

BLACK DAMP KILLS PAIR

Bodies of Couple Found at Entrance to Wamac Mine

CENTRALIA, Ill. (UPI)—Deadly "black damp" gas issuing from an abandoned mine shaft that only 11 years ago caused the deaths of 111 coal miners has apparently taken two more lives.

Pathologist Louis Rossiter, Carbondale, said Friday night that Charles (Bud) Jenkins, 36, and Mrs. Virginia Goosetree, 45, whose bodies were found sprawled at the shaft opening, died of some form of poison gas.

Jenkins, a Farina farmer, and the widowed Salem barmaid had disappeared last Sunday. Their bodies were found Friday in a

small pocket above the sealed entrance of Wamac No. 5 shaft.

Residents of the area, grimly remembering the 1947 explosion in Wamac No. 5 that became one of the greatest disasters in American mining history, said the shaft still spouted "black damp," or methane, gas.

Rossiter said his death report, also showed a "good deal" of alcohol in the victims' blood. He said there would be a more complete autopsy.

Violet Burkett, a friend of Mrs. Goosetree, found the bodies. She told authorities Mrs. Goosetree had told her that she and Jenkins often "explored" the ruins about the mine shaft.

Authorities said the couple was last seen Sunday when they ordered a meal at a tavern about a block and a half from the mine. They left before it was served.

Both bodies were fully clothed, police said, and Mrs. Goosetree was lying on her back in the rubble of a concrete block house at the top of an air shaft. Jenkins' body was in a sitting position about a foot away.

The mine shaft was closed shortly after the 1947 disaster when 111 miners were either killed instantly or trapped by cave-ins following an explosion which was attributed to "black damp."

Deputy Sheriff Buck Ross, one of the survivors of the blast, said many of the miners had succumbed to the gas and were found slumped in the same sitting position as Jenkins.

Two Confess \$53 Burglary At Tavern Here

Two youths have admitted breaking into Fischer's Tavern, 1201 East Main Street, last September 6 and stealing \$53, according to Chief of Police Reese G. Dobson.

They are: Allen K. Goldman, 16, unemployed of 805 South Illinois Street, and James R. Gladson, 20, a laborer of 109 West Washington Street. Dobson announced the confessions yesterday afternoon following two days of investigation.

Goldman is being held for County Probation Officer, Herbert G. Uhley, while a burglary and larceny

Disappeared Sunday

Blame 'Black Damp' for Deaths Of Couple Found at Mine Shaft

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1958 Aug couple found at Wamac mine IL

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