



Which W Platts?

The newspaper reports refer to a W Platts. A search of the 1861 census for W Platts within five miles of Swannington revealed:

- William Platts (father) - age 51, agricultural labourer, Griffydam
- William Platts (son) - age 18, smith's labourer, Griffydam
- William Platts - age 34, colly lab (colliery labourer), Gelsmoor
- William Platts - age 30 bricklayer, Whitwick

While it is possible that the W Platts at the Califat in 1863 had moved into the area since the 1861 census, or that one of the others had changed jobs, it is most likely that the Califat banksman was William Platts of Gelsmoor.

Early Life

William Platts was baptised at Worthington on the 4th February 1827. The 1841 census records Thomas Platts 35 agricultural labourer, Elizabeth 35, William 14 and Eliza 12 living at Chapel Row, Griffydam (part of Worthington parish). This was next to the Top Chapel at the junction of Elder Lane and The Tentas, the Wesleyan Reform Union Chapel near the Wagon and Horses had yet to be built.

By 1851 the family had moved within Worthington parish to the Outwoods (between Gelsmoor, Newbold and Coleorton). The census lists Thomas 49 agricultural labourer, Elizabeth 49 domestic duties, William 24 agricultural labourer and Eliza pointer lace, all born in Worthington.

Marriage To Jane Whyman 1859

Monday 21st February 1859 was an important day for Gelsmoor's Whyman family. Miner William Whyman married Harriet Wood, then his older sister Jane married labourer William Platts. Spinster Jane had a three year old son Parnell Whyman.

William and Jane's first child, Thomas, was born later in the year. Sunday 4th December 1859 was a double baptism for Parnell Whyman and Thomas Platts. The family were still living in Gelsmoor at the 1861 census, next to the toll house. William was described as a colly lab, a colliery labourer.

Califat Overwind 1863

The Leicester Journal, Friday June 5, 1863 report of the incident and inquest into the death of John Hutchinson stated:

W. Platts, a banksman at the second pit, was about thirty yards from the pit's mouth. Did not see the cage come out of the mouth of the pit. Saw it immediately after the accident. The cage was up against the pulley wheel. Saw Lakin come out of the engine-house. Have seen him repeatedly working the engine. Did not know that he ever drew men up before.

Later Life

The 1871 census shows William, coal pit lab, and Jane, dressmaker, living in the Newbold / Outwoods area with children Parnell 15, coal miner, Thomas 12, Amos 6, Hannah 3. William died in 1877, aged 50 years.