

Much Talk of Incendiarism

Throughout the day there was a good deal of talk of the mine having been fired by an incendiary who, for some unknown reason, desired to destroy the company's property. Perhaps jealousy, vindictiveness or pure love of destruction prompted the fire fiend, but the truth will probably never be known. In view of the testimony adduced at the inquest however, the verdict is thought to be a particularly strong one, but few can be found here who are not in hearty accord with it. Not a man in the town can be found who will even venture an opinion as to who the incendiary might be. The officials will not talk concerning the matter. One of the pit bosses said this evening:

"I have an idea who set the breast on fire, but I won't say."

"Why?"

"Cause the man I suspect is dead. He was smothered in the level."

From: *Post Intelligencer* August 26, 1894

After being in session the whole afternoon, the coroner's jury empowered to investigate yesterday's disaster this evening rendered a verdict which, though it may startle the outside country, caused no surprise here. The jury found that the fire in breast sixty two of the

north sixth level was started by parties unknown who willfully, knowingly and maliciously desired to do great injury and damage to the lives of the employees and the property of the Oregon Improvement Company. The verdict in full is as follows:

"We the undersigned jurors, do agree that on August 24, 1894, on the sixth level of the Franklin, King County, Wash., the following parties, namely (follows a list of the thirty-seven dead miners) did come to their death by suffocation caused by smoke emanating from a fire in breast sixty-two, on the north side of the sixth level, said fire having been caused by a party or parties unknown to us, and that said party or parties did willfully, knowingly and maliciously cause said fire with intent and purpose to do great injury and damage to the lives of the miners and property of the Oregon Improvement Company.

Signed:

E.E. Makiel, Foreman

E.M. Mathew

B.M. Curtis

S.J. Collins

John Robinson."



FAN HOUSE ON HILL SHOWING THE SMOKE FORCED ITSELF OUT
AFTER THE OUTLET WAS CLOSED UP