymour immediately withdrew.

James Bell: I live at Hollingwood Common, and am overman at Hollingwood Pit. Examined by Mr. Hedley: I saw the place on Sunday morning. I went with George Ord, and we found some stone lying. It was about eight o'clock in the morning. The stones had fallen from the roof, some four or five inches thick, which had shelled from the roof. We agreed to meet Heeley, the night shift overman, at nine o'clock at night, on the pit-bank, to examine the stone, and see what was needed. I saw Heeley at nine o'clock, at the pit bank, and told him to look at the place, that there were a few stones there, and to see what it needed. By Mr. Hedley: I told him to make it secure. It was his duty to attend to that sort of work. It is the junction of four roads, and the place is sixteen or seventeen feet wide, and narrows to six feet. It runs forty or fifty yards. The place was not timbered at all when I saw it on Sunday morning. I thought it perfectly safe when we examined it, even in a roof like that. The roof shells in small pieces. A Juryman remarked that it could not be very safe if it shelled off three or four inches thick. There was four feet of coal between the roof and the rock before we took eighteen inches down. Mr. Hedley: You say the roof was safe. What is the cause of it coming down. Witness: On Monday morning, after I had heard of the accident I went down to the place and found water in the roof. I intended to blow the bind from the roof to the rock, and we fired one shot when Mr. Seymour came and would have it timbered. Mr. Hedley: Have you met with any water before? Witness: Not generally in the gate-roads. Mr. Hedley: Seventeen feet is a great width to be unsupported. Witness: It is; but when we examined it we always found it safe. Mr. Hedley: Can you give us any information whether the deceased set about their work in a proper manner. Witness: Smith had got too much under his work. We make a practice of examining the pit every Sunday morning when it is quiet. Mr. Hedley: It is a very good practice, and I wish everybody did it. Witness: Heeley is an experienced man.

Charles Heeley, of Brimington, night overman at the pit: My duties are to do repairs of roads or drifts, and everything necessary for the day-work. I look to the safety of the pit during the night. I have been engaged at this pit better than nine years - five years at Hollingwood next August. On Sunday night, at nine o'clock, I saw James Bell on the pit-heap. He told me there were a few stones down at the place where the accident happened. I did not go to the place until after the accident had occurred. I sent Smith and Goodwin, Rimington, and a lad, with a pony to make the place safe and to pull down the stuff. I told Cable to follow them and examine the place. The Coroner: Don't you think you ought to have examined the place yourself? Witness:

No, Sir. We have practical men for the job, and of course I send them. The coroner: It seems to me to be extremely unsatisfactory that you, whose duty it was to do so, did not attend to it yourself. Mr. Hedley: It having been mentioned to you as a particular thing, did it not strike you that you ought to have gone yourself? Witness: Of course I might have gone to look at it, but I told him to look at it and make it safe. The Coroner: But an inspection of the place might have led you to tell him something else. Witness: Yes, Sir, but ---. The Coroner: I don't want to argue the point with you. On one side something is reported; on the other nothing is reported, but instead of going yourself, you send someone else. Mr. Hedley: What is the width of the gate-road? Witness: From twelve to seventeen feet. Mr. Hedley: Do you consider a space of that width to be safe without timbering? Witness: Yes, Sir, when there is no great pressure. The Coroner: You knew the pressure was liable to come. Mr. Hedley: It is a roof you have had a good deal of trouble with. Witness: Yes, but we consider the roof is safe. Mr. Hedley: The last enquiry we had was regarding a man who was killed with bind. The coroner: It seems to me that you are the only responsible person in the pit who can give us the least information about the accident. Mr. Hedley: How soon after the accident did you get there? Witness: About twenty minutes or half an hour. Mr. Hedley: In what state did you find it? Witness: There was a great quantity of stuff down. By a Juryman: We have timbered it now, but that was through a pressure of water coming. I cannot tell whether the men got it down in a proper manner. Rimington was the man who was working with him. The Coroner: Rimington was not with him. By Mr. Brookes: Six hours elapsed from the time of the accident to the time of my going into the pit. By another Juryman: If I had seen it before the accident I should not have ordered it to have been timbered.

