

Bacup Time April 19th 1902



The two photographs reproduced give an excellent idea of the chasm down which the unfortunate man fell. The first is taken from about half way down the opposite side of the quarry, and shows the boiler water tank, and other parts which separated from the rest of the crane lying in the debris below. When the accident occurred the young fellow was standing with his back to the boiler, and as it made the awful drop of 94ft he with arms outstretched followed it down alighting amongst the rocks a second after it. The second photograph is taken from the top of the quarry and shows the exact position of the crane when the accident happened.

The accident occurred to a young man named Ebenezer Jones Mills, aged 27 and residing at South Street, Whitworth. Mills was substituting for his father as a travelling steam crane driver at Ab Top Quarry, belonging to Messrs, Taylor and Company, Whitworth and had been some three months at the job. It appears that the crane required some repairs at the weekend and these were done by a man named Fred Ashworth a wheelwright also residing at Whitworth. When the work had been completed Ashworth left Mills on the crane, and went to the blacksmiths shop some distance away. After Ashworth had left Mills jibbed the crane around, and by some means the boiler and tank parted from the rest of the engine and fell along with the deceased into the quarry below. A distance of 94 feet. A man named Stephen Bostock of Whitworth, saw the deceased and the portion of the crane falling down to the quarry and along with others immediately went to his assistance, but he was dead. His body was terribly mangled. and presented a shocking appearance. At the inquest it was gathered that the crane had had a working life of about 30 years having been used for this amount of time by the deceased father Ebenezer Jones. The jury of the inquest which followed returned a verdict of accidental death.