

Successful Mine Rescues in the United States

Compiled by Rob McGee for the United States Mine Rescue Association

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Please Note: The **Carnegie Hero Fund** website has been redesigned. Because of this, all links pertaining to their awardee accomplishments are now directed to the [hero search page at that site](#). Once there, simply enter the name of the person awarded for more information about the rescue incident. A summary page of mining awardees [can be viewed here](#).

— 2023 —

Sep Abandoned Brewster Mine Rescue, Brewster, New York

A Somers man was rescued from a Brewster mineshaft after being trapped for over **seven hours**. The Brewster Fire Department said the man was exploring the mine with four friends when he became trapped after traveling too far. Brewster firefighters Pete Segreti and Keith Rusinko executed a high-angle rope rescue to return the man. The village still has several mines running underground which have been sealed up, the fire department said, but people sometimes still find ways to enter. [Source document](#).

— 2022 —

Jul Meikle Gold Mine Ground Fall Entrapment, Elko, Nevada

Four employees at Nevada Gold Mines' Meikle underground operation were trapped for about — **six hours** — due to a ground fall incident. The four employees were rescued by 8 p.m. and did not sustain any injuries, according to NGM. [Source document](#).

Aug Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, New River, Arizona

Firefighters rescued a teenage boy from an abandoned mine shaft after he fell about 50 feet while driving an all-terrain vehicle in a desert area the northern outskirts of metro Phoenix. The 17-year-old boy was taken by helicopter to the hospital for evaluation after being pulled out of the shaft near New River. Rescuers arriving at the scene found the boy at the bottom of the shaft with the ATV on top of him. The 17-year-old was reportedly somewhat responsive by the time he was pulled out of the shaft, but the extent of his injuries were unknown. [Source document](#).

— 2021 —

Mar Abandoned Iron Mine Rescue, Galax, Virginia

Three hikers were lucky to be alive after they were rescued from a mine in Carroll County, Virginia. Three women, in their early 20s, went hiking but got lost in an

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old, abandoned iron mine. Incredibly, the women were able to call for help after finding they had 1 bar on a cell phone. It was a miracle the girls got any cell signal at all. There's barely reception driving around on the road, let alone a thousand feet underground. It took crews about 45 minutes to find the women until finally, rescuers spotted them. After another 45 minutes of working their way out to safety, the young women thanked the responders from the Galax Volunteer Fire Department who left their families in the middle of the night and put their own lives on the line. [Source document.](#)

Apr Abandoned Eureka Copper Mine Shaft Rescue, Corinth, Vermont

Police responded to a call someone had fallen in an abandoned copper mine shaft at the Eureka Mine on Pike Hill. The man, who officials said was about 30 years old, tumbled down about 150 feet. Firefighters assembled a twin-tension rope rescue system and lowered two paramedics into the shaft. They then packaged and pulled up the patient in a basket. After his — **three-hour** — confinement, the man was transported by ATV to a nearby helicopter, which took him to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. There was no word on his injuries or his identity. Officials said the entire rescue took less than one hour. [Source document.](#)

Dec Wingdale Material Quarry Rescue, Dover, New York

A quarry worker in New York was trapped in a mine Tuesday afternoon after a 40-to 50-ton boulder became dislodged from a wall and landed on the machinery the man was operating, according to the local fire company. Crews from the J.H. Ketcham Hose Company in the Dutchess County town of Dover, as well as ambulances from the town, were called just after 1:30 p.m. after reports of a 40-year-old man trapped in a mine at the Wingdale material quarry. Soon other emergency personnel were brought to the scene, including a LifeNet helicopter to transport the man once he was freed. Rescuers entered about 2,500 feet into the mine, where they were able to contact the victim, who was conscious and alert, officials said. He was trapped inside the cab of his excavator after the massive boulder fell from the wall of the mine and landed on the machinery. Crews stabilized the boulder, and then worked to get the worker, who was receiving care from paramedics, officials from the J.H. Ketcham Hose Company said. **After just over an hour**, the man was extracted from the mine and was air-lifted to Westchester Medical Center. He suffered injuries to both legs and a hand, but they are not expected to be life-threatening. It was not immediately clear what caused the boulder to be dislodged and trap the worker. [Source document.](#)

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— 2020 —

Mar Abandoned Mine Rescue, Twentynine Palms, California

San Bernardino County Fire Department search teams staged a daring and complex rescue of a man trapped in a remote mine. County Fire officials received a call from an unidentified explorer in a rural, unincorporated area of Twentynine Palms who had recently left a mine and reported that a partner was still inside and unable to get out. To reach the trapped man, rescuers braved significant hazards within the mine, including unsafe terrain, and high temperatures and humidity, officials said in the statement that described the 15-hour effort. Members of the rescue team crawled through an entrance on their stomachs for approximately 50 feet. After this, they navigated a large drop by skirting around a 14-inch ledge. Secured by safety lines, the firefighters then climbed down a separate, 200-foot drop on a wooden ladder. From there, they encountered another small gap with irregular height, which forced them onto their hands, knees, and stomachs for another 150 feet. Rescuers lowered themselves down another sheer drop with ropes before traversing a horizontal tunnel. They found the man at the bottom of an additional 90-foot drop at the end of that tunnel. The total distance the team traveled in the mine was estimated at over 900 feet. A team of six rescuers used a system of ropes and pulleys to hoist the man out of the mine. While exhausted, he suffered only minor injuries and declined transport to a hospital. In total, the man spent roughly — **20 hours** — in the mine. [Source document.](#)

Apr Isaban Mine No. 3 Missing Person, Gilbert, West Virginia

Timothy Kennedy, 26, who had been missing for **more than a week**, was located by MHST, West Virginia State Police, MSHA personnel, and a Southern Pocahontas Mine Rescue Team in the closed Isaban Mine No. 3 of Frasier Creek Mining, LLC. Besides having to wade through some water, the rescuers did not encounter extreme adverse conditions and did not need to turn on their breathing devices. They did find evidence of copper removal during their search. The man was brought to the surface and examined by Elite Care Ambulance personnel before being taken to a hospital by life-flight for an evaluation. [Source document.](#)

May Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescue, New River, Arizona

After an **undisclosed period**, firefighters rescued a teenage boy from an abandoned mine shaft after he fell about 50 feet while driving an all-terrain vehicle in a desert area in the northern outskirts of metro Phoenix. The 17-year-old boy was taken to hospital for evaluation after being pulled out of the shaft near New River. No information was released about possible injuries, but a Maricopa County Sheriff's Office spokesman said the boy was alert and speaking with rescuers. Rescuers arriving at the scene found the boy at the bottom of the

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shaft with the ATV on top of him. Personnel from the Glendale, Daisy Mountain, Phoenix and Peoria fire departments participated in the rescue. [Source document](#).

Oct Abandoned Colorado No. 2 Mine Rescue, Eureka, Utah

One eighteen-year-old is thanking his rescuers after he was trapped in a mine for at least **four hours**. Izick Garcia and his friend Moroni Oliveira were exploring caves and mines down in Eureka, when Garcia realized he had gone too far. The two friends had explored a few other mine shafts and caves before reaching a ventilation shaft for the Colorado No. 2 mine. "We went in, and I guess you could say there was a drop," said Garcia. About a 25 to 30 foot drop that Garcia rappelled down in his homemade rope harness. "I was trying to climb up and as soon as I grabbed it, it just started crumbling in my hand," said Garcia. Moments later, the ground beneath his foot crumbled. Police said Garcia and Oliveira did a lot of things right in this situation: they were together, they told others the area they were going to, and they had some equipment. Most importantly, when they realized they were in trouble, they called for help. Nearly four hours after Garcia entered the mine shaft, he was pulled to safety. [Source document](#).

— 2019 —

Apr Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Cave Creek, Arizona

A woman who fell into a mine shaft while out for a run north of Phoenix was rescued. Authorities said the woman appeared to have no serious injuries after being pulled from the abandoned mine overnight in Cave Creek. The woman said she went for a run and got lost. She then came across the mine shaft and fell 20 feet. The woman's father became worried when he hadn't heard from her and called the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. Deputies tracked her cellphone and heard her yelling. She was hoisted out by a rope. Authorities said she was expected to recover. [Source document](#).

— 2018 —

May [Hi-Crush Sand Mine](#), Whitehall, Wisconsin

Robbie Gunderson was rescued at the Hi-Crush sand mine near Whitehall, Wisconsin when the bulldozer he was operating went into the holding pond and became submerged under several feet of water. As the rescue efforts began, some 10 million gallons of water were released from the pond to lower its level the company statement said. Officials at Hi-Crush said Gunderson was underwater for **2½ hours** before he was rescued.

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May Abandoned Gold Mine Rescue, Phoenix, Arizona

An Arizona prospector realized he was lucky to be alive after surviving **nearly three days** at the bottom of an old, abandoned gold mine shaft in the Arizona desert and staring down rattlesnakes. John Waddell, 60, broke his left leg and ankle when the rigging he used to lower himself into the 100-foot shaft about 90 miles northwest of Phoenix broke. He free-fell to the rocky bottom and saw that his left leg "was flopped up and my ankle was going the other way," according to Waddell. He had a cellphone but no service. A flashlight that didn't provide light for very long. And no food or water. Waddell said he killed three diamondback rattlesnakes with a stick before they could strike — including two the first day — and then hung on before he was finally rescued when a friend drove to the mine and heard his cries for help. It took about three hours for rescue crews to lift Waddell to safety and then to a hospital for treatment. [Source document.](#)

Dec [Rock House Powellton Mine Rescue](#), Clear Creek, West Virginia

Four people had gone missing on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2018. Their abandoned ATV was found near an opening into the mine. **More than 48 hours** later, Eddie Williams, 43, safely came out of the mine on his own. On Dec. 12th, after **more than five days**, Erica Treadway, Cody Beverly, and Kayla Williams were brought out safely by rescuers. The three were taken to the Charleston Area Medical Center to be checked out. The idled mine is owned by the Elk Run Coal Company, a subsidiary of Alpha Natural Resources. The rescuers were from both Alpha and the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health Safety & Training.

— 2017 —

May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Tooele County, Utah

Trent Widdop, 27, of American Fork, fell into a mine shaft on his UTV (utility task vehicle) at about 2:00 a.m. while searching for firewood. The UTV lodged in the shaft at a depth of about 15-20 feet, but Widdop fell off the vehicle. He fell 15-20 feet to a ledge and then slid another 50 feet to the bottom of the shaft. His family began searching for him when he did not return to camp and finally located the UTV around 5:00 a.m., when they called 911. Crews from the Utah County Sheriff's office, Tooele County Sheriff's office, Unified Fire Authority, and Tooele County Search and Rescue responded. Search and Rescue retrieved Widdop from the shaft and he was flown to the hospital with serious injuries. [Source document.](#)

Jun [La Farge Gravel Mine Rescue](#), Placitas, New Mexico

Two workers became trapped while working on equipment at the La Farge gravel mine. Attempting their rescue, two others also became engulfed in the material. Two of the workers were buried up to their necks, a third to his chest and the

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fourth to his waist when emergency personnel arrived. The last man was freed from his confines **6 hours** after the incident occurred.

Dec Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescue, Golden, Colorado

A 15-year-old was pulled from an abandoned mine shaft near Golden Colorado after more than **3 hours**. Crews with the West Metro Fire Rescue rushed to rescue the teenager who was trapped in the old mine shaft. The boy was climbing in the old mine shaft when his rope snapped, and he fell about 60 feet down the deep hole. He was already 40 feet down when he fell, so rescuers had to bring him up from 100 feet below. He was rushed to St. Anthony's Hospital for treatment of a broken leg.

— 2016 —

Jan Cargill Salt Elevator Incident, Lansing, New York

Rescue crews freed 17 miners in upstate New York after they spent a terrifying **10 hours** down in one of the world's deepest salt mines. The first four of the Cargill Salt miners emerged to the surface in a basket around 7 a.m. The rest were rescued from the salt mine over the next **two hours**.

Jul Abandoned Iron Mine, Iron Ridge, Wisconsin

Three teenage boys got lost in a labyrinthine abandoned iron mine in southeastern Wisconsin for hours, spending the night huddled together against the cold before rescuers found them alive and safe. The three were Tate Rose and Zachary Heron, both 16, and 15-year-old Samuel Lein.

Aug Keystone No. 1 Abandoned Mine Rescue, Keystone, West Virginia

Three men were found and rescued in the abandoned Keystone No. 1 mine following a search lasting more than **12 hours**. The three men found, Justin Bolen, Brandon Collins and Steve Cordle, along with Dustin Bolen and Jimmie were arrested following an investigation into the copper thefts at the mine. A fourth man lost in the mine, Clay Epperly, was never found. [Source document](#).

— 2015 —

Jan Keystone No. 1 Abandoned Mine Rescue, Keystone, West Virginia

In January 2015, a McDowell County man had to be rescued from the Keystone No. 1 mine after entering it to steal copper, officials said (see page 2). The injured man and his partner became separated after entering the mine. The partner made his way out, but the injured man did not. According to a source with knowledge of the incident, the trespasser survived **20 hours** in 12 percent oxygen in a rescue effort lasting 6-8 hours. [Source document](#).

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Jan Abandoned Mine Animal Rescue, Tuttletown, California
Molly the cow was rescued from almost certain death at the bottom of a Tuttletown mine shaft by UC Davis veterinarians on Jan. 22. Her owner, Antoinette Nichols, went looking for the family pet Jan. 19 after Molly didn't return to her corral that day. Nichols spotted her in a 30-foot hole. Molly was fed and given water, but Nichols and the Yolo County Sheriff's Office had no way to get her out. After **three nights**, the Sheriff's Office called UC Davis' Veterinary Emergency Response Team to rescue Molly. Nichols was on hand to comfort the 1,200-pound cow as the team began her extraction. "Molly, we've had since birth," Nichols said. "She's always been special. One day old, she came up to humans, and every now and then you have to dodge her because she gives you a big lick." Molly is a 9-year-old Brahman cow, a breed known for "snorty and aggressive behavior," according to Dr. John Madigan, a professor at UC Davis' School of Veterinary Medicine and head of VERT. The response team sedated Molly before bringing her up for their own safety. The team attached her to a lift specially designed by UC Davis veterinarians for picking up large animals and brought her out of the hole. Molly was uninjured and returned to her corral following her rescue. [Source document.](#)

Sep [Abandoned Mine Rescue](#), Adelanto, California
After a man became trapped in an abandoned mine near Adelanto, California, the call was for a vertical shaft mine rescue. The subject was 40 feet down a shaft with a level adit that went on for 20 feet. He had hand over handed down a poly rope to see inside the mine. When his friends tied the rope to a quad and tried to pull him out, the rope broke. He fell a distance back down the shaft, landing on a pile of discarded mattresses at the bottom of the mine. Since vehicles could not access the shaft, equipment was hiked in, and pickets were set up for anchors. An EMT from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Cave & Technical Rescue Team was lowered to bring the man to the surface. The subject was unhurt, and after a nearly **8-hour** entrapment, he was raised in a harness and declined further treatment.

— 2014 —

Mar D & E Mine Roof Fall, Minersville, Pennsylvania
Two miners were rescued following an **undisclosed period** after a mine roof collapse at a slope operated by the D & E Deep Mine Coal Co. at its Buck Mountain Drift Mine in Cass Township. Officials had not released their names. One of the men possibly had a shoulder injury and the other a possible back injury. Workers at the scene helped the two men to the ambulance. No blood was visible on the two men. [Source document.](#)

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— 2013 —

- Mar Castle Valley No. 4 Mine Cave-in, Huntington, Utah
Two miners were involved in a cave-in at a mine in Bear Canyon, about 10 miles west of Huntington, Utah. After an **undisclosed period**, rescuers freed Dallen McFarlane from the cave-in and took that worker to Castlevue Hospital in Price where he was treated and released. The second miner, Elam Jones, was killed by the collapse. The mine is part of the Castle Valley Mining Complex operated by Rhino Resource Partners. [Source document](#). [Investigation Report](#).
- Jun Tracy Lynne Mine Roof Fall, Kittanning, Pennsylvania
Two miners were rescued after a coal mine collapse at the Tracy Lynne mine operated by Rosebud Mining of Kittanning. The miners were brought to the surface just after 6 p.m. after a rescue effort that began about **an hour** earlier. The two miners were being taken to a hospital, one of the men was to be treated for a possible knee injury. The injuries were not believed to be life-threatening. [Source document](#).

— 2011 —

- Jun Jellico No. 1 Mine Inundation, Middlesboro, Kentucky
Three mine maintenance workers were set free after being trapped for **14 hours** in the flooded Jellico No. 1 mine of the Bell County Coal Company, a subsidiary of the James River Coal Company. The miners became trapped when a collapse near the mine entrance sent water from a swollen drainage ditch gushing into the mine. None of the miners were injured. The three miners were Pernell Witherspoon, Doug Warren, and Russell Asher. [Source document](#).
- Dec Young Zinc Mine Fire, Knoxville, Tennessee
Three miners were rescued **2 hours** after a fire broke out in the Young zinc mine about 25 miles from Knoxville. 54 miners were in the mine at the time the fire started on a drill rig. Two miners were treated for smoke inhalation. The 3 men were trapped by smoke and needed respirators to leave the mine. They were transported to a hospital for further evaluation. [Source document](#).
- Dec Lucky Friday Mine Rock Burst, Mullen, Idaho
Seven miners were pulled safely from the Lucky Friday mine after an **undisclosed period** following a sudden rock burst which left them injured more than a mile below the surface. Hecla Limited officials said this incident did not appear to be connected to blasting activity in the underground shaft. Hecla Vice President Melanie Hennessey said the miners were installing a safety system to contain rock

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bursts when precisely the kind of burst the company was seeking to protect against occurred. Such a burst, a spontaneous fracture in the rock, can be triggered by blasting in deep mines, or by "seismic activity," she said in an interview. [Source document.](#)

— 2010 —

- Jan [Doe Run No. 29 Equipment Fire](#), Viburnum, Missouri
Three Missouri miners were rescued from a DPOS after being trapped more than **5 hours** in the No. 29 mine of the Doe Run Company near Viburnum on January 21, 2010. Their escape was cut off when a 30-ton haul truck caught fire. The trapped miners were Robert McClain, truck driver; Michael Byers, loader operator; and Timothy Yount, scaler operator.
- Nov Abandoned Mine Rescue, Longswamp Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania
More than 50 rescue workers labored for **seven hours** to hoist four Berks teenage boys to safety after they found themselves trapped at the bottom of an old mineshaft in Longswamp Township. Camping with four others near Bear Creek Mountain Resort, the teens decided to climb down the mine shaft to explore surrounding caves. A youthful indiscretion, a good story for the grandkids until one of them lost his grip after making it more than halfway down. The unidentified boy fell 30 feet to the shaft's floor, knocking himself unconscious. Three of his friends climbed down to make sure he was OK and realized they couldn't get out, either. They called police and the remaining campers hiked out half a mile through dense woods to meet rescue officers. From there, emergency officials shuttled supplies in via all-terrain vehicle. As dawn approached, emergency workers realized the shaft was much deeper than they expected. Enter the Lehigh County Technical Rescue team, which rappelled down four rescuers to attend to the stricken campers. With hypothermia setting in, paramedics administered warm intravenous fluids to boost their body temperatures. Finally, around 9 a.m., the last teen was hoisted to the surface. The rescued boys were taken to Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest for treatment of hypothermia and the fall victim's head injury. [Source document.](#)

— 2008 —

- Aug Abandoned Gold Mine Rescue, Sonora, California
Darvis Lee, Jr., 34, was rescued from an abandoned gold mine after tumbling more than 100 feet and spending two nights at the bottom of the dark shaft. Lee fell down the shaft while exploring the mine. [Source document.](#)

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- Sep Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Sierra Vista, Arizona
A spokesman for the U.S. Border Patrol said agents rescued a man who fell into an abandoned mine shaft in southern Arizona. Agency spokesman Rob Daniels said agents were patrolling south of Sierra Vista when they caught a group of 14 illegal immigrants. The immigrants told agents one of their group had fallen down a shaft. Daniels said agents and a local search and rescue crew found the mine and pulled the man to safety after an **undisclosed period**. The man suffered injuries to his legs, neck and back, but they weren't considered life-threatening. [Source document](#).

— 2007 —

- Sep Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescue, Chloride, Arizona
A 13-year-old girl who went missing while riding an all-terrain vehicle was found dead in a mine shaft while her 10-year-old companion was rescued with serious injuries. She was transferred to the University Medical Center in Las Vegas. [Source document](#).

— 2006 —

- Jan [Sago Mine Explosion](#), Tallmansville, West Virginia
One miner, Randal McCloy Jr., is found alive after **40 hours** following the [Sago Mine Explosion](#) in West Virginia. Twelve miners died in the accident. This disaster prompted the creation of the [Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006](#) (MINER Act).
- May [Darby No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Holmes Mill, Kentucky
Paul Ledford, roof bolter, was rescued after more than **2 hours** following the explosion. Ledford had traveled approximately 1,050 feet in the No. 5 Entry where he collapsed and lost consciousness. He regained consciousness at approximately 3:05 a.m. and crawled into the No. 6 Entry, where he was discovered by rescuers. He was then taken out of the mine on a battery-powered personnel carrier and transported to Lonesome Pine Hospital in Big Stone Gap, Virginia, where he was treated.
- Jul Abandoned Mine Lost Persons, Mammoth, West Virginia
Two men who illegally entered a closed coal mine to search for scrap metal to sell were rescued after they became lost about 3,000 feet inside the mine. Crews found Franklin Johnson, 44, and Glen Edelman, 35, on July 31, a few hours after their search began. They were treated at a hospital and released. The rescuers traced them by following the fumes from a fire the two had set after their

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flashlight failed as they hunkered down in the mine, authorities said. An expert said they were lucky they didn't set off an explosion or suffocate themselves. The men, who were last seen — **two days** — earlier, didn't have any food but there was water in the mine to drink. The mine, which was owned by Massey Energy Inc., was closed in 1993. [Source document.](#)

— 2005 —

- Mar South State Dredge and Plant, Bridgeton, New Jersey
Elwood Durham, 66, was injured when a work boat he and another co-worker were on capsized. A crane and the boat were being used to retrieve a dredge anchor from the bottom of a dredge pond. The crane and the boat were simultaneously hooked to the anchor line. The crane operator's view of the boat was obstructed and there were no communications established between the crews. Because there was too much slack in the cable connection to the crane, the crane backed away from the shore, capsizing the boat. After an **undisclosed period**, two co-workers rescued the two employees from the cold water and administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation to revive Mr. Durham. He was hospitalized and died on March 24, 2005. The other miner was able to rescue himself. [Source document.](#)
- May Rouchleau Mine Rescue, Virginia, Minnesota
Charles Grant and Joseph Kure, both 18, were rescued from the Rouchleau Mine late Thursday and early Friday when rescuers rappelled along the pit wall where the two were stranded. The teens became trapped about 200 feet into the pit, after they apparently walked into it while exploring a trail. A Virginia firefighter rappelled down to Kure, attached a "pickoff" harness strap to the teen, and lowered him to safety. A rescue squad member then rappelled to Grant and lowered him. Neither required medical treatment. Rescue crews worked for about **two hours** atop a barren edge of the pit to establish a secure rescue location. [Source document.](#)

— 2004 —

- Jun Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Utah County, Utah
A 21-year-old Riverton man was hospitalized after falling about 60 feet into a gravel pit on his all-terrain vehicle. Utah County Sheriff's deputies say he was riding with a group of friends around 3:30 p.m. in the Fivemile Pass area when the accident happened. Officers say he drove his four-wheeler through a break in the wall and fell. The man suffered neck and back injuries and several broken bones.

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He was flown to the University of Utah Hospital. Source: MSHA Stay Out, Stay Alive campaign.

- Aug Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Ogden, Utah
Steve Mahoney, 46, of Ogden suffered a broken leg from a fall in a mine. He had descended an 85-foot winze located 150-200 feet inside the mine using a 75-foot polypropylene waterskiing tow rope. He jumped the remaining ten feet and was injured (how he planned to reach the rope to exit is unknown). A companion summoned help, although she originally denied being in the mine and gave changing stories to emergency responders. The rescue by Weber County Search and Rescue required a difficult in-mine litter hoist and a scree slope evacuation to get the victim to an ambulance. Source: Weber County Sheriff Search and Rescue Training Newsletter.

— 2003 —

- Jan McElroy Mine Shaft Explosion, Cameron, West Virginia
Rescuers clambered into an oversized bucket attached to a crane and were lowered to two injured miners below. They brought out Benjamin Bair and Richard Brumley. They were transported to Pittsburgh's Mercy Hospital. Bair was listed in critical condition with second-degree burns and multiple fractures. Brumley was in serious condition with second-degree burns, puncture wounds and a concussion. The five rescuers were honored with Carnegie Medals for heroism for saving injured workers after the explosion in a mine shaft. They included Sheriff's deputies, Brent Wharry, and Steven Cook; Donald Kline, paramedic; and miners Aaron Meyer and Jack Cain. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Apr Ruby's Pit Slate Entrapment, Castleton, Vermont
A quarry worker was rushed to the hospital after being pinned beneath nearly 6,000 pounds of slate on Friday afternoon. The worker, whose name could not be determined, was helping to unload four large slabs of slate from the back of a trailer when the accident occurred. He was on the trailer bed when the slabs fell on him. The severity of the man's injuries could not be determined. He was unconscious and seemed to have trouble breathing when rescue workers carried him on to the ambulance. Each 1-inch-thick slab, 4 feet wide by 10 feet long, weighed about 1,600 pounds. By the time the fire department reached the gravel quarry known as Ruby's Pit, quarry workers had broken the slabs apart with hammers and freed the man. The Regional Ambulance Service took the man to Rutland Regional Medical Center for treatment. The slate apparently was being trucked into the gravel pit for milling. Since the accident occurred in a quarry, the

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investigation fell to the federal Mine, Safety and Health Agency rather than Occupational Safety and Health Administration. [Source document](#).

Apr Cave Rescue of Lost Persons, Harrisburg, Illinois

Following an **eight-hour rescue effort**, three teenagers made it safely out of a cave at Cave Hill, just west of Glen O. Jones Lake southeast of Harrisburg. The three boys, including Josh Myogeto, 15, Garrett J. Mousey, 19, and Garrett R. Decoursy, 18, told deputies they had been walking, apparently in circles, in the cave between 4 pm Monday and 3:30 am Tuesday. After walking in circles, they determined they weren't going to get out, and sat down to wait and save batteries in their flashlights. In the beginning of the journey the boys had used string to find the way back out but had decided to journey farther than the string could reach. The three were on the brink of falling asleep when they heard the voices of rescuers calling their names, and they immediately yelled back. A rescue team from the Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals arrived about 3:13 am and split up to spread the search out. Finally, at 6:32 am, a mine rescuer radioed out they had found the three and were coming out. Once out of the cave the boys were thirsty, tired, cold, and shivering, but none were injured. [Source document](#).

May H. B. Coal Mine Cave-in, Williamsburg, Kentucky

Trapped **nine hours** by a fallen rock, Charlie Jones was freed by rescue workers and fellow miners who carved his escape path by digging out rock and cutting through a metal vehicle with a torch. He said he survived the ordeal without a single scratch. He was released from the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, where he had been taken for observation. Jones was working on his stomach inside a small, motorized vehicle that hauls coal out of the mine when a 17-foot-thick rock collapsed. The weight of the rock blew out the tires and pinned him inside. Miners who work with Jones helped free their trapped comrade. [Source document](#).

Sep Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescue, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Rescuers hoisted a 27-year-old Santa Fe man out of an old mineshaft, more than — **20 hours** — after he fell while climbing into the shaft. The man apparently injured his ankle during the fall but otherwise suffered only minor cuts and bruises. He was taken to St. Vincent Hospital for a routine checkup. The man's family looked on throughout the three-hour rescue operation. Ten yards from the hole, an old cotton-braid rope was tied off to a small shrub. The rope apparently broke after the man climbed into the shaft. Officials weren't sure how far he fell, but he was found at the bottom, about 115 feet down. [Source document](#).

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— 2002 —

- Apr Abandoned Lead Mine Entrapment, Thida, Arkansas
Volunteers digging by hand rescued two young brothers, their teen-age cousin, and a dog from an abandoned lead mine more than — **24 hours** — after they had become trapped while searching for gold. The trio - ages 9, 11, and 19 - were pulled out of a small pocket about 250 feet inside the Civil War-era mine. They were cold and wet, but otherwise appeared OK, said the teen-ager's father, Terry Foster. "I thought they were going to bring them out dead," Foster said. "I thought they were going to lose their air. I thought for sure the little one would be history." Some people in area believe there is gold in the mine. There was no basis for the local legend that there was gold in the hill in Thida, about 90 miles northeast of Little Rock. [Source document](#).
- May [Abandoned Mine Rescue](#), Kern County, California
While riding his dirt bike in a remote part of Kern County, California, a 10-year-old boy fell 200 feet into an abandoned mine shaft. In a rescue which lasted **several hours** and was executed by the Indian Wells Valley Mine Rescue Team and the Kern County Fire Department, the boy and his rescuer, Sean Halpin, were raised to the surface. The victim was transported to a nearby hospital, where he was kept 24 hours for observation and then released.
- May Zeigler Coal Company Mine No. 11, Coulterville, Illinois
Kenny Penrod, 56, and Raymond Smith were rescued uninjured after an **undisclosed period** following a massive roof fall in the Zeigler Coal Company Mine No. 11 near Coulterville. Penrod said the area he was trapped in was approximately 2 to 3 feet high, and 4 feet wide. He estimated it to be about 8 feet long. Penrod said the fact that the rock was on top of the buggy saved his life. Raymond Smith, who was running the shuttle car that was directly behind the miner was also trapped. The fall that had Penrod and Smith trapped was one solid slab of rock that measured 72 feet long, 19 feet wide and 7 feet thick. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, California City, California
A 12-year-old boy fell 200 feet down an abandoned mine and remained trapped for almost **four hours** before fire officials rescued him. The boy emerged from the ordeal conscious and without major injuries, said Kern County Fire Capt., Thomas Patlan. He was airlifted to Loma Linda Medical Center. "He was conscious, and he helped us out a lot. He's a brave young man," Patlan said. The fire department was notified of the incident at 2:15 p.m. and succeeded in freeing the boy about 6 p.m. [Source document](#).

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- Jul Quecreek Mine Inundation, Friedens, Pennsylvania
Following an inundation of water from an adjacent abandoned mine, nine miners were rescued after being trapped more than **3 days** in the Quecreek Mine in Friedens, Pennsylvania.
- Aug Walter L. Houser Strip Asphyxiation, Kittanning, Pennsylvania
At 7:15 a.m., Timothy E. Barrett, a 40-year-old auger machine operator became overcome from low oxygen after crawling in a 30-inch diameter auger hole at the Walter L Houser Strip mine. Barrett crawled into the auger hole but did not return, nor did he respond when Darlene Orr, helper, called to him. Orr crawled into the hole and found Barrett unconscious about 120 feet into the hole but was unable to drag him out. Joseph O'Donnell, MSHA inspector, donned a self-contained breathing device, tied two ropes around himself and entered the hole. Barrett was found unconscious due to the oxygen deficiency. O'Donnell tried to drag Barrett but could not. He then tied a rope to Barrett and signaled to the rescue personnel to begin pulling. Barrett was removed from the hole at approximately 9:15 a.m. was given emergency medical treatment. Barrett was transported to Armstrong County Memorial Hospital where he unfortunately was pronounced dead at 9:44 a.m. Source document.

— 2001 —

- Mar Harmony Mine Cave-in, Columbia-Northumberland County Line, Pennsylvania
Ivan Sweinhart was listed in satisfactory condition at Geisinger Medical Center after being buried by a patch of loose coal two miles below the surface in a mine. Crews spent **an hour** removing Sweinhart from Harmony Mine, near the Columbia-Northumberland County line. He was taken out in one of the mine buggies used to transport men and tools. The mine was owned by UAE CoalCorp Associates and operated by West Point Mining Company of Mount Carmel. Source document.
- Dec Abandoned Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Arnie Campbell, 28, survived a fall of nearly 200 feet into a mine shaft. Rescue crews pulled Campbell from the shaft after more than **two hours** of work, Coal Township Fire Chief Robert Wariki said. Campbell sustained cuts, bruises, and abrasions. Campbell and an unidentified friend were out driving a four-wheel-drive pickup truck on coal lands northeast of Shamokin about 2 a.m. when they stopped to inspect an old fan house on Big Mountain. As Campbell walked to the rear of the building, he fell down the mine shaft. From what officials could determine, Campbell initially fell 40 to 50 feet, landed on a less inclined area, and then rolled about 30 feet along the "bench" before tumbling and falling another

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120 feet. Campbell's friend drove down the mountain to Shamokin to get help.

Source document.

— 2000 —

- Apr Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Utah County, Utah
Randy Gatton, 26, of Provo, was riding a motorcycle with a friend when he fell approximately 30 feet down a mine shaft and landed with the motorcycle atop him. He suffered a sprained ankle, scrapes, and bruises. He was in the mine for **three hours** before being rescued. Source document.
- Jul Willow Creek Mine Explosions & Fire, Helper, Utah
More than **10 hours** following the explosions in the Willow Creek Mine, four injured miners were laboriously brought to the surface by mine rescue teams. The rescued men included William Burton, Tyson Hales, Cory Nielsen and Shane Stansfield. Two other miners were found dead by rescue personnel.

— 1998 —

- Jan Abandoned Mine - Dog Rescue, Avra Valley, Arizona
A male Chow Chow - hungry, thirsty, and too weak to stand - was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft where firefighters said the dog may have been **trapped up to a week**. Ten firefighters and rescue workers from Northwest Fire District worked for nearly 90 minutes to lift it safely from the 30-foot-deep pit in Avra Valley. The Pima County Animal Control officer who took the dog to the county shelter, said it hadn't eaten in at least a week. The dog was treated for dehydration, malnutrition, infections in both eyes, and minor injuries it received from the fall into the shaft. Source document.
- Apr Mine Shaft Rescue, Acton, California
A man was rescued after being trapped for nearly **six hours** on a ledge 150 feet down a mine shaft. He was trapped after falling in the 800-foot vertical mine shaft prompting an effort by more than 60 rescuers. He had fallen off a ladder, but details about what he had been doing were unavailable. Source document.
- Dec Abandoned Stateline Noncoal Mine Rescue, Modena, Utah
Todd Meeks, 36, of Ivins, slipped and fell about 100 feet down a mine while prospecting. He suffered a broken arm, broken leg, and other injuries and was not discovered and rescued until the day after the accident. He was hospitalized in critical condition. Source document.

