

# WORKERS DRILL THROUGH ROCK TO REACH CHILD

## Small Prisoner Is Freed Unhurt.

(Picture on back page.)

Picher, Okla., March 31.—[Special.]—Gerald Collins, 3 years old, tonight was rescued by miners after he lay for twelve hours wedged between rocks 20 feet down in a drill hole into which he had fallen while at play at the Mary Ann lead and zinc mine.

The baby, to save whose life volunteer miners had driven a 22 foot shaft through rock parallel to the one that imprisoned him, and then a connecting tunnel, was numb from exposure and suffering from shock, but otherwise apparently unharmed.

The instant he was brought to the surface he was placed in a waiting ambulance and speeded to a hospital at Miami, Okla. Physicians ordered that he remain overnight for observation. Only members of his family were permitted to see him.

### Found Wedged in Hole.

Rescuers said they found the boy in a sitting position in the drill hole, just wide enough to catch his slender body and prevent him from plunging to the bottom of the 250 foot cavity. The child's knees were doubled up and his arms were uplifted and pressed against the wall of the hole.

The boy plunged into the drill hole about 9 o'clock this morning while at play at the mine. His screams attracted attention and miners were hurriedly assembled for the twelve hour tunneling drive that led to his rescue.

### Send for Steam Shovel.

A steam shovel was ordered to the scene by telephone and scores of volunteers grabbed pick and shovels and started digging a shaft which would lead them to the level where the boy was imprisoned. The miners dug frantically, laboring in short shifts to speed the work. It was 5 o'clock when they reached the 20 foot level. Then they began digging a side shaft to the narrow crevice between two rock ledges where the child was imprisoned.

Another squad of rescuers, fearing that the ledge might give away and allow dirt and rocks to fall on top of the boy, prepared a long casing to keep an opening clear through the ground in the event the rock gave away.

### Shaft 250 Feet Deep.

The baby's position was made even more precarious by the fact that only a slight narrowing of the hole prevented him from dropping into a 250 foot deep mine shaft.

When the sweating tunnelers started their side tunnel two physicians entered the newly made shaft prepared to administer first aid.

The father, Paul Collins, who is 25, accompanied the physicians down the shaft. While silent men worked feverishly with their picks and shovels the tear-faced father clung to the side of the rocks and talked to his baby boy.

"This is daddy, son," he called. "We're going to get you out in a few minutes now."

"Daddy! Take me! Take me!" the child's feeble voice was heard through the thin layer of rock and dirt.

"I'm here, sonny boy. We're coming," the father replied.

"Gee, he's a gritty kid, isn't he?" the father remarked to the physicians.

### Too Stiff to Move.

When the last layer of dirt was removed the boy was found in a cramped position, his legs doubled up under him. His arms were also cramped and he was unable to move because of the stiffness.

He was carried out into the larger shaft and then taken up a ladder by two rescuers. After being laid on the ground and given a preliminary examination the physicians ordered him removed to the hospital at Miami.

"Oh, I am so happy," was the mother's only response as she entered the hospital at the heels of the ambulance attendants carrying her boy.

At the hospital it was said the child had recognized his father and mother and embraced them during the short ambulance ride. The parents remained near their boy. Both had been under such a strain that they were given medical treatment.

### Autoists Rush to Scene.

Early in the afternoon this small mining town became a scene of great activity. Hundreds of automobiles from southern Kansas, northeast Oklahoma, and southwest Missouri began arriving here, the motorists eager to witness the rescue of the boy who within a few short hours had gained nationwide publicity. An area of nearly one square mile was a solid mass of parked automobiles, and it

