

On Her Majesty's Service

POSTAGE

WASC 1779

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THE GUNPOWDER EXPLOSION.—The *Abbey Church Monthly* refers to this sad event as follows:—"The terrible explosion of about 1500 pounds of gunpowder which occurred on December 13th, about 2.30 a.m., at the Cam House, Lower Island, Royal Gunpowder Factory, has brought sorrow and desolation to many homes in the neighbourhood, and has cast a deep gloom over the whole parish. Fifty years have passed away since a disaster of this magnitude has occurred in the royal works. In our parish register of that period we find that seven men lost their lives by an explosion on 13th April, 1843, and their mutilated remains were interred in the churchyard. Nearly thirty-two years before that date, on 27th November, 1811, eleven men also met with a similar violent death, and ten years earlier, on 18th April, 1801, nine men were killed by the first explosion which had occurred since the mills became Government property. They were purchased by the Board of Ordnance of the owner, John Walton, Esq., in the year 1787. The fourth serious explosion recorded happened near the scene of the recent disaster on 16th June, 1870, when five men were fatally injured, and the sad accident on 22nd August, 1890, which cost two poor men their lives, is still fresh in our memory."

THE WALTHAM ABBEY EXPLOSIONS.

Our readers will note with sympathetic interest the letter printed below, which appeared in the *Sporting Life* of Friday, December 29th. We shall be happy to forward any contributions to the Rev. F. B. Johnston, if addressed to us. The letter is as follows:—

"Sir,—I hope that, through your kindness, I may be allowed to make an appeal to your readers in cases of very exceptional distress which have come under my immediate notice. On Wednesday, December 13th, a most disastrous accident occurred at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey. One man was killed on the spot, and eight others, after great suffering, succumbed to their injuries. Two of the deceased were married men; two more were the sole support of aged mothers. They had been but a short time in the employ of the Government, and by the regulations

would, therefore, only be entitled to very trifling compensation. Since then another disaster has occurred at Waltham Abbey. Last Friday two terrible explosions took place at the Cartridge Factory of Messrs. Joyce and Co. As the result of these accidents two men have died, and two more are now in hospital severely injured. It is on behalf of these sad cases that I appeal. I am confident that when the need of the bereaved ones is made known in your columns, generous help will be forthcoming to swell the fund which is being raised to assist in their dire distress the widows and relatives of the dead and of the injured men. The Vicar of Waltham Abbey, the Rev. F. B. Johnston, Farm Hill, Waltham Abbey, has consented to act as treasurer of the fund, and subscriptions may be sent to him, or to me at my address.

Yours, etc.,

W. P. GREENALL.

Temple House, Waltham Cross, Herts.
December 25th, 1893."

Writing to last Wednesday's *Times* upon the subject of the public subscription, the Mayor of Hertford says: "It has been decided to apply the fund [raised by the subscription] to assist the families of the victims of the explosion at the Royal Gunpowder Factory only. But should any subscribers specially desire the sufferers by the explosion at Messrs. Joyce's works should be allowed to participate in the fund I, and those who act with me, will be glad to be made acquainted with their views."

TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly, through your columns, thank all the members and friends of the Star Football Club for their kindness and sympathy for our dear departed brother, Edward Larman, who was killed by the explosion of gunpowder in the Government mills, and who was formerly a member of the above club. Our grief will not allow us to thank them sufficiently for the splendid wreath which was purchased by the members and friends of the club for their departed member. Please accept the most heartfelt thanks from his widowed mother and his brothers,

JAMES, GEORGE, JOHN, AND HENRY LARMAN.
Waltham Newtown.
December 28th, 1893.