Royal Humane Society, small bronze medal, successful (David Williams, 28th March, 1895.), with integral top bronze riband buckle, extremely fine £200-240

Royal Humane Society case no. 27,632: 'At 10:30am, on the 28th March, 1895, the pit at Taff Llantwit Colliery, Pontypridd, became flooded through water from an old working. All the men escaped except two. John Owen, aged 30, and David Williams, aged 66, at the greatest risk, descended the pit and with difficulty succeeded in rescuing the two men.'

Incident at the Taff Llantwit Colliery
'On Thursday week, an accident which might have caused a serious loss of life occurred at the Taff Llantwit Colliery. It appears that a lad named Joe Thomas was engaged in the occupation known as “Holing”, when a stream of water, like a rushing torrent, broke through out of an old mine named Rhdyrhelig. The boy Joe, and another lad called Willie Chubb, who stood by, were hurled off their feet, and rolled some distance by the flood. They eventually managed to escape. By this time most of the miners became aware of their critical situation, and what added to the horrors of the moment was the fact that most of the lights had gone out. The shaft is not very deep, and as the vein slopes upwards to the north and south, many working places had been driven right up to the surface. Through these surface holes the men managed to escape, and assembled on the pit-bank. Now, however, it was found that two men named David Morgan and Edward Thomas, who worked alone on the Dyffryn side, were still in the mine, and their case was considered hopeless. Nevertheless, the overman, David Williams, and a young man named John Owen, went down through the ladder shaft, and although the current was so strong that the overman, who is an aged man, failed to proceed far, the gallant young fellow struggled bravely on to the two men. The journey back was a veritable struggle with death, and the three were in a very exhausted state when they reached the bank. Such bravery as was displayed by this intrepid young fellow surely deserves some recognition. It is not expected that the water will be got out for several weeks.'

Mr. David Williams, born Llantwit Vadre, Glamorgan, 1829; employed as a Mine Filler at the Llantwit Vadre Iron Works in 1881; subsequently Overman, Taff Llantwit Colliery.