

Quarry explosion took five lives in Stinesville in 1898

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ered sufficiently to tell Dr. Rogers what had happened just prior to the explosion. The boy said: "I was in the quarry at the time of the accident and was standing by John Williams. Ed Watts had put a cap on a stick of dynamite and had put it in a 10- or 12-foot hole, which had been drilled in solid stone. He put sand in the hole and began tamping it with a long stick or pole. John Williams was standing by Watts with about 11 sticks of dynamite in his arms when the explosion occurred in the hole. I heard the explosion and saw the fire, but knew nothing more until some time afterwards."

Liford also told the coroner that one of the workmen had been drinking.

The Indianapolis *News* ran an account of the tragedy in its

Sept. 3, 1898, edition in the back of the newspaper among the stock market statistics and obituaries. Curiously, the *News* version of what happened differed appreciably from that of the *Telephone*: "Yesterday afternoon, while men were preparing a charge, John W. Williams stood near with a number of cartridges in his arms, and John Grubbs undertook to hand one of them to the man preparing the blast, but in doing so, dropped it. Contact with the ground exploded the cartridge, and the concussion instantly communicated with the cartridges still held by Williams."

The *News* account contained one more detail of the story. Of Williams the newspaper said: "On his person at the time of the explosion was gold watch and \$100 in currency, none of which can be found, and is supposed to have been obliterated."