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— 1997 —

Apr Lehigh Coal & Navigation Strip Mine Rescue, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Heroic overnight efforts by about 70 people saved two Lansford teen-agers stuck in a 500-foot stripping pit for up to **11 hours** Wednesday and Thursday. John Urso, 18, and a 13-year-old boy escaped with minor injuries. The two, along with Howard McLaughlin, 20, of Lansford and another boy apparently entered the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company property in Coaldale. All four were walking around and climbing the walls of the Springdale mining pits. Trouble started when Urso and the 13-year-old became stranded around 4:30 p.m. The pit is about a quarter-mile wide and 500 feet deep and consists of several narrow, descending ledges spaced 50 to 60 feet apart. McLaughlin and the unidentified boy climbed out of the pit, while Urso was stranded on a ledge about 200 feet from the top and 300 feet from the bottom. The 13-year-old was 300 yards away, on a ledge 400 feet down. "Urso was holding onto a tree so he wouldn't fall farther down." Rescuers with spotlights stationed on one side of the wide pit illuminated the opposite side, where others worked their way down ledges to the 13-year-old and placed him in a basket. He was raised to safety at 1:49 a.m. The boy was treated for minor scrapes and ankle injuries at Miners Memorial Medical Center, Coaldale. Urso refused medical treatment. [Source document.](#)

— 1996 —

Feb Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado
Shannon Danley, 23, was rescued uninjured after he fell into a mine shaft on Cheyenne Mountain. Danley apparently walked about 25 feet into the shaft and then fell about 30 feet down a vertical shaft. Danley's fiancée and a companion flagged down a passing deputy, who tried unsuccessfully to rescue Danley before calling for additional help. He was brought to the surface at about — **3 hours** — later with rope burns to his left hand. He apparently was searching the mine shaft for gold when he fell. [Source document.](#)

Dec Mine Shaft Rescue, Morris County, New Jersey
Four rock climbers who were reported missing for **more than a day** were rescued from a Rockaway Township mine shaft in New Jersey. A police officer found their vehicle along the roadside near property owned by Mount Hope Rock Products. A search party was sent onto the property, and a police officer heard cries for help coming from 100 feet below the opening to the mine shaft. The men had climbed down over a protruding ledge and could not climb back out. Rescuers dropped ropes down the shaft, and the climbers were able to assist in their own rescue. [Source document.](#)

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— 1995 —

- Feb Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Tooele County, Utah
Mark Hoefnagel, 20, and Anthony Ballif, 23, both of Sandy, crashed their Jeep through a fence and plunged 50 feet down a mine shaft around 3:00 p.m. They survived the fall and were able to get out of the vehicle, but not climb out of the shaft. The two were rescued around 7:30 by another party of off-roaders who heard their calls for help. Hoefnagel was hospitalized in serious but stable condition with internal injuries; Ballif was treated for minor injuries and released. [Source document](#).
- Feb Solvay Minerals Trona Mine Rescue, Green River, Wyoming
Two miners were rescued after becoming lost when a 5.4 magnitude earthquake hit the area. The first miner was lifted to safety **after a day** and was in good condition at a hospital. The second miner was rescued after **nearly two days**. He suffered a heart attack as he was being lifted out of the mine and died hours later. [Source document 1](#). [Source document 2](#).

— 1994 —

- Dec Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Lavelle, Pennsylvania
A rescue crew of nearly 50 worked for **five hours** to save a teen-age boy who fell into a mine shaft while hunting. William L. Hubler, Jr., 16, of RD1 Ashland, sustained injuries during the 30-foot fall. He was listed in satisfactory condition at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, where he was flown by medical helicopter. "It's a very treacherous area very steep and rocky," said state Trooper H. Thadd Dillon, explaining why the rescue took so long. Also, rescue workers were unsure whether the teen had a neck or back injury and needed to be cautious, he said. Emergency workers from Lavelle, Washington and Yorkville fire companies used ropes, chains, and a Stokes rescue basket to haul Hubler from the abandoned hole, Dillon said. Yorkville Fire Company was called in because of its mine rescue equipment. Two or three workers went down into the shaft to secure the boy in the Stokes basket. He was then hoisted up, according to Dillon. The shaft is about 80 feet long, 30 feet wide and 60 feet deep. Hubler landed on a rocky ledge about 30 feet from the top. "Because of the area being so steep, rescue workers had to use chainsaws to cut a path to the road so they could carry him out quickly and safely," Dillon explained. "That was time consuming." According to the trooper, Hubler was hunting with his father, William Sr., and several other people when he fell. [Source document](#).

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— 1993 —

- Jan Whitwell Mine No. 30 Roof Fall, Whitwell, Tennessee
Investigators were trying to determine what caused a 100-foot-long, 14-foot-wide rock to fall at Whitwell Mine No. 30, killing two miners and injuring two others. The mine is in a remote location on Daus Mountain, about 50 miles northeast of Chattanooga. Robert Dempsey was rescued after **10 hours** and taken to Erlanger Medical Center in Chattanooga for emergency treatment. He had to have at least two fingers amputated as part of the rescue and was in undetermined but apparently non-life-threatening condition. The fourth miner, William Watts, was in good condition at Whitwell Medical Center with bruises on his head and cuts on his scalp. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Abandoned Mine Animal Rescue, Tooele County, Utah
On February 14 several members of the Tooele County Search and Rescue were called and asked to participate in an unusual rescue. **A lion hunter and his dogs had chased two mountain lions to an abandoned mine.** One dog and both lions fell down an 80-foot-deep vertical shaft. The dog was miraculously lassoed and pulled from the shaft the day before, however, the two lions remained trapped. Randy Callicot was repelled into the shaft by members of the rescue team with the very much alive lions. A tranquilizer dart was used to incapacitate the two animals. The lions were then hoisted from the 80-foot shaft. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Unnamed Mine Inundation, Wilkesville, Ohio
Daniel J. Beam and Charles Jody Neece helped to save eight men from drowning on July 11, 1993. Eight miners were working in a distant area of an underground coal mine when millions of gallons of water from an adjoining, abandoned mine began to flood the corridors of the working mine. The miners were alerted to the situation and ordered to evacuate. They proceeded on foot toward the nearest elevator, unaware of the extent of the flooding ahead of them. After a fire boss left, on foot, to get them to change their course, Beam, 46, mine supervisor, agreed to take a mine trolley more than three miles to the far end of the mine, where the miners and fire boss were expected. When Beam reached that point, the men had not yet arrived, and he was unable to determine their location or the advance of the floodwater. Rather than flee himself, Beam waited 50 minutes before the fire boss and miners appeared. They boarded Beam's trolley and another one that was available and rode toward an elevator, picking up another fleeing miner on the way. As the group proceeded, a power outage forced them to abandon the electrical conveyance, and they continued on foot. When one of the men restored power to the trolleys, Beam turned, ran into the path of the advancing floodwater, and took a trolley to the others. They resumed riding to

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the elevator, which they took to the surface of the mine shortly before floodwaters reached the bottom of the elevator shaft. Both Mr. Beam and Mr. Neece were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

— 1992 —

- Jan Ozark Mahoning Mine No. 1 Equipment Fire, Cave in Rock, Illinois
The rescue of four fluorspar miners near Cave in Rock was a successful trial by fire for two of the Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals' mine rescue teams. The miners were trapped inside the Ozark Mahoning Mine No. 1, north of Cave in Rock, after a 10-ton truck was engulfed in flames on January 7. The diesel truck apparently caught fire after a hydraulic line ruptured and leaked oil on the hot engine. The four miners were working near the truck. As the fire raged out of control, they lost their communication link with the surface. Mine Superintendent Larry Bowers called the IDMM's Springfield office. Fred Bowman, the department's administrative director, took the call at 10 a.m. It was the beginning of a long day. "We sent the rescue folks below," Bowman said. The "rescue folks" are mine rescue teams from Elizabethtown and Du Quoin. The Elizabethtown team is composed of fluorspar miners from the Ozark Mahoning mine and is headed by Bowers. That team was activated at 10:10 a.m. "Those men are primarily working in the immediate area and are fluorspar miners," Bowman said. "But we must have a backup team." So, another team was activated at 10:30 a.m. one composed entirely of state coal mine inspectors, all employees of IDMM. A third team, the White County Mine Pattiki Team, was placed on standby but did not have to be activated. The first team went into the mine at 12:40 p.m. and at 1:25 p.m. Bowman was notified that the four miners were safe. They had put out the fire themselves, and there were no injuries. The truck was destroyed, but there was little other damage. [Source document](#).
- Dec U. S. Gypsum Company Mine Cave-in, Ocotillo Wells, California
Leroy Witherspoon, 34, was rescued after being trapped for more than **seven hours** in the U. S. Gypsum Company Mine. He had been operating a mine train that became engulfed in 200 tons of gypsum ore. Conscious when rescued, Witherspoon suffered fractures in his left arm and right leg. [Source document](#).
- Dec Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Tucson, Arizona
Two Tucson teen-agers were rescued after spending about **five hours** in a Tucson Mountains mine shaft that their friend escaped to call for help. About 30 rescue workers tugged on a rope that trailed down the sides and middle of Beehive Peak to retrieve Scott Brown and Jay Turcott, both 16, who got stuck after rappelling

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into the shaft. Paramedic Dane Crouse, who went down the 60- to 80-foot-deep hole to check on the teens' conditions, was pulled up after them. The three-hour rescue took place near West Bilby and South Palomino roads on Tucson's southwest side. Turcott had rope burns on his hands and a scrape on his elbow. Brown and Larry George, 15, were not injured, Crouse said. Source document.

— 1991 —

May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Tucson, Arizona

A 30-year-old Tucsonan, Paul Cantenella, fell 30 feet down an abandoned mine shaft "didn't even break a nail." The inadvertent spelunker was target shooting with three friends about 35 miles northwest of Tucson Wednesday when he decided to explore a cave. The "cave" turned out to be the entrance to a vertical mine shaft – one of about 95,000 abandoned mines in Arizona, officials said. While hiking in the desert about 15 miles west of Red Rock, he and his three friends noticed the opening to what looked like a cave. Cantenella entered the cave alone and walked about 20 feet before coming to a fence. He said he stepped through an opening in the fence and began walking slowly toward what he thought was a continuance of the cave. What followed was a bumpy fall, darkness, and the stench of a dead animal. The Tucsonan had tumbled into an abandoned mine shaft with a decaying javelina, which had fallen to its death a few days before Cantenella's fall. Craig Bushelle, 21, said he was nearby when he heard "rocks falling and a couple of moans." After determining what had happened, another friend, Joe Buffo, 27, tried to descend the shaft to rescue Cantenella. Buffo went down about 12 feet before realizing the shaft was too deep. After a four-hour wait, he was extracted by a Pima County search and rescue team along with Cantenella. Source document.

Aug McElroy Mine Roof Fall, Moundsville, West Virginia

70 miners were rescued after more than **seven hours** following a roof fall at the Consolidation Coal McElroy Mine near Moundsville, West Virginia. The fall occurred when a mine car struck a roof support causing the collapse. Rescuers lowered food and extra mine lamps to the trapped miners during their ordeal.

Aug Canada Coal Company's Mine No. 2 Roof Fall, Kimper, Kentucky

Roger Dean Blackburn was seriously injured when rescued from a roof fall after — **6 hours** — at Canada Coal Company's Mine No. 2 near Kimper. He was rescued at about 7:30 p.m. and spent much of the next day in surgery at the University of Kentucky's Albert B. Chandler Medical Center in Lexington. Mine workers reported that they could see and communicate with Blackburn, who was trapped under a pile of large and small pieces of shale about two miles deep in the mine.

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As they worked for nearly six hours to free him, rescue workers conversed frequently with Blackburn, Dept. of Mines and Minerals Supervisor David Phillips said. "He was conscious the whole time six hours," Phillips said. "Occasionally, he would lapse into a period where we didn't hear anything from him. We would holler extra loud and he would respond. He'd say, "Hurry up and get some of this stuff off me." I can't understand how someone could live through that. Some of the shale pieces were so large that Phillips feared they would break if workers used hydraulic jacks to lift them. For that reason, he said, workers had to cut pieces of the rock and manually lift them from Blackburn. [Source document](#).

- Sep Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Tooele County, Utah
Terry Blackburn, 16, of South Jordan was hiking with two friends after dark to camp near the rim of the Kennecott pit. Around 10:30 or midnight Blackburn stumbled 20-30 feet into a 4-foot-wide ventilation shaft. His friends summoned help but were unable to relocate the shaft for some time. Blackburn was not rescued until 5:25 a.m. He suffered a broken leg, four broken teeth, and cuts and bruises. [Source document](#).
- Nov Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Little Cottonwood Canyon, Utah
Kent Parker, 16, of Sandy fell down a 50-foot shaft near Alta while snowboarding. He did not see the shaft until he was airborne in it. His companions did not see him fall and continued down the mountain. He was trapped for 90 minutes before being discovered. It took an hour for rescuers to remove him from the shaft. He suffered a concussion and hypothermia and was hospitalized for several days. Source: Salt Lake Tribune, November 3, 1991.
- Dec Rocky Mouth Canyon Mine Rescue, Sandy, Utah
Adam Smolensky, 19, of Sandy crawled through a steel barrier installed by the UAMRP to enter the mine around 8:30 a.m. and fell into a 25-foot-deep winze located about 20 feet inside the mine. Passers-by discovered him around 1:15 p.m. and summoned his parents, who unsuccessfully tried to rescue him. Smolensky was finally rescued by Sandy Fire Department and Salt Lake County Search and Rescue crews about 3:00 p.m. Smolensky was hospitalized with a shoulder injury. Sandy firefighter Tad Norris suffered a broken nose during the rescue when a steel bar being removed from the entry hit him in the face. [Source document](#).

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— 1990 —

- May Abandoned Lorman Mine Rescue, Twentynine Palms, California
Jeff Smith, 29, was lifted from the mine after an **undisclosed period** by a rescue team from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. The 240-pound Smith and two friends had lowered themselves by rope into the 85-foot deep Lorman Mine. They were climbing out of the mine when a rock dislodged and broke Smith's arm. His friends lowered Smith to the floor of the mine. They intended to use the ropes and their car to pull him out, but the car would not start. One friend found some members of a ham radio operators' group that notified authorities, who dispatched the rescue team. [Source document.](#)
- Sep High Splint Mine No. 1 Roof Fall, Cloverlick, Kentucky
Two miners were injured and trapped in a roof fall at a mine in Harlan County, but one was rescued a **few hours** later, officials said. Rescuers pulled one man from the underground mine, but the other, a foreman, was still trapped last night and authorities could not make voice contact with him. The roof fall occurred at the High Splint No. 1 underground mine at Cloverlick. The mine, run by Arch Mineral's subsidiary Arch of Kentucky, is about one mile south of Southeast Community College in Cumberland. The miner who was rescued was identified as a roof-bolter operator, Elmo Banks, age unknown. Banks was conscious when pulled from the mine. He had been talking to rescuers before being freed and had said that the foreman was alive. Banks was to be taken by helicopter to the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville. His condition was not available. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Abandoned Mine Rescue, Cave Creek, Arizona
Michael Clark, 18, fell 60 feet into an abandoned mine shaft, breaking both legs and a hip, but survived. It took rescuers nearly **10 hours** to extract Michael Clark, 18, from the mine near Cave Creek after his fall. Clark was camping with friends in the Tonto Hills area when they decided to explore a mine tunnel. They had walked in about 300 yards when Clark fell through flooring. [Source document.](#)

— 1989 —

- Aug Abandoned Coal Mine Asphyxiations, Grand Junction, Utah
A group of teenagers exploring an abandoned coal mine apparently were overcome by poison gas, and three were killed, authorities said. A fourth youth rescued from the mine was hospitalized in serious condition. The fifth member of the group walked and ran more than five miles through rugged desert to get help for his friends after they collapsed, said Mesa County Sheriff's Lt. Wayne Harms.

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Miles Slape, 17, the boy who went for help, reported he had trouble breathing in the mine, and investigators believed the teenagers were poisoned by gas, Harms said. Autopsies were ordered. "Those old mines have all kinds of gas: the older the mine the more gas they have," Harms said. "They 're very, very dangerous things. Killed were two girls — Christian Rossman, 15, and Catherine Schrettner, 16 — and a boy, Greg Folchert, 17. Frank Warner, 16, was listed in stable but serious condition Monday at St Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction. [Source document.](#)

Sep [Hidden Treasure Mine](#), Stockton, Utah

Joshua Dennis, a 10-year-old gone missing from a Boy Scout exploring trip, was rescued after nearly **one week** from the abandoned Hidden Treasure Mine near Stockton, Utah. The boy was found by a Utah Power and Light Company mine rescue team, ranked among the best teams in the country.

Sep [TM Coal Company Mine Roof Fall](#), Pikeville, Kentucky

A Pike County coal miner, trapped for **five hours** by a roof fall, emerged unharmed after rescuers dug through a thick pile of rocks and coal with their hands. Herman Coleman, 41, drove home after being rescued from the TM Coal Co. mine. It's kind of hard to explain," said Coleman, who had been working at the mine just two days. "It's just one of those things that will happen to miners as long as we work underground." He was operating a coal-cutting machine when a section of the roof fell. Coleman was examined by emergency medical technicians at the scene, given a clean bill of health and then allowed to drive home. [Source document.](#)

— 1988 —

May [Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue](#), Fivemile Pass, Utah

John Carlson, 25, of West Valley City was lowering himself into the mine when the rope broke. He fell approximately 50 feet and sustained minor injuries. He required rescue by the county search-and-rescue team. Source: Deseret News, May 22, 1988.

Jul [Abandoned Monarch Noncoal Mine Rescue](#), North Willow Canyon, Utah

Phillip Butterfield, 15, entered the mine portal without a flashlight or safety gear and slipped down a 30-foot winze. His father, William Butterfield, 44, went after him and could not climb out. They were rescued by the Tooele County Sheriff's search and rescue unit. [Source document.](#)

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- Jul Abandoned Maxfield Noncoal Mine Rescue, Big Cottonwood Canyon, Utah
John Mazuran, 16, and two companions tried to explore a winze located about half a mile inside the mine. Mazuran lost his footing about 60 feet down and slid another 100 feet to the bottom. He was unable to climb out. His friends summoned the Salt Lake County Sheriff's office, which performed the rescue. Lt. Mike Wilkinson, Salt Lake County Sheriff's office, also reported another incident of a group of four people trapped 1/3 mile inside the mine unable to climb out. The mine contains vertical drop-offs and 18% grades. Source: Deseret News, August 4, 1988.

— 1987 —

- Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Twentynine Palms, California
A 20-year-old Marine who fell into a 40-foot-deep desert mine shaft was rescued after an undisclosed period by sheriff's deputies. The deputies from a San Bernardino County search and rescue team hoisted Andrew Poll from the bottom of the shaft. Poll, stationed at Twentynine Palms, suffered only scratches in the fall and did not require medical treatment. Source document.
- Feb Big Mountain Mine Cave-in, Prenter, West Virginia
Cecil Hager, 32, was rescued — **11½ hours** — after he was trapped under 14 feet of rubble in a cave-in at the Big Mountain Mine at Prenter, West Virginia. Rescue workers believed that Hager was working under the canopy of a continuous mining machine at the time of the cave-in and was protected from the falling rock. Source document.
- Feb Abandoned Mine Accident, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania
A state Game Commission worker was in stable condition this morning after being rescued from the bottom of a 60-foot shaft after an accident while on a bat-counting expedition. James Kennedy of Uniontown was one of about 10 people helping with an annual census of the endangered Indiana bat inside the cave and abandoned mine in Canoe Creek State Park. Source document.
- May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Pinos Altos, New Mexico
A 17-year-old was rescued about **seven hours** after he had fallen about 90 feet down a mine shaft west of Pinos Altos, New Mexico authorities said. He was taken by helicopter to Gila Regional Medical Center, Silver City, where he was treated for a broken leg and cuts. Source document.

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- Oct Baby Jessica McClure's Entrapment, Midland, Texas
Rescuers worked for **58 hours** to free "Baby Jessica" McClure from an eight-inch (20 cm) well casing 22 feet (6.7 m) below the ground. The story gained worldwide attention (leading to some criticism as a media circus), and later became the subject of a 1989 television movie, *Everybody's Baby: The Rescue of Jessica McClure* on ABC. As presented in the movie, a vital part of the rescue was the use of the then relatively new technology of waterjet cutting.
- Oct Diamond Gold Mine Entrapment, Leadville, Colorado
Five miners trapped for more than **a day** were hauled 800 feet to safety in a bucket about the size of a garbage can. They became trapped when a cable suspending a 3-ton piece of machinery snapped, sending the equipment and debris plunging into the Diamond gold and silver mine at Leadville, Colorado. The mine was owned by the Leadville Corporation.
- Dec Slate Top Mine Roof Fall, Woodbine, Kentucky
Charles Simpson, Jr. was rescued **19 hours** after a roof fall accident at the Slate Top Coal Company mine near Woodbine, Kentucky.

— 1986 —

- Jan Ophir Canyon Mine Shaft Rescue, Ogden, Utah
An Ogden Scout leader, Steven F. Stanford, 65, was rescued from an Ophir Canyon mine shaft by Tooele County Search and Rescue volunteers. Mr. Stanford had trouble with his equipment when hiking the mile route to the cave and the five boys accompanying him went ahead of him. While searching for the boys, however, Mr. Stanford made a wrong turn and fell down a 70-foot incline, then dropped another 20 feet to the bottom of the cave. The Scout leader had suffered a broken wrist, strained knee, and sprained ankle from the fall, Deputy Park said. Rescuers hoisted him out from the cave and administered first aid. After walking out of the cave, Mr. Stanford was placed on a stretcher and transported down the mountainside. He was taken to the Tooele hospital. Source document.
- Jan Rothermel Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Lincoln Colliery, Pennsylvania
A cave-in killed one man and — **briefly trapped four others** — according to a spokeswoman for the state Department of Environmental Resources. The body of Clayton Knorr, 21, of Gordon was recovered from the Rothermel Coal Company mine and he was pronounced dead by the Schuylkill County deputy coroner about 45 minutes later. It was believed the cave-in occurred after an explosive charge was detonated. Source document.

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- Apr Abandoned Quicksilver Mine Rescue, Guerneville, California
Rescue crews pulled a tired and thankful teenager from a 150-foot abandoned mercury mineshaft Saturday night where the luckless explorer was trapped for **more than six hours**. Rick Gloege, 18, of Sebastopol was hoisted with rope and harness by firefighters and the Sonoma County sheriffs rescue and search team from a carved room 150-feet down the mercury mineshaft where he had been stuck. The youth, who described himself as a professional tree climber now working at a pizza restaurant, said he was stranded in the shaft at the old Quicksilver Mine when he was unable to find the footing and strength needed to pull himself 30 feet to a ledge. Neither Gloege nor his 19-year-old friend Jeff Brown, who didn't enter the mineshaft, were injured in the incident. Gloege spent about three hours trying to pull himself out of the mineshaft Saturday afternoon before Brown drove into town for help at the Guerneville firehouse. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Weaver Mine Entrapment, Durango, Colorado
Rescuers freed a teen-ager who became wedged in a narrow shaft off a limestone cavern, and also freed a rescue worker who got stuck head-first while trying to pull the youth to safety. Thad Scheer, 17, and Keith Dahl, 28, were brought to the surface of the old Weaver Mine, as the cavern 23 miles north of Durango is known and taken to Mercy Hospital. Both men were conscious and talking, said Sgt. Dan Bender of the La Plata County sheriff's department. Their rescue ended a — **12-hour ordeal** — that included more than 100 people from 16 agencies and 10 local contractors, said Bender. Scheer became wedged deep in the cave when he was about 100 yards from the entrance and slid 10 feet down an 18-inch shaft. Scheer's companions reported the mishap a half hour later. A professional mine rescue crew from Silverton arrived at the site and about an hour later one of the rescuer workers slid head-first into the shaft, Bender said. Initially Scheer was unconscious, and the other man slipped in and out of consciousness, but oxygen fed through tubes brought both back to consciousness, said Bender. Rescuers using mining drills were able to free the two but **bringing them to the surface took another two hours**. The two were removed from the cavern on a 5-foot-wide path that has 25-foot drop-offs along the way and in some places is just 24 inches from the rock overhead, Bender said. Workers were "crawling on their bellies and pulling the stretchers" to get to the surface, Bender said. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Limestone Cave Entrapment, Durango, Colorado
Thad Scheer, 17, who got stuck in a crevice while exploring a limestone cave and was trapped more than **10 hours**. Scheer and Keith Dahl, 25, were in satisfactory condition at the hospital suffering from exposure and hypoxia. Dahl became

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trapped when he reached down to try to pull Sheer out and got wedged in the narrow passage Scheer had been trapped 100 yards inside the cave and about 50 feet below the surface for more than 10 hours and Dahl was trapped upside down for nearly **five hours** before they were rescued. The rescue effort involved more than 100 people from 16 public agencies and nine private contractors and local businesses Scheer said he was "just walking along exploring" in the cave when he climbed into a crevice and "got stuck pretty good." "Once I got down in the little hole there was no way to climb out," he said. "So, I curled up in a little ball and I guess I passed out for most of the time." Sgt. Dan Bender of the La Plata County Sheriff's Department said some of the openings in the cavern were 18 inches by 18 inches. "Rescuers used jackhammers and air compression drills to carve their way out," Bender said. "There were several times where we had serious doubts whether either one would be taken out alive." [Source document](#).

Sep Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Pilot Knob, Missouri

About 30 tons of rock fell onto a teen-age boy in an abandoned mine, and rescuers using heavy equipment took **more than 17 hours** to roll a boulder aside to free him. Gerald Dwayne Easter, 17, was freed and flown to St Mary's Health Center in Richmond Heights, a St Louis suburb, where he was listed in serious but stable condition after surgery. Easter became trapped in the mine on Pilot Knob Mountain when a shaft wall collapsed and the boulder fell on his legs, said Don Wynn, the Pilot Knob fire chief. [Source document](#).

Dec Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Tinton, South Dakota

A Sturgis youth was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft in the Tinton area by the Spearfish Search and Rescue Unit. Authorities said Shane Anderson, 15, of Sturgis received minor injuries when he fell about 25 feet while exploring the hole with a companion. Authorities said the pair had apparently forced open the protective grate covering the shaft and were using a knotted rope to climb down into the 45- to 50-foot-deep hole. Terry Wenzel, a member of the rescue team, said the youth landed in about four feet of water at the bottom of the shaft and the water probably broke his fall. Wenzel said the rescue team was able to maneuver a truck near the shaft and winch the boy out without difficulty. Anderson received only minor abrasions and a jammed knee in the accident. He was taken to Lookout Memorial Hospital for treatment. [Source document](#).

— 1985 —

Apr [Powderhorn Mine Roof Fall](#), DeBeque Canyon, Colorado

Trapped for **37 hours** following a roof fall accident, Curtis Sanders was rescued and walked out of the Powderhorn Mine in DeBeque Canyon, Colorado. Sanders

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had been hunched over and nearly waist-deep in water in the cab of a large mining machine during his period of entrapment. He was taken to St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, where nurses in the emergency room said he was in good condition.

- Jun Abandoned Lead Mine Rescue, Thida, Arkansas
Volunteers digging by hand rescued two young brothers, their teen-age cousin and a dog from an abandoned lead mine Monday, **more than 24 hours** after they had become trapped while searching for gold. The trio — ages 9, 11 and 19 — were pulled out of a small pocket about 250 feet inside the Civil War-era mine. They were cold and wet, but otherwise appeared uninjured. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Abandoned Maxfield Mine Rescue, Big Cottonwood Canyon, Utah
Two brothers missing for **2½ days** were found in an abandoned mine where they had been lost in darkness since their flashlight went out. Dennis Workman, 26, and his brother Scott Workman, 25, were found by teams led by a Sheriff's deputy. The use of dogs helped pinpoint them. [Source document.](#)
- Nov [Bessie "G" Gold Mine Avalanche](#), LaPlata County, Colorado
Following an avalanche at the remote Bessie "G" gold mine in Colorado's San Juan Mountains, rescuers, including officers from the LaPlata County Sheriff's Department worked for **24 hours** to rescue Lester Jay Morlang. His partner, Jack Ritter, died of suffocation when the men were buried around 6 p.m.
- Dec MS&W Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Carlstown, Pennsylvania
Troy Wolfgang was rescued unconscious about — **three hours** — after a 2:30 p.m. MS&W Coal Company mine cave-in, but his father, a brother and a fellow worker suffocated before rescuers could reach them. The three dead miners, identified by state police as Gene Wolfgang, the owner; his son, Rick, 22, and Frank Benner, 30, were found 50 feet from the mine's gangway in a breast of the operation. Troy Wolfgang was pulled out of the mine at 5:17 p.m. He was unconscious and had both his legs broken. He was listed in serious condition at the Pottsville hospital. [Source document.](#)

— 1984 —

- Jan Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Sidney, Kentucky
James G. Thornsby rescued Frederick J. Pinson from a cave-in, Sidney, Kentucky on January 23, 1984. Pinson, 31, was seated in the operator's cab of a mining machine when a large section of the roof of the mine in which he was working collapsed atop the machine, trapping him. Thornsby, 25, who had been working nearby, fled the area of the fall. Hearing Pinson's cries for help, Thornsby

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returned to the edge of the collapsed ceiling, under which there was a narrow space. Despite additionally falling rock, Thornsby crawled into the space and proceeded to clear a path to Pinson. Upon reaching Pinson, Thornsby assisted him from the cab, then crawled with him from beneath the fallen ceiling. Pinson suffered bruised ribs but fully recovered. Mr. Thornsby was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Feb Gold Miner Rescue, Chico, California

A gold miner evacuated by helicopter after a 25-foot fall in Butte Creek Canyon was listed in satisfactory condition at a Chico hospital. Jerry White, 30, was lifted out of the canyon by a California Highway Patrol helicopter. He was injured in a fall while panning for gold in the rugged foothill area east of Chico. [Source document](#).

Mar Abandoned Tungsten Mine Fall of Person, Visalia, California

Joel Baca, 22, was listed in stable condition at Valley Medical Center in Fresno after he fell about 100 feet down an abandoned tungsten mine shaft. Tulare County sheriff's deputies said Baca and his brother were checking the mine shaft when Joel Baca fell into the opening. His brother rushed to the nearby Chrisman Ranch to get help. A sheriff's rescue team lifted Joel Baca from the shaft and a California Highway Patrol helicopter transported him to VMC. Deputies said he suffered facial and head injuries. The mine was on the Chrisman Ranch in Drum Valley, 20 miles east of Orosi. [Source document](#).

Aug LTV Corp. Mine Entrapment, Nemacolin, Pennsylvania

Three miners were rescued uninjured after being trapped in a mine shaft lift in an LTV Corp. mine for **more than an hour**. The accident occurred when an outdoor crane struck a 25,000-volt power line, causing a motor in the lift to burn out just as the midnight shift workers were leaving. [Source document](#).

— 1983 —

May Black Queen Mine Roof Fall, near Sylvester, West Virginia

John Varney was rescued after being buried under debris for — **two hours** — at Elk Run Coal Company's Black Queen mine following a massive roof fall. He was unhurt. In the same incident, Kenneth Wayne Scarbrough, 36, of Arnett in Boone County, was killed when the mine roof collapsed. Scarbrough was an assistant mine foreman with 14 years' experience. [Source document](#).

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- Jun McClure No. 1 Mine Explosion, McClure, Virginia
Three miners at the faces survived and were rescued shortly after the explosion. Ronald Sluss, Albert Holbrook, and Carson Blackstone were returned to the surface suffering from burns and were taken to hospitals.
- Jul No. 9 Twilight Mine Roof Fall, Boone County, West Virginia
A coal miner trapped **13 hours** under tons of rock said yesterday that he prayed and thought about his family because he figured he was in a "tight spot." "I didn't know whether they were going to get me out or not," said William Epling, 52, of Sharples. Epling was trapped in a 4-by-4-foot space under the canopy of a mining machine after a 50-foot section of the mine roof collapsed about 2 a.m. Tuesday. "I thought this might be my way to go. I knew I was in a pretty tight spot." Rescue crews reached Epling about 3 p.m., and the miner emerged from the Armco No. 9 Twilight mine in Boone County with just bruises and scratches. Epling said he was helping cut the last coal out of a seam when the roof fell. Epling said he was trapped once before by a roof fall, for about 90 minutes, but escaped injury that time too. Source document.
- Sep Abandoned Gold Mine Fall of Person, Kings Mountain, North Carolina
An 18-year-old man rappelling down the side of a deserted gold mine shaft lost his grip on his rope and fell 40 feet to the bottom of the pit. Kings Mountain Rescue Squad members spent an hour checking over Edward Allender, then tied him into a wire basket stretcher and hauled him 60 feet to the top of the mine shaft. Allender was taken to Kings Mountain Hospital, complaining of hip and leg injuries. The hospital refused to release his condition. Source document.
- Nov Tire Hill Mine Lost Miner, Tire Hill, Pennsylvania
For nearly **30 hours**, George Havrilak, 56, was as alone as any man ever was, in a place as dark as it ever gets. The veteran inspector, who started working at the mine in 1946, failed to come out by shift's end. The rescue teams, three from nearby mines and one from the state converged on the scene and began their search. Havrilak was led to safety from the Tire Hill Mine of the Bird Coal Company by one of four rescue teams that had been working in relays, searching the pit for some trace or the body of Havrilak.
- Havrilak explained what happened when he went into the Somerset County mine, which had been closed since 1980.

I go in every day and examine the mine. I look for any methane gas buildup. I check the air, the water level and keep watch on the ventilation. I usually stay in until 3 in the afternoon, and I try to cover most of the mine.

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What happened was that my head light went out. I guess it wasn't charged right ... sometimes that'll happen. It's battery-operated, it's charged every day. All you do is just plug it in. I don't know what happened this time. I would say I had been in about four or five hours ... it must have been about 12 or 1 o'clock when it went out.

I had a buglight, but I slipped and fell, and it fell off my belt and I couldn't locate it. It doesn't put out much light, but it gives you enough to walk by. When the light went out, I waited a while and then decided to work my way out. I got in the air current ... I faced the air ... and I knew I could get to the air shaft and then I could find my way out. I was never panicky. I knew all the time I would make it out. I knew if I kept the air in my face, I would get out. I didn't want to work up too much of a sweat. I would go along a bit and then I'd rest and then I'd go and then I'd rest. I knew I had a long way to go. I knew where I was. I know that mine real well. It's just that it's hard to make any time in the dark.

Havrilak said he knew rescue teams would be searching for him, and he believed he and the teams must have passed each other several times during the search. He noted, though, that the mine has a lot of entries ... and there are cross cuts. It's pretty easy, I guess, for someone to go up one and you're in another one and nobody knows where someone is. I didn't hear them, and they didn't hear me. That's the part I can't figure out. How could we have passed each other a couple times without them noticing me or hearing me?

As a precaution, Havrilak was transported to Johnstown Memorial Hospital for observation. Source document.

— 1982 —

May Magma Mine Cave-in, Superior, Arizona

Three miners died between 5:30 and 6 p.m., on May 10, 1982, in three separate incidents that involved a cave-in and fall-of-ground in the Magma Copper Mine in Superior, Arizona. During a daring rescue and recovery which lasted through May 12th, one of the victims was recovered from the dangerous area, however, he died shortly thereafter from his injuries. Joseph Granillo was also entrapped in the same manner, and while his rescue was being attempted, both he and his would-be rescuer, Joseph Cassaro, were killed when additional material fell. For their brave efforts, the Carnegie Hero Award was bestowed upon Frank Aldecoa, Andy J. Arroyos, Jr., Billy Ray Evans, Henry Lopez Rodriguez, George Anthony Gomez, G.

