

ACCIDENT AT AN EXPLOSIVE FACTORY. TWO WORKMEN SEVERELY BURNT.

A serious accident, which resulted in painful and dangerous injuries to two workmen named William Ross and John Clarke, occurred yesterday morning at the Neco Explosive Factory, St. Albans, near Braybrook. The explosive known as "Neco" is a powerful compound used for blasting purposes and also for ordinary ammunition. The manufacture is carried on by a company called the Neco Explosive Manufacturing Company, the offices of which are in Little Collins street. The preparation of the material has hitherto been deemed unusually free from danger. The chief ingredients are saltpetre, nitre, and sawdust. Ross and Clarke, who were the only two men working in the factory at the time of the accident, were engaged in scraping the heavy rollers used for compressing the material with wooden scrapers, this operation being necessitated by the material clogging on the rollers. Suddenly there was a great flare up of flame unaccompanied by any noise, and the fire instantaneously communicated itself to a box containing 60lb. weight of the explosive which had not yet been treated in the mills. Ross, who had been blinded by the sudden smoke and glare, became dazed, and fell headlong into the blazing reserve of material, while Clarke, although suffering severely, managed to stand his ground. Assistance was speedily procured, and both men were taken to the Melbourne Hospital, where their wounds received attention from Mr. Strong, who found them suffering from shock as well as from burns. Clarke was burnt on the face, arms, palms of the hands, back, and legs, and the injuries of Ross were also found to be extensive. The two men were relations by marriage, Clarke having married a sister of Ross. Clarke is 34 years of age, and Ross is only 23. Although their injuries are very severe, hopes are entertained at the Hospital that both patients will survive them. It is supposed that the explosion was caused by the accidental presence of some foreign substance.

THE ST. ALBANS EXPLOSION.

Death of One of the Victims.

MELBOURNE, Tuesday.

William Ross, one of the two men injured by the explosion at St. Albans yesterday, died in the Melbourne Hospital this morning. John Clarke, the other man injured, is in a low state.

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