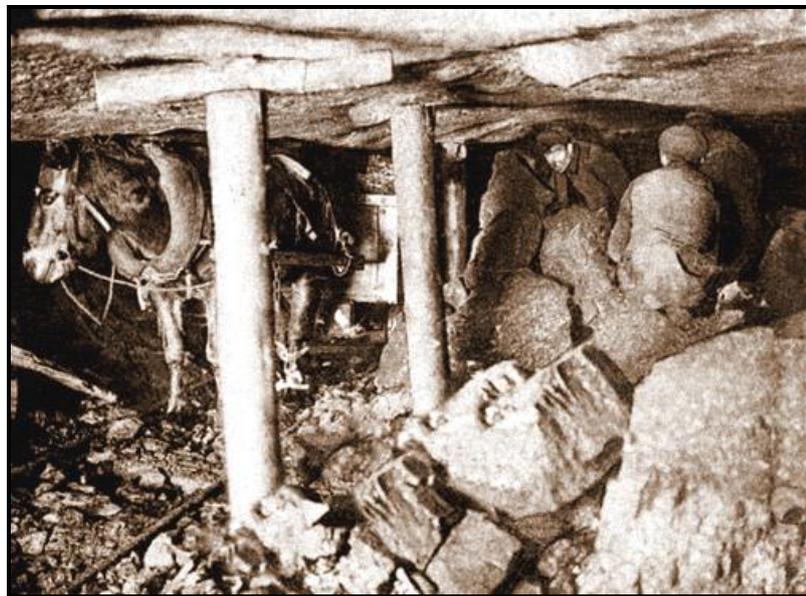
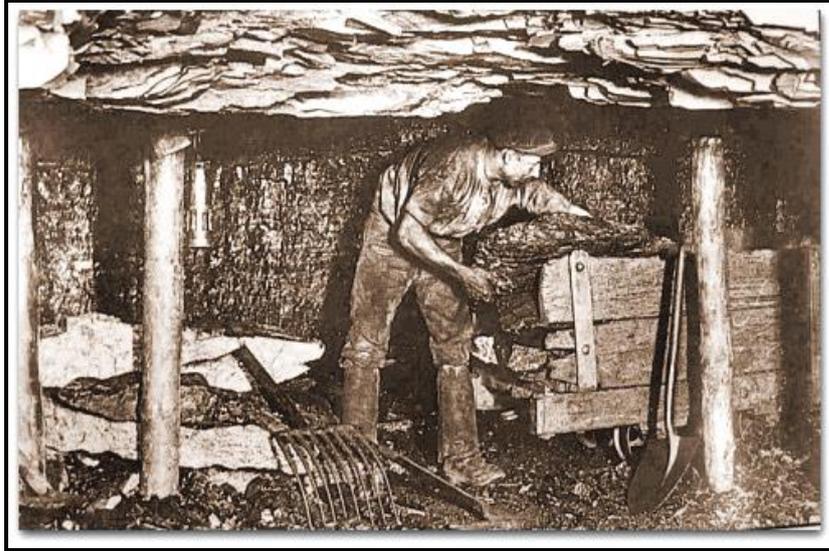


**THE BIRCH FAMILIES OF GELSMOOR &
COLEORTON WHO WERE
INVOLVED IN LOCAL COAL MINING
FOR c.75 YEARS**



DRAFT - ONGOING PROJECT

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - DECEMBER 2022

Numerous publications on local coal mining are free to download and read on the authors website :-

samuelstewart.com

**THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE BIRCH FAMILIES REFERRED TO
IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE BURIED IN GRIFFYDAM WESLEYAN
METHODIST CHAPEL GRAVEYARD**

1. John Birch the son of Isacc and Hannah Birch
2. Thomas Birch and his wife Rebecca
3. William Birch, son of Thomas and Rebecca Birch

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When I first recorded the death of John Birch at Pegg's Green Colliery, as the result of a shot firing accident in 1838, I was not aware that he was the great uncle of another Birch I had written about who was awarded the Edward Medal for an act of bravery, some 72 years later, in trying to save the life of a fellow miner Charles Marshall during a roof fall at Coleorton No.3. (Bug & Wink) Colliery, on Dec 16th 1910.

Isaac Birch was born in 1786 in Cubley Derbyshire a village on the Roman road into Rocester from Derby. He moved to Griffydam as a young man and married Hannah Burgess of Worthington on the 3rd February 1806.

