

ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

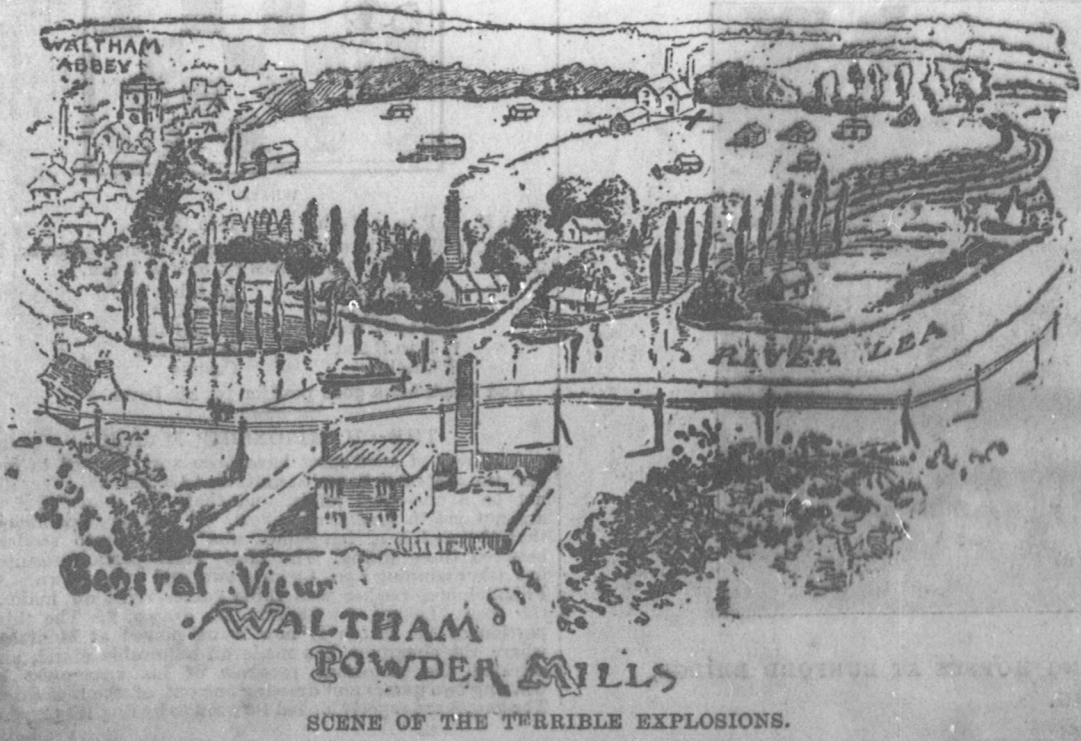
WASC1338



7801 ✓

The Disastrous Explosions at the Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mills render of sad interest our sketch of the scene of the accident. A double explosion, more terrible in its consequences than any of the four that have already taken place at Waltham Abbey since the opening of the present year, occurred on May 7 in the Government cordite factory. Four lives were lost, and great damage was done, not only to the Government buildings, but also to the private property of the town. The four men killed were Mr. Bennis (manager of the gun-cotton works), William Ingram (a foreman), and two workmen, named George Suckling and George Frost (married), all of them well known and respected at the works and in the town. At

the inquest it was stated that at the time of the explosion there were 1500 pounds of nitro-glycerine in the washhouse, and over a ton in the store, the work being under the control of four qualified chemists. The jury found that the four men met their deaths by the explosion, but there was nothing to show how it occurred. The funeral of the victims of the cordite explosion took place at Waltham Abbey on May 11. All the factories were closed, and the operatives attended the funeral. Most of the county residents were represented, as were also the Secretary of State for War, Woolwich Arsenal, and the Society of Chemists.



1894 ✓

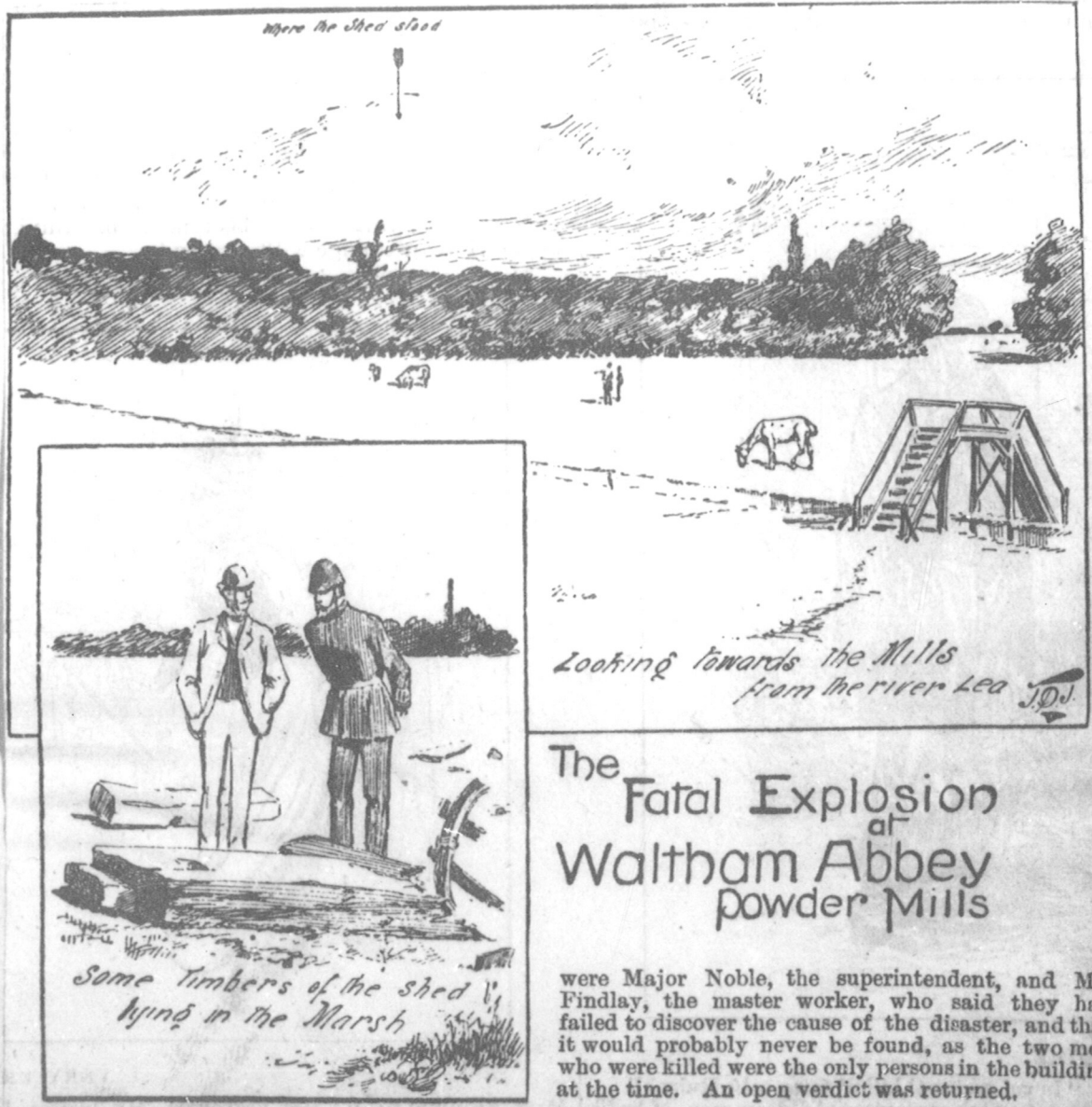
ne tell us that whilst he did so, the figure on
raculous crucifix bowed its head in an ominous
r.