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Michael Martinez (posthumously) and Joseph Cassaro (posthumously). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

May Abandoned Strip Mine Fall of Person, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
A MedEvac rescue helicopter was used to evacuate a seriously injured Tamaqua youth to the Allentown and Sacred Heart Hospital Center (ASH) after he had fallen 100 feet into an abandoned strip mine. Mark Rudenko, 15, was in serious condition in the ASH Shock Trauma Unit with head injuries, a collapsed left lung, a broken clavicle and possible internal injuries, a hospital spokesman said. Rudenko was found at the bottom of the strip mine by Jack Brode, a neighbor, who had been walking his dog along the mountainous ridge that overlooks Tamaqua Area High School. The 50-year-old Tamaqua man ran about a quarter mile to his home and called the Tamaqua police, who later arrived with the Tamaqua Rescue Squad. Michael Lincovich, a rescue squad official, said it took about a half hour to retrieve the youth from the rocky pit. It was not known how long the boy had been there. [Source document](#).

Jul Unnamed Abandoned Noncoal Mine Rescue, Fivemile Pass, Utah
Kerry West, 24, was recovering from his injuries at Utah Valley Hospital in Provo after he and his motorcycle fell 30 feet into a mine shaft. The accident occurred in the area of Five Mile Pass, near the Utah-Tooele County border. Mr. West and a friend were riding dirt bikes in the area when the victim apparently rode up a pile of mine tailing which led to a vertical mineshaft. He and the motorcycle fell about 30 feet to the bottom of the shaft. The bike apparently struck a ladder near the bottom of the shaft, which is believed to have broken the fall. Mr. West suffered a broken leg and other injuries. He was rescued by members of the Utah County Sheriff's Office and by personnel from the Lehi Ambulance Association. [Source document](#).

— 1981 —

Feb Centralia Mine Fire Fall of Ground, Centralia, Pennsylvania
12-year-old Todd Domboski narrowly escaped serious injury when he fell through an opening created by a smoldering underground mine fire at Centralia. Residents were shocked when they learned that he fell through the opening while playing in his grandmother's yard but was rescued by his teen-age nephew. The boy told authorities he noticed smoke rising from the ground in the yard. When he went to look at it, his foot broke through the surface, the ground opened and he slipped through, dropping about 6 feet before he was able to grab some tree roots. "If he didn't have a red hunting cap on, I wouldn't have found him," said Eric Wolfgang, who pulled the stunned boy to safety. Todd was taken to Ashland Hospital where

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he was tested for inhalation of carbon monoxide fumes and released. The fire, which started in an underground vein of coal, has been burning below this Columbia County community of 1,000 since 1962. Todd was the first person known to have fallen through an opening, although smoke is often seen rising from holes in the ground. Officials of the state Department of Environmental Resources took a temperature reading of 350 degrees in the hole. Neighbors, looking at the 2-foot hole after the rescue, tossed a brick down the shaft to see how deep it was. It was quite a few seconds before they heard the brick hit bottom. [Source document.](#)

Apr [Dutch Creek No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Redstone, Colorado

Seven miners working in other areas of the mine at the time of the explosion survived. Three were injured and were rescued; the other four were not injured and escaped unassisted to the surface. The injured miners were admitted to Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs for treatment of burns, bruises, and shock.

Apr U.S. Steel Zinc Mine Equipment Fire, Jefferson City, Tennessee

Gene "Yoggi" Carey and Cecil Wallen spent — **more than four hours** — trapped deep in a U.S. Steel Corp. zinc mine in this East Tennessee city 30 miles from Knoxville. Mine supervisor Joe Miller refused to release details of the ordeal, which began when the engine of a 22-ton truck used to haul zinc ore from the mine caught fire, trapping the men behind it. The men, who were in an air pocket, were uninjured, officials said. The two miners, filthy when they emerged from the mine, were greeted by 70 co-workers, family members and, friends when they stepped off a tractor at a mine office building. [Source document.](#)

Dec [Stillhouse Run No. 1 Mine Roof Fall](#), Bergoo, West Virginia

On December 3, 1981, a roof fall occurred in the Stillhouse Run No. 1 Mine of the Elk River Sewell Coal Company that resulted in the deaths of Robert Bennett, Doyle Gillis, and Donald Arbogast. Rescuers found Donzil Cutlip, 27, pinned under the block about seven hours after the fall, but it took six more hours to free him (**13 hours total**). He was in serious condition after surgery to repair deep gashes in both arms. Larry Clevenger, 18, and Carl Hull, 24, were rescued earlier and were unhurt. Clevenger said the seven hours before rescuers found him was "the worst thing that ever happened to me." [Source document.](#)

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— 1980 —

- Feb Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Barstow, California
The local sheriff's search and rescue team and mounted posse assisted in the rescue of a motorcyclist who fell down a mine shaft in the Victor Valley area. Mark Hillman, 23, of Anaheim was riding his bike when he fell down a 150-foot-deep mineshaft. The shaft was on Bureau of Land Management property. Two companions who had been riding their motorcycles with Hillman called authorities, who then called in the Barstow Search and Rescue squad and posse a short time later. After — **several hours** — of work, Hillman was pulled from the hole and transported to St. Mary's Desert Valley Hospital for treatment of multiple fractures. [Source document](#).
- Apr [Florence Mine Roof Fall](#), Huff, Pennsylvania
Clyde Waddell was rescued **13 hours** after a roof fall at the Florence Mine near Huff, Pennsylvania. The mine was owned by the Florence Mining Company.
- Oct [University of Arizona Experimental Mine](#), Pima County, Arizona
Two men, David Aubuchon and Guy Hayton, and the car they were driving were rescued after spending **4 days** at the bottom of a vertical shaft of the University of Arizona experimental mine near Tucson. They had crashed their car through a barbed-wire fence protecting the shaft entrance. Following their rescue, the men were questioned by Pima County Sheriff's detectives about the burglary of \$700 worth of tools from the mine. Apparently, no charges were filed.
- Oct Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Florence, Montana
A teenager was hospitalized after he and a companion spent about — **eight hours** — trapped in an abandoned mine shaft 12 miles east of Florence. Dan Wall, 18, reportedly fell about 50 feet while he and Tim Harris, 17, were climbing in the mine in Eight Mile Canyon. Wall was listed in stable condition at Community Hospital in Missoula. A spokesman said he was suffering from shock and had pain in the chest and pelvic areas. Harris was hit by falling rock but was not seriously hurt. [Source document](#).
- Nov Gold Miner Rescue, Shasta Dam, California
Ted Schjoth, 42, who was injured while panning for gold was rescued by Shasta County sheriff's deputies and volunteers after he was spotted by the crew of a California Highway Patrol helicopter. Sheriff's Capt. Gene Toten said Schjoth suffered a broken leg and was unable to return to his vehicle, which was parked about three miles away along Little Squaw Creek west of Shasta Dam. Schjoth told his rescuers he fell off a 20-foot embankment several hours earlier. Because of

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the rugged terrain, Schjoth was carried for about 2½ miles on a litter to a location where the helicopter could land. He was flown to Mercy Medical Center in Redding, where he was listed in "satisfactory" condition. Source document.

— 1979 —

- Mar Upper Taggart Mine Rockslide, Oven Fork, Kentucky
Trapped for **6½ hours** by a rockslide at the Upper Taggart Coal Mine at Oven Fork, Kentucky, Larkin Napier was rescued. Two other miners, Grant Sturgill and Ernest Stetzer, were crushed by the falling rock.
- Jun Belle Isle Salt Mine Explosion, Franklin, Louisiana
An outburst of flammable gases and salt occurred following a face blast and a gas explosion approximately 10 minutes later. At the time of the explosion, 22 persons were in the mine. Seventeen persons were rescued, and five persons died as a result of the explosion.
- Jul Unnamed noncoal mine, Eureka, Utah
Sean Winters, 13, Christian Brown, 14, and Curt Conrad, 17, of Eureka, and their dog decided to explore the mine. The dog ran ahead and fell down a winze, landing on a ledge of rotting timbers 35 feet down, with a shaft of unknown depth below. The boys left and returned with a rope. They lowered Winters down to the ledge to retrieve the dog, but he got stranded there instead. The others summoned help. Winters and the dog were rescued by the Juab County sheriff. Williams suffered scratches and bruises, shock, and a possible concussion from a rock that fell on his head.
- Jul Gateway Mine Cave-in, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania
Five miners trapped by a rockfall for **4½ hours** deep inside the Gateway Coal Company mine near Waynesburg were rescued without injury. "It feels great," said John K. Self after he emerged from the mine and passed a medical checkup. "It was a great rescue effort by the other miners to get us out" adding that he was "a little scared" during the ordeal. The men were cut off from the mine entrance when the roof collapsed in a shaft about 460 feet below the surface. Bill Gibbons, a spokesman for Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp. which owns the mine, said the miners "were a little dusty, but there were no injuries. The fall occurred between the mine entrance and their location. They were not trapped in the debris." Also trapped were Charles V. Ferguson, James Bell, Jr., Kenneth Beatty, and Robert S. Baker. Source document.

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Nov U. S. Steel Mine Cave-in, Somerset, Colorado

Less than two hours into the afternoon shift at the U. S. Steel Mine near Somerset, two workers were suddenly buried in a cave-in. Bruce Lewis, 21, died instantly when tons of rock fell from the ceiling of the mine. Jesse Erickson, who was working with Lewis, was in a mining machine that was imprisoned in rock when the ceiling fell. It would be — **10 hours** — later before he would see the outside again. Erickson was rescued from the air pocket after about 10 hours. He said at least 30 feet and untold tons of rock separated him from his rescuers. [Source document.](#)

Nov Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Glen Lyon, Pennsylvania

Following a systematic ground search conducted by the Civil Air Patrol, a Glen Lyon hunter who had fallen into a mine ventilator shaft was rescued. The hunter, Andrew Sweeney, had been **missing for more than two days** when he was located. Sweeney, who had fallen into the shaft and was on a ledge 80 feet below ground. Rescue efforts were begun immediately, and a medic was lowered into the shaft to make sure Sweeney was alright. Two men were then lowered into the shaft to help put Sweeney in a harness and pull him out of the shaft. Approximately 150 Civil Air Patrol members from Hazleton, Wilkes-Barre, Scranton, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Reading and Allentown, assisted with the successful search and rescue effort. [Source document.](#)

— 1978 —

Apr Moss No. 3 Portal "A" Inundation, Duty, Virginia

William Joe Arden, Willis Ison, and Richard L. Shelby died attempting to save fellow workmen from suffocation, April 4, 1978. Strickler Mullins, helped to save Charles L. Breeding in the same incident.

Arden, 25, Shelby, 56, Service Manager from National Mine Service, and Ison, 45, Mine Safety and Health Administration subdistrict manager, entered the tunnel to give aid but, before reaching any of the men, were overcome.

One of the three men was removed from the tunnel and revived; but Arden and the others died. Messer's Arden, Shelby, Ison and Mullins were posthumously awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Apr Jersey Miniere Zinc Mine Equipment Fire, Gordonsville, Tennessee

Miners trapped underground by a fire in a zinc mine shaft were rescued after the flames were brought under control. The miners were trapped for **several hours**

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by the fire, which occurred some 600 feet down the mine shaft. A company official said there were no injuries. The mine manager for Jersey Miniere Zinc Company said the fire was believed to have started when some hydraulic oil spilled from a piece of loading equipment in the mine shaft, called a load-haul dump unit. The accident occurred at about 2:30 p.m., trapping miners farther down the shaft. It was estimated about 20 men were involved. The men were never in any danger, but they were unable to bypass the fire and get out of the shaft and into refuge chambers along the mine shaft, which are equipped with air, water and first aid supplies. [Source document.](#)

Jul [Unnamed noncoal mine](#), Rock Canyon, Utah
Don Bateman, 16, of Castro Valley, California, suffered cuts and bruises when he fell 25 feet into a shaft in Rock Canyon. He was exploring the mine with two companions at the time. His companions summoned help. Bateman was rescued by the then new Provo City Alpine Rescue Squad.

Jul Unnamed Noncoal Mine Rescue, Rock Canyon, Utah
Don Bateman, 16, of Castro Valley, California, suffered cuts and bruises when he fell 25 feet into a shaft in Rock Canyon. He was exploring the mine with two companions at the time. His companions summoned help. Bateman was rescued by the then new Provo City Alpine Rescue Squad. [Source document.](#)

Dec Trixie Mine Cave-in, Eureka, Utah
Two men were rescued from a collapsed Trixie Mine tunnel owned by the Kennecott Copper Corporation on New Year's Eve after one was buried up to his neck in sand for **several hours**. It took a 22-man crew about 45 minutes to rescue Daryl Lance, 52, and Robert Kalletta, 28, from the 900-foot level of the 1,100-foot-deep lead and silver mine. The cave-in occurred at about noon but wasn't discovered until 3 p.m. when the men were to get off work. [Source document.](#)

— 1977 —

Feb Dry Lake No. 4 Mine Cave-in, Cranks Creek, Kentucky
Robert Jones, 28, was rescued after his **8-hour** entrapment in the No. 4 mine of the Dry Lake Coal Company. Another miner was injured, hospitalized, and listed in fair condition. According to reports, Jones received a concussion, but was otherwise in good condition. [Source document.](#)

Successful Mine Rescues in the United States

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- Feb Newfield Mine Cave-in, Penn Hills, Pennsylvania
John R. Bazella helped to rescue Donald J. McCully from a cave-in at the Newfield mine of Republic Steel Corporation, Penn Hills, Pennsylvania, February 8, 1977. When a cave-in occurred in the Newfield coal mine, McCully, 46, was completely buried alongside a mining machine but was able to breathe because the shale and sandstone rock that had fallen was partially supported by collapsed wooden beams. Bazella, 31, coal mine mechanic, and other workmen gathered to assist in the rescue of McCully. After another machine had removed enough rocks to uncover the end of the collapsed boom of the mining machine, a tunnel was dug by hand alongside the boom. It was necessary to cut through a fallen beam along the way as, with the men crawling in and out, the careful removal of rocks finally extended the tunnel to McCully. Rocks were removed from around him. As a result of the efforts of Bazella and the other men, McCully then was pulled from under the rock fall via the tunnel — **nine hours** — after the cave-in occurred. John Bazella, 31, coal mine mechanic; Thomas V. Damico, 29, coal miner; Lawrence P. Rankin, 23, coal miner; Vincent J. Shilobod, 26, coal miner; and Clayton R. Wall, 59, coal miner were each awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal for their bravery. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Mar Porter Tunnel Mine Inundation, Tower City, Pennsylvania
Ronald Adley survived after being trapped for nearly **6 days** following an inundation of water at the Porter Tunnel Mine owned by the Kocher Coal Company in Tower City, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Nine miners were killed in the accident.
- Jun Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Plum, Pennsylvania
Joseph R. Sabot rescued Steven T. Tady following a rock fall, Plum, Pennsylvania, June 15, 1977. In an underground coal mine, a fall of slab rock covered a mining machine and trapped Tady, 27, in the operator's compartment. Sabot, 46, mine mechanic, crawled into a crevice in the rocks 10 feet from Tady and began digging a tunnel toward him. As he removed the rocks, Sabot placed shoring in the tunnel, which was about two feet wide and high. After extending the tunnel to the machine, Sabot backed out. Tady, who was uninjured, then crawled from under the rock fall by way of the tunnel. Joseph R. Sabot was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his brave efforts. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Aug Unnamed noncoal mine, Little Cottonwood Canyon, Utah
Benjie Suazo, 17, of Salt Lake City, required rescue after becoming stranded in a vertical airshaft. Suazo was exploring the mine with four friends. He climbed up an airshaft about 300 feet inside the mine and was unable to descend. His friends

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summoned help. Suazo was rescued uninjured by the Salt Lake County sheriff's search and rescue and fire department crews.

Sep Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Prosperity, Missouri

A rural Joplin youth emerged with only minor bruises after a 60-foot tumble down an abandoned mine shaft. Kevin Rumble, 15, spent about **an hour** trapped in the water-filled old shaft before rescue workers retrieved him by rope. Rumble and another youth were exploring the area around the shaft when Rumble slipped and plummeted into water about 60 feet from the top of the 140-foot shaft. Clinging to some old boards, he managed to keep himself above water while his friend flagged down a passerby in a dune buggy. The motorist tossed a rope down to Rumble, then attached the other end to his vehicle until rescue workers arrived. A Jasper County Deputy Sheriff was lowered by rope into the shaft to retrieve the youth, who was then taken to a Joplin Hospital for examination. Preliminary reports showed a possible broken rib, but no other serious injuries. [Source document.](#)

Oct Segco No. 1 Mine Roof Fall, Parrish, Alabama

Kenneth W. Ely rescued Ollis A. Bryant from a cave-in, Parrish, Alabama, October 11, 1977. When a cave-in occurred in a coal mine, Bryant, 46, was pinned beneath a huge slab of shale and sandstone that was propped up slightly at one side by reason of its resting on a low machine. Ely, 29, federal coal mine inspector, wriggled under the slab and, by moving debris and digging into the clay floor, created a crawl space to the machine, alongside which Bryant was trapped. After freeing Bryant from the debris around him, Ely drew him into the crawl space. Workers pulled Ely by the feet as he in turn pulled on Bryant. In that manner both men were drawn from beneath the slab. For his bravery, Mr. Ely was awarded the Department of Interior Award for Valor, the Holmes Safety Association Medal of Honor, and the Carnegie Hero Award. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

— 1975 —

Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Calveritas, California

William Kerr, 31, escaped injury in a 35-foot fall in a mine shaft. Kerr, his mother, and their family dog were walking in a field near their home when the dog fell down the 75-foot-deep shaft. Kerr got a rope and began lowering himself down the shaft to retrieve the small dog. The rope broke when Kerr reached the half-way mark and he fell to the bottom of the shaft. Mrs. Kerr ran to a nearby telephone and called sheriff's deputies for help. Officers pulled out both Kerr and the dog with the aid of safety harnesses and lines. Kerr suffered only minor cuts

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and abrasions, and the dog had no apparent injuries, officers said. [Source document.](#)

Mar Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Calico, California

Billy Loenhorst, 13, was reported to be in good condition at Victor Valley Hospital following a fall into a 50-foot mine shaft in the Calico area. Billy was with a group from Redlands, hiking in the Doran scenic drive area northeast of Calico, when he apparently fell into the shaft, sheriff's deputies said. Several members of the group from Redlands were hiking and exploring in the area which is dotted with abandoned shafts when the youth fell. The Barstow sheriff's substation was notified, and an all-out rescue effort began. A total of 20 members of the desert rescue team participated in the removal of the youth from the shaft. Billy suffered a fractured left arm and numerous cuts and abrasions in the fall. The sheriff's deputies and other members of the rescue team had Billy out **1½ hours** after they were notified. He was then taken to the hospital by Desert Ambulance service. [Source document.](#)

May Deer Creek Mine Cave-in, Huntington, Utah

Three miners were rescued and hospitalized following a double cave-in at the Peabody Coal Company's Deer Creek Mine. One man was trapped inside an iron cage for **two hours** before he was rescued. Three miners were killed in the incident. [Source document.](#)

May Robena Mine Roof Fall, Carmichaels, Pennsylvania

A Fairbank man was rescued after being trapped when a mine car derailment triggered a roof fall at the Robena Mine's Colvin Shaft. Billy Grant, a main line brakeman was safely removed from the mine and transported to the West Virginia University Hospital in Morgantown where he was undergoing examination and treatment. A company spokesman said a main-line empty trip derailed causing the fall. Mine employees installed temporary roof supports and removed Mr. Grant from the area after an **undisclosed period**. A physician at the scene underground reported Grant in good condition. [Source document.](#)

Jun Wabash Mine Powered Haulage Rescue, Keensburg, Illinois

A mechanical failure which caused an AMAX Coal mine employee to be trapped for **five hours** 100 feet below the surface of an 800-foot elevator shaft at the Wabash mine at Keensburg, Illinois may have sparked a series of events which includes vandalism of AMAX employees' vehicles and caused two consecutive shifts of workers to leave their jobs. John Davis, an electrical supervisor, was descending into the elevator shaft aboard a lowering hoist car when a five and one-half-inch reflective drive shaft broke. Davis, the only passenger, was able to

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contact safety personnel who, with the assistance of the Frontier Kemper Construction Company, managed to remove Davis, unharmed, from the stopped hoist. Davis was brought to the surface by means of a lowered bucket device. Before Davis was rescued, employees reporting for the second shift at 4 p.m. refused to enter the mine until Davis was removed from the hoist car. [Source document.](#)

- Jul Piedmont Mineral Associates Mine Cave-in, Mineral, Virginia
Three miners who were trapped 150 feet underground by a cave-in at a zinc mine were brought safely to the surface by rescuers after an **undisclosed period**. One suffered what were described as minor injuries. Deputy Sheriff Louis Proffit of the Louisa County Sheriff 's Department said the cave-in occurred at a mine operated by Piedmont Mineral Associates. The three men were identified as Horace Sherry, George Dickson, and Roosevelt Groom, who was taken to the University of Virginia Hospital. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Dallas, Georgia
Gary Holcomb, 22, was riding through woods in Paulding County when he went over a small bluff and found himself heading straight down into a 65-foot-deep abandoned Coppermine shaft. Rescue workers who spent two hours Monday pulling Holcomb from the mine shaft, said, "I don't see how it didn't kill him." Holcomb suffered a broken arm, a severe burn on his ankle, cuts, and bruises. [Source document.](#)

— 1974 —

- Mar Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Pittsburg, California
Eddie Hulteen Jr., 14, suffered a fractured skull when he fell 30 feet down an abandoned mine shaft near Pittsburg. Hulteen was in critical condition at Delta Memorial Hospital, Antioch. He had been hiking with his sister, and two other youths through Coal Mine Park south of Pittsburg when he apparently lost his footing and fell 30 feet into the old mine. The rescuers, using a litter and ropes, had him out of the shaft in about an hour. He was taken by helicopter to the hospital. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Abandoned Mine Shaft Entrapment, Chester, Massachusetts
An 18-year-old who became trapped while exploring a mine shaft was pulled to safety, state police said. Felix Munez became trapped after he lowered himself to the bottom of a 90-foot shaft while exploring with a companion, identified as Richard J. Barus of Manchester, N.H. [Source document.](#)

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- May Trona Mine Shaft Cave-in, Green River, Wyoming
Joe Beaucamp, 28, was rescued after being trapped for **23½ hours** in a new trona mine shaft being dug at the Allied Chemical Company plant west of Green River, Wyoming. He was trapped Tuesday evening when he fell 80 feet from a scaffold during a cave-in, 1500 feet underground. Beaucamp, whose leg was pinned by a large piece of timber, almost was freed 10 hours after he was trapped, but another cave-in covered him again up to his nostrils. Doctors said Beaucamp suffered from exposure and was dehydrated, but otherwise was in good condition. [Source document.](#)

— 1973 —

- Feb Abandoned Old Forge Colliery Fall of Person, Old Forge, Pennsylvania
A 10-year-old Old Forge boy narrowly escaped death when he fell 40 feet down an abandoned mine shaft at the Old Forge Colliery. Old Forge police said Michael Scarnato's fall was broken at the 40-foot level by some old roofing material jammed in the open shaft. He could have fallen a lot further down the shaft they said. As it was, the youth suffered cuts and bruises and had to be taken to Community Medical Center after his rescue. Police said Michael and several of his friends were playing near the shaft when he got too close and fell in. Despite his 40-foot fall, Scarnato remained conscious during the entire time he spent in the shaft. The Moosic Hose Company provided personnel and equipment and supervised the rescue operation. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Ranger Fuel Company, Bolt, West Virginia
Five miners were rescued after **4 hours** from the flooded Ranger Fuel Company mine at Bolt, WV. The rescued miners were identified as Dennie Pauley, Otis Best, James Widensall, James Griffith Sr., and Jerry I. Lucas. Four others had managed to escape. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Brush Creek Mine Mudslide, Downieville, California
Two veteran gold miners were rescued in good condition early today after being trapped in a century-old shaft for — **33½ hours** — when a violent Sierra storm triggered a giant mudslide. Air compressors had been used to pump oxygen into the Brush Creek Mine four miles west of this historic gold mining town in an isolated corner of the Sierra. Both men were cold, hungry, and filthy but in "tip-top" shape, according to Sierra County Sheriff Sam Doyle, who headed a rescue team of 20 deputies, miners, and friends of the pair. The miners were working the mine 2,000 feet into the shaft when the slide hit. But their fate was not discovered a caretaker noticed the miners' cars in front of the shaft and the entrance sealed with mud. [Source document.](#)

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Dec Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Fallon, Nevada

A California teenager was in the Washoe Medical Center after being rescued from an abandoned mine shaft. Doug Gard, 18, of Lafayette, suffered serious back, neck and shoulder injuries when he fell almost 50 feet down a mine shaft that he and three friends were exploring. Gard and his three companions were exploring the mine with Gard in the lead when he fell. Their only light, a flashlight, was carried by the third man back in the group. When the rocks and dirt stopped falling, the three could hear Gard moaning. They climbed down an old wooden ladder to find Gard some 50 feet below. He was conscious and said he was numb from the neck down. After rescuers arrived, it took almost **an hour** to lift Gard out of the shaft to a waiting helicopter. The helicopter took him to the Washoe Medical Center in Reno where he underwent emergency treatment. [Source document.](#)

Dec Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Tucson, Arizona

Weston Wilson, 27, was rescued about — **five hours** — after he fell into a 40-foot abandoned mine shaft near Wasson Peak in the Tucson Mountains. Wilson was taken to Tucson Medical Center with a fractured leg, dislocated hip and two broken legs. Sgt. Ted Brandes of the Pima County Search and Rescue Squad said that Wilson, his wife and four of their friends were hiking in the area and found the cave entrance. They told Brandes they went inside to explore the cave. Just inside the entrance, Wilson fell into the shaft. Dr. Christopher J. Heller and two members of the rescue squad were lowered into the shaft. Heller applied splints to Wilson who was then put on a stretcher and hoisted to the surface. Helicopters from Davis Monthan AFB flew Wilson to the medical center where he was listed in satisfactory condition. [Source document.](#)

— 1972 —

Jan Abandoned Red Rooster Gold Mine Fall of Person, Adelanto, California

A 19-year-old rockhound was rescued **3½ hours** after he fell 160 feet down the shaft of an abandoned gold mine. Alan Chamberlain of Adelanto, who was lifted out of the mine on a stretcher, was taken to the March Air Force Base hospital with a broken right thigh and hand and numerous cuts and bruises. Sheriff's deputies said Chamberlaine had been investigating a 15-foot-deep side shaft at the Red Rooster gold mine in the foothills of Shadow Mountain. After dragging a box full of equipment from the hole, Chamberlain stepped backward into the main shaft and fell to the bottom, striking timbers several times on the way down. A friend called for help and a sheriff's department search and rescue team along with two tow trucks arrived several minutes later. Deputies said Dave Stever, a member of the rescue unit, was lowered down the shaft about 50 feet above

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Chamberlaine but the deputy was painfully, but not seriously hurt when he struck a timber and had to be brought out. A civilian volunteer was lowered next, and he managed to reach the youth and give him first aid before he was placed on a stretcher and pulled out by winch and cable nearly **three hours** later. Authorities said the gold mine had not been worked in nearly a decade and no barricades or warning signs were posted near the mine as required by law. Source document.

Feb Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Miami, Oklahoma

A motorcyclist was critically injured when he and his bike plunged 80 feet into a crater created by an abandoned mine shaft near here. Unconscious and listed in critical condition at Tulsa's Hillcrest Hospital was Sammy Dowling, 23, who plunged into the opening as he topped a chat pile about 200 feet high. Dowling and a group of friends had come from Claremore to ride their motorcycles over the towering piles of mine tailings that dot the countryside near Miami. Two rescuers were lowered by rope to rescue him. They placed him in a wire stretcher that was hoisted to the surface by spectators and officers who gathered at the scene. The crater apparently was formed when a mine tunnel beneath the pile collapsed. Source document.

Mar Abandoned Silver Queen Mine Fall of Person, Calico Ghost Town, California

A Compton youth was in satisfactory condition last night after a 150-foot fall down the main shaft of the Silver Queen Mine at Calico Ghost Town, located northeast of Compton. Darrel Avery, 19, was taken to Barstow Community Hospital where he was treated for a broken leg, cuts, and bruises. He and his brother, David, 23, entered a horizontal shaft in the mine and apparently got lost before Darrel fell into the main vertical shaft around 3 pm, said Sgt. Gerald Hanna of the Barstow Sheriff's substation. A timber protruding from another shaft broke his fall, saving him from dropping to the bottom which is full of water and debris. His brother climbed about 200 feet to the top of the boarded over shaft and summoned help. Two sheriff's deputies and 10 men from the Barstow Desert Search and Rescue Team rushed to the mine to start rescue operations. Volunteers Charles Jefferson and Eldon Haskell were lowered 350 feet into the main shaft and pulled the trapped youth out at about 6:50 pm (**4 hours later**). Source document.

May Sunshine Silver Mine Fire, Kellogg, Idaho

Two men, Tom Wilkinson, and Ronald Flory were rescued and found to be in good condition after being trapped for — **8 days** — following the Sunshine silver mine fire in Kellogg, Shoshone County, Idaho. 91 miners were killed in the disaster. The four men responsible for the rescue were Wayne D. Kanack, Frank J. Delimba, and Don Morris from the U. S. Bureau of Mines, and Sonny Becker, a Sunshine miner.

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- Jun Abandoned Mine Rescue, Garden Valley, California
Lowell T. Simpson, 17, was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft after spending **seven hours** 50 feet below the ground-level opening. Sheriff's Deputies said Simpson and two other youths were exploring the old mine shaft by use of a rope when Simpson could no longer hold on and slipped down the rope. He suffered severe rope burns on his hands. A Sheriff's spokesman noted that Simpson was fortunate he did not fall farther down the shaft than he did. He explained that a pile of dirt from a previous mine cave-in broke Simpson's fall, preventing the youth from continuing down the shaft. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Hegins, Pennsylvania
A 34-year-old Hegins miner, James Smith, was killed Tuesday when buried under a mass of coal some 11,000 feet below ground at a Good Spring area deep mine. A second miner, Kermit E. Binkley, was rescued after a **nine-hour** digging operation. Smith's body was recovered about an hour later. Binkley was listed in satisfactory condition at Pottsville's Good Samaritan Hospital. James Laird, inspector for the U.S. Bureau of Mines, said the two miners were found in the battery of the mine, which is a retaining wall used with a chute to control the flow of coal. Mine inspectors believe the chute was empty and the two miners had gone inside when the coal stopped flowing. Laird said coal flowed in on the pair while they were in the chute, covering them to their necks. A rescue crew of five men from the neighboring Stahl Coal Company descended into the mine shaft about 3 p.m. and worked until 10 last night in the effort to dig out the entombed miners. A second crew relieved them at 10 and succeeded in digging out Binkley by 11:40. It was well past midnight when Smith's body, was brought to the surface. There was no official report on the extent of injuries to 35-year-old Binkley late this morning though hospital spokesmen said he appeared to have no serious injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Unnamed Strip Mine Entrapment, Washington County, Pennsylvania
Cecil Clark, 65, a Washington County strip miner was pulled from a would-be grave by coworkers who saw him buried accidentally beneath thousands of pounds of earth. A worker who witnessed the accident ran to where Clark was entombed and bored a hole through the dirt with his arm. Some **35 minutes later** Clark was pulled free by fellow workers who, with small tools and bare hands, had worked feverishly to save him. McDonald was taking core samples at the Luzerne Township strip mine and apparently didn't hear a warning that dynamite was about to be set off, police said. When the charge exploded Clark was buried in earth and debris. [Source document.](#)

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Oct Skelton Mine Rib Fall, Stanaford, West Virginia
Eugene Fugate, loader operator, and Ed Bryant, loading-machine helper, traveled to the No. 6 entry and began normal loading operations in the crosscut. After the coal was loaded Fugate trammed his loading machine into the left side face of the No. 6 entry. About 11:20 a.m., Fugate, moved the loading machine into the right side of the face of No. 6 entry. The coal rib rolled over and caught Fugate against the loading machine. Bryant rushed to Fugate, along with Frank Sauchuck, shuttle-car operator. They disconnected the loading machine and freed Fugate from the fallen debris and rushed him to an awaiting ambulance. He was pronounced dead at Raleigh General Hospital. [Source document.](#)

Dec [Itmann No. 3 Mine Explosion](#), Itmann, West Virginia
Three miners were brought out by rescue crews about **six hours** after the explosion. They were identified as Larry Bailey, 23, of Brenton; Dallas Mullins, 32, of Pineville; and Jerry Billings. All three were said to be in critical condition.

— 1971 —

Feb Abandoned Emery Mine Fall of Person, Westfield, Massachusetts
A 10-year-old Chester boy who was rescued after an **undisclosed period** from an abandoned 70-foot mine shaft of the Emery Mine near Westfield was reported in fair condition in a hospital. He suffered a fractured pelvis and cut left arm in a 60-foot fall. Gary Lutat was exploring with two friends when he fell into the shaft, after trying to climb down using a clothesline. [Source document.](#)

Jun [Federal No. 2 Mine Roof Fall](#), Miracle Run, West Virginia
As a result of a roof fall, two miners were injured and rescued from the clogged section of an underground tunnel which is 700 feet deep and a mile and a half back in the Eastern Associated Coal Company's Federal No. 2 Mine. Also injured and recovered from the mine were Robert Lee Strakal, 24, of Cassville, and Steven Shuman, 29, of Fairmont. Shuman died the next day from his injuries.

Aug Jefferson Mine Rescue, Cottonwood Heights, Utah
A 17-year-old Salt Lake City youth was rescued unhurt from the Jefferson mine about 8 p.m. Monday but not until he spent four frightening hours perched on a narrow ledge. The youth was one of five to walk into the mine through a tunnel. They found the four-foot diameter shaft rising to the surface on the mountain above. The youth climbed up the shaft to tie a rope to a beam. When he climbed to the break, he found that it wasn't safe. That was about 4 p.m. The rest of the party tried to rescue him but couldn't. They called the sheriff from nearby homes. [Source document.](#)

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- Sep Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Shawnee, Ohio
Two youths trapped in an abandoned mine shaft for more than — **two hours** — were rescued by a special mine rescue team headed by State Mine Inspector Ralph Dean of Glouster. The youths were identified as Alan Foley, 14, and Kenneth Eugene Gottke, 17, both of Shawnee. They were trapped in an old truck mine on the Dave Lewis property some 300 feet deep in the shaft and 100 feet to the south of the main shaft in a small chamber. When the pair had gone further into the mine to retrieve equipment, there was a huge rumble and the whole front of the mine shaft caved in. Rescuers uncovered some heavy rocks from the small slit entrance and were able to talk to the youths and to urge them to crawl "with precaution" toward them. Gottke sustained a minor cut on the left forearm and Foley received a bump on the head. [Source document](#).
- Nov Grays Knob Coal Mine Cave-in, Harlan, Kentucky
Jessie Cornett was rescued after spending — **9 hours** — trapped from a roof fall in the Grays Knob Coal Company mine near Harlan, Kentucky. The 25-year-old miner was operating a coal cutting machine when he spotted the rock begin to fall. He managed to duck under the steel cage of the machine for protection. Four hours passed until he heard his name shouted by the rescuers. Before that, his co-workers thought he was dead. [Source document](#).
- Nov Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Scottsdale, Arizona
Steve Ball, 14, was listed in satisfactory condition after he was rescued from a 150-foot-deep mine shaft near Scottsdale. He sustained arm and shoulder injuries when he fell into the mine. Ball was hiking in the area with several companions when the accident occurred. Officials said Ball was the sixth person to be pulled from this abandoned mine shaft in two years. [Source document](#).