Their youngest son John Birch worked at Pegg's Green Colliery as a shot-firer. In simple terms, this involved the drilling of holes at strategic intervals along the coal seam face to take the explosive charges, which would bring down the surrounding coal, prior to the Hewers or Getters coming on shift at about 6 o'clock in the morning to fill the horse drawn tubs with the loose coal, and then commence hewing more coal by hand with picks from the seam face. Little did John Birch know that when he went to work in the early hours of September 14th 1838, that he would be carried out of the pit seriously burnt and would have been taken to his home in Gelsmoor by horse and cart where he lingered there for five days before dying from his awful injuries. There follows a transcription of a newspaper report about the accident:-

Leicester Journal – September 14th 1838

Accident – *On Saturday week, an accident occurred at Pegg's Green Colliery which might have been attended with more serious consequences. A man named Birch had put a portion of powder into a cavity made in the coal for the purpose of blasting it, and laid the bag from which he had taken it a short distance from him, on the ground. As soon as the explosion had taken place, a portion of the touch paper, not burnt out, fell upon the bag unperceived by Birch, who went to take it up, when it suddenly ignited, burnt off his hair, whiskers &c., and severely injured his head and neck.*

Below is a transcript of a newspaper report on the inquest into John Birch's death which was held in Pegg's Green:-

Leicester Chronicle – Tuesday September 22nd 1838

THE INQUEST

DEATH FROM GUNPOWDER; FATAL RASHNESS. – *An inquest was held on Tuesday at Thringstone (Pegg's Green), on the body of John Birch, a young man aged 19, who was severely burnt from the explosion of a bag containing two or three pounds of gunpowder, in the Pegg's Green Colliery, on Saturday fortnight. Four blasts had been made by drilling holes in the coal, at about two yards asunder; three of them had been fired, and the last, which was deceased's, had been loaded first, and was fired last. A bag of gunpowder belonging to the deceased had been laid by one Richard Wardle about six yards from the blast. After the blast had gone off, some paper which had been used in preparing the blast, fell in a lighted state upon the bag containing the deceased's powder. As soon as the other young men who were round, saw it, they ran away; but the deceased very thoughtlessly and incautiously went to knock the fire off the bag, for the purpose of saving the powder, when just as he was touching the bag with his hand the powder exploded, and blew the deceased*

backwards to the ground. He was picked up, and found much burnt on the stomach and front of his body; he lingered until Saturday last. – Verdict, “Accidental Death”.



**Example of hand drilling holes for explosive charges.
Note the Davy safety lamps in the lower photograph**

These men worked in filthy, wet, warm conditions deep underground with the air often thick with coal dust. The mine owners gave them little respect or concern for their safety. Lighting conditions would have been minimal, as they had to provide their own light, by purchasing candles from the pit storeroom at that time. It is just possible that they may have had their own Davy Safety Lamp, as shown in the above photograph, which had become available at this time, but it is unlikely, as they would no doubt have proved to be too expensive and were not readily available. The miners were contracted to the mine owners on a self employment basis working a six day week. They were often dismissed for reasons that today would be seen as totally unacceptable. For example, illness or a family bereavement would not have been considered as an acceptable excuse to be off work, and their position would have been immediately filled by another man where possible, if they didn't attend work. In some cases, where the owner relented, they would have had to accept a fine by way of losing the equivalent in wages for the days lost. See the following examples:-

Nottingham Review and General Advertiser for the midland Counties – February 26th 1836

John Cambridge, of Whitwick, a collier, committed **for one month to hard labour**, for absenting himself from his work at the Pegg's Green Colliery.

Leicester Chronicle – May 7th 1842

Ashby de la Zouch Petty Sessions

William Green of Whitwick, charged by John Price, agent to the Pegg's Green Colliery Company, with absenting himself from work; case adjourned for a week, in consequence of the Constable not having served the warrant.

Leicester Chronicle – April 20th 1844

Ashby e la Zouch Petty Sessions, April 13th

George Perry, of Thringstone, **was committed for three months hard labour** for violating his contract with the Pegg's Green Colliery Company; and several men working at the same colliery were committed on the previous Monday for the same offences.

