

# TWO KILLED BY BLACKDAMP

## Boy Peers Into Abandoned Mine and Overcome—Father Dies in Rescue

OWENSBORO, Ky., July 13.—  
(Special)—Joe Fuqua, aged 50 years,  
and his son Robert, age 15 years,  
were drowned in the shaft of the  
abandoned Fern Hill Coal Mine west  
of Owensboro this afternoon.

The father and son left home early  
this morning for the purpose of  
picking blackberries. The suppo-  
sition is that the young boy was  
leaning over the shaft of the mine  
and was overcome by the fumes of  
black damp. It is thought that his  
father descended a ladder in an ef-  
fort to rescue him and he, too, was  
overcome and fell into the water.

The bodies can be seen in the water  
tonight but on account of the strong  
fumes of black damp a rescue has  
not been effected.

The finding of a lunch basket and  
a hat near the shaft of the mine led  
to the discovery of the double trag-  
edy. There is a large crowd at the  
mine and efforts were made to re-  
cover the bodies tonight. Fuqua  
was connected with the American  
Tobacco company here.

# FATHER AND SON'S BODIES REMOVED FROM MINE SHAFT

Coroner's Verdict Is They  
Accidentally Fell Into  
Abandoned Mine

## BLACK DAMP CAUSE

After lying at the bottom of an air shaft of an abandoned coal mine of the Fern Hills Coal company for many hours, the bodies of Joseph Fuqua, age 50 and his son, Robert, age 13, were recovered about 9 o'clock Wednesday morning by means of a rope and grab hooks.

When it became known on Tuesday afternoon, shortly after 3 o'clock, that there was every evidence that the bodies of both Mr. Fuqua and his son, were possibly at the bottom of the air shaft, an alarm was given and many persons rushed to the scene. Efforts were made to recover the bodies but dark came on and efforts were abandoned until Wednesday morning.

A number of coal miners, some of whom were familiar with the air shaft, pressed themselves into service, and with ropes and grab hooks proceeded to locate the bodies. About 8:30 o'clock, the body of Robert was found, and he was soon brought to the top of the shaft, a distance of about 60 feet. His leg was broken, and it was thought that his neck was also broken. About one-half hour later, the body of the father of the boy was brought to the surface. While Mr. Fuqua showed signs of many bruises, it was not believed that he suffered any broken bones.

The bodies of Mr. Fuqua and his son, were brought to the Miller-Gillison Undertaking establishment, where Coroner Gillison held an inquest. The verdict was that both Fuqua and his son had met death by accidentally falling into the air shaft. During the afternoon both bodies were viewed by many persons and friends of the deceased. No funeral arrangements have been made.

Mr. Fuqua, with his family, resided at 2117 West Seventh street. On Tuesday morning he and his son, Robert, decided to go blackberry picking in the Bon Harbor hills. Shortly after 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Del McAtee of 326 St. Elizabeth street and Stewart Mattingly and his little sister, Jessie of 517 West Third street, who had also been blackberry picking, passed near the scene of the tragedy and discovered a filled lunch basket, a bucket half full of blackberries and a black felt hat near the entrance of the mine shaft. This aroused their suspicion that something had happened to the owners of them. An alarm was given by Mr. McAtee and a crowd quickly gathered. The identity of the bodies was made known by Thornton Fuqua, another son of Mr. Fuqua, who arrived, and identified the buckets and a straw hat.

It is the belief that Mr. Fuqua and his son sought rest near the shaft, possibly to eat their dinner, and that the boy in looking into the shaft was overcome by the black damp and fell in. Mr. Fuqua is then thought to have gone to the rescue of his son, and he too, to have been overcome by the damp.

1920 July Father and son fall into  
abandoned mine

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