— 1970 —

- May Silver Reef Mines Fall of Person, Chuichu, Arizona
A 17-year-old Casa Grande youth who survived a 130-foot fall down a mine shaft was rescued late Saturday after some 25 volunteers worked for nearly — **seven hours** — to free him. Roy Pair was exploring the area with two companions when he lost his grip on a rope and fell to the bottom of a 150-foot mine shaft at Silver Reef Mines south of Chuichu. Papago Policeman Dan Martinez, who supervised the rescue gave the account of the incident. Pair was exploring the mine with two other youths, Willard Crawford, 18, and Steve McBride. The same shaft nearly claimed the life of another youth, Leonard Corvelli, two years ago on February 24, 1968. Martinez, in urging persons to stay away from the old shafts, noted that

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there are several on the reservation and most are not marked. He said there was nothing of value in the area. Source document.

- Jun Abandoned Hazard Gold Mine, Foresthill, California
Lester E. Benbow, age 41, schoolteacher, Foresthill Elementary School, was asphyxiated in the Hazard Gold Mine in the early morning of June 20, 1970, when he attempted to rescue Clifford J. Cox, who was overcome in an oxygen deficient atmosphere. He had no mining experience. Cox was later transported to the hospital, and reportedly made a complete recovery.
- Sep Ranchers Exploration & Development Mine, Vance County, North Carolina
Richard Owens was rescued **10 hours** after being trapped in mud and rock up to his neck in the Ranchers Exploration and Development Corporation's Tungsten Mine. The mine is in Vance County in north-central North Carolina, near the Virginia border.
- Nov Hasting Mine Fall of Person, Deemstown, Pennsylvania
Harry T. King, 25, was seriously injured when he fell about 300 feet after slipping from a cable in a shaft of the Hasting Mine at Deemstown, Pennsylvania. King was rescued **four hours** after he fell. Firemen had to enter the bottom shaft through the mine and plodded a mile and a half to reach King. The mine is owned by Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation. Harry Dale King, 21, cousin of the injured man, also had been sliding down a cable but saved himself by stepping onto a beam about 350 feet from the bottom of the shaft. Companions were outside the mine and called police when the Kings failed to return. Source document.
- Nov Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Sparks, Nevada
A Sparks boy was rescued after he became trapped for — **two hours** — in an abandoned 110-foot mine shaft. Chris Hammond, 12, suffered a cut on his right leg but otherwise was unharmed before firemen pulled him to safety. Hammond and a friend, Stephen Marcoe, 12, were exploring an area dotted with abandoned shafts. Hammond said he attached a rope to a fence and climbed down the shaft. The rope broke about 25 feet from the bottom. The Marcoe boy ran for help. Source document.
- Dec Leckie Mine Roof Fall, Anjean, West Virginia
Loren Hinkle was rescued after his **24-hour** entombment following a roof fall in the Leckie Coal Company mine near Anjean, West Virginia. Rescuers delivered water and orange juice through a two-inch emergency air vent while they dug him out. Killed in the accident were R. B. Crookshanks and Charles Pitzenbarger.

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Ironically, Hinkle previously escaped death in a mine fire and another roof collapse.

— 1969 —

- Jan Humphrey No. 7 Mine Fire, Mount Morris, Pennsylvania
Twelve miners were rescued after being trapped more than **six hours** after a fire at the Christopher Coal Company, Humphrey No. 7 mine near Mount Morris, Pennsylvania. Eleven of the miners were walked out by rescuers, one man was removed by stretcher.
- Mar Deep Lark Silver Mine Cave-in, Lark, Utah
William "Buck" Jones was rescued **8 days** following a cave-in at the Deep Lark lead, zinc and silver mine near Lark, Utah. The elderly miner was tired but able to laugh following his ordeal. He was greeted on the surface by his wife and 11 children.
- Nov Cardinal Silver Mine Cave-in, Carrietown, Idaho
Four miners were rescued from a cave-in at the Cardinal silver mine in a remote central Idaho area after being trapped for nearly **three hours** about 600 feet underground. The Cardinal was mining lead and silver 18 miles west of Ketchum, near Carrietown, an old ghost town. The mine, one of the oldest in Idaho, was founded in the 1800s and had been idle for many years until Cardinal Mining Company resumed operations. None of the men were caught under the falling debris, but the slide blocked their escape from the mine. Source document.
- Dec Arkwright No. 1 Mine Roof Fall, Granville, West Virginia
William Nabors was rescued after spending — **five hours** — trapped deep in the Christopher Coal Company's Arkwright No. 1 mine, which tunnels through Granville and Indian Creek, West Virginia. Nabors, 60, of Cheat Creek in Monongalia county, and two other miners on a work shift of 125, were operating a continuous mining machine, when the roof collapsed. Robert Moss, 30, and William Crigler, 40, escaped the massive slate fall with minor injuries, but Nabors was entombed beneath a maze of slate. Work stopped at the mine, and rescue workers began a piece-by-piece task of tunneling to Nabors, who remained in contact with them and a physician, Dr. Jerome Johnson, throughout his ordeal. Nabors was removed from the mine and transported to the West Virginia University Hospital where his condition was described as "good." Source document.

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— 1968 —

- Feb Silver Reef Mines Fall of Person, Chuichu, Arizona
Luck of the Indian gods stayed with a California teenager yesterday when he tumbled 150 feet to the floor of a derelict silver mine on the Papago Reservation near here and limped out with bruises. Leonard Corvelli, 13, was hauled back to daylight with a grazed face and hands, bruised legs, shock, and fright from spending — **five hours** — in the jet-black underground. Corvelli was recovering in St. Joseph's Hospital, Phoenix. The boy was on a field trip to the Silver Reef Mine, 11 miles south of here on White Horse Mountain, with 10 companions from Villa Santa Cruz School, Toltec City. Tour supervisor Bill Maitland, recreation director at the school, told the boys not to venture near shafts at the 87-year-old mine. But according to Sgt. Minor Stephens of Pinal County sheriff's office, Corvelli decided to explore on his own and descended a 100-foot ladder to the mine's first level. Then, said Stephens, Corvelli walked 20 feet into a dark tunnel and fell into a shaft leading to the second level. The boy tobogganed down a 20-foot incline and then dropped 150 feet straight down. Hearing rocks dislodged by the tumble, Maitland counted heads, discovered Corvelli missing, and went for rescuers. Rescuers rigged a leather saddle cinch and lowered it to Corvelli. The boy, still conscious, was able to sit in the makeshift Jacob's ladder for the long pull to safety. In 1969, Daniel Martinez was given a monetary reward for his efforts in Corvelli's rescue. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Southwest Potash Mine Collapse, Carlsbad, New Mexico
Two Carlsbad, New Mexico miners trapped over **34 hours** were rescued by workers using their bare hands and chisels. They became trapped when a 50-foot potash slab collapsed in the Southwest Potash Company mine. The two miners rescued were Fred Crabtree and Arnold Delso.
- May Saxsewell No. 8 Inundation, Hominy Falls, West Virginia
Inundation of water at the Saxsewell No. 8 Mine in Hominy Falls, WV. Fifteen men were rescued **5 days** later, and six others were rescued **10 days** after the inundation occurred.
- Aug Amherst No. 1 Mine Roof Fall, Lundale, West Virginia
Buried up to his waist in debris, Ervin Roark was rescued following a roof fall accident in the Amherst Coal Company's No. 1 mine at Lundale, West Virginia. Three other miners, Charlie Lowe, Enoc Tudor, and Emmett Copley, were recovered dead after 8 hours.

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Aug Galena Mine Cave-in, Wallace, Idaho

Dean Cody, 33, was in satisfactory condition Saturday at East Shoshone Hospital, after being rescued about **three hours** after the cave-in. Rescuers continued their search for another miner, Fred Stepro, 53, trapped in the same incident. Stepro was believed to be buried at the end of an 80-foot stope leading horizontally from the mine's central shaft. Mine officials held little hope that Stepro would be found alive. Cody told rescuers he was about 80 feet from Stepro, who apparently was working farther up the stope. Cody said he was struck in the back by a support beam and bent double under the fallen material but had enough of an air pocket around him to be able to breathe and remain conscious. Source document.

Sep Somerset Mine Roof Fall, Somerset, Colorado

John W. Southerland was rescued following a roof fall in the United States Steel Corporation's Somerset Mine. Southerland said he was trapped among the rocks for about **45 minutes** before two fellow workers, Chuck Woodburn, and Jim Pavisik, dug him out. Four others were killed in the accident.

Nov Consol No. 9 Mine Explosions, Farmington, West Virginia

Eight miners were rescued **five hours** after explosions ripped through the No. 9 mine in Mannington, West Virginia owned by the Consolidation Coal Company. 13 other miners managed to exit the mine shortly after the 1st of at least 3 explosions tore through the mine. This disaster, which killed 78 miners, triggered Congress to pass the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969.

Nov Abandoned Coal Mine Lost Persons, New Straitsville, Ohio

Terry Allen Collin, 11, flashed a bright smile on his grimy face after being lost for — **more than 24 hours** — in a mine and said, "I'm all right, Mom." Terry and Stephen Perrin, 19, had crawled through a cave-in leading into the mine. They wandered through the mile-long, meandering tunnel of the coal mine which had been abandoned about 50 years ago. The youths lighted candles, stepped through a "clubroom" filled with model airplanes, old snakeskins and then began exploring deeper than they had before. "I left my jacket at the entrance," Terry said. "So, anybody coming along would know we were inside. We had candles when we started, but they didn't last so long. So, we just sat down and waited. I kept dropping off to sleep and then waking up. Boy it wasn't easy down there. It's not so warm." Several dozen rescuers from a sheriff's office, local fire departments and the State Bureau of Mines took part in the search. Source document.

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— 1967 —

Jan Shannopin Mine Roof Fall, Bobtown, Pennsylvania

Two miners, Virgil Williamson, and Harry Silman became trapped after a roof fall in the Shannopin Mine of the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation. Williamson was found dead early on January 24 and Silman was rescued after **2 hours**. Taken to the hospital, he was listed in fair condition, suffering from shock and bruises.

Jan Abandoned Silver Mine Fall of Person, Barstow, California

Gordon Mahoney, 37, a silver mine explorer from Anaheim, sustained a broken shoulder and ankle as well as facial cuts when he fell 20 feet down a shaft near Barstow. Mahoney was exploring an old silver mine with W. V. Thornton of Barstow, who summoned San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies to carry Mahoney out in a wire basket. On the same day, some 68 miles away, John Hawkins, 15, suffered a broken pelvis and cuts and bruises in an 80-foot fall at Johannesburg. Source document.

Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Johannesburg, California

John Hawkins, 15, suffered a broken pelvis and cuts and bruises in an 80-foot fall at Johannesburg and was in fair condition at a Ridgecrest hospital. Hawkins slipped into a loosely covered shaft 40 miles east of Mojave while searching with three cousins for old whisky, medicine and other bottles which are sought as collector's items. He disappeared without anyone immediately realizing it. He was located after an intensive all-night search by 40 deputies and members of the Kern County sheriff's search and rescue team, a helicopter from China Lake Ordnance Test Center and a group of local miners. On the same day, some 68 miles away, Gordon Mahoney, 37, a silver mine explorer from Anaheim, sustained a broken shoulder and ankle as well as facial cuts when he fell 20 feet down a shaft near Barstow. Source document.

Mar Well Shaft Fall of Person, Votaw, Texas

2-year-old Teresa Fregia was pulled from a well where she had been trapped **nine hours**, inches above the water. A middle-aged rescuer had himself lowered into a shaft beside the well and smashed a hole in its tile walls with a hammer. "I pulled on her and I heard her bones crack, and I knew I was hurting her, but I had to get her out," said R.S. Bill Jr., 46, who heads a Houston rescue group. Bill found the girl knotted almost in a ball where she had been lodged since 6:30 p.m. EST Friday, breathing piped-in oxygen. She survived the entire ordeal with only minor scratches. Smashing a hole in the side of the well at the 22-foot level, Bill pulled her through and was brought to the surface on a rope, holding her in his arms. Source document.

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- Apr Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Concord, California
A 17-year-old Concord high school boy, out hiking with friends, fell into an abandoned coal mine shaft and had to be hauled to safety after an **undisclosed period** by Concord firemen. The youth, Charles Frederickson, was able to strap himself into a stretcher firemen lowered and was pulled the 30 feet to the top. He was under treatment for back injuries at Concord Community Hospital. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Salt Lake City, Utah
Melanie Beck, 17, was rescued from the bottom of a 150-foot mine shaft where she had fallen not once but twice. She was lifted from the near-vertical shaft by deputy sheriffs using ropes and a basket stretcher. It took nearly **2½ hours** to bring her out. Melanie suffered a broken arm, head lacerations and a possible concussion in the fall. [Source document](#).
- Jun Morton Salt Company Mine Entrapment, Grand Saline, Texas
Sixteen miners emerged unharmed after 9 hours trapped 700 feet underground with a heavy drill suspended above them. A 6-foot-square, 10-foot-high drill was being lowered into a Morton Salt Company mine when it tilted and wedged itself across the elevator shaft. Then, during the efforts to right the drill, the cable attached to it snapped. As the miners took cover, the drill crunched through one supporting crossbar and then stopped, dangling 610 feet above the mine floor. For the next eight hours, the miners left their work area and clustered in protected areas within calling distance of the mine Superintendent Ray Rucker, near the elevator shaft. Above the trapped miners, three repairmen cut holes in the floor of the elevator and lowered it to just above the jammed drill, then labored to secure it to the elevator. The men below watched as the drill was lowered cautiously down the elevator. Rucker said the men stayed cheerful. "They knew the danger involved that the equipment might fall and tear out the elevator shaft, but after the mechanism was once tied back to the elevator, we all relaxed." [Source document](#).
- Jul Maple Creek Mine Roof Fall, New Eagle, Pennsylvania
James T. Nagy, 25, miner, saved John W. Burns, 40, miner, from suffocation, New Eagle, Pennsylvania, July 24, 1967. In a coal mine Burns, Nagy, another miner, and the foreman were at an intersection of passageways when a fall of coal and shale occurred. The foreman was fatally crushed, and Burns, attempting to escape, was trapped when he fell, and his feet became engulfed by the edge of the debris pile forming from the fall. Nagy, who with the other miner was clear of the fall, made his way around the pile and into another passageway. He then saw that Burns was pinned under the edge of the fallen material, the sliding debris creeping up

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his thighs. Nagy ran back to alongside Burns. There still was some fall occurring at the opposite side of the intersection, and material from it continued to slide down the side of the pile. Nagy removed debris from one leg of Burns. He then stepped to a position astride Burns and began removing debris from his other leg. A block of shale slid down the pile, struck Nagy on the shoulder, and came to rest across the leg of Burns. Nagy lifted the block from Burns and then uncovered most of his leg. More sliding was heard at the top of the pile, which was about 12 feet high at its peak. Stepping away from the pile, Nagy took hold of Burns under the armpits. He then was joined by the other miner, who had made his way around the debris. Nagy, aided by the other miner, pulled Burns free of the debris. James Nagy was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. [Source document](#). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Aug Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, China Lake, Nevada

A 14-year-old China Lake boy was reported in good condition after being rescued from the bottom of a 50 foot deep abandoned mine shaft. Gilbert Soto, the boy who was rescued, and Allen Comb, also of China Lake, were exploring while on a visit to the Wheeler Ranch, some 70 miles east of Bakersfield. Soto accidentally dropped his pellet gun into the shaft. He lowered himself into it but lost his grip and fell to the bottom. The Kern County sheriff's office summoned the China Lake mine search and rescue group which pulled young Soto out. [Source document](#).

Aug Cave Shaft Fall of Person, Powell, Tennessee

Rescue workers hoisted a mud cake, semi-conscious young cave explorer to safety **11 hours** after the youth fell to the bottom of a 70-foot shaft. His right leg broken, and his face battered by the fall, 17-year-old John Cheka was rushed to a hospital after being pulled from the cave aboard a wire basket that had been lowered to him by rope. Two companions, Vernon Bruner, 20, and John Connell, 20, helped rescue workers save Cheka. The youths entered Carpenters cave, which slices a quarter of a mile deep into copper ridge in the foothills of the great Smoky Mountains. John was repelling down the side of the shaft when his rope broke, said Bruner, a junior at the University of Tennessee. [Source document](#).

Dec Abandoned Clay Mine Rescue, Wellsville, Ohio

After becoming lost in the abandoned clay mine for **30 hours**, Mike Sanfrey, age 19, and Harry Reibold, age 18 were located and rescued by Columbiana County Sheriff's deputies. The youths were found more than a mile from the mouth of the mine. [Source document](#).

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- Dec Carley V. Porter Tunnel Cave-in, Gorman, California
Rescue workers broke through tons of rubble and rescued 17 sandhogs entrapped in the collapse of a construction tunnel deep beneath the snowy Tehachapi Mountains. The 17 trapped men, uninjured and seemingly untroubled by their ordeal, were caught by a rock and mudslide — **17 hours** — earlier in the Carley V. Porter tunnel as they prepared to end their shift. They had been isolated 125 feet underground inside a milelong, 20-foot-wide horizontal shaft but had been in no immediate danger. They had electricity, and food and fresh air were supplied through an eight-inch pipe. [Source document.](#)

— 1966 —

- Jul Glen Nan Mine Fire, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania
Fire in an air shaft trapped 150 miners for more than **an hour** in a Glen Nan Coal Company mine. All were rescued. Stanley Ftorkowski, Nanticoke fire chief, said at least 10 miners were taken unconscious to Nanticoke State hospital suffering from smoke inhalation. A spokesman at the mine said 160 men were working in the mine when the fire broke out. Ambulances from all nearby hospitals were dispatched to the scene. [Source document.](#)
- Jul [Siltix Mine Explosion](#), Mount Hope, West Virginia
Eleven men in the 6 Left section heard the explosion, but they were unaware of what happened, and they erected a barricade in the return entries about 250 feet from the entrance to the 6 left section when they encountered smoke and fumes in the return entries. The men remained behind the barricade until they were rescued about **2 hours** later. After leaving the barricade, seven of these men assisted in recovery operations in the 2 left mains section; two of these seven employees and three additional men were overcome by smoke and fumes and were removed from the mine.
- Jul Unnamed Uranium Mine Cave-in, Ambrosia Lake, New Mexico
Three dirty but happy Indian miners, trapped all night 100 feet down in a New Mexico uranium mine, scrambled out unhurt Wednesday after a perilous rescue. The trio had spent — **16 hours** — in a cubicle four by eight feet in size, with eight feet of solid limestone separating them from a main tunnel of the small rimrock mine. There were air holes into the chamber and rescuers were able to pass food into them through a passage drilled through the limestone. The men were in good condition. When they got out, they embraced their families, talked briefly to newsmen, shook the hands of their rescuers, and then got in their cars and went home. [Source document.](#)

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Aug Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Springfield, Missouri

A Springfield youth fell and injured himself in an abandoned mine shaft, but rescuers brought him out, mud covered, within **two hours**. Eighteen-year-old Charles Stoner was taken by ambulance to a hospital suffering from a fracture in his leg or back. A rope broke while he was lowering himself in an old lead mine. He dropped about 50 feet. His companion, 19-year-old Paul Montgomery, crawled back out of the shaft and flagged down a sheriff's office patrolman for help. Montgomery, a student at Southwestern Missouri State College, told officers he and Stoner entered the shaft about 8 am to explore. They descended the original shaft about 40 feet, then crawled 300 feet to where they found a rope. Stoner began to lower himself 50 feet into another area, but the rope broke. Rescuers scrambled into the hole in the eastern part of Springfield. They strapped Stoner to a cot. Covered with mud and moaning from pain, the youth was brought out and carried to the ambulance. [Source document](#).

Oct Glen Falls Mine Cave-in, Harrison County, West Virginia

A coal miner, trapped by tons of slate and coal for — **30 hours** —, told newsmen from his hospital bed Wednesday that he simply "beat the obituaries." Edward Longwell, 52, a big man with calloused hands, was not injured in a huge roof fall at the Glen Falls Mine of the McCandlish Coal Company just north of Clarksburg. The first collapse and another which followed 10 minutes later sealed him a mile inside at about 1 p.m. Monday. Rescuers reached him at 6 p.m. Tuesday. "I hope nobody else ever has to go through that," said Longwell, a resident of Rosemont. "I want to thank everyone who helped me." In all his 36 years of coal mining Longwell said he had had no real scrapes with death. His experience with mining apparently helped him not to panic and he said he waited calmly for rescuers. Longwell, a mining machine operator, was "pulling pillars" when he was trapped. Usually, when the last pillar is pulled, there's a "crackling noise" when the roof falls. But he said, "It made no noise, it just came down." The miner said he ducked under the machine just in time as the slate and earth crashed down around him. He said he had about six inches of clearance around his legs and hips and a little more at his head. To breathe, he said, he put his face close to a crevasse on the floor through which air was circulating. Longwell was expected to be released from the hospital after a short time. John M. Ashcraft, 47, state mine inspector; Baxter W. Ellison, 47, mine general superintendent; and Gayle Alvin Davis, 27, miner, were each awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal for their bravery in the rescue of Mr. Longwell. [Source document](#). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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— 1965 —

Jan Lost Miner at Dewar, Oklahoma Mine

And then there was this chain of events that produced one of the more unusual rescues seen here. Would-be rescuer Johnny Miller became lost for **9½ hours** in a Dewar, Oklahoma abandoned mine while searching for Jackie Madewell, age 23. Madewell was a Tulsa County prisoner being held on a bad check charge. He apparently convinced a Tulsa police detective to allow him to enter the abandoned mine in search of stolen loot taken in nearby burglaries. When Madewell failed to return to the surface, Johnny Miller, a retired miner, went into the mine to locate Madewell, but he got lost instead. The story ended well when additional rescuers located Miller and Madewell came out of the mine on his own with his light turned off. There was no news of discovering the stolen loot. [Source document.](#)

Apr Shamrock Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Hinkley, California

John Poulson, veteran miner who lay nearly **three hours** in the bottom of a 250-foot mine shaft in the Superior Valley north of Hinkley, was in the San Bernardino County Hospital, "not in critical condition" but suffering from a fracture of the lumbar spine. Barstow firemen, sheriff's deputies and members of the Barstow Rescue Squad were over two hours getting Poulson out of the old shaft. The mine shaft is owned by Walter Hutchins, and Elmer Kelsoe. Hutchins said the mine was known as the Shamrock and he and his partner had been planning to reopen it. [Source document.](#)

May Wasatch Mountains Cave Rescue, Salt Lake City, Utah

A University of California graduate student was rescued in critical condition after **36 hours** in a 1,170-foot-deep cave high in Utah's Wasatch Mountains. James Dowling, 24 dangled on a rope in the freezing cave for more than two hours. Part of his weight rested against a collapsible ladder. Mountain climbers and spelunkers inched into the cave, wrapped him in a down-filled sleeping bag and tugged him out foot by foot. He was taken to St. Marks Hospital, where attendants said his body temperature was more than 20 degrees below normal. He was semiconscious and in shock. [Source document.](#)

Jun Abandoned Mine Rescue, Carterville, Missouri

A Webb City youth, Henry Dunaway, 15, spent an unhappy **hour** on a ledge about 55 feet down an old mine shaft Saturday before he was rescued by the Carterville Volunteer Fire Department. Dunaway lowered himself to the ledge on a small rope to collect pigeons nesting there. Fifteen feet below the ledge the water begins. No one knows how deep it is. He got between 50 and 60 birds — the sack

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weighed about 50 pounds — and tried to go back up the rope — but he was too small, and he cut his hand. City Marshall Everett Tannehill said a friend of Dunaway's, who happened to be in the area, heard him and ran to get a member of the Volunteer Fire Department. [Source document.](#)

Jun Abandoned Brenizer Mine Fall of Person, Brenizer, Pennsylvania

Sixteen-year-old John Wayne Rager narrowly escaped serious injury or death as his curiosity got the best of him, trapping him in a 35-foot-deep abandoned ventilation shaft at Brenizer mine until Blairsville firemen rescued him. Rager entered the air shaft through an opening where a heavy steel door had been pried loose. Once inside the room at the top of the concrete shaft. Rager tied a rope to a handrail and started to descend into the opening. As he reached a point about halfway down the shaft, he was unable to hold to the rope and started to slide as his hands were burned by friction. He dropped the remainder of the way, falling seat first as he described it, into rotten lumber at the base of the shaft. The rescuers work was made difficult by cramped quarters in the room, but a ladder finally was placed in the opening. Leonard Kelly descended the ladder and tied a rope to the youth, now huddled in a blanket for warmth. The two ascended the ladder and Rager was taken to Dr. Samuel Cohen in Blairsville for treatment. He reportedly suffered some shock and was treated for this and returned home. [Source document.](#)

Aug Bethlehem Mine No. 32 Roof Fall, Revloc, Pennsylvania

William Ferguson, 64, was rescued unharmed **12 hours** after he was trapped in a roof fall in the No. 32 mine of Bethlehem Mines Corporation at Revloc. Ferguson was operating the continuous miner. Two other miners working nearby were uninjured. [Source document.](#)

Aug Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Chillicothe, Ohio

Ernest L. Bradley, 36, heavy equipment operator, sustained fatal injuries helping to rescue Jack W. Berryman, 45, heavy equipment operator, from a cave-in, Chillicothe, Ohio, August 6, 1965. Bradley immediately entered the ditch and, kneeling in front of Berryman, began digging the earth away with his hands. As Bradley continued digging, another man entered the ditch. A man outside the ditch shouted a warning. A section of earth weighing about six tons caved in from the side nearest Bradley. The other man jumped back, and only one of his legs was trapped. Bradley managed to place his arms about his head before the falling earth knocked him face down and covered him completely. Workmen extricated Bradley and Berryman, both of whom had suffered fractures. Berryman recovered, but Bradley, who also had suffered internal injuries, died. Mr. Bradley

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was given the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery (posthumously). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Oct Wildcat Cave Entrapment, Hinckley, Ohio

A fifteen-year-old boy was rescued after being trapped for **24 hours**. He was wedged in a crevice 10 inches wide and three feet high and was found tilted downward at a 45° angle. Consultation and assistance were provided by employees of the Ohio Division of Mines.

Oct Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Porterville, California

James Roberson was recovering from an ordeal during which he lay unconscious at the bottom of a 150-foot mine shaft for an **undisclosed period**. Roberson and two 17-year-old friends, David Seaton, and David Jurkovich were exploring a deserted mine east of Porterville in the Sierra foothills one at a time. Using a 200-foot rope Robertson got down all right but, on the way, up became entangled in the rope. He fell 50 feet. Seaton descended to help but dislodged a large stone which hit Roberson in the head knocking him unconscious. Officers summoned by Jurkovich used a rope sling to pull Roberson 30 feet to a side tunnel and carry him out. He suffered rope burns on his hands and a deep head cut. Source document.

Oct Mars No. 2 Mine Fire, Wilsonburg, West Virginia

Workers inched their way deep inside the fire-ravaged Mars No. 2 mine tunnels for nearly **20 hours** before coming upon Charles Lantz, 26, of Buckhannon. He was brought out alive but died of his injuries enroute to a hospital.

Dec Noncoal Mining Facility Entrapment, Morgantown, Pennsylvania

A pile of rocks buried Stanton E. Friend, 35, of Meyerstown in a mine chute but he was rescued without serious injury. Source document.

— 1964 —

Jan Empire Copper Mine Cave-in, MacKay, Utah

Stanley Johnson was rescued after his 27-hour entrapment following a cave-in at a MacKay, Utah lead and copper mine owned by Empire Copper Mines. Johnson suffered only a bad cold following his ordeal. He was rescued by workmen who found an unused and uncharted back entrance to the mine. The rescue operations had nearly been halted by frozen ground and cold temperatures just before the old tunnel was found. The rear entrance led workers to within six feet of the cubicle where Johnson was trapped. There were no others killed or injured in the accident.

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- Feb Barnes and Tucker Mine Roof Fall, Spangler, Pennsylvania
Coal miners Joseph Chila and William Prandi were recuperating in Miners' Hospital from shock sustained while trapped 540 feet underground for **nine hours**. The two men were working at the Barnes and Tucker Coal Company mine when the roof gave way, causing a rockfall along a 125-foot haulage area. Four other miners in the area escaped unhurt. A crack rescue team labored for nine hours, clearing out the rubble and reshoring the roof. The rescuers first reached Chila. An hour later they found Prandi. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Mine Rescue, Trumbull, Connecticut
Two Boy Scouts were trapped in the abandoned main mine shaft at Old Mine Park for **2½ hours** while a third scout was corralled by a four-foot protective fence, unable to summon help for the trio. Police said Andrew Kolessar, 14, and William Lapinski, 12, had entered the shaft while Mark Baker, 13, had crawled with them into the fenced off area where the mine is located, but did not venture into the shaft. The boys were rescued, uninjured by members of the Long Hill Fire department who lowered a ladder into a shaft. The three boys were part of a group of scouts working on a conservation project in Old Mine Park and the three wandered away and crawled under the fence surrounding the mine area. The two who were trapped the shaft had dropped from a shelf in the excavation and could not find a toehold to climb out. The plight of the trio was discovered by an unidentified member of the troop who had been detailed to find them. They were returned to the police station and their parents notified to pick them up. [Source document](#).
- Sep Nuclear Test Site Entrapment, Mercury, Nevada
The last of four men trapped in an 1,800-foot-deep test hole was hoisted to the surface. All were in good condition. They had been lowered fresh food and other supplies throughout their **three and one-half-day** ordeal at the Nevada nuclear test site. Last to come up was George R. Cooper, of Tucson, Arizona. The others rescued earlier were Floyd Shaw, Leland Roeder, and Art Luhnnow. They were stranded when a thick cable, being installed to link instruments in the underground nuclear blast chamber fell into a spaghetti-like tangle – jamming the shaft. Workmen, toiling around the clock finally cleared the cable, restored the elevator to operating condition, and began bringing up the quartet. [Source document](#).
- Oct Grays Creek No. 11 Mine Fire, Whitwell, Tennessee
Six miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** after being trapped by a fire burning in the Grays Creek No. 11 mine operated by the Grundy Mining Company.

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According to the news report, the miners were brought out "safe and sound."

Source document.

- Nov Abandoned Quicksilver Mine Fall of Person, San Jose, California
To Eric Proter, 12, of San Jose, the abandoned quicksilver mine suggested adventure and the unknown. But it almost became his grave Friday. The boy crawled about 150 feet into the lateral shaft when he fell suddenly into a 10-foot-deep hole. His cries were heard by a companion who summoned help. Highway Patrolman Americo Gonsalves crawled into the hole and rescued the boy. Source document.
- Dec Franklin Colliery Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
William Paul Holena helped to rescue Peter A. Byczkowski from a cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, December 21, 1964. When a cave-in occurred in a coal mine, Byczkowski, 54, was pinned face down under eight feet of coal and debris. After another cave-in, the mine was cleared of all rescue workers, who by then had dug a tunnel six feet into the debris to find that Byczkowski was alive. Although further slides were anticipated, Holena, 36, coal miner, and Clair S. Sigworth, a mine inspector made their way to the debris pile where Byczkowski lay partially in the tunnel, trapped by his legs. The inspector crawled into the tunnel, which was so small that he had to lie on top of Byczkowski. Working as rapidly as possible, the inspector removed coal from atop Byczkowski's legs and passed it back to Holena. Additional coal fell as the inspector worked, but he soon uncovered Byczkowski's legs. While the inspector rested outside the tunnel, Holena made repeated trips to obtain rescue tools. A mine foreman joined them. He and the inspector took turns working to free Byczkowski's feet; when either was in the tunnel, all his body except his feet was beneath the debris. The foreman cut Byczkowski's boots and freed one foot, the other remaining pinned by a heavy timber against the metal conveyor on the floor of the mine. The inspector positioned a jack to move the timber, but it broke on use, and the foreman likewise broke a second jack. They and Holena then worked to bend the conveyor, after which the inspector pulled Byczkowski's foot free, and he was removed from the debris then carried to safety. He recovered. The rescue had taken **2½ hours**. Several hours later another cave-in occurred in the area, and it required six days to uncover the body of a man who had been buried with Byczkowski. Messrs. Di Andriole, Sigworth, and Holena were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Dec Butte Mine Avalanche, Fairfield, Idaho
10 persons were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the Butte mine, off Willow Creek Road northeast of Fairfield, by Sawtooth rangers Smithy and

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Darrell Smith. A series of snow slides and avalanches buried four pickups, a 1½ ton truck, other mine equipment, and part of an ore trestle was destroyed. The president of the Russco Silver Company, which operates the mine, called the rangers to investigate the conditions at the mine. Two small slides had already occurred and partly destroyed the ore tie and buried the truck. The rangers came out and reported that the conditions were extremely hazardous and suggested getting people out of the mine. The rangers went back in a four-wheel drive vehicle, following Osborn on the cat. A series of slides separated the cat and truck with snow about 17 feet deep before they reached the mine. They rescued the personnel at the mine a short time before eight slides buried the pickups under the snow and brought them out in a Forest Service vehicle. [Source document](#).

— 1963 —

Jan Abandoned Mine Animal Rescue, Sonora, California

A 12-year-old gray mare, trapped in an abandoned mine for — **two weeks** — was rescued, shaken but apparently unharmed. Lottie Pedro said the mare, Rena, vanished January 15. Ranch hands searched every day. She was found Tuesday, the 29th, in the 20-foot mine shaft. Wednesday, in a drenching rainstorm, the mare was given a tranquilizer shot and hauled out with block and tackle. The thin old horse lay down for a few minutes, then got up and trotted to the barn. [Source document](#).

Feb Abandoned Coal Mine Rescue, New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Harry Noerr of Middle Run was rescued by New Bethlehem firemen after being trapped for **four hours** in a cave-in at an abandoned strip mine. Mr. Noerr, 39, had entered a hole in the highwall at the mine to dig out coal. He had traveled approximately 20 feet when the cave-in occurred. When the walls caved in, Mr. Noerr fell another 15 feet and was trapped in the hole. Accompanying Mr. Noerr were two unidentified youths, who attempted to rescue him with a rope. When the rope broke, the youths went to the home of a neighbor, who contacted the New Bethlehem Fire Department. Thirty-four men and two trucks responded to the call. Two firemen were lowered into the cave with a light and a rope. They fastened a rope around Mr. Noerr and firemen pulled him up. After the rescue, Mr. Noerr was able to walk around. Firemen said he seemed to be in a state of shock but refused medical treatment. [Source document](#).