The following newspaper article suggests that Isacc and Hannah had another son John later on, probably named in memory of his brother:-

Leicester Daily Mercury – November 6th 1939

*Mr & Mrs. John Birch, of Highfield Street, Coalville, today celebrated the 63rd anniversary of their wedding. They were married at **Breedon Church in 1876**, and have two sons, a daughter, seven grand children and four great grand children.*

*Mr. Birch is 84 years of age and his wife 83. **Both were born at Gelsmoor**, and have lived in the Coalville district all their lives. Mr. Birch is a none smoker and for 65 years he was a Sunday school teacher at Coalville Marlborough-Square Methodist Church where he was at one time secretary.*

Mr. Birch was employed in the coal mines for 61 years and spent most of them working for the South Leicestershire Colliery Co, Snibston Mine at Coalville. After working at a brick-yard at the age of eight, he went down the pits when only ten years of age and as a young man worked twelve hours a day for 3s.

Mrs. Birch entered domestic service when she was only seven years of age.

John Birch who was killed in Pegg's Green colliery had an elder brother Thomas who was a coal miner all his life and lived in Rotten Row which was an island of land within Coleorton, but part of the Township of Thringstone from 1807 till 1884 when it came into the parish of Coleorton. He married Rebecca Burton of Worthington. She bore him eight children and died in the Alms Houses in Ravenstone.

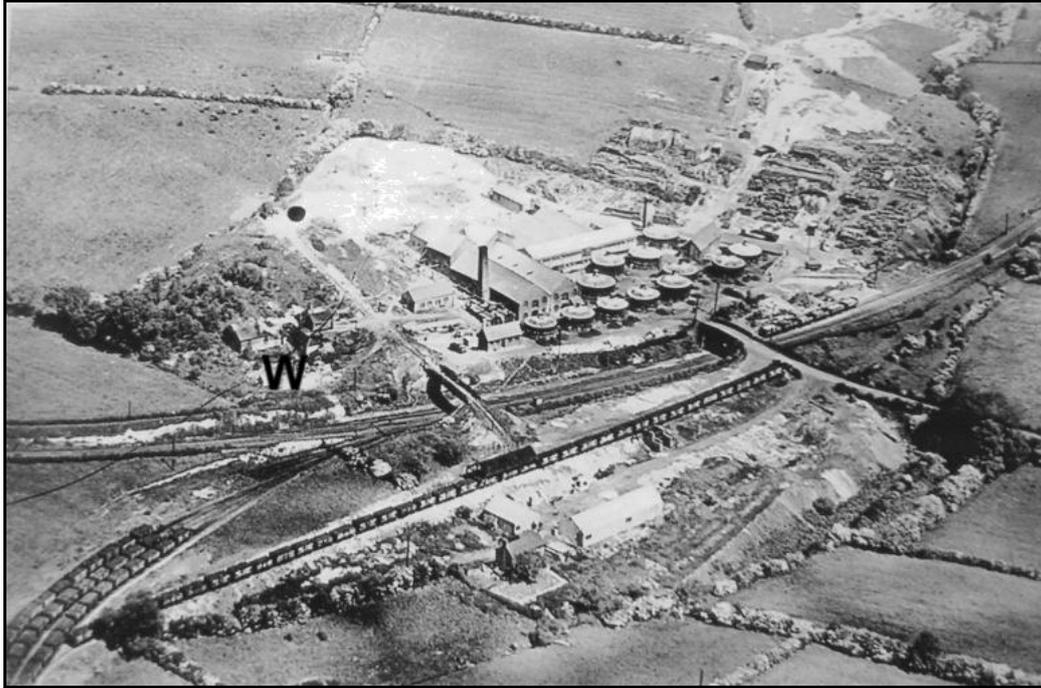
Thomas and Rebecca's daughter Jane, apparently had a relationship with Henry Lakin, a miner from Gelsmoor when she was 17 by whom she became pregnant. She assumed he would marry her, but he refused, and she gave birth to a son named Henry William Birch, but known as William. The family legend considered she died of a broken heart when William was four, and he was subsequently brought up by his grand parents. William married Mary Ann Springthorpe of Worthington at Breedon church in September 1877 when they were 21 and 20 years old respectively. They lived the majority of their lives in Gelsmoor, on Gelsmoor Road, two properties down from the Railway Inn (now "The Gelsmoor") raising 13 children in 27 years.



**William Birch and his wife Mary Ann (nee Springthorpe) surrounded by six of their thirteen children. From left: Arthur, William & Mary Ann, Sarah Jane, Olive May on pony, Ada Ann, Beatrice & Clarice.
Photograph taken c.1908.**

According to the 1939 register, Mary Ann Birch (b. 4th October 1857), by then a widow, was still living in Gelsmoor with her daughter Clarice G Birch (b 14th November 1900) who was single and a school mistress. Mary's husband William had died in 1929 aged 73 and she died in 1940 aged 83.