errible disaster was indeed at hand, which those
ame after might well suppose would be foretold

EXPLOSION AT WALTHAM ABBEY POWDER MILLS.

AN EXPLOSION occurred on the morning of the 22nd
inst. at the Waltham Powder Mills shortly after the
men went to work. It happened at one of the sheds
at the gunpower factories belonging to the Govern-
ment, and situated near the banks of the river Lea.
The shed was known as Breaking Down House No. 2,
and it was blown to pieces. Two men who were
working there were killed. They were elderly men,
named Napthan and Maynard. They appear to have
been working alone in the shed, and their bodies
were hurled a long distance away, one of them falling
into the marsh by the river-side; but none of the
remains were recognisable, and they had to be
collected in fragments. Another man named Albert
Wilson was injured by the force of the explosion, but
only slightly. A P.I.P. Artist was soon on the
spot, and sketched the scene of the sad disaster.

The deaths of the two men formed the subject
of an inquest on Monday. Among the witnesses



The Fatal Explosion at Waltham Abbey powder Mills

were Major Noble, the superintendent, and Mr.
Findlay, the master worker, who said they had
failed to discover the cause of the disaster, and that
it would probably never be found, as the two men
who were killed were the only persons in the building
at the time. An open verdict was returned.

27. A dreadful explosion took place this morning about eleven o'clock, at the government powder-mills, at Waltham Abbey. The concussion was distinctly felt in and around the metropolis, more particularly in Stepney, Hackney, and Blackwall. Two mills, together with a corning-house, and other buildings, were blown to atoms, and we lament to say, eight valuable lives were involved in their destruction. The following are the names of the sufferers:—Parker, Stevings, Grapes, Goates, Belcher, Wakeling, Chappel, and Wilsher. The only surviving person, Thursday night, was Wilsher, but he was not expected to live. They were all married men with families, except Goates.

1811.

On Saturday morning one of the powder-mills at Waltham Abbey blew up; one of the workmen was killed, and another wounded.

1760.

13. At Waltham Cross, Mr. William Marchant, Surgeon to his Majesty's Powder Mills.

1790.

Powder Mills, Waltham Abbey.—We record with pain and regret a disastrous and dreadful accident, which took place in the course of Wednesday, at Waltham Abbey.—The powder magazine at that place belonging to Government, together with the corning houses, mills, and several other buildings, blew up with a tremendous explosion. The shock was like the concussion of an earthquake. Several houses in the town of Waltham Abbey were overturned, and scarce a pane of glass was left whole in any part of it. The effect of the explosion was not confined to the immediate vicinity, as many houses in the surrounding country, to a great distance, suffered considerable damage from the violence of the shock. The loss to the public by this calamitous accident is very considerable, as we are given to understand that the whole of the buildings have been destroyed. We are afflicted to add, that a number of lives were lost on the occasion. Some accounts state the number as high as 150, but we have reason to believe that it does not exceed 11. The accident happened about one o'clock.

1811

27. A dreadful explosion took place this morning about eleven o'clock, at the government powder-mills, at Waltham Abbey. The concussion was distinctly felt in and around the metropolis, more particularly in Stepney, Hackney, and Blackwall. Two mills, together with a corning-house, and other buildings, were blown to atoms, and we lament to say, eight valuable lives were involved in their destruction. The following are the names of the sufferers:—Parker, Stevings, Grapes, Goates, Belcher, Wakeling, Chappeil, and Wilsher. The only surviving person, Thursday night, was Wilsher, but he was not expected to live. They were all married men with families, except Goates.

1811.

On Saturday morning one of the powder-mills at Waltham Abbey blew up; one of the workmen was killed, and another wounded.

1760.

13. At Waltham Cross, Mr. William Marchant, Surgeon to his Majesty's Powder Mills.

1790.