Isaac Cable, of Barrow's Hill, miner: I am deputy night overman at the pit. About half-past nine on Sunday night, Heeley told me to examine the place and see what it wanted doing. I heard Heeley tell Joseph Smith to pull the bind down at the end of the crossing. The deceased did not go to the place till near two o'clock. Joseph Smith stood at the crossing when I went there. I said, "Joseph, this must be pulled". I took a tool and began to sound near the split. I sounded the roof for six yards, and I told the men to pull it and make it safe, and to start at a safe place. The deceased was to work on the rise side, and to follow his work. I did not see him commence work. Information was brought to me that the two deceased were buried. I ran to the place and found they had got Henry Goodwin out and James Rimington. It appeared to me that Smith had been on the top of a tub and had fallen under his work, and that he was trying to pull and fell over the waggons. I think he broke his head by falling on the waggon.

James Rimington, of Brimington, who was carried into the inquest room on a chair, having been previously brought to the place in a cart, said: I am a labourer. I was getting bind away from Joseph Smith. I had been to Henry Goodwin. I heard the stuff tumble and cried out "is all right". I got no answer. I called for Henry Goodwin, and we went to the place. I lifted a piece off Joseph Smith, but there was another upon him which we could not lift, and I called for assistance. I left Henry Goodwin beside Smith, and when we got back the second lot fell on the top of Goodwin. It did not cover him up. Goodwin was stood on the outside, under the roof Smith had been getting down. The shell that fell was perhaps four inches thick. The stuff fell upon my back, and Goodwin fell over my shoulders. I did not see Smith on the waggon, but it was turned over when we got to him. Goodwin went two or three yards from where Smith was lying, and the bind fell upon him there. Mr. Seymour was called into the room, and in answer to the Coroner, he said it was dangerous to put timber in such a roof, as it was liable to crush the sides and bring the roof down. Mr. Williamson, a juryman: There seems to have been some neglect. Mr. Seymour: In what way? The Coroner: Cable got instructions at nine o'clock, and did not go until two o'clock the next morning. Mr. Hedley concurred with Mr. Seymour about not timbering the roof, but he thought something temporary might have done. He said Heeley was much to blame for not going to the place himself. There were more men employed to look after the safety of this pit than in any other in the Midland Counties. Mr. Seymour said the men could have anything by

asking for it. Enoch Goodwin, son of the deceased, said that Heeley and Cable were to blame in not examining the place themselves.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death", and they requested the coroner to express their opinion of the conduct of Heeley and Cable, whom they considered to be much to blame.

Heeley and Cable were then called into the room, and addressed by the coroner as follows: The Jury are of opinion, and I quite concur with them, that Heeley is much to blame, and that he has not shown a proper attention to his duty, in not going to the place. I am not quite clear that some blame does not attach to Cable, because when the state of the roof is reported at nine o'clock at night, he does not go near it until two o'clock the next morning.

The men then left the room, and the proceedings terminated.

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Assault at Whittington.

George Sykes, engine tender, of Whittington, was charged with assaulting John Truswell, on the 3rd. instant. The complainant said he was an engineer, at New Whittington, and on the day in question he was in the engine house. The defendant was in the engine house, but he had no business there. He had screwed the steam valve down to stop the steam from going to the engine. He asked him what he was doing it for. The defendant made no answer, but he (complainant) grumbled at him. Defendant said that if he grumbled at him he would smash his face. The defendant then struck him. Screwing down the valve might have caused a serious accident. Cross-examined by the defendant: It was not your duty to regulate the steam when it was falling or rising. You were not engaged at engine-man, but as fireman. George Clarke, a witness, said he was engaged repairing the boiler at the time the assault took place. Defendant said that he would give the complainant "A smack in the mouth", and he struck him. William Holt, who works for the West Staveley Colliery Company, corroborated the evidence of the complainant. Defendant, in answer to the charge, said he was employed as fireman, and it was his duty to regulate the steam. He screwed the valve down to prevent the engine from creeping round. The complainant and him had a few words, when he ran after him with a crowbar, and threatened to run his "guts" out. Defendant was fined 5-0d., and ordered to pay 15-6d. costs, or 14 days imprisonment. The fine and costs were paid.