Apr Old Sparks Well Entrapment, Rupert, Idaho

Two amateur gold prospectors were rescued from a 600-foot deep dry well **12 hours** after they became trapped. Floyd Gambrell and Darnell Hamilton were imprisoned when a bucket being lowered to lift them to the surface broke loose,

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dropped halfway down the shaft and became wedged in the narrow hole. With their communications severed and their exit blocked, their companions on the surface summoned help to free the men. This shaft, known as the "Old Sparks Well" claimed the life of another prospector 25 years earlier when a bucket of tools fell on him in a similar incident. [Source document.](#)

Apr Box Mine Cave-in, Hamilton, Alabama

Rescuers removed two brothers from a coal mine where they had been trapped for **three days** deep in a cave-in. Bobby Gene Johnson, 23, and Lewis Ray Johnson, 20, were unharmed by their ordeal. They were taken to a Winfield hospital for rest and observation. Officials said rescuers bypassed a rock and tunneled through coal to reach the trapped men. A rockslide pinned the brothers more than 2,000 feet in the Box mine. Officials said the men were removing rock deep inside the mine when the cave-in trapped them. [Source document.](#)

Jun Railroad Tunnel Roof Fall, Parkersburg, West Virginia

Workers picked their way through rock falls and rescued a construction worker, Arthur Boggs, who was pinned under tons of rock that crashed from the roof of a Baltimore & Ohio railroad tunnel. The rescued worker was one of the nine workmen in the tunnel when the fall occurred. Harry Nichols of Bartlett, Ohio, was missing and presumed dead. [Source document.](#)

Jul Castle Shannon Coal No. 2 Shaft, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

On July 12, 1963, in a miracle survival that confounded experts, three teenage boys were found alive after spending **2 days** in an abandoned, gas-ridden mine. The youngsters were found nearly a half-mile from the mouth of No. 2 shaft of Castle Shannon Coal Company which had not been used for more than 25 years. Their rescuers were U. S. Bureau of Mines Inspectors Everett Turner, James Hutchens, and Jennings Breedon. The boys, Danny O'Kain, Billy Burke and Bobby Abbott were taken to St. Clair Hospital where they were treated for exposure and dehydration.

Aug Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Pittsburg, California

Ronald Buffo, 15, was pulled safely out of a 65-foot mine shaft Wednesday after spending over an hour on his back looking up at "that little hole in the sky." He suffered minor injuries. Two friends lowered him into the shaft with a rope. It broke when he was halfway down, dropping him to soft ground at the shaft bottom. Two Pacific Gas and Electric Co. linemen climbed down and rescued him **several hours** later. "It was pretty gruesome," Buffo confided while recovering at his Pittsburg home. "I was knocked out, I guess, and then I woke up, I was lying on

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my back, and I looked up and all I could see was that little hole in the sky." Source document.

Aug Oneida No. 2 Slope Cave-in, Oneida, Pennsylvania

David Fellin and Henry Throne were trapped for **14 days** in the Shepton Mine in the Pennsylvania anthracite coal region following a cave-in. In the early hours of Tuesday, Aug. 27, 1963, first Throne, then Fellin were pulled from a depth of 330 feet to the surface wearing parachute harnesses and football helmets. A third miner in the mine at the time, Lou Bova, was never recovered.

Aug Cane Creek Mine Explosion, Grand County, Utah

Seven men erected a barricade in 3U drift. Two of these men left the barricade and traveled to the shaft station where they were met by a rescue crew and brought to the surface **19 hours** after the explosion. The other five men remained behind the barricade and were rescued **50 hours** after the explosion.

Aug Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Webb City, Missouri

Mrs. Margaret Hayes, 29, fell 90 feet down an abandoned mine shaft and landed in deep water, then clung to the timbered sides of the shaft **more than an hour** until rescued. Suffering only from bruises, hospital attendants said she was in good condition. Source document.

Sep Abandoned Spring Hill Mine Entrapment, Grizzly Gulch, Montana

Two Helena teenagers were rescued when they became trapped in an abandoned 100-foot-deep glory hole left from a surface mining operation in a gulch above Helena. They were stranded about **2½ hours**. Dean White, 16, and Bob Safford, 14, had climbed to the bottom of the pit and got about half-way up and could climb no further. Safford said another youth, Bob Olson, had gone down into the hole with them but was still at the bottom and was able to climb out a different way to get help. Two other youths arrived before the rescue party and pulled White out with a rope. The rescuers described the so-called glory hole, at least 50 feet in diameter, as studded with hanging rocks and ledges all the way down. It was located at the old Spring Hill Mine, about six miles south of Helena in Grizzly Gulch. Safford was the son of State Veterinarian Dr. John Safford. The youth said he and his companions had been out exploring. Source document.

Dec Abandoned Peerless Mine Fall of Person, Silver City, New Mexico

A young Austin, Texas girl plunged down an abandoned mine shaft in southwestern New Mexico and suffered serious injuries. Rescuers had to lower a litter basket on a fire hose to pull Lucy Marian Watson, 10, from the 75-foot-deep shaft. The girl was taken to the Silver City Hospital with a broken leg, a broken

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arm, and internal injuries, and in deep shock. State Patrolman Gene Tow said the Watson family was driving through the area on a Christmas vacation trip. They became attracted by the tailings dump and remains of the old Peerless mine shaft beside the road at Central in the Grant County copper mining district. Lucy, described as a rockhound, went to search the ruins for mineral specimens and plunged down the open shaft. Source document.

— 1962 —

- Jun Bull Gulch Lead and Zinc Mine Cave-in, Jefferson City, Montana
An 8-year-old boy was responsible for saving two miners caught in a cave-in at the Bull Gulch lead and zinc mine near Jefferson City, Montana. Robert Steinbacher and Henry Madison, who were both in considerable pain, were safely removed from the mine by rescuers after their brief entrapment.
- Jul Abandoned Quicksilver Mine Rescue, San Jose, California
After hours of walking around lost in the abandoned quicksilver mine, five children were located by rescuers including Sheriff's deputies and a 17-year-old neighbor. The lost teens included Eileen Patrino, 17; Robin Patrino, 9; Wayne Patrino, 4; Jim Butters, 17; and Mike Atchison, 17. The children became lost when their light failed. Source document.
- Jul Independent Anthracite Mine Asphyxiations, Lavelle, Pennsylvania
Richard Cappell, 20, of Lavelle, who miraculously escaped death after being trapped in an accumulation of black damp in an independent mine operation, near Lavelle, was reported in "good" condition at Ashland Hospital. Three other co-workers were killed by the gas. They are William Metzinger and Frank Schaffer, 30, and Clayton Maurer, 62. Donald Metzinger, 32, owner of the mining operation, was stricken during the rescue operations and rushed to the Ashland State Hospital and his condition was also described as "good" by hospital authorities. The victims were trapped in the mine shortly after 8:30 a.m. and the last of the four was removed about 12:30 p.m. They were rushed to the Ashland Hospital where the three victims were pronounced dead. Source document.
- Aug Abandoned Gold Mine Fall of Person, Hill City, South Dakota
Airman Gerald Becker spent — **3½ days** — trapped in an abandoned gold mine pit near here. Becker, 18, of Mapleton, Minn., had the night off from his duties as a mechanic at nearby Ellsworth Air Force Base and decided to go swimming in Sheridan Lake. "But it was too cold, and I started exploring instead," said Becker at the base hospital, where he was under observation. "I came across this big hole. Suddenly the edge gave way and I fell 50 feet to the bottom." After

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recovering from the initial shock, Becker looked for a hold on the shale and slate walls to enable him to climb out but found none. Then he started shouting for help. Early Monday the vacationing Pete Ptacek family from Phoenix, Ariz., stopped in the area to let their children exercise. Becker, with his very hoarse throat, heard them and called out. Ptacek hurried to a cabin resort near the lake for help. Two forestry men, a rancher and Ptacek returned to the pit with a rope, and with it tied around his waist Becker made his way up the sheer wall. [Source document.](#)

Sep Williamson Coal Mine Fall of Person, Valley View, Pennsylvania
William Klinger, 36, was listed in guarded condition in Geisinger Medical Center where he was admitted with a fractured skull, leg, ribs, and possible internal injuries. Klinger suffered the injuries in a 40-foot fall down a mine shaft at the Williamson Coal Company in Valley View, Pennsylvania. [Source document.](#)

Nov [Abandoned Idaho Bride Gold Mine](#), Idaho Springs, Colorado
After falling 200 feet down the abandoned Idaho Bride gold mine near Idaho Springs, Colorado and spending **14 hours** in the murky depths, Airman Chester West was rescued. It took rescuers, led by District Mine Inspector, Norman Blake, three hours to lead West out of the winding tunnels.

— 1961 —

Jan [Abandoned Sutro Tunnel Silver Mine](#), Virginia City, Nevada
Rescuers saved 15-year-old, Larry Dacek, after falling down an airshaft of the abandoned Sutro Tunnel silver mine near Virginia City, Nevada. He was trapped for **11 hours** there. Mining experts said Dacek escaped certain death by coming to rest on a rock layer supported by a few rotten timbers. Below him was a straight 1,400-foot fall.

Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Yermo, California
The dry lake area just south of Mule Canyon was the scene of a dramatic rescue. Little eight-year-old Gene Armand Stevens was rescued after falling 50 feet into an abandoned uncovered mine shaft. Units from the Barstow Sheriff's Substation, Fire Department, along with the Civil Defense rescue Unit were dispatched to the scene. Eight-year-old Gene Stevens was found lying at the bottom of a 50-foot mine shaft still conscious and able to move despite what proved to be a broken leg. John Patton of the Barstow Fire Department Rescue Squad was lowered into the shaft, where he managed to tie the boy into a wire basket type stretcher which was raised to the surface by fellow workers. An ambulance immediately rushed the boy to the Barstow Community Hospital where he was given

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emergency treatment. The report from the hospital indicated that the boy's condition was generally good. He suffered a fracture of the left leg as well as cuts and bruises about his face and body. [Source document](#).

- Jun Raven Gold Mine Asphyxiations, Thompson Falls, Montana
Jack Arms and Wally Monk were overcome by gas, then rescued from the bottom of a shaft of the Raven gold mine about eight miles northeast of Thompson Falls. A blast had been set off the night before. The miners entered the mine the next day and fell to the gases. A third partner, Ralph Provence, discovered that the two had been overcome by gas. He entered the shaft and attempted to assist them, but he was nearly overcome himself. He shouted for help and two Montana Bureau of Mines employees working nearby and two other men came to their assistance. When Provence first descended, he succeeded in opening an air compressor valve. This was credited with saving their lives. [Source document](#).
- Jun Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Petros, Tennessee
A slate fall trapped four miners in an old coal mine near Petros, Tennessee. One was freed **five hours** later after rescuers severed his arm. A call for more rescuers was put out to dig through more than 30 feet of debris in a desperate effort to reach the remaining three trapped men. Robert Woods **was taken from the mine after a doctor, using a hacksaw blade, cut his arm above the elbow**. Woods' arm had been caught between rocks and a coal car. The fall occurred while the miners were taking out coal pillars and shoring up the mine which was being reconditioned after being closed. Eight miners were in the mine when the accident occurred. Three walked out safely. Later reports doubted the survival of the three other miners trapped. [Source document](#).
- Aug Worley Mine Asphyxiations, Whitley County, Kentucky
A coal mine superintendent who was rescued after an undisclosed period from a Kentucky mine in which two other officials were found dead later died in a Louisville, Kentucky hospital where he was taken for treatment. Tracy Eugene Lafferty, 39 died the day after his rescue at the hospital in Oneida. Lafferty had been given new blood and an artificial kidney; however, he could not survive the effects of the poisonous gases accumulated in the mine. Two others who died in the old Worley Mine of Stearns Coal and Lumber Company in neighboring Whitley County, Kentucky were Maurice Blevins, 63 and Otis Tucker, 53. The three had gone in the old mine to see about taking coal from pillars left standing and were overcome by carbon monoxide. [Source document](#).
- Sep Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Aristes, Pennsylvania
Robert Hampton, Jr., 35, was rescued by fellow workers after being buried more than **3 hours** under a fall of rock and coal in an independent mine on Aristes

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Mountain. Hampton was trapped under the fall while dressing down the top. Within several minutes of the fall, they uncovered Hampton's face enabling him to breathe. Hampton was first taken to his home and then a brother, Wilham, drove him to Ashland Hospital. Hospital attaches said he sustained multiple contusions and abrasions of the body. His condition was described as good. [Source document.](#)

Dec Abandoned Mine Animal Rescue, Gilbert, West Virginia
Brownie, a 3-year-old rabbit hound was rescued after a **50-day entrapment** in a caved-in mine shaft. A bulldozer late Monday uncovered a hole leading into the shaft into which the dog disappeared almost two months earlier. For 18 days after Brownie disappeared while on a hunting trip with his owner, he was thought dead. But whatever the dog chased into that narrow slit, probably a rabbit, seemed to have provided him with enough food to keep him going for a while. Brownie's whimpering and barking was heard by one of his owner's numerous cousins. The dog's owner had visited the break every day since the dog had been located, dropping food down the slit to his pet. Water was plentiful inside the shaft. [Source document.](#)

Dec Banner Copper Mine Asphyxiations, Lordsburg, New Mexico
One miner was killed, and seven other men gassed as the result of a dynamite blast at the Banner copper mine. Reports of other miners trapped were dispelled when rescue workers finally were allowed to enter the gas-filled tunnel 1,300 feet below ground. Rescue workers reported that all victims were found — **7½ hours** — later. Sources said the miners apparently set off a blast before noon, ate lunch while waiting for the tunnel to clear, but then were felled by the poisonous fumes as they re-entered. [Source document.](#)

— 1960 —

Jan [U. S. Steel Iron Mine Cave-in](#), Ely, Minnesota
Joseph Mismash was rescued after being trapped **15 hours** in a U. S. Steel Corporation iron mine near Ely, Minnesota. Mismash was trapped in a walled-in cubicle blocked by a 14-foot-thick block of ore.

Feb No. 13 Slope Cave-in, Moosic, Pennsylvania
Isaac Stark, a 35-year-old mine laborer was killed instantly, and a 38-year-old Scranton resident was injured seriously when a rock fall trapped three men for — **more than an hour** — in No. 13 Slope of the Lombardi Coal Company near Moosic. John Brunesheski, 38, was in fair condition at Taylor Hospital. He suffered a fractured knee and leg as well as extensive brush burns of the face. Eight sutures

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were required to close a laceration of the chin; 20 to close a cut over the right eye, and four to close a wound on the left ear. He was also suffering from shock.

Joseph Symuleski, 55, the third man trapped in the cave-in was unhurt and aided in the rescue operations for Mr. Brunesheski and the extrication of Mr. Stark's buried body. [Source document.](#)

Apr Hope Tunnel Asphyxiation, Basin, Montana

Basin experienced another exciting day with all the miners and businessmen gathered about the entrance to the Hope tunnel. Albert Boulware, who went into the mine Saturday with a rescue party and who was overcome by the gas, was not dead as believed. John Berkin and the two Jarve Brothers made the descent, found Boulware and brought him to the surface this morning. Previous attempts at a rescue of the badly gassed man had proven fruitless. John Berkin and John Webber were much affected by the gas. Boulware was down in the mine in the gas nearly **19 hours**, but doctors said his chances for recovery were good. [Source document.](#)

May Abandoned Iron Mine Fall of Person, Peekskill, New York

A state trooper trudged a thousand feet through an abandoned mine tunnel to reach an injured youth trapped in a 200-foot-deep shaft, then piggy backed the victim to safety. The youth, Gerald Kulich, 18, of nearby Peekskill, fell into the shaft while exploring the old iron mine with four other teenagers. Kulich already was half-buried in falling debris as his companions ran to a nearby home, where police were called. [Source document.](#)

Jun Unnamed Tourmaline Mine Cave-in, Unspecified City, California

A gem miner trapped for **10 hours** in a cave-in Friday was behind bars Saturday in the county jail. He was Calvin Trevor Mellish, 42, of nearby Escondido. He was pinned by his right arm 130 feet underground in a tourmaline mine 63 miles north of here when a 500-pound boulder rolled down on him. Mellish, serving a year's sentence for arson in the burning of his home, was freed last month on \$2,625 bail to enter the mine. He told the court at that time he wanted to recover a cache of gemstones and \$8,300 in cash. Rescue workers had to shore up a narrow mine shaft and jack up the boulder to free Mellish. He was treated and released at a hospital. The bail bondsman said he had surrendered Mellish to the county jail. "He was supposed to get that money," the bondsman said, "but now it's too dangerous in there, and a slide has covered his cache." [Source document.](#)

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— 1959 —

- Jan River Slope Mine Inundation, Port Griffith, Pennsylvania
One miner, Amadeo Pancotti, age 50, was awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism for leading 32 miners to safety. As the flood waters rose, Pancotti scaled a 50-foot sand-stone wall which rose generally at an angle of 75 degrees making his way to the surface. Once there, he summoned others, who raised Louis Randazza, John Elko, and Joseph Soltis from the shaft. A rescue team entered the mine through the shaft and found James LaFratte, Jerome Stuccio, and Pacifico Stella. Twenty-six other men later were located and removed. Twelve miners perished and their bodies were never recovered.
- Feb St. Joseph Lead Mine Hoist Accident, Viburnum, Missouri
Two men were killed and two critically hurt in a 100-foot fall to the bottom of a lead mine shaft. Killed were Junior Gilliam and Don Hall. Injured were Lloyd Francis and Loy Bennett. Bennett's right arm was severed. The mine is operated by the St. Joseph Lead Company. The men were being hauled up from a new 800-foot-deep shaft in a bucket when one of two ropes clamped together to hold the bucket slipped, spilling them out. Source document.
- Mar Unnamed Gold Mine Explosives Detonation, Death Valley, California
A gold miner lay helpless in a Death Valley tunnel hearing the fuses for 18 sticks of dynamite hiss a song of destruction. Frank Rasmussen, 35, could only wait. His right leg was shattered from a premature blast and gushing blood. As he waited for the remaining charges to blast him into eternity, he gasped a prayer and buried his head under his arms. Then he heard his alarmed partner Harry Boyer starting into the shaft from 18 feet above to see what was wrong. "Don't come in here!" Rasmussen shouted. "No use both of us dying!" Moments earlier he had lighted the 40-inch fuses to 10 two-stick charges spaced across the end of the tunnel wall. Ordinarily, he would have had two or three minutes to get out. Something went wrong this time — a faulty fuse. Wham! With each blast two sticks of dynamite went off. Rocks and dirt flew. The noise was deafening, the concussion terrific. Rasmussen counted the explosions. One, two, three — ten in all counting the first one which had slammed him right against the opposite wall 10 feet away. As the echoes died away Boyer charged into the shaft. All he could see of his comrade was a shoulder sticking out of the debris. Boyer grabbed it and pulled Rasmussen's head free. Boyer tied a rope tightly around Rasmussen's leg to stop the pouring blood. Then he packed the injured man up a ladder and drove him to the nearby village of Skidoo. Rasmussen told the story from his hospital bed while in traction with a leg broken in two places. He was waiting for X-rays to show how badly his back was injured. Source document.

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- Apr Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Ironton, Ohio, Logan, West Virginia
Bob Russell, 17, was lucky to be alive after his rescue from a mine shaft cave-in. Authorities said the boy and a companion, Jerry Thacker, 10, were exploring a deep mine shaft when a rock fall occurred, trapping the two. Thacker freed himself, but Russell was buried up to his neck. The younger boy ran for help and four men, two of them from a nearby coal company, rushed to the rescue. [Source document](#).
- May Ken Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Beaver Dam, Kentucky
The main thing when you're trapped underground is to "keep together, keep level-headed and wait." This is the way Jake Lewis, 39, put it after he and two other exhausted miners crawled to safety after **41 hours of imprisonment** in a western Kentucky coal shaft. "I'm thankful we got out, we felt real good," said Lewis. "We're just thankful to the Lord and to the men that done it." A machine that cuts and loads coal in the same operation dug rescuers a path to reach Lewis, Earl Bennett, 50; and Don McClernon, 53. A roof cave-in caught the three miners 90 feet underground and 500 feet from the shaft entrance at the Ken Coal Company mine. "We slept 30 or 40 minutes at a time, then we'd get cold. We'd have to move around to get warmed back up," said Lewis. The men had a watch to tell time, small lights, and plenty of fresh air. They drank water and milk piped through a tube used as a sprinkler system. A telephone cable kept them in touch with the outside. Earl Bennett survived a [1928 explosion at West Frankfort, Illinois](#), that killed 21 miners. [Source document](#).

— 1958 —

- Jan Abandoned Mine Shaft Rescue, Crafton Hills, California
Scared and dirty but unhurt, two Yucaipa youths were pulled to safety from an abandoned mine shaft in the Crafton hills area above Oak Glen Road by sheriff's deputies and volunteers. The boys, Larry Anderson, 12, and Lee Schumann, 13, waited at the bottom of the shaft for nearly **four hours** while their companion ran back to Yucaipa for help. The boys had climbed to the area Saturday, discovered the mine shafts, and decided to return to the site Sunday with a rope and go down into this mine. The Anderson boy made the descent safely on the spindly rope. But when the Schumann youth attempted to go down, the rope broke, and he tumbled to the bottom. Neither boy was hurt but they were unable to climb back out. The boys became stranded about 4:30 p.m. and the rescue party set out for the site about 5:45. When the party arrived at the mine, ropes were lowered and Anderson and Schumann were pulled to safety, dirty but otherwise unhurt at about 8:30 p.m. [Source document](#).

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- Feb Lundale Mine Roof Fall, Morgantown Post, West Virginia
Glenn Burchett was rescued after a **6-hour** roof fall entrapment in the Amherst Coal Company's Lundale Mine at Morgantown Post, West Virginia. Rescue workers using hydraulic jacks slowly and methodically lifted the fallen slate to a point where Burchett could be extricated. Sadly, Burchett later died from his injuries.
- May Boone County Coal Corporation Mine Inundation, Logan, West Virginia
24 miners, trapped for more than **15 hours**, were rescued from a flooded Boone County Coal Corporation mine in Logan, West Virginia. There were no deaths reported in this accident.
- May Unnamed Potash Mine Cave-in, Carlsbad, New Mexico
24 miners, trapped for more than **15 hours**, were rescued from a flooded Boone County Coal Corporation mine in Logan, West Virginia. There were no deaths reported in this accident. Source document.
- May Wharton No. 2 Mine Roof Fall, Barrett, West Virginia
Resulting from a roof fall in the Wharton No. 2 mine, one employee was rescued after being pinned against an air compressor for **5 hours**. Four miners were killed in the accident.
- Oct Bishop No. 34 Mine Explosion, Bishop, Virginia
An explosion occurred in this mine and resulted in the death of 22 miners. Thirty-seven others erected barricades and remained behind them until they were rescued.
- Oct Burton Mine Explosion, Craigsville, West Virginia
Four men who miraculously escaped death after being trapped underground were hospitalized. The first of four men rescued reached the surface on his own feet, leaning on the shoulders of his rescuers, some **four hours** after the blast. He was Artie Humphreys of Craigsville. Three others, two of them horribly burned, were brought out on stretchers.

— 1957 —

- Mar Abandoned Coal Mine, Harlan, Kentucky
50-year-old, Cantrell Owens, was rescued from an abandoned Kentucky coal mine near Harlan after spending more than **2 days** lost in mine. Rescuers had to give up the search once because of the foul air they encountered.

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- Apr Buttonwood Colliery Explosion and Fire, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Two miners, trapped while working 1,500 feet underground at the Buttonwood Colliery of the Glen Alden Corp., were rescued after a perilous **12-hour** wait. Walter Olshefski, 41, and Earl Hill, 33, were examined by a company physician and reported in good condition. The miners were working at the bottom of an anthracite vein when an explosion and fire broke out. A rescue party penetrated an auxiliary shaft to the 200-foot level and heard the trapped men about 800 feet further down in the mine. The rescuers then dropped bucket seats down, and the two miners were hauled to safety. [Source document](#).
- May Donegan Mine Cave-in, Richwood, West Virginia
William C. Richmond was rescued after being trapped for **74 hours** in the mine operated by the Donegan Coal & Coke Company about 18 miles from Richwood. This was Mr. Richmond's eighth shift as a coal miner. Richmond was without food, water, or light until rescuers found him. [Source document](#).
- May Lost Persons Cave Rescue, Easton, Pennsylvania
Three boys and a science writer were rescued from a cave after having been lost underground for **twenty-one hours**. Two state troopers and a resident of the area trailed a length of rope from the cave entrance to the four. Then they followed the rope back to the surface. The four spent a wet and shivering night in a forty-foot-square chamber 100 feet from the entrance and about twenty feet below the surface. They were in good physical condition after the rescue, although they were wearing light clothing and had had only candy bars to eat. When Mr. Pfeiffer failed to return home, Mrs. Pfeiffer notified the state police. Troopers searched several commercial and noncommercial caves. The lost foursome included John E. Pfeiffer, 42; his son, Tony, 12; Charles Ingham, 11; and Norman Ganter, 11. Mr. Pfeiffer said they had become lost in many twisting passages. They decided to sit down and await rescue. [Source document](#).
- Jun Abandoned Spring Hill Mine Rescue, Helena, Montana
Three teenage boys trapped in the abandoned Spring Hill mine shaft near Helena, Montana for more than **4 hours** were rescued. The trio, Louis and George Taylor and John McIntosh, all about 15 years of age, suffered only superficial cuts and bruises on their hands and arms from the sharp rocks while being pulled out of the shaft. [Source document](#).
- Jun [Betsy No. 3 Mine Cave-in](#), Fernwood, Ohio
Five miners were rescued from the Betsy No. 3 coal mine operated by the Powhatan Mining Company at Fernwood, Ohio. Released from their tomb after their entrapment of **14½ hours** were Hank Horvath, Martin Kovalski, Fred Sabol,

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Joseph Supinski, and Kenny Hamilton. The Betsy No. 3 mine is a small, "punch mining operation" that produces about 600 tons of coal per day.

Jul Abandoned Mine Fall of Persons, Pueblo, Colorado

Two teenage boys spent — **seven hours** — at the bottom of an abandoned mine shaft Friday after their Jeep plunged 60 feet into the opening. James McCarty, 14, and his cousin, Robert Roblek, 15, suffered severe cuts. The boys were dumping trash. The youngsters said they rounded a hill near the dump and spotted the hole. McCarty, who was driving, attempted to apply the brakes, but the Jeep skidded downhill into the shaft. David Riggs, a game warden, and William McCarty, James' father, lifted out both the boys and the wrecked Jeep with a winch. [Source document.](#)

Jul Robena No. 3 Mine Cave-in, Masontown, Pennsylvania

A cave-in killed one miner and trapped another for **six hours** at the Robena No. 3 mine of U. S. Steel Corp.'s Frick Division. Jerry Sova, 61, a roof bolter, was found crushed to death five hours after Andy Wydo, 36, a cutting machine operator, was rescued. Wydo, apparently uninjured, was taken to Uniontown Hospital for observation. The roof cave-in occurred while the men were working at the face of the mine. Wydo apparently was shielded when slate formed an arch above him, officials said. Rescuers immediately began removing the tons of slate piece by piece, working slowly and carefully to prevent another cave-in. The entrance to the No. 3 mine was located about seven miles west of the Monongahela River in Greene County near here. At the time, Robena was the world's largest bituminous coal operation. [Source document.](#)

Aug Sewage Tunnel Fire, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Fifteen men were rescued after being trapped for nearly — **three hours** — in an underground sewage tunnel. None was injured. The workers were trapped after fire set off by an electric motor of a locomotive blocked the tunnel entrance. The men are employed on a sanitary authority project. The locomotive burst into flames about 4,000 feet from the tunnel entrance and about a mile below the surface. [Source document.](#)

Sep International Salt Mine Hoist Accident, Detroit, Michigan

A safety saving device was credited with saving the lives of six men who fell 200 feet down a mine shaft when a hoist cable snapped. The device was a set of clamps installed in the 1,200-foot shaft of the International Salt Company mine in the downriver area near the Ford Rouge plant. A cage carrying the men back to the surface plunged downward again when a cable snapped. The safety clamps stopped the fall at the 900-foot level, but it took **five hours** to complete the

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rescue. None of the workers were injured, despite their harrowing experience.

Source document.

Sep Marianna No. 58 Mine Explosion, Marianna, Pennsylvania

Six miners were rescued from the exploded and burning mine after more than **8 hours**. Shortly after noon, telephone lines were dropped to the men at the foot of the portal shaft. The miners said they all were burned, one so badly he could take liquids only through a straw. Blankets, first aid equipment and oxygen tanks were then lowered by rope. The first of the trapped miners was brought to the surface in a makeshift oil drum elevator at 2:10 p.m. At half-hour intervals, five other survivors were lifted to safety in the drums.

Sep ACA Fluorspar Mine Cave-in, Rosiclare, Illinois

Two miners were rescued unhurt after being trapped **90 minutes** behind a wall of ore and waste which spilled into a mine tunnel when a timber support snapped. John Reed and Grant Ralph, both about 40, were freed from a working tunnel of the Aluminum Company of America Fluorspar Mine. Reed was pinned in rock up to his knees. A timber support for an ore bin snapped, allowing several tons of the broken rock to fall into the tunnel at the 300-foot level. 125 men were working on various levels in the mine. Source document.

Nov Unnamed Coal Mine Entrapment, Stockdale, Pennsylvania

Robert P. Thompson, 14, schoolboy, died after rescuing John T. Vingless, 13, schoolboy, from a cave-in, Coupon, Pennsylvania, November 2, 1957. While John and Robert were digging for coal in a small pit four and a half feet deep at an abandoned strip mine, one side of the pit collapsed and clay, slate, and coal in a high ridge above it slid onto them. Both boys, who were kneeling in the pit with their heads two feet below the top, were covered chest deep. John's hands were pinned, and a lump of slate 18 inches square and four inches thick rested on his head, pressing his face into the clay so that he barely was able to breathe. Although he had sustained serious injuries to his back, chest, and legs, Robert freed his hands and dug himself out. Unable to stand, he began crawling toward a nearby road to summon help, but at John's pleas he dragged himself back to the pit. Although in considerable pain, he moved the lump of slate from John's head. John then dug himself out with some assistance from Robert, who removed several small pieces of slate. John walked and Robert crawled 200 feet to the road, calling for help. John's mother was attracted, and the boys then were removed to a hospital. John sustained a wrenched back and hip injuries but recovered. Robert's injuries were extensive, including damage to his spinal cord, which caused his death later in the day. Robert P. Thompson was posthumously

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bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

- Dec Pocahontas Fuel No. 31 Mine Explosion, Amonate, Virginia
Fourteen miners were rescued after more than **five hours** following an explosion at a Pocahontas Fuel Company No. 31 mine near Amonate, Virginia. Eleven miners died in the blast. The mine is officially listed as being in McDowell County, West Virginia.

— 1956 —

- Jan Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Carmichaels, Pennsylvania
On January 31, 1956, when a section of roof fell in a coal mine 550 feet below the surface, Percy A. Hooper, 33, was buried between a loading machine and a coal pillar. During an arduous rescue in a space 18 inches wide and 20 inches high, and working with hand tools, John W. Blazek, Jr. managed to free Hooper enough that the pair were able to be pulled to safety by assisting miners. Hooper, who had been buried an hour and a half, was hospitalized for four days from shock and bruises. Blazek, who had been in the tunnel 30 minutes, was nervous and sustained minor cuts. Both recovered. For his bravery, Mr. Blazek was given the Carnegie Hero Award. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Apr Kaiser Coal Company Mine Roof Fall, Sunnyside, Utah
A roof fall at the Kaiser Coal Company mine near Sunnyside, Utah occurred trapping 4 miners. Three of the miners were rescued after **44 hours**. The rescued were Lavell Golding, Joe Archuletta and Lloyd Allen Heath. Deceased in the accident was Joseph Otterstrom.
- May Allegheny Coal and Coke Mine Lost Persons, Tarentum, Pennsylvania
Two teenaged boys, Joseph Pitkavich, 16, and Paul Crawford, 15, who wandered for nearly — **24 hours** — in a vast coal mine were rescued after they entered the Allegheny Coal and Coke Co. mine and became separated from four other hookey-playing companions from Har-Brack High School. The search for the two boys began after they failed to return to the mine entrance where their four companions waited. Parents and neighbors kept an all-night vigil while rescuers made a foot-by-foot search of 10 miles of winding tunnels. Joseph and Paul were found by Lloyd Nicewonger and Dominic Bonino sitting about 2,000 feet from the mine entrance. They said they did not realize they were lost until they had wandered through the mine for nearly two hours. "When we kept coming back to the same place, we knew we were lost," Joseph said. Joseph said his experience taught him "never to go in a mine again or play hookey." Paul admitted he had

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enough adventure for a while. "I'm never going in a mine again," he said. Source document.

Almost four months later, on August 29, 1956, Joseph Pitkavich was killed in an auto accident in which he was a passenger. Source document.

