

HENRY BELL jnr 1834-1876

Henry Bell was one of twelve children of Henry Bell snr, a farmer of Bell's Farm, Thornton-in-Craven, North Yorkshire.

He worked as a labourer carter in the quarry on the outskirts of the village. He married Jane Cowgill and moved into Lime Tree Cottage in the middle of the village. They had three children, Elizabeth, Joseph and Henry Thomas. Jane died in January 1867 leaving Henry to look after three young children.

In 1876 Henry married again, on 6th February 1867 to Sarah Ann Land, who had moved into the village from Knottingley to seek work in service.

Henry and Sarah and the three children, now in their teens, lived a quite life until six months later Henry was involved in a tragic accident in the quarry.

Extract from Craven Herald August 1876.

FATAL ACCIDENT AT THE ROCK. – On Friday last about eight o'clock in the morning, a very sad accident occurred at Thornton to Mr Henry Bell of the same place. For many years Bell had been employed in conveying wagons of stones out of the rock down to railway sidings at Thornton station, and on the morning in question he was standing on a loose heap of stones talking with John Eastwood when a laden wagon emerged from the tunnel leading from the rock to the main line. As it passed the diseased he attempted get onto the break(sic), but the stones on which he stood slipped from under his feet causing the wagon passing over him cutting off a portion of his feet, running across his legs and thighs, and mutilating him in the most shocking manner. The unfortunate man was seedily conveyed home and Dr Roberts of Barnoldswick, his assistant (Mr Heak and Dr Macnab of Skipton) were speedily in attendance, rendering all the aid they could. The case however was quite hopeless and the poor sufferer died about 10 o'clock in the evening. On Monday last an inquest was held at The Kay's Arms before T.P. Brown, Esq. coroner and a respectable jury, who after hearing the evidence returned the verdict of "Accidentally killed". The unfortunate man was 41 years of age and was married a second time, about six months ago; he leaves behind him a widow, who is pregnant, and three children to mourn his untimely end.

Henry was buried in Thornton church on 14th August 1876. His son John Henry was born on 1st March 1877.

The incident was mentioned in the book "Granny's Village" by Roger Mason.