There follows details of an accident at Staunton Colliery, resulting in the death of William Stinson. **William Birch (son of Jane referred to above)** was a "Night Deputy" at the Colliery at the time the accident occurred and gave evidence at the enquiry. This was the same mine where on Oct 6th 1886, a fatal accident occurred, because of a combination of "a complete lack of practical knowledge" and "a total disregard for all rules and regulations" by the management, when re-opening old workings, with the result that four persons – including John Lakin (aged 60) and his two sons William (aged 30) and George (aged 35), plus a pony driver named John Stewart (aged 14) who were all overcome by "choke-damp" (air depleted of oxygen) and died. The ventilation system was deficient in every respect, and all the necessary precautions required, such as making adequate bore holes, were neglected. The Lakins are all buried, along with their mother and wife in the Wesleyan Methodist Cemetery, Griffydham. Lakin's widow continued to work the colliery with William Richards as Manager (previously Manager at Coleorton Colliery).



An old aerial photograph of the Newbold Pipeworks site and the Midland Railway line. The letter W marks the area of where the original Staunton Colliery was sunk, although the surviving buildings relate to the later Worthington Colliery

**AN ENQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF WILLIAM STINSON
AT STAUNTON COLLIERY, HELD AT THE RAILWAY TAVERN (LATER
NAMED RAILWAY INN), GELSMOOR**

Leicester Chronicle – June 6th 1891

On Saturday afternoon, Mr. Henry Deane, Coroner for north Leicestershire, held an enquiry at the Railway Tavern, Worthington, into the death of William Stinson, who met with his death at the Staunton Harold Colliery on the 28th ult. – Mr. H. Hipplewhite, assistant inspector of mines attended.

– Mary Stinson, wife of the deceased, said her husband was a collier and sixty years old. He left home to go to work at the colliery at 5.30. on the morning of Thursday last in his usual good health. He was brought home dead about 4 p.m.

– William Smith, Stallman at the colliery said on Thursday morning that he was in the pit working at No.1. stall. William Birch would examine the stall before they went to work. He was putting a hole in when the accident happened at about 10 o'clock. Deceased had been sawing a prop to make some sprags, and had just sawn it through when the roof started all at once. It was the roof of the stall and the roadway which began to press down and fall. There were other men working with deceased, but they got out before the roof bore down like a clap of thunder, all at once, and he did not have time to get away himself. Witness packed up coals between himself and the deceased to try and keep the roof up. Deceased cried out when the first fall came and "crawled" under the coal to get out of the way, but this was all borne down on him. Witness was got out first, being drawn out by his legs. He left the mine before rescuers got to the deceased.

- By the inspector: There was not sufficient quantity of sprags, so deceased cut a prop, and left the prop in so that the top should not be disturbed. There was a sudden

thickening of coal just there, and extra precautions had been taken. Stanley had done what little holing had been done that morning, and had set the sprags that were up. He had done that the day before – all but one – and the old man was going to set one for himself. Witness thought Stanley was a competent man to set sprags. The foreman found no problem with the setting when he came through.

– William Birch, deputy at the colliery, and residing at Gelsmoor, said he examined stall No.1. at 5.30. on the morning of the accident. – By the inspector: The one pack was partly built when he was there and the other was up. He was night deputy, and made his inspection before leaving at 6.30 a.m.

– John Saunders, under-manager at the colliery, said he saw stall No.1. at 8.30 a.m. on the 28th. The day shift were then at work. The stall appeared safe. There was some holing done on the left side of the gate, but he saw nothing to find fault with.

– By the inspector: The packing should have been done at night, but the stallman on the night shift was ill. The floor coal was rather soft, and it had gradually worked down, and the sprags had been pushed into the floor. The coal was solid and had to be blown.

– Thomas Stanley, collier, Coleorton, confirmed the previous witnesses and said he assisted to get deceased out.

*– **The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental Death”.***

Continued over page

WILLIAM BIRCH WORKING AT COLEORTON No.3. COLLIERY (BUG & WINK)



Before 1910, William Birch was working on underground road repair work at the Bug & Wink, when he was involved in a tragic accident which resulted in him being awarded the Edward Medal for an act of bravery in the attempted rescue of a colleague (**see the following pages for details**). There can be no doubt, that this event resulted in him becoming a member of the Coleorton Colliery rescue Party as shown in the following photograph taken at the Leicestershire & South Derbyshire Rescue Station, Ashby de la Zouch.