- Jun Uranium Mine Asphyxiation, Orangeville, Pennsylvania
Andrew Haladay, 32, from Bloomsburg was saved after an **undisclosed period** from possible asphyxiation by firemen and an ambulance crew who administered emergency respiration treatment to the man after he was overcome by fumes from a gasoline engine in a uranium mine near Orangeville. His brother summoned help and Andrew was brought to the surface. Source document.
- Oct Unnamed Bituminous Coal Mine, Kimberly, Ohio
Thomas Riley, Jr., helped to save Eldridge R. Hanning from suffocation, Kimberly, Ohio, October 12, 1956. Hanning, 31, a slate picker, and others were excavating coal from an exposed vein on a hillside. A three-foot auger hole had been drilled 40 feet horizontally into the hillside, and it penetrated an entry of an abandoned underground mine in which the air contained insufficient oxygen to sustain life. One of the other men entered the hole and was overcome, falling unconscious with the upper part of his body in the hole and the lower part in the mine entry. Hanning looked into the hole and then called to the others, informing them that something was wrong and that the other man was in the hole. Hanning then entered the hole and crawled 15 feet inside before he was overcome from a deficiency of oxygen. One of the other men looked into the hole, heard labored breathing from inside, and became dizzy. He immediately drove to another coal company a half-mile away and summoned a group of men, including Riley, 34, a slate picker. Those men went to the scene with a rope, and, although warned that the hole probably contained a deadly gas, Riley took an end of the rope and crawled inside, holding his breath. He reached Hanning and tied the rope to his ankle. Calling to those outside, Riley inhaled air and immediately was overcome. Hanning, and with him Riley, who lay atop the rope, then was drawn from the hole as the men outside pulled on the rope. Firemen arrived with rescue equipment. The original victim and another man who had attempted a rescue then were drawn from the hole by ropes tied to them by a fireman equipped with an oxygen mask. They were taken to the hospital but could not be revived. Hanning, who had been in the hole about 15 minutes, was given artificial respiration at the scene and then taken to the hospital, where he regained consciousness. He recovered. Riley, who had been in the hole less than two minutes, revived quickly. Mr. Riley was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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— 1955 —

- Jan Banner Mine Storage Bin Collapse, Tucson, Arizona
Arnulfo Borbon, 22, a pick man at the Banner mine, was buried up to his chin in a loose ore bin yesterday morning. Fast-working crews freed him in **three hours**. He was uninjured. Borbon was standing at the apex of an inverted cone-shaped mass of quarter-inch rock in a bin 20 feet high and 15 feet in diameter. He was knocking rock loose above him for the slide through the bottom of the bin, at his feet, and onto a conveyor belt underneath the bin. An unusually large mass of the ore suddenly slipped down on Borbon's feet, pinning him at the bin bottom before he could step back to a safety area. A resultant slide buried the miner up to his hips, then, later, up to his chin. [Source document](#).
- Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Thomas Margelavage, 44, was buried in a bootleg mine up to his neck in a pile of coal for **six hours** before rescuers could set him free. The Mine Inspector said a wall of coal collapsed and buried Margelavage. He was set free only 20 hours after the body of another miner had been recovered from a nearby mine. Margelavage was taken to Good Samaritan Hospital, where he was treated for cuts, bruises, and shock. [Source document](#).
- Apr Fall of Person Rescue, Aurora, Colorado
Two-year-old David Mark Countermand was raised to safety after spending nearly — **four hours** — at the bottom of an eighteen-foot well shaft. The shaft was eighteen inches in diameter. Workers drilled a parallel shaft, then angled under the child. Three rescuers made their way to the bottom of the rescue shaft and dug through to the boy. They pulled him headfirst into the new shaft and then to the surface as his mother and nearly 1,000 neighbors and other onlookers cheered. David tumbled into the shaft when his father, Charles, 24, turned away to rest from working a hand-operated auger he was using to dig a water well in the rear yard of his home. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Cloverdale, California
Floyd Whittaker was recovering at his home in traction after he was seriously injured when he fell down a shaft at a mine on the Geyser Road. He suffered a fractured cervical spine, multiple fractures of the right thumb and contusions and abrasions of the body. He was brought to a local facility and given treatment and then taken to his home and his back put in traction. [Source document](#).

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- May Unnamed Mine Fall of Person, Kellogg, Idaho
Horace Beebe, 40, was buried under 20 feet of ore and muck for **1½ hours** after falling 70 feet down a chute into the material. Thinking they were searching for a dead man, rescuers elected to dump the ore into rail cars instead of digging down from the top. With one car filled, Beebe shot from the car feet first. He was black all over but conscious, by all accounts he should have been dead. When they arrived at the hospital Beebe got up from the basket rescuers were carrying him in and started walking down the hall, telling all he was going to take a shower. Horace and his brother Gerald were operating the mine under a lease from the Sidney Mining Company. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Pioneer Mine Cave-in, Ely, Minnesota
A cave-in occurred in one of the deepest underground iron mines in the world entombing Albert Marolt, 41, and Tokvo Hill, 55. The miners were rescued from the Oliver Mining Company's Pioneer Mine after being trapped for **20 hours**. Also missing in the mine was Joe Glinsek. Workers said there was virtually no chance he was still alive. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Abandoned Clay Mine Rescue, East Liverpool, Ohio
Three young men were rescued after being lost in an abandoned clay mine for **15 hours**. A searching party of about 50 persons was formed after the trio failed to return home. They were found unharmed 5 hours after the search began. Those rescued included: Ed Unger, 16; Lemoyne Simms, 19; and James Simms, 23. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Union Pacific Coal Mine Cave-in, Rock Springs, Wyoming
Rescuers dug frantically today in their attempt to reach the last of three men trapped by a cave-in at a Union Pacific coal mine near Rock Springs. One of the other two miners, Louis Julius, 38, was rescued apparently in good shape, but his companion, John Nesoit, 41, a mine foreman, was crushed to death a few yards away. Julius owed his escape to his machine under which the rescuers found him huddled after **seven hours** of frantic digging. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Glen Burn Mine Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Two miners were trapped for almost — **eight hours** — in the Glen Burn mine at Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania when rock and coal in an old breast "ran away." Both men were trapped behind the loose rock and coal because the slide prevented them from reaching the gangway. They both walked from the workings uninjured. [Source document.](#)

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— 1954 —

- Jan Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Sidney, Kentucky
James G. Thornsby rescued Frederick J. Pinson from a cave-in, Sidney, Kentucky, January 23, 1984. Pinson, 31, was seated in the operator's cab of a mining machine when a large section of the ceiling of the mine in which he was working collapsed atop the machine, trapping him. Thornsby, 25, miner, who had been working nearby, fled the area of the fall. Hearing Pinson's cries for help, Thornsby returned to the edge of the collapsed ceiling, under which there was a narrow space. Despite additionally falling rock, Thornsby crawled into the space and proceeded to clear a path to Pinson. Upon reaching Pinson, Thornsby assisted him from the cab, then crawled with him from beneath the fallen ceiling. Pinson suffered bruised ribs but fully recovered. Mr. Thornsby was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Jan Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Ravensdale, Washington
Cascading coal freed by a mine cave-in swept one miner from sight 400 feet below the surface and trapped another for nearly **four hours** until he was rescued. Rescue workers were still digging for Harry English, 39, but little hope was held he would be found alive after the coal chute down which he disappeared is cleared. A happier fate was experienced by Roy Coutts, 25, working companion of English when the slide occurred. Fellow workers found pinned down by a rock which rested on his left leg and right arm. His head was covered with coal, but he could breathe. Coutts was reported in good condition at a hotel in Enumclaw, a few miles from Ravensdale and approximately 30 miles southeast of Seattle. [Source document](#).
- Apr Abandoned Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
An 8-year-old boy was rescued from an abandoned coal hole at Shamokin through the combined efforts of a police officer and volunteers. Little Denny May fell 75 feet into the hole and had to spend **an hour** there before he was brought to the surface. Denny was playing in the vicinity of his home with some other children when he fell into the mine located on North Mountain, just north of Shamokin. [Source document](#).
- Jun Blue Mountain Mine Cave-in, Cumbola, Pennsylvania
Charles Kopinetz, 31, was rescued after being trapped for **three hours** in the mine operated by the Blue Mountain Coal Company near Cumbola, Pennsylvania. He was taken to the Pottsville Hospital where his condition was described as good as he received treatment for injuries to his back and legs. [Source document](#).

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- Jun **Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Raven Run, Pennsylvania**
Two entombed miners were rescue after being trapped for **more than 15 hours** in a cave-in at an independent Anthracite mine at Raven Run. The plight of the two men was not discovered until Friday night, when the 16-year-old son of one of the victims went to the mine to learn why his father did not return home. The youth climbed down the slope of the mine and discovered the walls had collapsed. He returned to the surface and spread the alarm. Both men were taken to Locust Mountain Hospital in Shenandoah and treated for shock and exposure. [Source document.](#)
- Jul **Coal Creek Slope Cave-in, Donaldson, Pennsylvania**
William Warner, 44-year-old coal miner, was in Pottsville Hospital today after fellow workers rescued him from a cave-in trap in a coal mine. Warner was trapped 600 feet underground for — **seven hours** — but suffered no apparent injury. He was admitted to the hospital for observation. The miner was cut off from other workers when a cave-in occurred in a vein of the Coal Creek Slope of Indian Head Coal Company, in nearby Donaldson. Fellow workers drove a pipe through the wall of coal separating Warner from the rest of the crew and pumped compressed air to the trapped man. [Source document.](#)
- Aug **Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Diamondtown, Pennsylvania**
A seven-year-old Mt. Carmel boy was rescued after an **undisclosed period** from an abandoned coal hole into which he fell while flying a kite on the hillside north of Diamondtown. William Boychuk was taken to Shamokin Hospital where he was treated for multiple abrasions of the back, arms, right ear, and legs. The youngster, one of several flying kites on the mine-scarred hillside, was believed to have been running backwards with his tow string when he failed to notice the abandoned shaft and dropped into it. His playmates didn't notice his absence immediately but discovered him when they saw his kite string leading into the old mine opening. The alarm was spread, and rescue workers used a clothesline to haul the lad to the surface. A loop was fashioned in the rope and lowered to the boy who was instructed to fasten the loop beneath his arms. Rescue workers said it appeared the boy landed on sandy soil that had created a shelf 50 feet from the top. Had he missed the shelf he would have plunged to an unknown depth. [Source document.](#)
- Oct **Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Branchdale, Pennsylvania**
Nearly freed from fallen timber and rock in an Anthracite mine in Branchdale, Pennsylvania, Carl Herman became trapped again when a second cave-in occurred. 35 friends worked for an **undisclosed period** to free Herman who managed to get out with only a broken leg.

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- Oct Water Main Tunnel Fire, Boston, Massachusetts
Five men were trapped 400 feet underground for — **2½ hours** — when fire broke out in a shaft leading up from a water main tunnel under construction near Harvard Stadium. The weary but unharmed men were brought up the smoke-filled shaft after firefighters went down and extinguished the blaze in a two-hour battle. The fire was started by a short circuit on a small dump car used to carry dirt from the excavation. The men were trapped in the tunnel as the car was between them and the exit. The tunnel was part of a system of water mains being constructed by the Metropolitan Water Commission. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Eatonville, Washington
Second Lt. James Clinkingbeard, of Fort Lewis, was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft — **18 hours** — after he had fallen into a 40-foot pit. Clinkingbeard was pulled from the shaft by a search party organized after his hunting companion, Lt. Joseph Jacob, also of Fort Lewis, reported that Clinkingbeard had failed to return to their car at nightfall the day before. Sheriff's officers said the officer tumbled 40 feet down the shaft and landed on water and rocks at its bottom. He fractured a wrist in the fall. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Abandoned Anthracite Coal Mine Fall of Person, Shaft, Pennsylvania
Alden A. Hartz, Jr., 27, construction worker, rescued Catherine M. Murphy, 72, from a cave-in, Shaft, Pennsylvania, November 23, 1954. Mrs. Murphy was crossing a field near her home when a cave-in occurred above an abandoned coal mine underlying that area. Ground gave way beneath her; and she fell into a hole 70 feet deep caused by the cave-in, landing on a mound of fallen earth which rose 20 feet above the bottom of the hole. She sustained severe injuries and partially was buried by earth. The hole was four feet wide at the surface and thence downward to the bottom widened irregularly to 40 feet, the sides having numerous overhanging protuberances. Attracted by the screams of Mrs. Murphy, Hartz and others gathered at the hole. A 20-foot ladder was placed on the ground across the hole. Although he could observe that the sides of the hole were unstable, Hartz, who observed others already there were reluctant to enter the hole, volunteered at once to descend to Mrs. Murphy and tied the end of 150-foot rope to himself. He was lowered into the opening carrying a hand lamp. Three men played out the rope, and another man lay prone on the ladder to guide the rope as Hartz was lowered 50 feet to the mound. Descending 12 feet on the mound, he found Mrs. Murphy and freed her from the fallen earth. She became unconscious. He had difficulty obtaining footing on the muddy slope and called to the men above to pull slowly on the rope. Hartz drew Mrs. Murphy to the top of the mound. He saw small stones and dirt falling from the sides of the hole and realized another cave-in might be imminent but removed the rope from himself

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and fastened it securely to Mrs. Murphy, deciding because of her injuries to have her taken up separately while he waited on the mound. At Hartz's call the men lifted Mrs. Murphy to the surface. The rope was returned to Hartz, and he was drawn rapidly from the hole after being in it seven minutes. Mrs. Murphy was rushed to a hospital but died of her injuries two days later. Hartz was nervous but recovered. Mr. Hartz was given the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Dec Carey Mine Company Asphyxiation, Winnfield, Louisiana

A naval officer and a miner made a daring 800-foot descent into a salt mine yesterday to rescue a worker overcome by carbon dioxide. The three men reached the top of the shaft just before their portable oxygen equipment gave out. The miner, Julius Smith, 40, was reported "in fairly good shape" by attendants at a hospital. "It was a miracle that Smith survived," said W. H. Cameron, manager of the Carey Mine Company. Lieut. Billy Scroggins, a naval officer home on leave, and Chester Camp, a salt miner, made the rescue. Scroggins was demonstrating new oxygen equipment owned by the Natchitoches Fire Department when they heard of the trapped miner, and he used the equipment in the rescue. Cameron said Smith and five other workers were setting off dynamite charges to loosen rock silt deposits for digging teams when a blast sent an underground carbon dioxide pocket into the mine compartment. All except Smith fled the suffocating fumes. The others said they tried to return to Smith after he fell, but he said: "Go ahead and get out of here and save yourselves." [Source document](#).

— 1953 —

Jan Gilberton Coal Company Drill Hole Entrapment, Gilberton, Pennsylvania

Five-year-old Laura Mae Helser was freed from her **90-minute** confinement after falling 10 feet into an 11-inch test hole at the strip mine owned by the Gilberton Coal Company. Rescuers ingeniously fashioned a make-shift vertical stretcher to free the child from her entrapment. [Source document](#).

Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Lordsburg, Nevada

A 15-year-old high school boy was recovering from several broken bones and assorted bruises after miraculously surviving a fall down a 330-foot mine shaft. Ray Harrington received a broken collarbone, broken arm and broken leg when he tumbled down the abandoned Nevada mine shaft. Rescuers attributed his survival to the fact that the shaft had a jog in it about midway down. This, they say, may have broken his fall. [Source document](#).

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- Apr Monarch Mine Fire, Harlan, Kentucky
Fifteen miners were rescued without injury after an **undisclosed period** at the Monarch Mine of the Blue Diamond Coal Company. The State Department of Mines and Minerals said it understood a locomotive reel cable caught fire and the motorman was unable to shut off the power. [Source document](#).
- Apr Lehigh Coal & Navigation Mine Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Steve Oblas, 26, was set free after a **9-hour** entrapment in the mine at Coaldale, Pennsylvania operated by the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company. Thirty miners participated in the rescue. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Goodsprings, Nevada
This story comes from Boulder City and relates to a father who rescued his son from a deep mine shaft near Goodsprings in Clark County. On a Sunday, about two weeks earlier, the family — Jake Dielemans and his wife and their two sons, Dick, age 13, Bobby, age five — went out with a group of local people interested in prospecting. They were perusing the area around Goodsprings. Jake and the other men were out checking rocks and formations when suddenly Jake looked around back toward where he had parked his car and saw the legs of his son Bobby shooting downward. At the same time, he heard a deafening scream from the lad. All hands went running and found that Bobby had fallen down a deep, dark, and treacherous looking mine shaft. They could see nothing and were frantic. They judged the hole at least 70 feet deep. They thought they detected a faint cry from the bottom of the pit. Then everyone went to work. One man raced to his vehicle, pulled out a couple of ropes and tied them together. Someone had to be dropped to the bottom of the pit. Jake insisted on doing it. But the rope was not strong enough to hold the hefty 200-pound man. It was Dick, the older brother, who cried to be allowed to go down after his brother. The little fellow — who last year was an All-American Pony Bowl footballer — again showed he was an All-American boy. The men tied the rope around him, gave him another loop for his brother, and lowered him into the pit. Jake, the father, meantime had scrambled down the hole about 15 feet and hung onto a ledge and guided the rope. Little Dick reached bottom, tied the halter onto his brother, and the men above hauled the two lads up. The rest is now a big sigh of relief. The lad was rushed to the Boulder Hospital. No bones were broken, thanks to a bed of blow sand at the bottom of the pit, and the lad was just a bit shaken. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Lime Mine Fall of Person, Rosendale, New York
Jack Rustemeyer, 13, was rescued after an **undisclosed period** by Binnewater firemen after he plunged 50 feet to a ledge in an old lime mine in the Maple Hill

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section of Rosendale. He was taken to Kingston City hospital and attended for shock and multiple bruises and abrasions and later taken to his home. The boy and three companions were walking near the edge of the mine when the ground gave way. Three boys managed to run to safety. The Rustemeyer boy dropped into the mine. He landed on a ledge 50 feet below the surface. The other boys ran to the Rustemeyer home and told Mrs. Rustemeyer her son had fallen into the mine. She summoned Binnewater firemen, who lowered a rope to the injured boy. He tied the rope around his waist and firemen pulled him to safety. [Source document.](#)

Aug Scrub Oak Mine Cave-in, Dover, New Jersey

Emergency crews rescued a miner who was trapped **six hours** by a cave-in at an iron ore mine. The miner, 51-year-old John Fortner was brought to the surface and taken to Dover General Hospital. Another miner, Robert Allen, 47, was hurt in the cave-in last night, but managed to scramble out of the path of the falling muck, which consists of bits of iron ore. He was treated for minor cuts and released. During the rescue operation, the crews were able to keep a running conversation with Mr. Fortner. When they reached him, he was found pinned by the ore. Police said the cave-in at the Scrub Oak Mine of the Alan Wood Steel Company apparently was caused by previous blasting. The rescue workers dug a pathway to Mr. Fortner and found him on the fifth slope of the lower level, about 1,800 feet below the ground. [Source document.](#)

Dec LNC Mines Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania

John Teno, 42, was caught and partly covered by a rush of material in the LNC mines in Coaldale. He was rescued after an **undisclosed period** by his buddies and was transferred to the Coaldale State Hospital. [Source document.](#)

— 1952 —

Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Springfield, Missouri

Don M. Searle, 18, suffered serious injuries when he fell into an abandoned mine shaft on Pierson Creek, five miles east of Springfield, Missouri. Searle was searching for traces of uranium in the old mine with three companions. He was being lowered into the shaft with a windlass and rope when the rope broke, dropping him about 50 feet. Ropes were used to bring him to the surface about 30 minutes after he tumbled into the shaft. He suffered a leg fracture, back injury and cuts. [Source document.](#)

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- Mar Repplier Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Caught under many tons of coal while working in the Repplier colliery, Steve Matusiak, 59, of New Philadelphia, near Pottsville, was dug out by fellow workmen after an **undisclosed period**. He was rushed to a Pottsville hospital where he was treated for chest injuries. [Source document](#).
- Mar Well Rockslide Rescue, Salida, Colorado
Charles Dennis, a 33-year-old metal miner was trapped for **12 hours** after a rockslide crashed down on him at the bottom of a 15-foot well. The slide completely covered the man, but he was able to breathe because of air spaces in the rock jumble. Rescue operations were carried on most of the night by floodlight and broke through to the trapped man. [Source document](#).
- Mar Pine Creek Canyon Snowslide, Bishop, California
A weekend of wild weather in California had a fortunate ending in the rescue of 33 persons whose mining camp high in the Sierra Nevada was crushed under giant snow slides. The 33 rescued Sunday night were workers and their families at the U. S. Vanadium Corporation's tungsten mill — the world's largest — 9,000 feet high in Pine Creek Canyon, 20 northwest of Bishop. A huge slide poured down from crags above. One end of the mill was caved in. Four homes were partially destroyed. The home of mill superintendent Tom Holmes was crushed and buried. Mrs. Holmes was knocked out of the house, over an auto, under a fence and against a tree 60 feet away. Her 15-month-old son was buried under 13 feet of snow and debris. Workers dug for two hours. They finally found him nestled between two pet Dachshunds—unharmd. Besides the dogs, he was protected by his play pen and a heavy chair. Two other workers were buried for **10 hours** before being freed. The 33 took refuge in the mill's basement, where the rescue party found them. None was seriously injured. They were there for **more than a day**, praying and watching smaller slides bounce down the canyon walls. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned Shale Mine Fall of Person, Royal Gorge, Colorado
Donna Zarnowski, 17, of Burns, Kansas, tumbled 100 feet and became trapped in a mine shaft by a quarter-ton boulder during a senior class visit to scenic attractions which included the abandoned shale mine shaft near Royal Gorge. A boulder at the mine entrance on which Donna was leaning gave way and she tumbled down the 60-degree entrance shaft after it. She came to rest 100 feet down the shaft and the boulder rolled back and pinned her against a slate pillar. A doctor was lowered into the pit to give her a hypodermic while a wrecking truck and firemen were enroute. A Catholic priest was also let down by rope at her request. **Two hours** later the boulder was moved by a winch and cable. Firemen strapped the

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girl to a stretcher, and she was hauled to the mine entrance. She was transported to Canon City hospital where she was reported in serious condition from injuries suffered. Source document.

Jun Penokee Iron Ore Mine Cave-in, Ironwood, Michigan

Three of five miners were rescued after being trapped for **24 hours** by a cave-in at Republic Steel Corporation's Penokee Iron Ore Mine near Ironwood, Michigan. The rescued miners were Victor Cox, Christopher Hocking, and Mack Krecker. The body of Jerome Olkonen was later found by rescuers, lying beside his machine. The fate of the 5th miner, Serafim Zackarzewski, and is not known, although mine officials feared he would have been crushed to death in the fall of rock.

Jun Bull Gulch Lead and Zinc Mine Cave-in, Jefferson City, Montana

An eight-year-old boy's yell and 150-yard sprint for help saved two miners from possible death and made his father "the proudest man in Montana." A cave-in at the Bull Gulch lead and zinc mine completely covered Robert Steinbacher, 34, this Father's Day. Mine owner Henry Madison, about 70, was held fast by rocks, gravel and dirt that stopped cascading when the slide reached his chin. Young Charles O'Reilly of Helena was the only other witness to the near tragedy. He yelled to his father, Henry, who was prospecting about 100 yards above the mine, pointed to cave-in and raced to the nearest telephone which was at the Steinbacher's home about 450 feet from the mine. Henry O'Reilly ran to the mine with a pick and shovel and seeing Madison able to breathe began digging where he thought Steinbacher was buried. In about 10 minutes he had freed Steinbacher's head enough so that he could breathe more easily. O'Reilly's son, meanwhile, urged Mrs. Steinbacher to call an ambulance and round up some volunteers. In another 20 minutes the men were free and on stretchers. Steinbacher and Madison apparently suffered only shock and bruises. Source document.

Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

50-year-old Sylvester Prosper was rescued after an **undisclosed period** after being trapped by a coal fall and buried up to the neck. It was some hours before anybody even knew there was anything wrong. One of the first rescuers to arrive was a priest, the Rev. John Shellum of a church in Pottsville. The priest crawled all the way to where Sylvester was trapped and gave him the last rites of the Roman Catholic church. Then the priest stripped off his robes, got a shovel, and went to work helping the others get the miner out. Hospital authorities said Sylvester had contusions and bruises and was suffering from shock. Source document.

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— 1951 —

- Jan Unnamed Surface Mine Rescue, St. Marys, Pennsylvania
Six-year-old William Van Slander liked to toddle along after his 34-year-old father and watch him rip coal from the earth with a giant bulldozer. Yesterday, Van Slander, Sr. wasn't satisfied with the way his huge machine was working. He got off his seat and kicked at a slowly moving cog. The cog caught in his overalls and started grinding his left leg to pieces. Frantically, the father shouted at his son to pull the lever which would stop the machine. There were several levers, but Billy got the right one just as his father lost consciousness. The boy then ran three miles to neighbors for aid. Van Slander was taken to a hospital, where his leg was amputated below the knee. The doctors, who credited Billy with saving his dad's life, said the miner's condition is satisfactory. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Pandora Mine Fire, Sullivan, Indiana
Sixteen men trapped for almost **three hours** behind a fire in the Pandora Mine were reported safe. Two men were brought to the Mary Sherman Hospital suffering from effects of the smoke. Both David Solomon, 66, and Wayne Mannel, 18, were reported at the hospital to be in good condition. Mannel was in the mine when the fire started and was able to get out without being trapped. He went immediately back in to help in the rescue work and to fight the fire. [Source document.](#)
- Feb East Mammoth Mine Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Entombed by a mine cave-in for **five hours**, Peter Gusick, contract miner, was rescued by fellow workers. Gusick was caught underground when a chute collapsed on the second level of the East Mammoth gangway at the Coaldale Colliery. The miner said he went for tools to repair his chute when he heard the tumbling earth and jumped aside to avoid being hit by falling coal and timbering. The only means of communication Gusick had with digging crews was an air pipe driven down through the debris. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Shaft, Pennsylvania
Henry W. Eckley, Sr., 61, coal miner, died as the result of attempting to rescue Anthony Woznicki, 46, coal miner, from a cave-in. During the course of the rescue, a large quantity of debris fell from near the ceiling and partially buried Eckley, who sustained severe internal injuries and a broken leg. Eckley and Woznicki were removed from the entry by other miners and were taken to the surface. Woznicki was disabled six months. Eckley succumbed to injuries three days later. Posthumously, Mr. Eckley was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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- Sep Vesta No. 5 Mine Roof Fall, Vestaburg, Pennsylvania
Though he was almost completely buried from a fall of slate in the Vesta No. 5 mine of the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, Harry Layhew, 28, only suffered a back injury. Fellow workmen dug him out of the slate after an **undisclosed period** and transferred him to the Brownsville hospital. He was admitted there after treatment, but his condition was not listed as serious. [Source document](#).
- Nov Blue Flame Mine Rescue, Plano, Iowa
Eugene Welch, 40, trapped 125 feet underground, was released by his fellow workers afternoon a **few hours** after a doctor was critically injured in a plunge down the mine shaft. Welch underwent amputation of his right leg below the knee following his rescue by fellow miners. Dr. C. L. Richey, 44, was in "very critical condition" from multiple fractures suffered when the cable broke on a cage in which he was being lowered into the mine to aid Welch. Welch's leg was drawn into the cutting chain on a coal-cutting machine while he was working in the Blue Flame coal mine a mile south of Plano. The men were working in a space 28 inches high when Welch's trouser leg caught in the endless chain which is used to cut into the vein of coal. [Source document](#).
- Nov Unnamed Mystic Coal Mine Tragedy, Mystic, Iowa
Dr. Granvil L. Richey, 44, who was injured seriously November 6 at Centerville, Iowa, while attempting to descend into a mine shaft to administer aid to a stricken miner, was reportedly in an improved condition at St. Mary's hospital in Rochester, Minnesota, after undergoing a series of operations as a result of his injuries. Dr. Richey suffered a broken nose, jaw, left leg, right heel, and ankle, when a cable broke while he was descending into the shaft to aid the miner, plunging the elevator and its occupant 125 feet to the bottom of the shaft. The Centerville physician, a graduate of Columbus high school and Indiana university medical school, was the medical director at St. Joseph's hospital in Centerville, where he was taken immediately after the accident occurred. The miner the Doctor was going down to aid was Eugene Welch. He was caught in a cutting machine. His leg required amputation in hospital 3 hours after the accident. Note: No mention of the name or owner of the mine where this accident occurred could be found in multiple news articles other than to say it was a coal mine located near Mystic, which is northwest of Centerville, Iowa in Appanoose County. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Orient No. 2 Mine Explosion](#), West Frankfort, Illinois
One miner, Cecil Sanders, was rescued after **60 hours** from the Orient No. 2 coal mine in West Frankfort, Illinois following an explosion which killed 119. At that time, this disaster was the nation's worst in the preceding 23 years.

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— 1950 —

- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Joseph Burda was rescued after being trapped for **40 hours** in a "bootleg" anthracite mine near Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. He and his brother, Edward, became trapped following a cave-in. Rescue attempts carried on for Edward, however, it is unknown if they were successful.
- Jan United Salt Mine Fire, Hockley, Texas
Eight miners were set free from the fire in the United Salt Company mine after an **undisclosed period**. The miners had been lowered into the mine only minutes before the fire broke out. Electric wiring was burned which temporarily idled the mine's hoist. The trapped miners were uninjured in the incident. Source document.
- Jan Lohb Coal Company Mine Asphyxiation, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Two miners were rescued from the end of a 100-foot, almost perpendicular, slope at Pottsville after they had been overcome by "after damp." Albert Galesky, 50, was rescued shortly after the pair were discovered unconscious by another miner. But it was nearly — **four hours** — before Joseph Flannery, 48, was revived enough to be moved down the slope and the 2½ miles to the mine entrance. Nine tanks of oxygen were used before the rescuers decided it was safe to lower Flannery down the slope to a coal car. Flannery was taken to Warren Hospital in Pottsville and placed in an oxygen tent. Al Clarkson, superintendent of the mine operation of the Lohb Coal Company on Sharp Mountain, said Flannery and Galesky apparently went into the area too soon after setting off a shot of dynamite. Source document.
- Feb Fire Chief Coal Co. Mine No. 2 Cave-in, Whitesburg, Kentucky
Worley Dickinson, 59, was rescued after being trapped by a cave-in for **more than 24 hours**. Dickinson and Dewey Rose, 49, were caught in a heavy rock fall in the Fire Chief Coal Company Mine No 2 near Whitesburg, Kentucky. Rose died instantly on Feb. 14 when the accident happened. Dickinson said he was imprisoned in a space about the size of a No. 3 washtub. He had been protected by a wagon where he had been standing when the roof let go. Source document.
- Feb Reliance Colliery Mine Asphyxiation, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
A 59-year-old Shamokin miner was killed, and another man narrowly escaped the same fate after an **undisclosed period** when a "pocket" of gas erupted while the two were working at the face of a pillar hole in the Reliance Colliery mine. In Shamokin Hospital following his rescue was Nicholas Amato, 26. Amato's

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condition was reported by hospital attaches to be satisfactory. Amato was the first of the two mine workers to be brought to the surface. A colliery first aid team used artificial respiration to partially revive the young man. Efforts of the first aid men to fully revive Amato continued while he was being taken in an ambulance to the hospital. In August 1950, during the annual first aid contest of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company, Michael Dobson was awarded the Joseph A. Holmes Safety Association medal of honor for knowingly risking his life by entering a pitching pillar hole filled with gas to successfully rescue one worker and after several attempts. Source document.

- Mar Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Following a cave-in at an independent Anthracite mine near Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Robert Schoffstall, 42, was reached by rescue workers after remaining entombed **seven hours**. He suffered a possible fractured skull, abrasions of the right temple and a fractured left leg. Frank Bosack, Jr., 23, the other trapped miner, crawled out of the mine on Sharp Mountain, after diggers drove through sixty tons of rock, crushed timber, and debris in **ten hours**. Also trapped with the two men and rescued from the mine was "Pete" the mule. The mule assisted greatly in his rescue. He kicked and pawed his way through fallen rock and coal while rescue workers drove from the outside toward the entombed animal. After the opening was made the mule squeezed through and crawled out of the underground operation on his own power, about 1,000 feet. Source document.
- Mar Auchincloss No. 2 Mine Cave-in, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania
Walter Legins, 39, coal mine shaftman, helped to rescue Stephen C. Grozio, 49, coal mine shaftman, from a cave-in in a mine, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, November 20, 1950. At night while Grozio and two other men were at work on a platform in a mineshaft 1,160 feet below ground-level, a cave-in occurred above them. Grozio jumped quickly onto a cage partly protected by a metal canopy in an adjoining section of the shaft, as a huge mass of debris struck the platform and demolished it. The other two men fell with the debris from 250 feet above the bottom of the shaft. The cage was wrenched from its guides but remained suspended 150 feet below a landing. The rumble of falling debris was heard at the surface, but the extent of the cave-in could not be determined. A group comprising two foremen, Legins, and three other men entered the mine at another shaft and reached the landing. Visibility into the damaged shaft was negligible, but all noted that a section of the shaft opposite the landing had fallen away. Grozio's headlamp was dimly sighted. In response to calls, Grozio apprised the others of conditions and told them his hands were numbed. Only Legins volunteered to descend to Grozio. Although aware that another cave-in might be

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imminent, Legins with a rope tied to him entered the shaft and was lowered to the cage, where he removed the rope. Using a metal bar, he broke away an obstruction in the shaft above the cage. Calling repeatedly to the landing with directions for the raising and lowering of the cage, Legins and Grozio after 20 minutes engaged the guide and were drawn to the landing. Legins and Grozio were taken to the surface. After extensive digging operations, the bodies of the other two men were recovered; and the shaft was closed permanently. Grozio was chilled, and he and Legins were nervous. Both recovered. Walter Legins was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Apr Old Pine Hill Mine Cave-in, Lonaconing, Maryland

Rescue workers clawed their way through 40 feet of rock and dirt to free a trapped coal miner. He was still alive when they reached him although he had been pinned down for **six hours** by heavy timbers which had collapsed on him and buried all but his head in heavy dirt. After clearing away the heavy dirt, the rescuers had to saw through the timbers to free him. The trapped miner, 43-year-old Harry Spiker, was rushed to Miners' Hospital in Frostburg where he was reported to be in good condition. He had leg wounds and injuries around the pelvic region, but no fractures were diagnosed immediately. Spiker was trapped in the nearby Old Pine Hill mine, which he ran for the Georges Creek Coal Company when tunnel timbers gave way. His brother Raymond also was caught by the sliding dirt, but another brother, Charles, was outside the mine at the time and was able to pull Raymond out quickly. Raymond suffered only minor injuries. Thirteen jobless miners from the Lonaconing area formed the rescue team. A second fall shortly after they had started digging almost wiped out the rescue effort, but the men pulled themselves out and continued their digging. By the time Spiker was freed some 200 persons had gathered around the mine lending a hand when required. Source document.

May Biscontini Mine Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Edmund F. Gorka, 28, was rescued after spending **15 hours** trapped by a fall of coal and dirt in a mine operated by the Biscontini Coal Company near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Prior to him being set free, rescuers hammered a steel tube through tons of debris to get fresh air to him. His co-worker, Thomas Dembski, 21, had narrowly missed being trapped with him and managed to get free and sound the alarm. Source document.

Jun Copper Canyon Mine Fire, Copper Canyon, Nevada

Fourteen miners trapped for **three hours** by flames in a mine shaft were rescued. Mining Engineer Tom Cahill of the Copper Canyon Company said that fire of

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unknown origin broke out at the top of the main shaft at 8:30 a.m. Contact with the underground crew 700 feet below the ground level was immediately cut off when telephone wires in the main shaft burned. When news of the trapped men was first transmitted to nearby cities, rescue crews of miners were flown from adjoining areas to the scene. Supt. Robert Raring ventured down a parallel shaft abandoned as a working operation and used as an emergency escape route. By noon, the last of the 14 miners had climbed ladders in the old shaft and emerged safely on the ground level. None of the men had been overcome by smoke.

Source document.