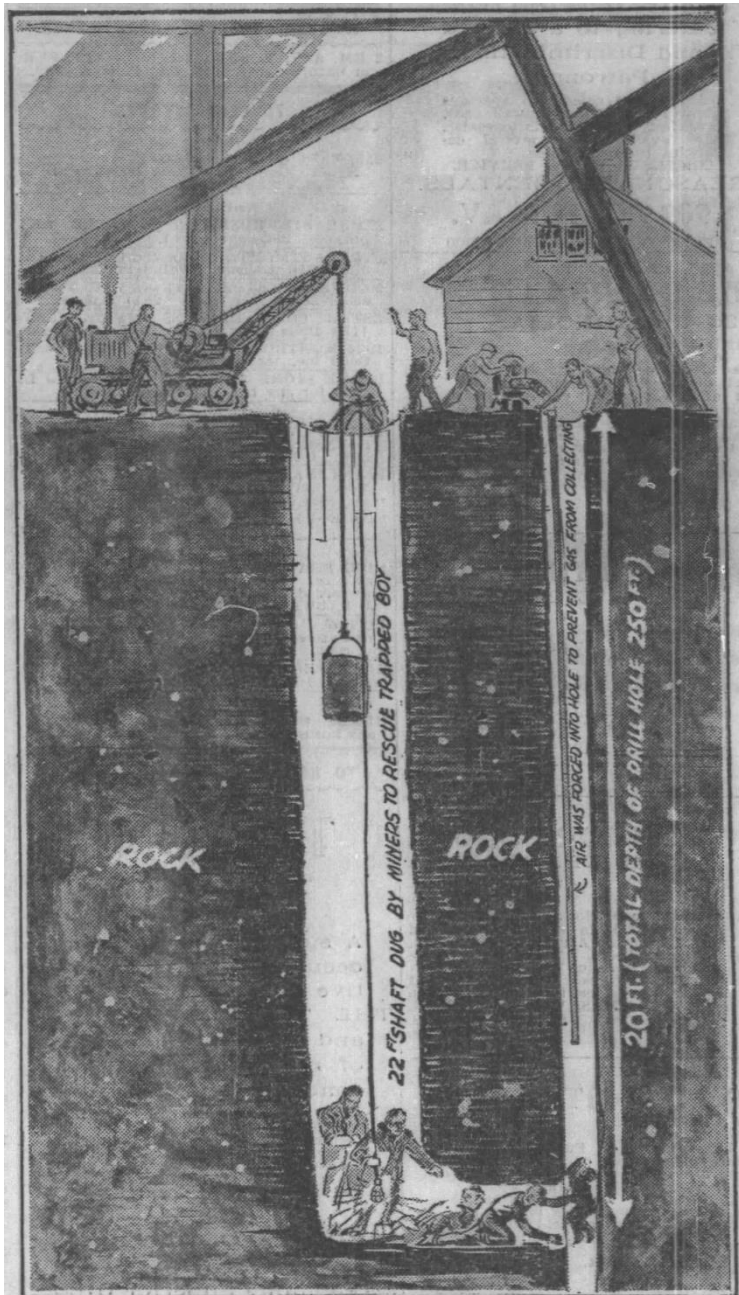
was estimated a crowd of 5,000 was at the scene when the game baby boy was brought to the surface.

Police from Miami, Cardin, and Commerce, all mining towns, were summoned to the scene to aid in caring for the crowds and scores of volunteers formed a human chain to keep out overcurious persons.

In order that the outside world might be informed as to the rescue work and its progress, a telephone company hastily constructed a temporary telephone line to the scene of the accident in the early afternoon. At many downtown stores bulletins on the progress of the rescuers were posted on the windows.

#### **Prison Hole Kept Heated.**

Hourly until the rescue additional equipment in the form of heaters, lungmotors, oxygen tanks, and more volunteer miners arrived at the scene. As dusk came two motors added to the powerful lights which had been installed over the eighteen inch opening. These lights, back of which was a powerful fan, furnished heat to the small lad, keeping the temperature at about 77 degrees.



**HOW WORKERS RESCUED TRAPPED BOY.** Diagram showing how workmen sunk shaft at Picher, Okla., to rescue Gerald Collins. Two doctors are in the shaft and the boy's mother at the top.

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