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Page 3 Col. 4.

Oakerthorpe - Fatal Accident.

An inquest was held at Oakerthorpe, on Friday, on the body of James Bowler, aged 40 years, an engine tenter, in the Oakerthorpe Company. Joseph Cooper, engine tenter, of Bark Hill Cottage, Oakerthorpe: I am engine tenter at Highfield Colliery. I tent the winding engine there, and deceased tented the pumping engine. The two engine houses are about six yards apart. I was at my engine yesterday morning and deceased was at his. He went there at half past six in the morning. I was in my own engine house. I went there and saw the lad who helped deceased. He had hold of the pumping engine handle, and had stopped the engine. I went under the floor of the engine house to look for deceased, who was lying on his back. I went to pick him up. I could not lift him myself, but got assistance from two or three people, and we carried the deceased into the winding engine house. Deceased complained of his belly. I asked him what he had been doing. He told me he had been to oil the end of the balance beam, and he was coming back again, when one of the rappits(?) had caught him and taken him through the floor. I went to look at the place where it had caught deceased. There was a print of his slop at the end of the tappet, and this had partly cut a hole through the slop, about the middle of deceased's back. Deceased must have been pinned between the end of the tappet and the floor. We sent for the doctor as soon as deceased was in my engine house. Mr. Fielding, from Alfreton, came about 10 minutes before deceased died, which was about half past nine. Deceased ought not to have been oiling the engine while in motion. Deceased was chief man in care of the engine. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death".

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Rotherham - Singular Explosion.

On Monday afternoon an explosion of rather a novel character occurred at Rotherham. It would seem that a large cindery mass of dross, at white heat, was taken from one of the furnaces of Messrs. Brown and Sons, Rotherham Forge, and thrown into the River Don, which runs past the works, and as soon as it came into contact with the water it exploded with a loud noise, fragments rising high in mid-air. Fortunately by far the largest portions fell into the river again; but one fragment, by the force of the explosion, was flung over a number of buildings, alighting on a stall containing a quantity of muslin for sale, in the Market Place, quickly set the light material in a blaze. The fire, however, was extinguished before any considerable damage was done. Another portion fell upon the shed of the Rotherham Station, but the shed sustained no material injury.

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No Headline.

The lead mines in the neighbourhood of Matlock, we are happy to say, are improving. The Orchard Mine Company, at Snitterton, have found a good vein. The mine bids fair for a good speculation.

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Advert - Old Forge Boiler Works, Chesterfield.

John Arnold, manufacturer of Steam Boilers, Copper Brewing Pans, Wrought Iron Girders, Gasometers, Tanks, and all kinds of plate-work.

A large stock of boiler plates and second hand boilers always on hand.

N.B. - repairs promptly attended to.

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Page 3 Col. 2.

A "Dead Horse".

Edley Taylor, of East Moor Drainpipe Works, Brampton, sued Edward Swift for 12-0d., the value of a dead horse sold by the plaintiff to the defendant, who stated the value to be 8-0d. The Judge: Why do you dispute the amount? Defendant: Does Your Honour wish me to pay as much for a dead horse as a "wick" one? Verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount.

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Page 3 Col. 3.

Colliery Case at Brampton.

Patrick Delaney and Edward Burke v. Messrs. Swallow, Inkerman Colliery, Brampton, was a claim for £7-5-0d. for work done. Mr. Cutts appeared for plaintiffs, and Mr. Busby for defence. The evidence for the plaintiffs showed that they were employed by the defendants in February last to remove a bank near their colliery, and were to be paid at the rate of 7d. per yard. They also removed some loose bind, having to employ 6 extra men to get it away. For all this work they had received £13-4-0d., leaving a balance unpaid of £7-5-11d., for which the action was brought. The defense was, 1st., That the contract was not made with Delaney at all, 2nd., The work was not done; and 3rd., That such work as had been done had been overpaid. After hearing a mass of contradictory evidence of a totally uninteresting character, His Honour gave judgement for the defendants, and costs.