About 3 months following the accident, the 1911 Census records that William Birch (55) and his wife Mary Ann (56) were living in Gelsmoor with **7** children, whose ages ranged from 6 to 28. His occupation was given as "Below Ground Coal Miner Chageman". By this time, five of their original 13 children had apparently died.

One of their children, born Henry William in 1882, began work at the Bug & Wink at an early age. Both of his elder brothers, Arthur and Lawrence, were also coal miners. He married a lady by the name of Bertha and they lived in the area of Coleorton, formally known as Rotten Row. They had five children - Bertha, William Henry, Arthur, Ethel and Dorothy. The 1939 register shows Henry William (b.1882) living in Coalville with his two youngest children. He died in Coalville aged 70 in 1951.

Continued over page



The above photograph shows Coleorton No.3 Colliery (Bug & Wink) rescue team in 1913.

Official Accident Report on the death of Charles Marshall :-

Charles Marshall and William Birch were on road repair work when a fall occurred. Birch freed himself and was attempting to free Marshall when a second fall buried the two men almost up to their armpits. Birch freed himself once more but Marshall was still trapped and Birch tried again to release him.

Marshall was nearly free when a third fall completely buried Marshall and partially trapped Birch by his legs. A miner called Witham was on his way from the coal-face and Birch shouted to him. Both were trying to release Marshall when a fourth fall occurred. Witham rushed to get more help, while Birch carried on with his efforts to free Marshall. Within five minutes Witham returned with extra help; after approximately half an hour Marshall was released but he was dead.

Charles Marshall's occupation was a "Shifter", and he was aged 23 when he was killed. The following notes were included in the report:-

The deceased and another were engaged in repairing a gate-road. They had taken out a low bar and set another after ripping about half-a-yard of roof, and had ripped far enough to make room for a second bar, a yard further along, when a fall occurred from above the timber, and reeled the new bar and an old one set three weeks previously.

The Edward Medal (The Miner's Victoria Cross) – Presented by the King Edward VII to William Birch of Coleorton.

The Edward Medal 2nd Class, was awarded to William Birch, by King Edward VII at Buckingham Palace for an act of bravery in trying to save a fellow miner Charles Marshall during a roof fall at Coleorton Colliery, on Dec 16th 1910.

The **Edward Medal** was a British civilian decoration which was instituted by Royal Warrant on 13 July 1907 to recognise acts of bravery of miners and quarrymen in endangering their lives to rescue their fellow workers. The original Royal Warrant was amended by a further Royal Warrant on 1 December 1909 to encompass acts of bravery by all industrial workers in factory accidents and disasters, creating two versions of the Edward Medal: Mines and Industry.

