

Dean Forest Mercury – Friday December 17, 1897

A married man, with a large family, named **Jesse Brain, of Littledean Hill**, whilst working at Foxes bridge colliery, was seriously injured on Saturday morning last, by a fall of dirt. He was taken home in the colliery trap, on a stretcher, and was attended by Dr. Macartney, who on examination found he had suffered from a severe injury to the lower part of the spine, causing paralysis of both legs, and other symptoms. He remains in a critical condition, and little hope is entertained for his ultimate recovery.

Dean Forest Mercury – Friday December 24, 1897

Fatal Result of a Colliery Accident

The serious injuries received by Jesse Brain, collier of Littledean Hill, at foxes Bridge Colliery on the 11th (as reported in our last) terminated fatally on Tuesday last. An inquest was held by M.F. Carter Esq, Coroner, at the Royal Forrester Hotel, Littledean Hill, this day (Thursday) at noon. Mr Martin the mines inspector, having examined the place where the accident occurred, did not think it necessary to be present at the inquest.

Simeon Brain, son of the deceased, disposed his father was 48 years of age. They commenced working in the 20 in. seam on the 11th at 7am. It was examined before they commenced. He saw little in the place just as they started work; did not hear him say it was not quite safe. There was a prop near where they were working; did not hear anything about re-setting the prop. About 7am, whilst engaged ho'ing, suddenly about five cwt, of dirt and stone fell from the roof, and partly buried the deceased. The place had been inspected and the proper mark left.

Edward Little, of Bilson Green, deposed he went to the deceased's place about 6.30 to borrow a tool, and they had a conversation to the effect that they thought the place hardly safe, as the lid had the dirt only on one end. Deceased said he did not know whether it was better or not to set another prop. Witness left before the accident happened. The intention of deceased, he thought, was not to leave it as they saw it.

George Terret deposed that he had great many years experience as a collier, and he was now an inspector, and had been for four years. He carefully examined the place a few minutes after four am on the 11th. The place was properly timbered when the witness saw it: some movement must have taken place after he left, for he saw no appearance of a joint. In many instances joints cannot possibly be detected. Witness saw the place for the first time last Monday since the accident.

Mr McMuririe, the manager, deposed that he knew the deceased as a careful and experienced, but not one of the most skilful colliers. He was the man in charge of the place, of which of which witness had since made a plan (produced) showing the workings, the prop stone etc. which were explained in detail by witness to the jury. At the time of the inspection he considered it to be properly timbered. The accident was in consequence of a joint which deceased could not see; there were two joints, one of which he knew, and the other not. Had he known of the second joint another prop should have been set, and he thought the deceased would have shown sounder judgement if he had set another prop when he talked with Little. Had he done so, probably the accident might not have happened, but probably also many other colliers possessing the same knowledge would have done the same as the deceased did. Dr Macartney sent a letter describing the nature of injuries revealed by post mortem examination, which confirmed the opinion both himself and Dr Scott had formed whilst the deceased was alive.

The cause of death was the result of spinal injuries received by the falling of a stone and dirt, crushing him, and a verdict was returned accordingly.

Mr H Gardiner, districts superintendent of the Pearl assurance Company, attended the inquest, and stated that he was instructed to pay full amount of claim at once, £9 6s 0p, although the deceased had only paid the company 3/3 in premiums. – The Coroner remarked that it was very handsome on the part of the Company to do so, and the jury agreed.