- Jul Abandoned Anthracite Strip Mine Entrapment, Glen Carbon, Pennsylvania
A 13-year-old Philadelphia boy was rescued from the bottom of a 60-foot abandoned stripping pit at Glen Carbon, near Minersville, after being trapped for **more than two hours**. John Murphy, who was visiting relatives in the Schuylkill County area, was playing baseball with a group of companions. The ball rolled into the pit and Murphy entered the hole to retrieve the ball. At the bottom, he sank waist-deep into heavy mud but kept from slipping beneath the surface of the mud by clinging to a rock ledge. Rescue workers erected a platform over the muddy section and then released the uninjured boy. Source document.
- Dec Big 4 Mine Cave-in, Selleck, Washington
His life saved by the same huge beam that kept him prisoner for **54 hours**, John Wolti was freed from his tomb by rescuers in the Big 4 coal mine at Selleck, Washington. Wolti was brought out of the mine with a crushed arm and suffering from shock and was expected to be hospitalized for a week to ten days.
- Dec Old Smuggler Mine Fire, Silver Plume, Colorado
Six miners who escaped death in a mine fire in the Old Smuggler Mine gave credit for their rescue to a 4-man party that built a fire door to keep the flames from spreading. The six men were trapped for **four hours**. The fire broke out yesterday in the hoist house and spread to the dry timbers of the shaft. Some 30 men jumped to the task of rescuing the men and four of them went below through a supplementary tunnel that joined the main shaft about 75 feet below the surface. They constructed the firewall there, containing the fire with steel plates and heavy timbers. Source document.
- Dec Higgenbottom Cavern Rescue, McMinnville, Tennessee
National Guardsmen, passing along a stretcher on their hands and knees, rescued 17-year-old Don Ball, Nashville high school football star, after a tortuous five-mile underground trip from the fifty-foot pit into which he toppled. Ball was reported

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in critical condition with head and leg injuries and the possibility of a pneumonia complication due to his — **seventeen hour** — entrapment in Higgenbottom Cavern. William Greer, a 125-pound volunteer, was lowered into the chasm deep inside the cave to tie a rope around Ball so the Guardsmen could haul his limp body to the cavern floor. Source document.

— 1949 —

- Jan Loyalhanna Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania
A coal miner rescued from beneath 25 tons of rock where he lay trapped for — **14 hours** — died eight hours after fellow workers brought him to the surface. William Wallace, 27, lay beneath the crushing weight with only his head exposed as a rescue team labored to remove piece by piece the rocks which trapped him in a narrow entry of the mine of the Loyalhanna Coal Company. As other miners worked to release him. Wallace pleaded deliriously for his friends to "get this weight off me." He was taken to Windber hospital shortly after midnight, and doctors said he suffered extreme shock and other undetermined injuries. Wallace and his brother-in-law, Walter Gromack, were loading their second coal car of the day when the roof collapsed. Gromack had stepped away from the working place to adjust his lamp and wasn't hit. Wallace apparently had the presence of mind to dive beneath the car, but the weight of the fall crushed the car and pinned him beneath the frame, with only his head in the open. Source document.
- Feb Kittoe Mining Works Fire, Benton, Wisconsin
Fifteen miners were rescued after being trapped for **seven hours** by a fire which occurred in the engine room of the Kittoe Mining Works near Benton, Wisconsin. The fire cut the men off from their 167-foot escape shaft to the mine head. Except for one miner who suffered a slight heart attack, all the men remained calm throughout their ordeal.
- Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Sagon, Pennsylvania
A 62-year-old miner entombed in a standing position for **9½ hours** after a cave-in of coal and earth was smoking a cigarette as weary rescue workers hoisted him from the 30-foot hole. Alexander Pachekailo was trapped with his son, Joseph, 22, in an anthracite shaft at Sagon, near Shamokin. The son had dug himself out after an hour. At Shamokin Hospital, Pachekailo was treated for shock and exposure. He had no other injuries. Rescuers were forced to work singly in the four-foot square shaft of the independent mine. The debris had to be removed a bucket at a time before the trapped miner could be raised to the surface. Source document.
- Jun Spruce Mine Landslide, Eveleth, Minnesota

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Two miners were rescued after being trapped more than **ten hours** by an earth slide in the Spruce mine at Eveleth, Minnesota. Sakri Makinen and Ed Kinszater were both brought up from the 200-foot level unhurt. [Source document](#).

- Jul Sizemore Truck Mine Cave-in, Toler, Kentucky
Rescuers brought out alive four men who were buried under a slate fall at the Sizemore Truck Mine. The last of the victims was brought to the surface **four hours** after the fall occurred. He was taken to a hospital with possible fractures of both legs. One of the other three received treatment at the Williamson Hospital for shock, cuts, and bruises. The other two did not require hospitalization. The accident occurred about 200 feet from the entry of the mine, which had been reopened recently. [Source document](#).
- Aug Peabody Mine No. 59 Fire, Springfield, Illinois
An underground fire sent dense smoke through Peabody Mine No. 59 north of Springfield forcing between 250 and 300 men to use emergency escape shafts. All the men reached safe areas and were evacuated three at a time. Most of them had been brought to the surface **three hours** after the fire broke out. The fire broke out 1½ hours before the regular day shift was to end. [Source document](#).
- Oct Abandoned Well Rescue, Austin, Texas
A 3-year-old boy fell 14 feet down a narrow shaft of an abandoned well and was rescued alive **three hours** later. Bobby Gow, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Gow of Austin, toppled into the 10-inch shaft while playing. A 12-year-old playmate saw him fall and spread the alarm. His rescue came after three steam shovels, compressed air hammers and volunteer pick and shovel workers tore away the earth from the 20-foot hole. Except for the happier ending. The incident was reminiscent of the tragedy of Kathy Fiscus, age 3, who died last April after a 98-foot fall down an abandoned well pipe at San Marino, California. [Source document](#).
- Nov Maple Hill Colliery Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Rescuers brought out 15 weary coal miners early today who had spent **eight hours** trapped behind a rock fall 900 feet underground. The trapped men dug continuously during their captivity to help rescue crews working from the other side clear away the tons of rock, coal and dirt which blocked their path to freedom. Physicians who examined each of the men as they came to the surface said that they suffered no ill effects. They were sent home to rest. The men had been trapped in the No. 6 slope of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company's Maple Hill colliery when a runaway mine car jumped the track and knocked out timbers supporting the sides and roof of the tunnel. The crashing

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timbers and a warning rumble alerted the men, but the sides and roof of the tunnel collapsed with a roar before they could flee. The rock fall occurred only two hours after the men started working yesterday afternoon. All 15 had enough food in their lunch boxes. [Source document.](#)

Nov Alaska Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Hinton, West Virginia

Howard Daniels, 41, of Beelick Knob, received treatment at the hospital, after being removed from under a slate fall at the Alaska Coal Company near Hinton, where he was trapped for about **three hours**. He was to be X-rayed for possible fractures, but the extent of his injuries was not fully determined, although he suffered shock and exposure. [Source document.](#)

Dec Unnamed Bituminous Coal Mine Explosion, Nolan, West Virginia

Bryon Wootton rescued Claude Jude in a mine after an explosion, Nolan, West Virginia, December 28, 1949. Jude, 32, and Wootton, 40, coal miners, lighted 29 dynamite charges in the working face and in an adjoining wall of an entry, which was 2.5 feet high, and then crawled toward the mine entrance 280 feet away. A charge exploded prematurely when Jude was 20 feet from the face, and he was struck by flying coal, sustaining a broken leg. Wootton, who was farther from the face, suffered only bruises but was thrust to the floor opposite a cloth brattice which extended parallel to the sides of the entry. Headlamps worn by both men were extinguished, and visibility was negligible. Dense smoke containing noxious gases filled the entry. Wootton, after calling to Jude and ascertaining his injuries, obtained a hold on the brattice as the other charges began exploding at intervals of five seconds. He drew himself prone for 30 feet along the brattice to Jude, who was unable to move. Coughing violently because of the fumes, Wootton groped and touched one of Jude's hands, which he grasped. Pellets of coal repeatedly struck Wootton, and lumps of coal fell to the floor about him. Wootton dragged Jude 60 feet to opposite an air-course, where the smoke was light and free of gases. When the explosions had ceased, three other men entered and removed Jude on a stretcher as Wootton crawled outside. Jude was hospitalized for nine weeks. Wootton's bruises healed in two weeks. He also suffered from shock and was nervous but recovered in 10 days. Mr. Wootton was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

— 1948 —

Mar Big Cottonwood Canyon Avalanche, Salt Lake, Utah

Survivor of a terrible experience, trapped by a huge avalanche he could not see, but only hear, Roy Newman, blind miner, was discovered in the area of the snowslide which thundered down into Big Cottonwood canyon. Searchers for Mr.

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Newman and three skiers who were unaccounted for after the snow mass blocked the canyon road and stream, found the miner hiding in one of the mine shafts which honeycomb the area. He was shaken, but unhurt. Fears for Mr. Newman's safety had risen when state troopers slogged through heavy snow and found his cabin intact, but vacant. A friend of the blind man, who assisted in the search, suggested Mr. Newman might be in one of the mine shafts or tunnels, and a search of these revealed the missing man. Source document.

Mar Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Telluride, Colorado

Robert Pressley, 35, was trapped head down by a slide of muck for **14 hours**. He suffered a crushed foot and shock and was expected to recover. Pressley was pinned in a small ore chute throughout the night while fellow miners retimbered the chute to prevent a new slide of ore from coming down on him. He was rescued after the timbering operation was completed and taken to a hospital here. Source document.

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Inundation, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Edward Heck and Peter Gorton were rescued from a "bootleg" Anthracite mine near Shamokin, Pennsylvania following their **60-hour** entrapment from an inundation of water from an adjoining abandoned mine. The men said they believed their companion, Charles Bashore, was trapped in the lowest part of the mine and had no chance to escape.

Jul Edgewater Mine Explosion, Birmingham, Alabama

A company spokesman said a pocket of gas apparently was set off near the junction of a new ventilation shaft with an old areaway. About 50 men were working in the vicinity. Most escaped through an air shaft and others trapped by gas, were brought to safety by rescue workers after an **undisclosed period**.

Oct Dresser Mine Explosion, Terre Haute, Indiana

Thirty-five coal miners were trapped by an explosion in the Dresser coal mine last night, but all were rescued. Mine officials said two men with second degree burns were taken to the Union hospital at Terre Haute. None of the other men were injured. The explosion occurred at 6:10 p.m., and mine officials said all of the men were out at 7 p.m. Source document.

Oct Golden Rod Mine No. 9 Cave-in, Picher, Oklahoma

Burford Storm, 28, was trapped for **six hours** in a cave-in at the Golden Rod Mine No. 9. He and his helper, John Carmack, were loading boulders at a level 235 feet below the surface when dirt, ore rock and boulders gave way beneath them. The debris slid down about 30 feet to the bottom of the mine, carrying Storm with it.

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He was pinned between levels but was not covered by the debris. Carmack gained a higher level as the cave-in started and was helped out of the mine immediately. Some 25 miners worked to free Storm, finally succeeding six hours after the cave-in. Neither was seriously hurt. [Source document](#).

Nov John George Lease Mill Entrapment, Wardner, Idaho
George A. Scheurich was rescued after being buried for **four hours** under seven feet of muck in a chute at the John George lease mill in Wardner. Fellow mill men and Bunker Hill employees rescued him by tearing out the sides of the ore chute. Scheurich was alone when the accident occurred, and it is believed he was walking on top of the muck when it started to roll. He was uninjured but suffered from cold and cramp and was being kept in the hospital for observation. [Source document](#).

Dec Kritzer Tungsten Mine Snowstorm, Dinkey Creek, California
A quick and full recovery was predicted for Claude Kritzer, whose left foot was amputated to save his life. Kritzer, 34, with his brother, Martin, 38, were marooned in the snow-covered Sierras for **nine days** this month. The attending physician said the foot, which was gangrenous, was amputated above the ankle because there was no other choice. The two brothers were rescued from the mountains on December 21. They had planned to drive a tractor from their tungsten mine above Dinkey Creek but were caught in a snowstorm. Martin Kritzer, still in the hospital, was reported recovering from exposure and frostbite. [Source document](#).

— 1947 —

Jan Gemini Mine Cave-in, Eureka, Utah
Two silver miners were freed by crews who shoveled through 100 tons of dirt for **almost eight hours** after a slide of waste matter trapped the pair. Fifteen fellow miners used a bucket machine and shovels to reach Bryan Sorenson and Benny Allison, trapped in a mine pocket at the 1300-foot level of the Gemini mine. [Source document](#).

Feb Clyde No. 1 Mine Roof Fall, Brownsville, Pennsylvania
Two miners were rescued after being buried for **several hours** under 30 tons of slate in Clyde No. 1 mine of the Republic Steel Corporation near Brownsville. Lloyd Colvin, 33, and Thomas W. Jones, 38, were recovering in the Brownsville Hospital. Colvin suffered a fractured right leg and Jones had chest injuries and fractured ribs. A dozen other miners narrowly escaped the fall. Jones, partly shielded by the boom of a loading machine, was able to talk to the

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rescue party which worked for **two and one-half hours** to reach him. The mishap occurred several miles from the surface opening. Source document.

Mar Centralia No. 5 Mine Explosion, Centralia, Illinois

Rescue workers kept digging in a gaseous, clogged-up passage 540 feet underground. The picking and the toiling slow work in the thick of the lingering fumes, in about **20 hours** had accounted for only nine survivors of the 131 who were caught in the blast just a few minutes before quitting time.

Apr Schooley Mine Explosion, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

The Schooley mine explosion killed nine anthracite diggers and injured nine others as they worked 350 feet underground. The explosion, so terrific that it splintered supporting timbers and crumpled mine chamber walls, came soon after the day work crew reported at the shaft of the Knox Coal company. Dust and smoke rose from the pithead, as rescue forces rushed into the operation near Wilkes-Barre. Two bodies were removed immediately. Injured were speeded to nearby Pittston hospital where doctors said some had been burned, others overcome by fumes. Source document.

May Abandoned Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

Andrew Cooper, 16, of Pottsville, had a narrow escape from death when he rode his bicycle into a caved-in mine. He landed on a ledge 50 feet from the top, but the bike plunged another 200 feet to the bottom of the mine, believed to be filled with water. He managed to scale halfway up a wall only to lose his grip and plunge once again to the ledge. Searchers heard his shouts — **five hours** — later and hoisted him to the top with a rope. Source document.

Jun Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

George Sleva, 26, was rescued after being entombed **14 hours** by a rock fall in a small independent coal mine. Sleva was taken to the Pottsville Hospital, where he was taken and treated for shock and minor bruises. His condition was described as good. Source document.

Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Primrose, Pennsylvania

Marlin Beury, 24-year-old independent miner, knew all about the dangers of deadly, suffocating black damp. The day before, he wisely waited until brother Guy, 26, came home from work and could stand guard on top before he ventured into his poorly ventilated bootleg mine to drive a new air opening. That bit of foresight, plus his brother's courage, was credited with saving the life of Marlin, an ex-Seabee, when he was overcome shortly after he entered his 90-foot slope. Recent heavy rains had closed one of the two ventilating openings in the workings,

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and Marlin knew it wouldn't be safe or healthy to work in that kind air. When he first felt the dizziness caused by black damp and his lungs began choking for air, Marlin called to his brother on top for help. Guy dashed down the slope, and as he struggled to help Marlin up, he began to feel the effects of the bad air himself. Realizing he wouldn't be able to affect the rescue singlehanded, Guy dashed back up the slope and summoned a neighbor, Frank Zurat, and the two together went down the mine, tied Marlin securely with a rope and brought him to the top. Andrew Baunchak and Ray Conville responded to a call for help with the Minersville Goodwill ambulance and both Beury brothers were taken to the Pottsville Hospital for oxygen treatments. Guy, least affected of the two was released later that night. Marlin fully recovered the next morning and was expected to be discharged from the hospital. Source document.

Jul Old Ben No. 8 Mine Explosion, West Frankfort, Illinois

At the time of the explosion 264 men were in the mine, and all those not in the immediate area of the explosion escaped, unaided. All the deaths were due to burns and violence resulting from the explosion. Four men in the immediate explosion area were rescued after an **undisclosed period** but one man died approximately ten hours after being taken to the surface.

Aug John McNulty Mine Slide, Owensboro, Kentucky

Two men were trapped in a slide at the John McNulty coal mine, formerly the old Lee Rudy mine, five miles west of Owensboro. William Hays, 33, and Tom Gray, 61, the two men trapped in the mine, were at work cleaning a path toward the new shaft when the main shaft curb gave way. They were the only men in the mine at the time of the accident. An alarm was sounded, and a rescue squad was organized and succeeded in getting the two men back to safety within the space of **an hour**. A motorized winch was dispatched to the mine and the men removed through the new shaft on an improvised swing chair. Neither man suffered any ill effects from their ordeal. Later, the rescue squad was successful in bringing the mine pony to safety. Source document.

Sep Well Cave-in Rescue, Warner, New Hampshire

Norman Wood, 23-year-old war veteran, was rescued from an 18-foot well after being buried up to his waist for **22 hours** by a cave-in. Trapped while working in the well, Woods was pinned at the bottom of the pit and held prisoner for all the day and night before. When finally rescued by 300 volunteer workers, Woods was taken 18 miles to the Margaret Pillsbury hospital in Concord, where he was determined to be in fair condition. Source document.

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- Oct Helm Coal Strip Mine Material Slide, Dudley, Pennsylvania
Two employees of the Helm Coal Company at Dudley narrowly escaped death when the power shovel which they were using on a coal stripping operation at Dudley was covered by a slide of dirt and stone. The seriously injured men were rushed to the Mercy Hospital. The injured men were John Fahringer, the power shovel operator who suffered a compound fracture of the left leg. And James Harvey of Saxton, the oiler on the shovel. He, too, suffered a badly mangled left leg above the knee. He was the more injured of the two. Both men are suffering greatly from shock. Both men were pinned inside the shovel. Miners and all available citizens for miles around rushed the scene and worked frantically to remove the men from their perilous positions. Another shovel was moved to the scene to aid in the removal of dirt and stone. Ambulances waiting at the scene left immediately for the hospital when the men were rescued. The men were unable to assist in their own rescue since they were pinned in the wreckage when the tons of dirt and stone crushed in the side of the equipment. Source document.

— 1946 —

- Jan Havaco No. 9 Mine Explosion, Welch, West Virginia
James Williams, seriously burned about the hands and face, was rescued from the No. 9 mine of the New River & Pocahontas Consolidated Coal Company at Welch, West Virginia. The explosion there trapped 150 miners for **several hours** and killed 15. Source document.
- Feb Abandoned Anthracite Mine Lost Persons, East Scranton, Pennsylvania
After spending a night, lost in an underground gangway in an abandoned Anthracite mine, three Scranton youths were rescued. Rescued were Joseph Buydos, 16; George E. Lowe, 17; and Edward Liptock, 16. The boys entered the workings of the abandoned East Scranton mine shortly after school closed Monday. Exploring the passages, they became lost in the many tunnels and decided to wait until rescue came. When found the next day, after an **undisclosed period**, despite their long imprisonment in the damp and cold tunnels, the boys were unaffected physically but were tired and hungry. Source document.
- Feb Tamaqua Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
"I was hoping you guys would get here soon" was the greeting that Rolland Matalcavage gave to his rescuers when they reached him. Matalcavage was trapped for an **undisclosed period** by a rush of coal in a chute on the third level workings of the Tamaqua Colliery of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company. Workers heard the rush and rescue work proceeded. After a time, rescuers came

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upon several overhanging sections of rock, beneath which Matalcavage had crawled for protection. The workman was unharmed. [Source document](#).

- Mar Kempton Mine No. 42 Runaway Cars Derailment, Kempton, West Virginia
A heroic miner saved 10 comrades from certain death in the black depths of the Kempton No. 42 mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company but paid with his own life for his efforts. Peter H. Scripp, 33, succeeded in sidetracking a runaway string of cars racing toward the mine pit where the 10 men were working but the cars collided with others already on the siding, and Scripps was pinned against the side of the tunnel and crushed to death. Miners said they were forced to dig away the coal behind him to extricate his body. [Source document](#).
- Apr [Great Valley Mine Explosion](#), McCoy, Virginia
A rescue squad from Radford donned gas masks and made its way to the site shortly after the explosion. Eleven were found dead of burns. The twelfth miner, Paul Price, was brought to the surface but died without regaining consciousness at a hospital here.
- Jul Unnamed Mine Asphyxiation, Logan Canyon, Utah
Art Henderson was treated for asphyxiation when overcome by carbon monoxide gas in a mine in Logan Canyon. A rescue squad from the Logan-Cache fire department consisting of chief E. S. Laurence, and firemen Clyde Cressall and Heber Corbridge, answered the call with the respiration materials. Mr. Henderson was reported as resting "good" at his home by the attending physician, Dr. Omer Budge. [Source document](#).
- Aug Elcomb Mine Fire, Harlan, Kentucky
A rescue squad from Radford donned gas masks and made its way to the site shortly after the explosion. Eleven were found dead of burns. The twelfth miner, Paul Price, was brought to the surface but died without regaining consciousness at a hospital here. [Source document](#).
- Oct Abandoned Pennsylvania Coal Co. Mine Rescue, Pittston, Pennsylvania
A Pittston coal miner was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft after being entombed for **several hours**. Benjamin Desko, 58, was locked in the shaft when the exit was filled in by a bulldozer operator, who was unaware that he was in the shaft. Desko was reported missing by his wife when he failed to return home. She went to the shaft where her husband said he would be working and discovered the entrance blocked. The alarm was sounded, and workers of the Pennsylvania Coal Company made the rescue. When examined at the Pittston Hospital, Desko was found to be none the worse for his experience. [Source document](#).

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- Dec Globe Copper Mine Earth Slide, Globe, Arizona
John York, 52, trapped by an earth slide in the copper mine at Globe, Arizona was rescued after a **24-hour** entrapment. Hopes to rescue another miner trapped, John Orekar, age 44, diminished when the faint tapping sounds, he was making ceased after more than 70 hours. [Source document](#).

— 1945 —

- May [Sunnyside No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Sunnyside, Utah
Sunnyside No. 1 Mine Explosion, Sunnyside, Utah — Seven injured miners were brought to the surface within **two hours** following the explosion. These men were rushed to the hospital at Dragerton, less than a mile from Sunnyside, where Dr. F. V. Columbo, resident surgeon, assumed charge. Included in those injured and rescued were Martin M. Dean, Tony D. Trujillo, James A. Coleman, Guadalupe Sandoval, Tony J. Leger, Edward H. Edwards, and John B. Gulierez. [Source document](#).
- May Mine Subsidence Rescue, Pittston, Pennsylvania
A 57-year-old mother of 11 children was rescued from a 25-foot pit, after a section of her yard subsided as she stepped from the rear porch of her home. The woman, Mrs. Clayton M. Ryce, was rescued after an **undisclosed period** by her husband and neighbors after suffering lacerations and contusions. The Ryce home is located over abandoned mine workings near the scene of a former mine-subsidence which claimed the life of a five-year-old boy. [Source document](#).
- Aug Abandoned Mine Landslide, Beechwood, Maryland
The cows came home safe and sound — all four of them — after being trapped by a landslide for **three days** in an old coal mine without food or water. Shifts of men worked by lantern and carbon lamp hauling out wheelbarrow loads of rock and attempting to erect roof supports against recurrent rock fall. All were in good condition, their owners said. The last cow to be rescued, found about 150 feet from the entrance, was temporarily light-blinded, but was expected to make out all right. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Belva No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Fourmile, Kentucky
Approximately 3 hours after the explosion, nine miners barricaded themselves noting, "nine miners in here, 11 a.m. Thursday" on a pile of slate. **More than 50 hours** later, they were discovered and brought to the surface. The first out and the oldest of the group was Al Bennett. He died while awaiting rescue. The other eight miners were: Charles Lingar; McKinley Leath; William Branstutt; Ivan Philpot;

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Joe Hatfield; Huey Miller; Tom McQueen; and Bud Towns. Mr. McQueen died a few hours after the rescue. Mr. Towns died several months after he was rescued.

— 1944 —

- Jan Stambaugh Mine Cave-in, Uniontown, Pennsylvania
Oran Kennedy, 36, was rescued after **2 hours** from beneath tons of rock which crashed from the ceiling of the Stambaugh mine of the Bortz Coal Company. Tons of roof slate fell in the shaft in which Kennedy was working. A pit wagon broke the fall near the miner, however, and provided breathing space between the huge lumps of slate. Rescuers, constantly menaced by additional falls, went forward with their efforts until they reached Kennedy, who escaped with a fractured pelvis. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Anthracite Mine Hole Fall of Ground, West Scranton, Pennsylvania
Edward Pall, age 7, from West Scranton, appeared little the worse at his home following his rescue from a mine cave hole which held him prisoner for nearly two hours. The boy was on his way to school and walking along a path through a field near his home when the earth gave way and swallowed him to his shoulders. Nearly **two hours** later, his father, Charles Pall, on his way to work heard the boy's cries and saw his head sticking out of the ground. After digging frantically, Pall rescued his son and carried him home. Examination of the youngster showed he was unhurt but suffering somewhat from shock. Police said the cave was four feet deep. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Mine Subsidence Fall of Ground, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Seven-year-old Robert Adrian was swallowed up by the earth in a mine subsidence, only 300 feet from the spot where Jule Ann Fulmer, age 2, was killed in a similar cave-in a month earlier. But Robert lived to talk about it. Walking home from a barber shop, Robert plunged 10 feet into the earth when the paving opened beneath him, but he was buried only to his waist. The terror-stricken youngster scrambled to safety before passersby reached him. Almost simultaneously, another cave-in occurred nearby, but no one was near the spot. [Source document.](#)
- May U. S. Coal & Coke No. 31 Mine Inundation, Lynch, Kentucky
There was a dramatic rescue at Lynch, Kentucky, when 18 miners at the U. S. Coal & Coke Company No. 31 mine were saved after being trapped for **more than six hours** by high water. The flooding occurred when approximately 100,000,000 gallons of water, which had been impounded in the Roda No. 4 mine of the Stonega Coke and Coal Company, broke through into the First Right section of the

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No. 31 mine after a mountain bump occurred, crushing the barrier pillar between the two mines. The trapped miners were led to safety by company official, Ben Mills. Mills entered the pit through round-about channels and led them out through an air course. They were forced to walk through water almost neck-deep to reach freedom. None of the miners were injured or otherwise hurt by their experience. The U. S. Coal & Coke Company was a subsidiary of U. S. Steel.
[Source document.](#)

- Jul Ridgeway Darby Mine Fire, Harlan Kentucky
Eighteen miners trapped for **nearly 20 hours** were rescued from the flames in the Ridgeway Darby Coal Company Mine in Harlan, Kentucky. Only one man, C. C. Wills, had to be carried from the mine. Wills had been overcome by fumes, but his condition was not serious. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Mutual Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Excelsior, Pennsylvania
Michael Podovinski, 42, one of the owners of the Mutual Coal Company, a cooperative mine near Excelsior, was buried **one hour** under a rush of coal before rescued alive but uninjured. He was a patient at Shamokin State Hospital suffering from a fractured right leg, internal and chest injuries and lacerations of the head and face. His stepson, Edward Leszheskie, with whom he was working, left to get carbide for lighting purposes and Podovinski stepped into his working place. A moment later Leszheskie said he heard a rush and found his stepfather covered with the exception of his left leg. They were the only two at work in the area and Leszheskie in rushing to summon aid fell several times and injured himself but continued on. He returned with Anthony Kozinski, brother-in-law of Podovinski, and the four co-partners in the mining enterprise. They first drilled an opening so the victim could get air and an hour later had him liberated, alive and conscious. The mine was one of the largest cooperatively owned operations between Excelsior and Brady. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Maryland Fuel Mine Cave-in, Lonaconing, Maryland
William Reiber, 49, of Douglas Street, was rescued from the Maryland Fuel mine after being pinioned for **two hours** by a cave-in of timber supports. Reiber suffered a fractured right leg and was admitted to Memorial Hospital. The mine was owned by the Jenkins Coal Company. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
John Stebila, 16, was a patient in serious condition at Shamokin Hospital, the result of an accident which befell him as he was assisting in fighting a forest fire. The youth was a member of a fire-fighting group which was summoned to battle a blaze near the mining community. According to companions who took him to

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Shamokin Hospital, he fell more than 250 feet to the bottom of an abandoned mine shaft. Rescue workers worked for some time before they were able to bring the injured boy to the surface, and he was then taken to Shamokin Hospital. Doctors at the hospital said the accident victim sustained compound fractures of the hip, lacerations of the scalp, pelvic injuries, and a possible skull fracture. Source document.

— 1943 —

- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Byrnesville, Pennsylvania
Edward Stutscavage, 22, owed his life to the unceasing efforts of a rescue crew and, particularly to two men who played heroic parts in rescuing him from a coal hole at Byrnesville after he had been covered for several hours. Rescued from beneath a mass of earth, coal, and rock in a workings 150 and 175 feet underground, Stutscavage was taken to Ashland State Hospital where his condition was reported good and where X-rays were taken to determine the extent of an injury to his right shoulder. Stutscavage and a brother-in-law, Manuel Androde, 38, were putting up a set of timbers in their independent mine when a rush which they later said came without warning and "like a load of sand" and trapped them. Androde was covered only up to his knees, but Stutscavage was knocked down and almost completely covered. Hastening to the surface, Androde dispatched the hoister for help. Soon, miners came, and the rescue work was started. They had to proceed cautiously and slowly, however, because of the ever-present danger of a recurrent rush and the opening through which Androde had escaped permitted only one man to enter at a time. The story was told how one of the rescuers, Tony Bish, a Centralia man about 35 or 36, reached Stutscavage and, at the risk of his own life, arched his back over the young man to save him from being covered by a second rush. He remained in that position, holding up the weight of the new slide until other miners came. It was Androde, working tirelessly through the afternoon and evening despite his own weakened condition from the ordeal he had experienced, finally succeeded in uncovering Stutscavage. So tightly was he wedged beneath the debris, rescuers considered it a miracle that he escaped with his life. Source document.
- Feb Smith No. 3 Mine Explosion, Carbon County, Montana
As told in the book "Red Lodge Saga of a Western Area" by Shirley Zupan and Harry J. Owens, three miners were rescued from the Smith No. 3 mine disaster. At the time of the explosion, Alex Hawthorne, Willard Reid, and Eli Houtonen felt unusual pressure in their ears with no sound. A terrible wind came at them from inside the mine, blowing debris. Hawthorne reached a phone and sent word that something was wrong, and that he was coming out. He was then overcome by

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gas. Reid and Houtonen were knocked off their feet by the force of the wind. Reid managed to get up and tried to waken Houtonen. Guided by Reid's lamp, rescue men found the three and took them above ground. The three survived the explosion; 74 others did not.

- Mar Jermyn-Green Coal Co. No. 6 Colliery Cave-in, Inkerman, Pennsylvania
Henry R. Skibitski, 32, coal miner; and John Kuchinsky, 37, coal mine, helped to rescue Frank Chas, 44, mine laborer, from a cave-in in a mine, Inkerman, Pennsylvania, March 30, 1943. Two runaway mine cars were derailed in an air-course of a coal mine, causing the roof to collapse for 17 feet in the air-course and in a crosscut that extended six feet off the air-course at one end of the cave-in. Chas, who was in the crosscut, was pinned by a timber on which rock rested. While the debris moved and settled somewhat and a few rocks fell, Skibitski, followed by John Kuchinsky, from the end of the cave-in crawled 12 feet in a narrow passageway at one side of the cave-in under debris and reached Chas. They placed blocks under the timber; and with bars Kuchinsky and then Skibitski dug at rocks under Chas, freeing him. They dragged Chas into the air-course, lifted him across one of the cars, and lowered him to the floor beyond the inner end of the cave-in. Chas had sustained a cut on his head, and his legs were numb. Twenty minutes later, the debris having fairly well settled, Kuchinsky aided Chas over the car; and all crawled through the passageway into a safe section of the mine. Chas recovered. Skibitski and Kuchinsky were bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- May NuRex Mine Explosion, LaFollette, Tennessee
Eighteen coal miners, huddling behind a hastily erected canvas barrier nearly 2,000 feet underground, survived an explosion that rocked the Etna Coal and Coke Company mine and suffocated ten of their companions. The miners, fighting against the deadly fumes of "black damp" for more than **eight hours**, stumbled and crawled from their barricaded cell as rescue parties freed them.
- Jul Federal Colliery Inundation, Bridgeville, Pennsylvania
Six miners were rescued from the flooded Federal Colliery of the Ollett Coal Company after being trapped for **48 hours**. The rescue was largely successful due to the ingenuity of John Comp from the Red Cross. Make-shift surf boards were fashioned by Comp and used by the trapped miners with his assistance. The rescued miners were Henry Rheinstadler, Caesar Rua, Frank Albertini, Peter Carroll, John Bonassi, and Albert Long. Source document.