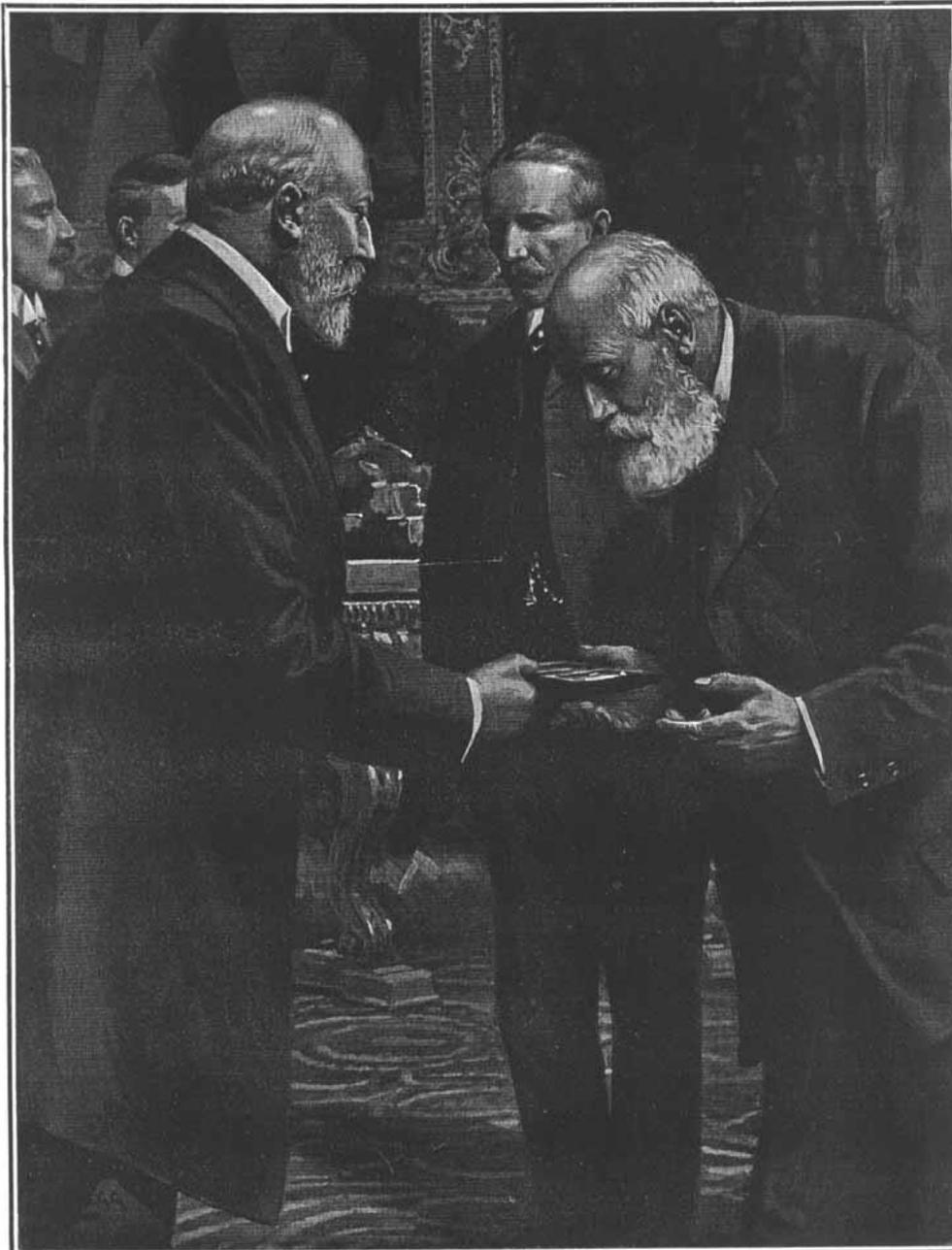
In both cases (Mines and Industry), the medal was divided in two grades: first class (silver) and second class (bronze), with the medal being a circular silver or bronze medal (as appropriate to the class awarded) suspended from a ribbon 1 3/8" wide and coloured dark blue and edged with yellow. Peculiarly, the cost of the Edward Medal (Mines) was borne by a fund established by a group of philanthropists (including prominent mine owners) and not the state. The Edward Medal (Mines) has been awarded only 395 times (77 silver and 318 bronze).



An example of the “Edward Medal (Second Class Bronze)” awarded to William Birch by King Edward VII at Buckingham Palace. The reverse showed a portrait of King Edward VII.



THE MINERS' VICTORIA CROSS:
THE FIRST PRESENTATION OF THE KING'S MEDAL
FOR HEROISM IN MINES.



Everson.

Chandler.

THE KING DECORATING FRANK CHANDLER AND HENRY EVERSON WITH THE MEDAL FOR CONSPICUOUS BRAVERY IN MINES.

On February 21 the King made the first award of his Majesty's new medals for conspicuous bravery in mines. Two working colliers, Frank Chandler, an old Yorkshire miner, and Henry Everson, a Glamorganshire miner, were decorated at Buckingham Palace. Chandler, who had been terribly scalded after an earth-fall at Barnsley, crept back under the loosened rock and earth, hoisted an injured man on his back, and crawled with him to a safe place. Everson climbed down a four-inch pipe in a shaft, reached water at a depth of 340 feet, and rescued a man who had fallen down a shaft and was clinging to a signal-wire. The King received the miners in the Council Chamber, where they were introduced by Mr. Herbert Gladstone. His Majesty said that he was very glad to meet two such brave men.—[DRAUGHT BY S. DICKIN.]

The King making the first award of the Edward Medal to two Yorkshire miners in 1908.

The following is a transcript from a 1911 edition of the Coalville Times:-

Heroism in the Coleorton Colliery

SEQUEL TO THE RECENT FATALITY

**BRAVE MINER DECORATED BY
THE KING**

ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION AT COALVILLE

The King received at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday, a number of persons recommended to him for decoration with medals for bravery for saving or attempting to save life on land. The prospective recipients of the decorations were driven to the Grand Hall of the Palace and conducted to the Throne Room, where the ceremony took place.

