

Account of explosion at Sedgwick gunpowder mill on 24 April 1874 transcribed from the Westmorland Gazette 25 April 1874

SERIOUS EXPLOSION AT THE NEW GUNPOWDER MILLS, SEDGWICK

Yesterday (Friday) forenoon, at about twenty minutes to twelve o'clock, a serious explosion occurred at the new gunpowder mills, Sedgwick. As the result of inquiries made just before going to press, we learn that the explosion occurred in the corning-house. In this part of the mills two men named respectively William Dodgson of Far Cross Bank, in this town, and William Booth, of Natland, were at work. Dodgson was in the act of feeding the large machine when, by some unexplained means, an explosion occurred, the building being rendered a complete wreck. Both men were severely burned, but were able to walk out. As soon as the explosion was heard, men employed in other parts of the mills rushed to the spot. A conveyance was procured and both the injured men were removed to their homes. We have not heard the nature of the injuries sustained by Booth; but Dodgson, we learn, is much injured about the head, hands and ankles. Dr Leeming was called in as soon as possible, and applied the usual remedies. In the afternoon, the unfortunate sufferer was conveyed to the Cottage Hospital. We may mention that a disastrous explosion occurred at the same works on the 22nd. Of October 1871. The corning-house (the scene of the explosion above described) and the adjoining press-house were then blown up. Six men were injured, of whom three or four afterwards died.