

November 6, 1922; Reilly No. 1 Mine, Spangler, Pa.; 79 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by G. S. Rice, J. W. Paul, and L. D. Tracy)

At 7:20 a.m. on Monday 112 men had begun work when the explosion occurred, blowing out some stoppings and overcasts and also the side and end walls of the fan housing.

Help was called from other mines and from the Bureau of Mines at Pittsburgh. The fan housing was patched, and the fan started, making the concrete-lined, 112-foot, main shaft an intake.

Recovery workers without apparatus encountered a live man making his way out to fresh air and brought him and four others out. All were badly affected by afterdamp, as were 18 of the rescuers.

Apparatus crews were then admitted, and 22 other survivors were rescued. Five other men made their way out unassisted. Seventy-six bodies were found, and 3 of the rescued men died. Gas that had accumulated in one or more rooms through open doors and deficient ventilation was ignited by the miners' open lights.

Fireboss examinations were neglected and incomplete. The mine had been rated gaseous in 1918, but at the instance of the new operators it was rated as nongaseous although a fireboss was employed and men were burned by gas on at least 4 occasions. The low volatile dust of this coal helped to spread the explosion but without great force or flame.

Conditions found by the investigators are shown in figure 56.

FIGURE 56.—Sketch of 9th left entry after explosion, Reilly No. 1 mine, Spangler, Pa., November 6, 1922.