

Alfred Lamb
Aged 26 years
Killed in the Markham Pit Disaster
May 10th 1938

'I think of him in silence
I oft repeat his name
What would I give to clasp his hands
And see him smile again'

'I'll see you in the Morning'
by Harold Smedley

Circumstances drew us together, Alf and me. We were members of the Staveley Salvation Army and. Alf was on soprano cornet and I was on the euphonium.

'Comrades' we called ourselves.

We were married within weeks of each other 'comrades in arms' you might say.

We worked at Markham Colliery on the night shift 'comrades in distress.' There were no buses in these days, you either walked it or biked it. We biked it.

Alf called for me each night ringing his bell at the bottom of our entry. He was an 'eternal optimist.' No matter how bad the weather or how bad the circumstances he never failed to sing all the way to Markham.

Somehow his cheerfulness rubbed off on me as I set off feeling under the weather yet finished up feeling a lot better.

So it was on this particular night.

If possible he was more exuberant than usual. We reached the lamp room, got out our lamps then had to our separate ways.

Alf worked down the 'Black Shale' and I down No2.

I had not gone many yards when I heard him shouting me. I turned round but failed to see him, only his lamp shining across the darkness.

"Good night Harold, I'll see you in the morning..."

the morning came but I waited in vain for my friend. His body was one of the last to be received from that explosion that killed eighty odd miners.

I'll never forget the night I restarted work. No cheerful friend by my side I was filled with sorrow and apprehension.

It was on the Markham road, not the Emmaus road when 'Jesus himself drew near and went with me.'

My burden was lightened, my fears subsided and new strength was mine to face the unknown future.

That is fifty years or more ago but even now I have but to close my eyes and once again I see a miners lamp shining across the darkness. I hear the voice of my old comrade echoing down the years "I'll see you in the morning."

The last verse of Newmans' hymn 'Lead Kindly Light' is relevant to me.

So long thy power has blessed me
Sure it still will lead me on
O'er moor and fen o'er crag and torrent
Till the night is gone.
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved, long since
And lost awhile.'