

## **September 24, 1943; Primrose Colliery, Minersville, Pa.; 14 Killed**

*(From Bureau of Mines report, by L. L. Naus, R. M. Monteith, and C. F. Weber)*

About 12:30 p.m, the mine foreman, the assistant foreman, and the contractor examined the working places and reported them free of gas for blasting. Another check was made in the return airway at 1:15 p.m. by the assistant foreman. At 1:30 p.m. he was at the discharge end of No. 1 west conveyor belt, instructing the electrician to install a light at No. 5 south conveyor, when the explosion threw him across the belt slope.

He was uninjured and immediately called to the electrician to cut off the power and then telephoned to the mine foreman. He and others went into the affected area and helped injured men out to fresh air.

After a short time they had to retreat because of the afterdamp. Five men arrived from the surface with oxygen breathing apparatus and searched for other survivors. As only dead bodies remained, the rescuers withdrew until better ventilation was provided.

Of the 31 men in the affected area, 14 were killed, 15 escaped, and 2 were rescued. The bodies were removed by 4:00 p.m. September 25, without using apparatus.

Gas was found in the section after ventilation was restored, and it was concluded that an explosive mixture had built up because of ineffective ventilation. The source of ignition was thought to be an arc from the switch of a conveyor motor in No. 2 west airway (fig. 136).

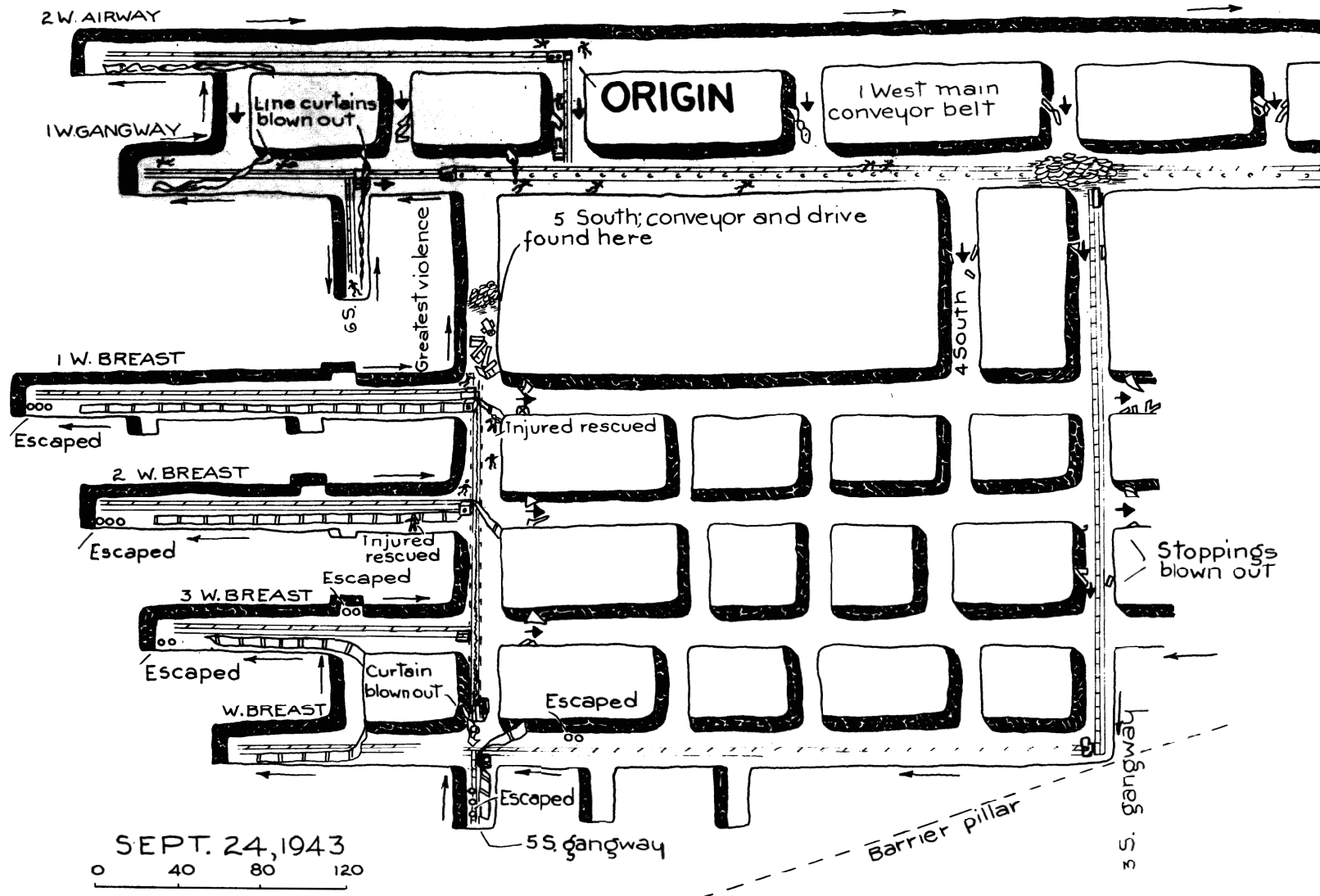


FIGURE 136.—Map of explosion area, Primrose mine, Minersville, Pa., September 24, 1943.