

The Craven Herald.

Saturday 8th June 1878.

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Grand Discovery of Coal.

We are glad to announce that a grand bed of coal has this week been discovered at Wilson Wood Colliery, Ingleton. It is four feet in thickness, and extends over a large space of ground. It is hoped that it will prove a great boon to the spirited proprietor, Mr Bracewell, as well as to the country at large, and it must be satisfactory to Mr Dawson (Danson?), the Manager, whose exertions have been never ceasing in trying to discover this seam of coal. A specimen was left with our correspondent, and which appeared to be in quality and brightness something similar to the Silkstone Coal.

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Colliery Accident at Ingleton.

On Friday last a very lamentable accident occurred at one of the Ingleton Collieries, to a man named John Hodgson. It appears that deceased was working along with a man named John Cornthwaite, in the Lady Pit. They were the only persons working there. The ventilation in the workings was not very good, in fact they had to leave the face and retire to another part of the pit. At about 2 o'clock they were preparing to go home as their supply of candles was nearly exhausted. Deceased had left some candles at the face, when the air was bad, and he appeared anxious to go and get them, although Cornthwaite tried to persuade him not to go. Cornthwaite also begged that if his light went out he would return. The deceased called out once and Cornthwaite called to him again. Cornthwaite heard the deceased fall, and at once proceeded to the place, and succeeded in dragging deceased a few yards, when he found that if he stayed longer he would suffer the same penalty as his unfortunate companion. He made his way to the shaft and got out. During the whole of the afternoon every means was used to get out the body of Hodgson, but it was not until nine o'clock at night that the poor fellow was got out. He was found to be quite dead. The deceased was a quiet, respectable man and leaves a widow and four children to lament his untimely fate. The body was interred at St Mary's Church, Ingleton, on Tuesday, and the remains were followed to the grave by a numerous body of pitmen, relatives and friends.

The Inquest was held on Tuesday at Mr Domoney's, the Bridge Inn, Ingleton, before Mr T.P. Brown Esq., Coroner. H.W. Wardell Esq., Chief Inspector of Collieries for Yorkshire, was present to watch the proceedings.- Joseph Hodgson was called out and said the deceased was his son. He had worked for five or six years at the collieries and was 31 years of age last February.- John Cornthwaite was called, and said; The accident happened on Friday the 7th last. The deceased and myself were working at the bottom of Lady Pit, up at the face, under the direction of Mr Metcalfe, Deputy Overman. We commenced work between six and seven o'clock. We had candles and were getting coal. The ventilation was good when we started. Metcalfe came to us about nine o'clock. We had come to the shaft before that time, as the air grew gradually worse. Metcalfe ordered us to get some timber in the drift. We continued doing that until two o'clock. Deceased would go down to try the wind. He had left some candles at the face. I followed and begged him to come back if his candle went out. He went about 10 yards. I wished him to return. I shouted, and he answered me when his candle went out. I called him again but he did not answer. I then heard him stumble, and I ran and got hold of his shoulders and dragged him two or three yards, until I found I was going to be done myself. I left him and went away. Joseph Hodgson and Wm. Foster got him out about a quarter to nine o'clock. He was quite dead. I should think that it was a change in the wind that caused the ventilation to be bad. By Mr Wardell. There were only two of us working at that time. We commenced between six and seven o'clock. The men we relieved had been working at the face, and when we went down they told us the wind was not very good. About four o'clock when I got to Hodgson the air was good. The air pipes were four or five yards from the face. We put them up in 6 ft lengths. We don't regularly keep them 4 or 5 yds back from the face. We worked at the face the day before. I should have put a length of air pipe to, but I did not. We were about 25 yds from the face. Deceased and I joined at the work. I have worked at the collieries about 6 years. I have worked at the Lady Pit a long time. I have had to leave it many times in consequence of bad air. I do not know whether the fan was working or not. It was not working independently of the winding machine. The air was good until about nine o'clock when it got worse. We left the face and came to the shaft and waited for Metcalfe, the overman. He ordered us to put some timber

in. He went about 15 yds and then came back and left the pit. The air kept good until about 12 o'clock. The overman was not in after dinner until the accident happened.

William Metcalfe said, I am Deputy Overman at the Wilson Wood Colliery. The Lady Pit is under my charge. The workings are ventilated by a fan, which is worked by an engine which is used for winding up coal and taking the men up and down. The drum is thrown out of gear when the fan is worked alone. I went down the pit at about 10 o'clock on Friday morning, and I found that the ventilation was not good. I told the men to repair a place in the road, and stop until I came in the afternoon. The fan was working on Friday when I was in the pit, and I told them to keep it going. On going between two and three o'clock I heard them shouting that a man was fast in the bad air. When I got there I could not get to the deceased. I went about 40 yards but he was 40 yards further, and it was about six hours before he was got out. The wind changed about 7.30 pm - Mr Wardell. The engine man told me that the fan was going all night. It was going when I went about nine o'clock. I was in the pit at about eight o'clock on Thursday. I was with the men at the face: They had not put on a length of boxes when I went. I asked Hodgson himself about putting a length of boxes on and he said he was going to do so. I have known the air bad when the boxes were quite up to the face. I told them that if the air was bad they must come out.

Samuel Bentham said, I am the engine-driver at the Lady Pit. The fan was working on Friday morning when the men arrived. When out of gear it goes double the speed. I commenced at six o'clock on Thursday evening and continued until I was relieved on Friday morning. The fan stood while the men were filling the tubs, which takes them about five minutes - by Mr Wardell. We regularly shout to the men to ask if the air is good. I did not hear the air was bad. About four o'clock we drew up about 12 tubs an hour. I do not know what the fan was doing between six and nine o'clock. My orders are to wind the engine and answer the calls of the men at the bottom.

William Clarkson said I am an engine-driver at the Lady Pit. I commenced work at about seven o'clock on Friday morning. The fan was running then. Metcalfe gave me orders to throw the drum out of gear and keep the fan running. - By Mr Wardell; between six and nine o'clock was going occasionally. The fan was standing until Metcalfe came out of the pit. It was a dull morning. A bad morning for air. J. Cornthwaite was recalled and in answer to Mr Wardell said; we called to the engine-man at about nine o'clock. We knock three times, and then call to him. I told him that we wanted the fan to work as the air was getting bad. We did not find any benefit after the fan was started.- By Mr Wardell, The fan was running all the morning.- Mr Clarkson was recalled and said, Cornthwaite called to me about nine o'clock to run the fan, and I then ran it. Metcalfe afterwards ordered me to throw the drum out of gear, as it then runs at double the speed. - Mr Danson, Manager of the Colliery, said; He had not got the barometer records with him. It was a dull morning, and he thought the barometer fell on Friday. Mr Danson has kindly forwarded the pit barometer records, which are as follows:-

June 5th	10am	29.91	4pm	29.95
June 6th	10am	30.00	4pm	30.02
June 7th	10am	29.90	4pm	29.90

The accident occurred about two o'clock on the 7th.

Mr Wardell said he was very sorry he could not go down the shaft, still he could form an opinion as to the state of the pit. The air boxes should be kept a certain distance from the face. He did not think that the fan had been sufficiently worked during the night. There was no blame attached to anyone. Verdict = Accidentally suffocated in the Lady Pit on Friday the 7th of June.