As each was presented, the Home Secretary read a brief account of the deed for which the recommendation was made. The King personally affixed the medals, shook hands with the recipients and spoke a few words of hearty recommendation. Among the men who were honoured was William Birch, who was given the Edward Medal of the second class, for bravery during a fall at Coleorton No.3. Colliery (Bug & Wink) on December last, when at the risk of his own life, Birch endeavoured for some time to save a comrade named Charles Marshall, a youth of Ashby-De-La-Zouch. Birch was commended at the inquest by Mr. Hepplewhite - H.M. Inspector, by the Coroner - Mr. H. J. Deane, and by the manager of the Coleorton Colliery, Mr. F. Tatham, who had taken a great interest in the case, and accompanied Birch to London on Tuesday.

An enthusiastic welcome awaited the hero when he arrived at Coalville by the 8 o'clock train on Tuesday night. A number of miners had arranged to have a band to play him to the Market Place, and thought it had not been made public. The news of this arrangement got out, and when the train steamed into the station, there was a crowd of three or four thousand people waiting in the street. In the crush, Birch got separated from Mr. Tatham and others who met him on the platform, and he appeared in the street alone. But he was wearing the medal, which had been affixed to his coat by the King, and he was soon identified and escorted to the market place by the crowd, with the Coalville Town Band playing "see the conquering hero comes". Many a stalwart miner pressed through the crowd to give Birch a hearty handshake as the King had done some hours before, and Birch, who is a very unassuming man, took it all quietly.

Much curiosity was shown by the crowd in respect to the medal Birch was wearing, and there was much eagerness to get a glimpse of the same. It was a round shaped medal with a portrait of King Edward VII on one side, and figures representing one miner succouring another on the other side, with the word "Courage" above.

In the Market Place, a platform had been erected and this was mounted by Birch together with the miner's agent, Mr. L. Lovett, Mr. T. Y. Hay, Mr. F. Tatham, Mr. F. Blow, Mr. Geo Brooks and Mr. Bollard.

Mr. Lovett said it was a proud day with them. As they all knew, Birch had been presented with a medal for trying to save the life of a comrade, and the

circumstances showed that there was among miners, as among other classes, a certain amount of courage when it came to assisting anyone in distress. They were pleased that the King himself had placed this medal on Birch for the bravery he displayed in an accident at Coleorton Colliery, and they could say that they as Leicestershire miners were nearer the Crown that day than they had ever been before (applause). Narrating the circumstances leading up to that day's event, Mr. Lovett said that on the night shift of December 16th 1910, Birch was working in the Coleorton pit with a young man named Charles Marshall. They were removing timber, and had nearly finished the night's work when a fall of roof occurred and brought down two settings of timber. Both Marshall and Birch were knocked down. Marshall had a large stone on his legs and asked Birch to remove it. He tried to do so, but a second fall occurred, burying Marshall and also Birch up to his shoulders. Birch got free, and still worked away trying to liberate Marshall and would have succeeded in another minute or two, but a third fall occurred knocking Birch's light out. Another man came up with a light, and then a fourth fall occurred, completely burying Marshall, and they heard no more of him. It took forty minutes to get him out, and then he showed no sign of life. At the inquest, the Inspector and the Coroner commented on the plucky manner in which Birch tried to liberate his mate, and Birch's reply in simple language, was that he had never known anything like it before...." *A poor lad begging to be set at liberty, and twice getting it all off but the last stone, and then for it to be of no use*". The unfortunate youth was killed, but Birch could not have done more (applause). No doubt many of those present knew something of pit work, and they would know that when a fall had taken place and there was loose stone hanging above, there was real danger for anyone going under, but in spite of that, Birch had tried to extricate his comrade. The circumstances of Marshall's death, he said, were very sad, but it had its bright side, inasmuch as it showed what a man would do to save his fellow man. It was not the first time it had been done in mining, but he was glad that a Leicestershire man had received this recognition from the King for the first time (applause). There was a bravery born of ignorance, but Birch knew of the great danger to which he was exposing himself, when he was doing his best to extricate his comrade. There were among miners many brave men. They knew that when explosions occurred or when there were rushes of water in the mine, there were always rescue parties willing to do what they could. He remembered the late Mr. Stokes, H. M. Inspector of Mines saying that when courage was wanted, give him a miner. And it was so. He (Mr. Lovett) was pleased to testify to the gratitude he felt, that the King had recognised the bravery of Birch in the risk he ran in trying to save his comrades life (cheers).

