

## William Henry Cauldwell (1888 – 1937)



William Henry Cauldwell was born in Slitting Mill, Staveley in 1888. His parents were William Cauldwell (1853 – 1920) and Ellen Bacon (1857 – 1929). On the 1891 Census, William Henry, was 3 years old and he was living with his parents and one younger sibling at Slitting Mill near Staveley. The household also contained three lodgers. His father was working as a coke drawer at a local colliery. On the 1901 Census the Cauldwell family were still living in one of the cottages on Slitting Mill farm. William Henry was thirteen years old and he had six younger siblings. His father was employed as a colliery labourer. On the 1911 Census, William Henry was single and living with his parents and four younger siblings at 21 Chesterfield Road, Staveley. He was employed as a coal 'getter', which is another name for a hewer. His father was now employed by the parish council as a carter. Very soon after the Census of 1911 he married Lucy Rebecca Jennings.

At the time of the disaster, William Henry was working as a 'cutterman' and was living at 43 Main Road, Renishaw.

William Henry was buried in Eckington cemetery on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 1937.

A 'Derbyshire Times' reported visited the family home of William Henry on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1937 -

When a Derbyshire Times reporter called at the home of William Henry Cauldwell, 49 Main Street, Renishaw, the morning after the accident, he found the youngest of five sons, Peter, playing with a puppy in front of the fire. Peter is eight years old and did not know that his father was dead. He had been told that he had gone away. The puppy was a Christmas present from his father.

Cauldwell who was 48, leaves a widow. Four of his sons are working, but not in the pit. "My husband worked in the pit for 36 years," his wife said. He never had an accident, but all the same, he was determined to keep the lads out – and he did!"

He was born at Slitting Mill, Staveley, but had lived in Renishaw 25 years, ever since he got married. He had worked in collieries for 36 years, and had been at Markham seven years prior to the disaster.

He was a keen footballer in his younger days, playing for Lowgates F.C. He was also an ardent angler, and a member of the Mason Arms Club, Emmett Carr. He was a staunch Labour supporter.

He was not of a superstitious nature, but had often told his family he believed his end would come in the pit. He had worked in collieries many years, starting when he was 13. He helped sink Westthorpe Pit.

Peter had frequently asked his mother, "Has my daddy come home yet?" and when told he had not, added "Never mind mummy, he is sure to write"

Mrs Cauldwell said that he her husband not gone to help a workmate, he would probably have escaped the explosion.

One of the sons walked and ran to the pit when he heard of the accident and after enquiring the names of those involved was told one was named Cauldwell. He replied, "Good God, That's my father"

Mr Cauldwell had passed safety first tests in mining. On the morning of the disaster he nearly stayed at home, but after hesitating, decided to go. He had complained of pains in his back when he awoke, and his wife had told him to stay at home., but in the end he went to work.

## ***Parents***

### ***Father – William Cauldwell (1853 – 1920)***

William Cauldwell (1853 – 1920) was born in Carsington, Derbyshire. His parents were Thomas Cauldwell (1819 – 1899) and Hannah Hunt (1811 – 1861). On the 1861 Census William was living with his parents and three older siblings in Carsington. His father was employed as a game keeper. On the 1871 Census he was a servant on a farm in Low Lees, Matlock. On the 1881 Census, William, aged 28, was living as a lodger at Matlock Cliff, Matlock and was working as a waggoner for a timber merchant. On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1887 he married Ellen Bacon in Derby, when William was 34 and Ellen was 29 years old. Their first child was William Henry, who was born in 1888, followed by Walter in the following year. Both boys were born at Slitting Mill, Staveley. William was working as a coke drawer, having made the transition from farm servant, via waggoner, to working at a colliery.

### ***Mother – Ellen Bacon (1857 – 1929)***

Ellen Bacon was born in Carsington, Derbyshire in 1857. Her parents were Matthew Bacon (1831 – 1893) and Ann Bestwick (1831 – 1889). Both parents had been born in Carsington in Derbyshire. On the 1861 Census, Ellen aged 3 was living in the village of Carsington with her parents and two younger siblings, Matthew and Fanny. Her father was a lead miner. On the 1871 Census Ellen was thirteen years old and was living with her parents and six younger siblings. The family was living at Surers Farm in Carsington and her father was still employed as a lead miner. Ellen was attending Carsington school. Sometime between 1871 and 1881, Ellen left Carsington and on the 1881 census she was employed as kitchen maid at

Upperwood Hall, Darfield in Yorkshire. This was the home of the Tynas family who were both solicitors and coal mine owners. In 1887 Ellen married William Cauldwell in Derby.

On the 1891 Census, Ellen was living at Slitting Mill. Slitting Mill, on the road between Staveley and Eckington, derives its name from the slitting mill, built in 1650, for the purpose of slitting iron into thin strips for the use of sickle and nail makers.

### ***Wife – Lucy Rebecca Jennings (1890 – 1987)***

Lucy Rebecca Jennings was born in 1890 in Killamarsh, Derbyshire. Her parents were William Jennings (1867 – 1950) and Millicent Batty (1868 – 1931). Her father came from Emmett Carr and mother came from Killamarsh. On the 1891 Census Lucy Rebecca was one year old and was living with her parents on Church Lane in Killamarsh. Her father was employed as a coal miner. On the 1911 Census Lucy Rebecca was living and working in the Travellers Rest public house on Mansfield Road in Killamarsh. The public house was run by Mary Ann Bramall, who was a widow. Lucy married William Henry in April 1911 in the Chesterfield registration district. Lucy Rebecca and William Henry had five boys between 1913 and 1929.

Following the disaster in 1937, Lucy Rebecca and her five children moved from 43 Main Road, Renishaw to 7 Hague Lane in Renishaw. They were living there at the time of the 1939 Register.

Lucy Rebecca died in 1987 in Sheffield at the age of 97. This was fifty years after the death of her husband.