

Dean Forest Mercury, Friday 27th November 1942

Littledean Man in Fatal Colliery Accident

A fatal accident occurred at Northern United Colliery on Thursday morning at 10.30 (26th November 1942).

The victim was **Frederick Adams, of The Ruffit Littledean**, whose death occurred at the Dilke Memorial Hospital.

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The Funeral of Frederick Adams (the inquest of whom is reported on page seven) took place on Tuesday at Littledean Church. The bearers were Messers. A Chamberlin, F. James, W. Cooksey and F. Grindle and the pall bearers Messers. E. Gerrard (manager Northern United), Lewis Witts (Undermanager), A. Baggot (overman) and W. Crump (engineer). Wreaths were from the following: Loving wife and children, Ron, Dennis and Trevor; daughter Dorothy (of Canada); daughter Gladys and Jack; daughter Daisy, Dennis and grand-daughter Pamela; sister Alice and family (Sandpits); sisters Ginnie, Minnie, Gertie (South Wales); Kate, Elam & Family; Harold, Will & Francis (South Wales); Amy, Frank & Family; Rhoda and Family; Dolly and Family; Mr & Mrs George Hughes and Nora; Officials and workmen Northern United; Mr & Mrs O. J. Meek; Rene and Charlie; Friends and customers Royal Forresters Hotel; from the neighbours; Mr & Mrs W. Hayward; Mr & Mrs R. O. James; Mr & Mrs J. Warren; Mr G. Powell and family; Mr & Mrs S. Warren; Bessie & Dick; Tom Lewis; Mr & Mrs Charlie Hayward; Mr & Mrs James The Ruffit; Mr & Mrs Daniels. – The wife wishes to thank the officials of Northern United and friends and neighbours and all those who kindly attended the funeral.

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Helmet Might Have Saved Miners' Life Four brothers killed in the industry: Importance of Protection

A Littledean coal hewer, whose skull was fractured at Northern United Colliery on Thursday of last week, would probably have escaped serious injury had he had been wearing a protective helmet.

These helmets can be bought at 3s 2d each, and as officials emphasised at the inquest held by the Forest Coroner (Mr M. F. Carter) on Tuesday at the Dilke Hospital, their use is essential for the safety of the worker.

The inquest was on Charles Frederick Adams (56) of The Ruffit Littledean, and he was the fourth of a family of brothers to be killed in the industry. Edwin was killed at Foxes Bridge, Edgar in the oil industry in America and Rowland at the New Fancy. Added to this tragic sequence is that fact that Mrs Adams' father Mr Jesse Brain of Cinderford was killed at Foxes Bridge and her brother Mr James Brain, at Brywreath Colliery, South Wales.

Mr W. E. Thomas Newport, represented the Mines Department, Mr. John Williams (Agent) the Forest Miners Association, Mr. W. E. F. Jones Inspector for the Forest of Dean Safety

Board, Mr S.L. Dorrington the Forest Overmans Deputies and Shotfirers' Association, Mr P.D. Clarke, Solicitor, Gloucester, Mr E. Gerrard, manager of Northern United Colliery and Mr. R. Walford, Surveyor for Henry Crawshay and Co. Mr. John Williams (Ruspidge) was chosen foreman of the jury.

Cause of Death

Dr. H.H. Sumption (Drybrook) said on November 26 he saw the deceased at the Dilke Hospital. When he saw him at mid-day he was unconscious and had a contused cut on the head above the left temple. Blood was coming from his nostrils; he remained unconscious and died at 11.45pm.

Cause of death was injury to the brain and shock from a blow which had caused fracture of the skull.

Mr. Thomas: Had he been wearing a protecting helmet (which he produced for inspection), what would have been the effect? – It would have lessened the blow and only knocked him over.

The injury would not have caused death? – That is the probability.

The wife Mrs Ivy Adams gave brief evidence, and the next witness was William Albert Cooksey, 5 Newtown, Cinderford, who said that he was trying to get a large piece of coal from the top of the seam. Adams was recharging his lamp about 16 yards away. When he returned to the face and was about four yards from the witness, a piece of coal weighing about 2 cwt fell and struck a pit prop, which came away and struck Adams, throwing him to the floor. Cooksey went to him and saw he was bleeding from the head. First aid was given.

Asked to wear helmets

By the Coroner: The last prop witness had put up was 2ft 7ins from the face of the coal and about 2 ft from the piece of coal which fell. This prop was hit away The remainder of the props were about 3ft apart. The only covering to his head was the crown of a trilby hat. The place was examined about two hours earlier by Mr. T. Morgan.

Mr. Thomas: Do you know that protective helmets are available at the colliery? – Yes. Mr. Thomas added at the cost of 3s 2d.

The Miners Agent: Would you say that the workmen are encouraged to wear these helmets? – Yes, they have been asked periodically to wear them.

Everything in Order

Timothy Morgan, 128 Church Road, Cinderford, examiner at the colliery said he had inspected the place in which Adams was working at 8.30am, when everything was in order. Examining it again after the accident, he found 2 cwt of coal had been dislodged and was lying across the ground with the around pit prop which had been struck.

By Mr. W.E.F. Jones: When he made his first examination the prop was not in place.

Mr. Dorrington: There was no need for the prop at that time? – No.

Replying to Mr. Thomas Morgan said he had emphasized the importance of wearing protective helmets.

Mr Clarke expressed the colliery company's sympathy and said they had lost a good workman. Jury and other officials concurred and the Coroner said he believed Mr. Adams had been with the company at Foxes Bridge, Lightmoor and Northern United for 40 years. Mr George Hughes, Littledean responded for the wife and told of the family's tragic history.