Mr. T. Y. Hay (manager of the Whitwick Colliery) said that as secretary to the Coalville Owners Association, he endorsed all that Mr. Lovett had said, and he was pleased to take part in the welcome of Birch that night. It was the first case he knew of the Edward Medal being awarded, and he was proud that it had come to Leicestershire. It was in accidents in mines such as falls of roof and explosions that man had to be brave. There were hundreds of miners who had done brave things which had never been heard of (hear, hear), and they were pleased that Birch's act had been recognised. He was glad that Mr. Tatham had taken such great interest in the same, and when it was mentioned to him (Mr. Hay) on Saturday night, he said he would only be too pleased to be there that night to welcome Birch. With all the legislation and inspection, he was afraid they would still have accidents in mines. He would welcome anyone who could come and save them from accidents, but while they went on ripping millions of tons of coal out of the earth every year, with thousands of men employed, they would have accidents. It was nice to know, however, that there were men like Birch, to do what they could to save a comrade, and to show such courage, as he did when required (applause). He (Mr. Hay) had been in Coalville for twenty years, and he regarded himself as a Leicestershire man,

and he felt proud of Birch as he was sure every owner and every man in Leicestershire would. If there were other cases of bravery in Leicestershire mines, they must see that they were recognised. It was like the "Victoria Cross", and a great honour to any man. He hoped Mr. Birch would live long to enjoy the honour conferred on him that day by the King (cheers).

Mr. F. Tatham, manager of the Coleorton Colliery, said that he would like them all to understand that he did not take any honour for this to himself, but at the same time, he was pleased to know that he had one brave man working for him (a voice: above one). He would be sorry to think he had one who was not brave (cheers). He must say that he had done his best in regard to this case, but he felt that every brave act of that description should be recognised in a similar manner. When a man risked his life two or three times over to save a comrade, it was only right that something should be done to recognise it. Probably some of them had done similar things without being rewarded – he himself on one occasion saved three lives – but it showed they were getting better legislation and were getting nearer that situation in which every man realised that his fellow man was his brother (cheers). That was a principal he would very much like to advocate. He was pleased to be able to stand there with the miners' agents, for whom he had as much respect as he had for the secretary of the Coal Owners Association (cheers). He hoped it would become more and more the aim of them all to work together on both sides, avoiding friction (hear, hear). In some districts the operation of the 8 hours Act caused a tremendous amount of trouble, but he was pleased to say that in Leicestershire, as a result of sound common sense on the part of leaders of the Miners' Association and Coal Owners Association, they had been able to steer clear of difficulty in regard to that. He hoped that this feeling would grow (applause). In regard to Birch, he hoped that it would be an inducement to other men to put forward a hand to help a brother in distress as the occasion arose. Birch had asked him to thank them on his behalf as he was no speaker. He told him (Mr. Tatham) that he could do a lot better down in the kitchen at Buckingham Palace than he could do on a public platform (laughter and cheers). On behalf of Birch, he thanked them for the splendid reception they had given him. He had not expected to see such a big crowd.

Mr. George Brooks said that he would like to say that when the matter was mentioned to Mr. Newberry, Mr. Blow and himself, they at once took the matter up and approached the "Town Band", who readily complied with their wishes. Mr. Lovett and Mr. Hay also said they would be delighted to be there, which showed that whatever was said in the Press about the relationship between masters and men, there were times when both could combine to give honour when honour was due (cheers). With all the mining legislation that could be brought in, they would never prevent accidents. Miners had, as it were, to face death, but a good practical miner would never allow another man to go into danger where he was afraid to go himself. He could say that from what he knew of Leicestershire miners. He moved a vote of thanks to the band and Mr. Hay, Mr. Tatham and Mr. Lovett for the interest they had shown in the matter. He added that Mr. Birch knew nothing of these arrangements for his reception. How it had got out to the extent it had, he, (Mr. Brooks) could not understand.

Mr. Newberry seconded the vote of thanks which was heartily accorded. Mr. Lovett responding, said it was as Mr. Brooks had said – there was a common ground on which they all could stand, whether they were colliery managers, colliers or miners' agents, and that was in the cause of humanity and doing the best they could for their fellow men (cheers). The Band played the National Anthem and the gathering then dispersed.