

**84 DEAD IN FREAK
MINE EXPLOSION**

**THIRD OF ITS KIND IN COUNTRY,
SAY OFFICIALS.**

TWO OF INJURED SUCCUMB

Dolomite Mine, Opened in 1882, Has
Operated Without Serious Acci-
dents—Man, Seriously Injured,
His Experience.

Birmingham, Ala.—Eighty-four bod-
ies, 29 those of white men and 54 of
negroes, lay in underlying establish-
ments here and in Bessemer, the
death toll of a coal dust explosion in
Dolomite Mine No. 3 of the Woodward
Iron Company, 14 miles west of Bir-
mingham. Eighty-two bodies were
taken from the mine and of the 69
injured, two succumbed. Reports re-
ceived by officials of the Woodward
Company indicated that while sev-
eral of those remaining in hospitals
were seriously hurt, possibly all
would recover.

It is believed about 40 of the men
who lost their lives were in the yard
at the foot of the slope and were kill-
ed by the concussion.

Of these six were foremen, the
blast wiping out all of the mine
houses. The deadly attendant
formed immediately and accounted
for the remainder of the victims.
Faces and hands of many of the dead
were seared by the flash of flame,
while other bodies bore bruises and
cuts, where they had been thrown
against the sides of the stumpy cars
by the force of the explosion.

A peculiar feature disclosed today
by officials of the Woodward Com-
pany was the fact that when rescue
parties entered the mine the candles
miners blind lamps on the caps of
some of the dead still were burning.

Safety precautions observed by the
Woodward Company prevented an ap-
alling disaster. Four hundred and
seventy-five men were in the mine
at the time. The breaking of elec-
tric cables with the crash and blast
threw the circuit breakers and the
motors operating the ventilating fans
came to a standstill.

The mine is equipped with emer-
gency fans run by gasoline motors,
which once weekly have been oper-
ated for a period of eight hours to keep
them in working order. Three min-
utes after the blast the emergency
fans were in operation and 20 min-
utes later the first miner to emerge
from the slope appeared. The mine
was cleared of the after-damp within
a short time and the miners still in-
side received fresh air. The mine is
connected with Dolomite No. 1, and
although there were four exits to the
surface, the miners in the inner win-
ings sought the three outlets not
affected by the explosion and safety
all of those unhajred emerged
through these passages.

Dolomite No. 3 recently was in-
spected by company, mine and fed-
eral experts and declared to be in
perfect condition. It is known as a
"gas free" mine and precautions were
observed to prevent the forming of
coal dust by means of an elaborate
sprinkling system. The sprinkling
apparatus kept the mine damp at all
times and it is believed only the im-
pact of the stumpy cars when they
struck the bottom of the slope cre-
ated the dust that resulted in the
explosion.

1922 Dolomite Coal Mine Explosion

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