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- Sep Three Point Mine Explosion, Southeast Kentucky
Rescuers freed six miners after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion at the Three Point Coal Company mine in southeast Kentucky. Twelve miners perished in the accident; 3 directly by the explosion and 9 others found huddled together, overcome by gases. The six rescued miners had traveled one mile further into the mine where they constructed a barricade.
- Sep Primrose Colliery Explosion, Primrose, Pennsylvania
After an **undisclosed period** following the explosion, nine injured men were removed from the mine and taken to a hospital in nearby Pottsville. Most of them were suffering from burns, bruises, and shock. Only one of these, James Connelly, was believed to be in serious condition.
- Oct Collinsville Mine Lost Person, Collinsville, Illinois
Lost for more than **27 hours** 200 feet underground in the tunnels of a Bunker Hill Coal Company mine, John Millett, 62, was rescued, but not before he apparently gave up hope. With chalk on a piece of slate he had scribbled the words, "You're five minutes too late." Millett, a veteran mine examiner, was found unconscious several hundred feet from the central shaft by two Collinsville miners. Millett said he wrote the message in despair after one searching crew passed without seeing him where he lay helpless. He was transported to the hospital where he was treated for shock and exposure. Source document.
- Oct Bootleg Anthracite Mine Lost Persons, Kulpmont, Pennsylvania
Two men imprisoned by darkness deep in a bootleg coal hole were rescued near Kulpmont, **12 hours** after their lanterns went out and they were helpless to move in fear that they might plunge to their death. The miners, Adam Psanko, 34, and Charles McNevech, 33, were under treatment at Shamokin State Hospital for exposure. While enroute to the location of their work one of them dropped his lamp and it rolled into a yawning pit. With only one lamp remaining, they decided to return to the surface. Suddenly a gust of air blew the flame of it out and left them in pitch darkness. It was midnight before members of their families became alarmed because they did not return home, and a searching party was formed. When found, the pair hadn't moved a foot from the spot where the lantern went out. Physicians at the hospital said both men were in satisfactory condition and would be discharged after a thorough check. Source document.
- Nov American Rolling Mill No. 3 Mine Explosion, Nellis, West Virginia
Nine men lost their lives, and two others were hurt after a gas explosion wrecked a section of the No. 3 mine of American Rolling Mill Company. Only eleven men were in the mine at the time of the blast, the first in seventeen years, said

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Superintendent A. E. Oakley. Two were brought out alive after an **undisclosed period** and sent to hospitals at Charleston, twenty-five miles away. The blast occurred in a mechanical loading section two and a half miles underground. The rescued men were William Barker and Lawrence Vincent. [Source document.](#)

Nov Boothton Mine No. 2 Cave-in, Birmingham, Alabama

Three coal miners, trapped — **more than 2 days** — in the No. 2 mine of the Boothton Coal Mining Company were rescued unharmed, it was revealed by D. A. Thomas, company president. The trio, Lewis Lawley, Ellis Boothe, and Leslie Patton were entombed 8,000 feet from the mine entrance. Rescue squads who reached them passed food through holes in the barrier. [Source document.](#)

Nov Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Three bootleg miners were recuperating at their homes after a nerve-shattering experience, in which they were entombed **34 hours** in a coal hole before being rescued. They received bruises and lacerations when trapped in a collapsed bootleg mine shaft but suffered mostly from exposure. When the rescuers broke through the barrier, they formed rope slings to haul the entombed men from the mine. They were wrapped in heated blankets and taken to Shamokin Hospital where they were treated and kept under observation for 24 hours, before being allowed to return home. The three miners rescued were Nicholas Logush, Theodore Horoschak and Jacob Merena. [Source document.](#)

Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania

Anthony Onushak, 35, was rescued from a bootleg mine operation near Mahanoy City, after he was entombed more than **five hours**. Onushak was working alone at the bottom of a 400-foot slope when the workings closed as the result of a heavy fall on the slope. Fellow independent miners organized a rescue force and found the miner buried to his hips, but not badly injured. He refused medical attention after his rescue, and at his request was taken to his home. [Source document.](#)

Dec Glen Alden No. 9 Mine Cave-in, Sugar Notch, Pennsylvania

Trapped by a cave at the No. 9 Tunnel of the Glen Alden Coal Company at Sugar Notch, a miner and laborer were rescued by a crew which had dug persistently for more than **10 hours** to reach them. The men trapped were Frank Adamovitch, and his laborer, Benjamin Miller. Adamovitch's other laborer, Frank Verostek, away at the time of the cave, spread the alarm which brought mine executives and rescue crews to the scene. Adamovitch and Miller were taken to Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, where it was found Miller escaped almost uninjured, but that Adamovitch's injuries were more serious. [Source document.](#)

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— 1942 —

- Jan Wadge Mine Explosion, Mt. Harris, Colorado
Four miners who were working nearer the entrance were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. These men included Joe Gall, Bill Fickle, Elmer Everson and Mike Atansoff.
- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Forestville, Pennsylvania
Joseph and John Hudock were recovering in the Pottsville Hospital after they barely escaped asphyxiation from black damp while working in a bootleg coal hole near Forestville. They were rescued after an **undisclosed period** and revived by their father and other miners. Source document.
- Jan Coal Brook Colliery Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Four mine workers were rescued from entombment today after being imprisoned — **six hours** — behind hundreds of tons of rock at the No. 1 tunnel, Coal Brook Colliery, Carbondale. The men were loading coal on a shaker chute belt when a long section of the roof in the main gangway, the only passageway to the slope, collapsed. The gangway was blocked with debris. A crew of rescue workers with picks and shovels carved an opening through the blocked gangway. Two hours later communications were established with the men by tap drills. The tunnel was operated by the Hudson Coal Company. Source document.
- Jan Griffith Mine Cave-in, Canon City, Colorado
Three miners trapped by a rock and coal cave-in in the Griffith coal mine were rescued uninjured after 3 hours. The cave-in occurred 2,000 feet in the mine and filled the entrance tunnel for 200 feet. The rescued miners were Sam Bowman, 46; George Costantino, 42; and Joe Fazzino, 31. Source document.
- Feb Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Mecur, Utah
Three miners were rescued after **49 hours** of imprisonment behind a mud slide that blocked the mouth of the tunnel where they had been working. The men, Mark and Max Jorgenson and William Peterson blinked at the sunlight as they emerged and told of "just waiting" while their rescuers drilled thru a rock wall to reach them. Source document.
- Feb Morris Gold Mine Mud Slide, Oroville, California
Three miners trapped by a rock and mud slide for — **15 hours** — were rescued unhurt from the Morris ravine drift gold mine. Rescue workers drove pipes through 90 feet of debris to give the trapped men air and then dug them out. Source document.

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Mar Cracker Jack Mine Roof Fall, Boulder, Colorado

Teddy the mule was rescued following an **8-day** entrapment after a roof fall occurred in the Cracker Jack mine near Boulder, Colorado. Teddy survived the ordeal by nibbling on bark from pine roof props and drinking from pools of water in the damp mine. The owner, Joe Robertson, turned Teddy out to pasture to rest for a month following his ordeal.

Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

Charles King, 48, one of two miners rescued from a bootleg mine after being trapped **12 hours** following a cave-in, died from injuries at the Coaldale Hospital. His death resulted from internal injuries, a broken arm and shock. His partner, Raymond Herring, 40, sustained only minor injuries. Both had been pinned from the waist down by coal and debris 125 feet below the surface and had watched helplessly as rescuers dug toward them. Three other men were working in the tunnel of the old Dunkelberger colliery working when a set of supporting timbers collapsed, causing the cave-in. They escaped and spread an alarm. The working was abandoned about 50 years ago. Ten miners from the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company and an equal number of volunteers worked throughout most of the night to save the men. Source document.

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Tremont, Pennsylvania

Theodore Bonawitz of Tremont risked death by carbon monoxide gas to save the life of a young man who was overcome in a bootleg coal hole. The rescued youth was Harold Nelson of Reinerton. Bonawitz and his wife were driving in their truck on Route 209 west of Tremont, going toward Joliett, when they saw a man staggering along the highway. Recognizing him as Raymond Wise of Reinerton and knowing him to be a sober man and a devout church worker, Bonawitz knew something must have happened to him. Ted stopped his truck and Mr. Wise cried, "Get my buddy out of the coal hole." Without stopping to consider the risk to himself, Bonawitz rushed to the opening and descended 135 feet into the gas filled coal hole without the protection of a mask or the aid of a light. When he stumbled over the body of the victim of the carbon monoxide fumes, he managed to hoist him over his shoulder and began staggering his way up the slope. Weakened himself by the inhalation of the fumes, Ted soon collapsed under the weight of Nelson's body, but he struggled on, dragging the inert form after him until he came to a point within 25 feet of the surface. Unable to pull Nelson any further he groped his way to the surface where he lost consciousness. Water revived him in a short time. While Ted was engaged in his heroic efforts to save Nelson, his wife stood on the highway flagging cars to get help for her husband. After Bonawitz regained his consciousness, he was aided by some of the passersby in bringing Nelson up the last 25 feet to the surface. In the meantime, a highway

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patrolman had been stopped and told of the accident, and he rushed to Tremont for a doctor. He and Dr. Simonis arrived at the scene just as the victim was brought out of the coal hole, still alive but badly affected by the carbon monoxide. The doctor administered an injection and Nelson began to revive. Mr. Wise, who was able to get out of the coal hole before he was completely overcome, had completely recovered from the effects of the gas and was back at work, but Nelson was still ill from the fumes he inhaled. He was expected to recover. Nelson and Wise were pumping water from the coal hole, water that flooded the workings following the heavy rains of the previous week. They had a gasoline engine installed in the hole to pump out the water and a leak in the exhaust pipe caused the carbon monoxide fumes which almost cost the two men their lives. Mr. Bonawitz was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Medal for his bravery. [Source document](#). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Louis Bogetti, 32, was rescued from a 350-foot bootleg coal mine in which he lay trapped and partially buried for **38 hours**. Bogetti said that when the fall occurred, he dove beneath a chute for protection but was unable to pull in his legs before they were pinned. He said he lay face down until rescued, unable to move. Bogetti was transported to the State hospital where doctors said he suffered nothing worse than bruises of the legs and a shoulder. [Source document](#).

Jun Bankston Creek Colliery Cave-in, Harrisburg, Illinois

When Denny Moore, shotfirer at the Bankston Creek Collieries company mine failed to show up at the wash house at the end of the shift, fellow workmen started a search and found him buried under six feet of dirt. Moore's groans led the searchers to the spot where loose earth had caved in when he stepped upon it. He was taken to a hospital for treatment for shock and an injured back. [Source document](#).

Jun Unnamed Renton Mine Cave-in, Renton, Washington

Two miners were rescued from a coal mine gallery 350 feet underground where they had been trapped for **56 hours** by a cave-in. Hungry, but evidently unhurt, the miners, Archie Skiver, 40, and Robert Stonack, 20, were freed through a tunnel dug around the slide. They came through the tunnel unassisted but were taken to a hospital for observation. The only food they had was what rescue workers had been able to send down a 60-foot two-inch pipe driven to a point near the men. [Source document](#).

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- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Raven Run, Pennsylvania
John Mischishin, 47, Frackville, was trapped and entombed in a bootleg mine slope at Raven Run for **23 hours**. The miner was working at the bottom of a 53-foot slope when the timbers collapsed. When the break came the timbers formed a partial canopy over the worker to protect him from crumbling rock, coal and earth. When the collapse occurred, the trapped miner was buried to the hips, while a piece of rock knocked off his miner's cap and lamp. He hugged the side of the canopy formed by collapsed timbers until the rescuers removed tons of debris before they were able to extricate the entombed man. Upon his release, physicians at Ashland State Hospital said Mischishin suffered hip and back injuries and was in a severe state of shock, but they anticipated his recovery. [Source document](#).
- Aug Blue Goose Mine Entrapment, Picher, Oklahoma
The life of Cecil Case, 38 years old, was saved by the frantic efforts of 40 or 50 miners, mill men, ambulance drivers and others when he was covered by tailings at the Blue Goose mine. He remained covered for the greater part of **two hours**. Case was assisting in punching down tailings when he was caught. He had a rope about his waist and when the flood of gravel closed in on him, he poked his arm up so he could be seen. The flood of fine rock was pushed away from the man's head and the end of a rubber hose inserted into his mouth for breathing. Time and again the gravel covered him, but the men shoveled on and finally uncovered him enough that he could be pulled out, wet and almost frozen. Case was taken by ambulance to the Picher hospital where it was found that he was practically uninjured, and he was taken back to the mine and then home. [Source document](#).
- Aug Abandoned Clay Mine Lost Persons, East Liverpool, Ohio
Two youths lost for — **15 hours** — in an abandoned clay mine were found safe by a rescue squad. The youths, Robert Clutter, 17, and Donald Mahon, Jr., 18, became separated from companions after entering the multi-chambered mine, extending from five to six miles into hills overlooking the Ohio river. They were frightened but unhurt. [Source document](#).
- Sep Edy Creek Colliery Cave-in, Olyphant, Pennsylvania
Peter Partonova, 24, was rescued from behind a 50-foot wall of rock 700 feet below the earth's surface. He was confined there for **15 hours**. Partonova was working in a chamber a mile and a half from the base of the Edy Creek Colliery shaft when the rock roof collapsed. Partonova shouted directions to a rescue squad of 25 men all through the night. He was without food, but had water and lights, which were dimming as he was released. He was transported to the Mid-Valley Hospital where he was being treated for shock. [Source document](#).

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- Nov West Kentucky No. 10 Mine Explosion, Providence, Kentucky
Following the West Kentucky No. 10 explosion, the rescue party headed by District Mine Inspector James Fugate brought out nine trapped miners after an **undisclosed period**. They were unable to reach six other victims in time to save their lives.
- Dec Consolidation Coal Mine No. 32 Cave-in, Shinnston, West Virginia
A slate fall at the number 32 mine of the Consolidation Coal Company trapped five miners for **11 hours**. The rescue crew needed to dig thru 90 feet of slate and earth. The men, George Horsey, Henry Mullinaex, Louis Mazza, Walter Watson and Carl Debarr were not injured although exhausted by the ordeal. Faint tappings on the shaft walls encouraged the rescuers all day until a hole was drilled into the chamber where they were trapped, and the trapped miners took turns talking to the rescue squads. Source document.

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- Jan Griffiths Mine Cave-in, Canon City, Colorado
Three coal miners trapped 2,000 feet underground by a cave-in were rescued unhurt. Drillers bored through more than 20 feet of solid rock to reach the trapped trio. The men, trapped in a tunnel of the Griffiths coal mine, four miles east of Canon City, were imprisoned **less than three hours**. The three trapped miners were Sam Bowman, George Costatino and Joe Fazzino. Source document.
- Jan Pitha Mine Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Pinned by a rock fall, Peter Kobat, 55, was rescued by diggers who had worked in relays for **five hours**. Doctors, who had administered stimulants to Kobat as he lay imprisoned up to his waist in fallen rock, said the miner would recover. Source document.
- Jan Atkins Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Frackville, Pennsylvania
Michael Yuskoski, 43, was rushed to Ashland State Hospital after fellow workmen rescued him from under a fall of coal at the Atkins Coal Company. Hospital attaches said Yuskoski, who was almost suffocated, had no pain and there appeared to be no fractures, although a complete diagnosis had not been made. Source document.
- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Heckscherville, Pennsylvania
John Ryan, 28-year-old free-lance miner, was the anthracite area's latest bootleg mining fatality despite a dramatic rescue after being trapped for nearly **48 hours** in a coal hole at nearby Heckscherville. Ryan was brought to the surface alive late

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yesterday but died a short time after as he was being placed in an ambulance to be taken to Pottsville hospital. Rescue crews worked in relays of 20 men when Ryan was trapped by a cave-in 80 feet below the surface. Joseph Slane, 30, who was trapped with Ryan, was brought out alive. He was discharged from Pottsville hospital after receiving treatment for minor injuries. Vincent Burns, 35, a third man working in the hole, climbed to safety, and spread the alarm as the mine roof gave way. Weary rescue workers reached Ryan after a second cave-in had dimmed hopes of finding him alive. Spurred by his tapings, they sent a priest and a doctor into the mine after he told them weakly that he was "all right, but cold." Last rites were administered before diggers were able to remove Ryan. Ryan was found pinned between a coal car and the side of the mine by the physician and clergymen who risked another cave-in to reach him. Despite first aid at the scene, Ryan died of exposure and internal injuries, physicians said. Source document.

Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania

Pinned by the legs in a small chute off a gangway of a bootleg mine hole, William Kellet, 20, was released by fellow workers after an **undisclosed period** and removed to the Coaldale State Hospital. He was reported in "fair" condition. Source document.

Mar Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Kulpmont, Pennsylvania

William Fisher, 37, was in Shamokin State Hospital with a probable fracture of the pelvis, sustained when covered by a fall of coal and rock in a bootleg mine north of Kulpmont. According to the hospital report, Fisher was in shock when admitted but his condition was not believed to be critical. Fisher was saved from suffocation when his brother, Arthur, with whom he was working, immediately summoned John Dulis and Robert Mummaw, and all three dug him out in **less than a half hour**. Firemen from both companies at Kulpmont were on hand with pulmotors when Fisher was brought to the surface, but the pulmotors were not needed. The bootleg mine where Fisher was covered was about 50 feet deep. Source document.

Apr Lehigh Navigation Coaldale Colliery Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania

Work was resumed at the Coaldale Colliery of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company after a general suspension as employees unsuccessfully attempted to rescue a miner trapped at the bottom of shaft Number Nine. The body of Joseph Bennis, 51, finally was recovered by rescue workers. Bennis and Alex Petroskey, 61, were trapped by a chute cave-in. Petroskey was rescued **an hour later** and taken to Coaldale Hospital, where he reportedly was recovering from a pelvis fracture. Although they worked in continuous relays, the rescue squad was unable to reach Bennis in time to save him. Source document.

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- Apr Kehoe-Berge Coal Mine Cave-in, Duryea, Pennsylvania
Shock was believed to have contributed to the death of Stephen Olenik, 45-year-old Duryea miner. Olenik died at Pittston Hospital from injuries suffered April 30 when he was trapped for **twelve hours** in a cave-in at the Kehoe-Berge Coal Company mine. [Source document](#).
- Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Trapped — **52 hours** — in a coal hole 60 feet below the surface, 18-year-old Joseph Loftus dug his way out with his hands after rescue workers had given up hope of saving him and a priest stood by to administer last rites. The youth, who had been unconscious for a time after a slide blocked the shaft opening and filled the 40-foot horizontal gangway in which he was working, pushed his head through an opening made by astonished rescuers and was dragged to the surface. He had several bruises, and his fingers were scratched open to the bone. Rescue workers estimated he had dug 20 feet in darkness. Lawrence Burns, 45, trapped with Loftus in the gangway of their makeshift anthracite mine, was rescued earlier. The cave-in occurred on Friday, April 4th. Rescue crews started a new hole Saturday, behind where they expected to find the younger miner. Late Sunday, two of the workers returned to the original hole. After a few minutes of digging, the ground moved beneath them, and Loftus stuck his head out. He thought it was still Friday. [Source document](#).
- Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Branchdale, Pennsylvania
Albert Gudinas, 26, was rescued alive after an **undisclosed period** from a gas-filled coal hole at Branchdale by the heroic effort of his brother, Joseph. The brothers were engaged in pumping water from their slope when Albert entered the mine to replenish the supply of gasoline in the engine operating the pump. When the brother failed to reappear, Joseph entered the mine to find him unconscious, victim of carbon monoxide. Summoning other miners, it was with difficulty they made their way into the gas-filled operation and conveyed the unconscious Albert Gudinas to the surface and eventually to the Pottsville Hospital. Surgeons at the hospital administered oxygen and stimulation and after a time revived Gudinas. [Source document](#).
- May Abandoned McKisick Mine Fall of Person, Jackson Hot Springs, Oregon
After being trapped at the bottom of an 85-foot shaft in an abandoned mine, 13-year-old Robert Porter was rescued after an **undisclosed period** and was none the worse for his experience. Young Porter along with Warren Davis, 13, discovered a mine shaft of the old McKisick Mine and decided to give it the once over. Robert was the first to start down the 65-foot ladder, with Warren following at a distance. Near the bottom, the ladder broke off and dropped Robert the remainder of the

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distance. With an unimpaired portion of ladder remaining, Davis climbed back out and ran for help. State Policeman Phil Stansbury, City Policeman Parker Hess, and Fire Chief Clint Baughman answered the call. They went to the scene and pulled young Porter from the shaft by means of a rope. The youth was unhurt except for some minor scratches and bruises, but after their experience the boys decided to return to their homes and forego their night in the wilds. Source document.

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Primrose, Pennsylvania

The bootleg mine industry claimed its twenty-second victim since the first of the year on the morning of May 23rd, when the body of Thomas Oplansky, 44, of Minersville, was recovered from a coal hole near Primrose. Oplansky's companion, Stephen Keysock was freed from a mine a short time after a first fall which occurred when the two men were at work in a gangway, Keysock was taken to the Pottsville Hospital suffering from injuries of the right ankle and body bruises. Shortly after Keysock was rescued from the mine, several other falls occurred, and it is believed these caused the death of his companion. Rescuers had little hope of rescuing Oplansky alive after the second fall. Source document.

Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Onedia, Pennsylvania

James Houser, 26, of Onedia, was taken to the Hazleton State Hospital and treated for shock, exposure and contusions of the left leg suffered during a **10-hour entombment** in a coal hole. Caught when a cable broke, causing the buggy to pull out timber which closed a slope, Houser was rescued before 11 o'clock on June 13. He was working with his brother Henry, and Oscar Logan and was just winding up his coal hole job when the accident occurred. He was to begin a job at Audenried on the following Monday. Source document.

Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania

Dominick Cardosa, 29, was rescued from a bootleg coal hole after he had been overcome by black damp. Unconscious when admitted to the Ashland State Hospital, Cardosa, was reported greatly improved. Source document.

Jun Oregon Gold Mine Cave-in, Boulder, Colorado

Buried by a cave-in at the Oregon gold mine after almost **eight hours** of frantic effort by fellow employees and volunteer rescue squads, Bernard Meyring, 60, was rescued and recovering at a hospital from exposure and minor injuries, but apparently no broken bones. Source document.

Jun Kent No. 2 Mine Explosion, McIntyre, Pennsylvania

Of 34 miners trapped in the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company's Kent No. 2 mine at McIntyre, Pennsylvania, as the result of an explosion underground, 28

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were rescued alive after an **undisclosed period**. All the bodies were recovered. Of the 28 men brought out alive, 17 were burned badly enough to be taken to the hospital and several of these were reported in a critical condition. The 34 men were working in Section Three of the mine, when the blast, described as a dust explosion, rocked the entire region. Last New Year's Eve, five miners were entombed in the same mine for 18 hours, but escaped when workmen tunneled through to them. Source document.

- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Trapped for **eight hours** in his coal hole near the highway between Mahanoy City and Delano, Peter Gerasinovich, 43, was rescued, but died five hours later at the Locust Mountain Hospital. He suffered internal injuries when struck by part of the fall. Source document.
- Aug Kent No. 2 Mine Cave-in, McIntyre, Pennsylvania
A fall of rock in the Kent No. 2 mine of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company near McIntyre injured one miner and trapped three others for **5½ hours**. Edward Brink, 23, was caught by the outside edge of the fall just as the men were ready to quit work and leave the mine. He was extricated after **three hours** of rescue work and was rushed to the hospital suffering from possible fractures of the left hip and right foot. Two and one-half hours later, crews succeeded in clearing an opening to the other three miners trapped by the fall. They were uninjured. The three men were John T. Wysocki, 27; Gerald S. Swan, 54; and Fred Fogle, 30. This was the first day of employment with the R. & P. Coal Company for Mr. Fogle. All four men in the room were working as conveyor loaders. Source document.
- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Peter Benson, 47, was rescued alive after he was entombed for **several hours** in a bootleg mine operation near Mahanoy City. The miner was at work at the face of the gangway when the workings closed behind him. Fellow miners formed a rescue party, and it was first believed Benson was crushed to death under the fall. After a time, workmen heard him tapping and still later engaged with them in conversation. He hid himself behind a ledge while rescuers continued the removal of coal, rock, and earth. The man was not injured. Source document.
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Brady, Pennsylvania
A crew of independent miners labored **four hours** before freeing Charles Madden, who was trapped in a bootleg coal mine near Brady, Pennsylvania. The accident victim at first was thought to be seriously injured, but after being examined at Shamokin Hospital was allowed to return to his home. He sustained bruises of the

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legs. Fellow workmen said Madden was trapped by a fall of rock and that he was covered to the waist. Working carefully, a rescue crew succeeding in extricating Madden without causing further falls. Source document.

- Oct Daniel Boone Mine Explosion, Daniel Boone, Kentucky
34 rescued miners were brought to the surface by way of an air shaft within **two hours** after the explosion. Four other survivors were able to leave through the main entrance before it was filled by gas.
- Nov Davis Coal and Coke Mine No. 25, Thomas, West Virginia
A localized explosion occurred in this mine. Three men were killed by asphyxiation and burns and one man who was rescued from the explosion area was resuscitated. The ignition was caused by opening a non-permissible flame safety lamp by a fire boss in the presence of an explosive mixture of methane and air near the face of the working place. Source document.

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- Jan Unnamed Gold Mine Rescue, Grants Pass, Oregon
Rescuers transported Ray Fountain, injured gold miner, to a hospital after crossing the swollen Illinois river via a 370-foot rope bridge. Fountain, struck by a rolling boulder, suffered a broken leg, and crushed ribs. A miner named Carlson in the rescue party solved the crossing by twirling a weighted fish line across the raging stream. Fountain's partner, Fred Voight, pulled a rope over with the line and the makeshift bridge was fashioned. Fountain had been isolated from medical attention for **more than a day** because the high water made it impossible for rescuers to cross the stream. Source document.
- Feb Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Frank Ostroski, 37, was rescued after being trapped for **49½ hours** in a cave-in on the property of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company. Frank's brother Boley, 26, was rescued **14½ hours** earlier and suffered a broken left leg, a fracture of the left arm, and suffered from shock. The independent mine where the brothers were trapped, located on Lehigh Valley Coal Company ground, is in the old Morris Ridge section of the abandoned Sayre Colliery workings. The Ostroski brothers and Thomas Reiner, 21, Mt. Carmel, were in a heading about thirty-five feet from the slope when the accident occurred. The men were engaged in shifting coal with scoop shovels in relays, when the sides of the heading caved in. The falling material knocked the shovel from Reiner's hands, completely covered Boley and entombed Frank Ostroski. Reiner, who barely escaped being caught by the falling

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material and unable to rescue his buddies single-handed, raced back to town for help. Source document.

- Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Germantown, Pennsylvania
Leo Shuder, 21, was entombed by a collapse of a bootleg mine operation and was rescued alive — **5 hours** — later. Shuder was working with Charles Raulinaitis, 21, and Edward Davis, 21, both of Mount Carmel. According to the two buddies, Shuder was working at the face of a gangway at the bottom of a combination shaft and slope when the top broke. He was caught with a heavy piece of mine timber across his neck and back. His cries for help attracted his companions' attention. During the removal of debris, the imprisoned man talked with his companions and said he was not badly hurt. Source document.
- Mar Davidson Mine Cave-in, Connellsville, Pennsylvania
One brother was buried alive and a second was saved through quick action by a fellow miner in the Davidson mine of the Republic Steel Corporation. William and Edward Semjock, of Trotter, known to miners as "The Flappy Brothers" were working on a gob when a timber let go. Both were knocked out by the blow and fell to the ground. Presley Hixon, also of Trotter, who was working nearby saw the accident and hurried to the scene. He was successful in taking Edward, aged 24, to safety and was returning for William, 27, when the "gob" roof let go and the miner was buried under tons of slate, coal, and rock. The alarm was spread, and a crew of miners started digging to rescue the buried man. As hour after hour elapsed without the men making any appreciable headway all hopes Semjock might have been saved disappeared and he was given up as lost. Source document.
- Mar Maust Mine Cave-in, Stoystown, Pennsylvania
Five miners trapped for **eight hours** in a small domestic coal mine were freed uninjured by rescue crews who tunneled 30 feet through a rock fall to reach them. The men, Orrin Dunmier and his son, Roy; and William McVicker and his two sons, Robert, and Peter, were trapped by the rockfall in the Maust Mine, a small shaft operated by Dunmier and producing coal only for domestic purposes. Source document.
- Mar Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Branchdale, Pennsylvania
John Petroski, 50, was rescued alive and resuscitated by a physician after he had been overcome the day before by carbon monoxide while at work in a bootleg mine near his home. Petroski and other workmen had installed a gasoline powered pump for use in freeing their independent mine of water. After the pump had been installed all the workers except Petroski went to the surface to

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check on other installations, and during their absence Petroski primed and started the pump. He failed to notice the accumulation of rancid fumes and carbon monoxide and collapsed. Petroski was unconscious when found by Anthony Bernoski who entered the mine to check on the operation of the pump. He carried the limp form of the victim to the bottom of the slope, and with the assistance of others conveyed the gas victim to the surface, where a physician was successful in restoring him to consciousness. Petroski was expected to recover. Source document.

Mar Northwest Colliery Cave-in, Simpson, Pennsylvania

Two anthracite miners were recovering in a hospital from effects of **17-hour** imprisonment 30 feet underground because of a cave-in. Steve Daynock, 58, and Michael Hurchick, 36, were brought to the surface in a dramatic rescue from a cave-in in a sub-leased Northwest Colliery mine. John Palish, 42, working in the mine with Daynock and Hurchick, heard the warning rumble of the cave-in in time to scramble to safety. His alarm brought scores of miners from nearby communities and set them to digging frantically at the 30-foot earth wall that entombed the pair in a subterranean pocket. At 3:28 p.m., the life-and-death battle ended triumphantly at the brink of the 32-foot hole dug by a power shovel and hand labor. Rescuers reached the trapped miners and lifted them up ladders to a wildly cheering reception from the throng of spectators. They were taken to St. Joseph's hospital, Carbondale, and treated for exposure. Source document.

Mar Willow Grove No. 10 Mine Explosion, Neffs, Ohio

An explosion in this mine resulted in the death of 72 miners. Twenty-two others were overcome by afterdamp, rescued, and taken to the surface. Seventy-nine uninjured men were temporarily imprisoned and rescued **five hours** later. Investigators believe that the explosion was caused by the firing of a shot charged with black powder.

Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Joliett, Pennsylvania

Paul Lengel, 34, was transported to the Pottsville Hospital suffering with internal injuries received in an accident in a bootleg coal hole at Joliett. Lengel was squeezed between the frame and a dump cart, and a section of props fell on him. He was rescued by fellow workers after an **undisclosed period** and removed to the hospital, where his condition was critical. Source document.

Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Edward Forbes, 29, suffered multiple injuries after having been buried by a rock fall for more than **two hours** in a bootleg coal mine. Forbes, who was buried

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about 50 feet from the mine entrance, was treated for shock, body contusions, possible rib fractures, and lacerations of the hands and feet. [Source document.](#)

Apr Mattie Gold Mine Cave-in, Idaho Springs, Colorado

Imprisoned **13 hours** by a cave-in at the Mattie Gold Mine, Jack Ward, 25, was rescued uninjured. Ward was made a prisoner in a six-foot-square hole when a 20-foot wall of rock and dirt crashed down from the tunnel's ceiling while he and two others were replacing old timbering yesterday. He was trapped about 600 feet from the entrance of the mine. When the cave-in occurred, Ward jumped one way and his fellow workers, Albert Harrison, and Oscar Hyman, jumped the other. They escaped imprisonment and gave the alarm. A rescue crew of 20 men worked in relays, three at a time, to reach Ward in the narrow tunnel. [Source document.](#)

Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

Anthony Dziezyk, 24, was rescued alive from a perilous position in a collapsed bootleg mine working 300 feet below the surface of the Turkey Run Mountain, south of Shenandoah. The youthful miner was working 300 feet down the slope when the rib pushed out, trapping him under debris and covering him to the waist. Dziezyk was alone in the slope, engaged in loading a wagon when the rush occurred. Yanking hard on the signal wire to apprise fellow workers on the surface that all was not well, the signal was misunderstood, and Joseph Michalkewicz, in charge of the engine ... an improvised automobile motor ... tried to hoist the wagon. When he was unable to do so he realized something was wrong and descended half-way down the slope to learn from Dziezyk that he was trapped and threatened with death. For nearly **five hours** rescuers worked cautiously as they held back the rock with timber until they were able to release the young miner, who was in constant pain and suffering greatly from shock. After the timbers had been installed and rock lifted out of the slope to release young Dziezyk, he was placed in a wagon and hoisted to the surface. An ambulance and physicians from Locust Mountain Hospital were in waiting, gave first aid and hurried the accident victim to the hospital, where examination revealed severe abdominal injuries, extensive contusions of both legs and the patient in severe state of shock. The hospital indicated the youth was expected to recover. [Source document.](#)

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Webster Yoder, 36, of Shamokin suffered injuries of the head, back and left hand when he fell into a bootleg coal hole in the Bunker Hill section, near Shamokin. Yoder was walking through the hills when he stepped into the breach. His cries attracted the attention of nearby residents, and he was rescued with difficulty and

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removed to the Shamokin State Hospital, where his condition was listed as semi-serious. Source document.

- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Joseph Nolan, 47, was in a serious condition in Ashland Hospital with head, back and internal injuries suffered under a fall in a bootleg mine operation near his home. Nolan was engaged in dressing down shattered coal in the working place when the top broke, almost completely burying the miner. He was rescued by fellow workers after an **undisclosed period** and taken at once to the hospital. Source document.
- May Walker Mine Explosion and Fire, Walker Mine, California
Ross Nicely, 45, was the last of three miners rescued from the burning Walker mine. Two other men were brought to safety earlier. Trapped for **7½ hours**, Mr. Nicely emerged from the mine with a rescue crew consisting of seven Grass Valley miners and three company men. The crew was the second to go into the shafts after the explosion and fire were discovered. Source document.
- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Clement Petrovich, 22, was admitted to the Pottsville Hospital with injuries of the head and a possible fracture of the skull, received when he was caught under a fall of top coal in a bootleg coal hole near New Philadelphia. Fellow miners rescued him after an **undisclosed period** and removed him to the hospital, where he is being treated for shock and the injuries. Source document.
- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Enoch Janaskie, 32, was transported to the Shamokin State Hospital suffering from back and pelvis injuries when struck by a rock while at work in a bootleg coal hole. Fellow workers rescued him after an **undisclosed period** and removed him to the hospital. Source document.
- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Greenbury, Pennsylvania
Joseph Terway, 45, an independent miner injured when he was entombed for an **undisclosed period** in a coal hole near Greenbury was taken to the Good Samaritan Hospital for treatment. He died two days later in the hospital of internal injuries and multiple fractures. Source document.
- Jul Primrose Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Minersville, Pennsylvania
Anthony Epsavage was rescued after an **undisclosed period** from a fall of rock and coal which struck him at the Primrose Coal Company. He was released by fellow workers and removed to the Warne Hospital in the Community Ambulance.

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He underwent an operation at the hospital for a dislocated right shoulder and left ankle, and his condition was reported as being good. [Source document](#).

- Jul [Sonman "E" Mine Explosion](#), Portage, Pennsylvania
Some of the survivors of the blast were slightly burned by the hot air that rolled through the mine. Thirteen of them came out of the 18th heading and eight escaped from the 16th heading. Edward Bem, one of these survivors, said the men crawled on their hands and knees and finally made their way to the 'dip' where they were rescued after an **undisclosed period**.
- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Heckscherville, Pennsylvania
Aloysius A. Brennan, 19, was rescued alive from a collapsed bootleg mine hole, and when he arrived at the surface following the rescue it was found he had escaped with a minor hip injury. Brennan and a brother, Leo, 16, drove a 20-foot shaft into a vein on an abandoned stripping operation at Pine Knot Colliery. The elder brother was working alone at the bottom of the shaft when the place collapsed. Rescuers were summoned from other independent mines and after **two hours** the workers removed sufficient debris to release the young miner. [Source document](#).
- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Kulpmont, Pennsylvania
Charles Griscavage, 27, Kulpmont, was a patient at Shamokin State Hospital, suffering a probable fracture of the skull and other injuries sustained when caught under a fall of top rock in a bootleg mine hole. He was partly buried, but fellow miners quickly rescued him. [Source document](#).
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Branchdale, Pennsylvania
Two Pine Grove miners were rescued alive yesterday after being trapped **15 hours** in a bootleg mine operation near Branchdale. James Kimmerling, 50, and Rep Batz, 32, were found uninjured but suffering greatly from cold and shock after they had been trapped in cramped quarters following the fall of many tons of coal. The two miners were working in a gangway 20 feet in from the bottom of a shaft when the bottom fell out of their working place when it was driven into old workings. As the bottom dropped, the mine collapsed. Kimmerling and Batz stepped to a narrow ledge and clung there while rescuers worked 15 long hours to remove debris, place timber and reopen the workings to reach the trapped who aided by directing activities of the rescuers. Miners who assisted in timbering the old workings and driving a new tunnel to reach the men marveled they escaped with their lives. [Source document](#).

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- Sep Silver King's Alliance Mine Cave-in, Park City, Utah
Nine miners from Park City were rescued unhurt from a cave-in in the Silver King's Alliance shaft. Everybody that was trapped was rescued alive, and all were unhurt. Apparently, they suffered little discomfort, except the mental anguish of being trapped underground. Sandwiches and coffee were lowered to them during the day through a narrow cut by rescuers. The men were **21 hours** underground. The cave-in occurred when a waste chute collapsed between the 800 and 900-foot levels. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Two hard-coal miners, rescued after being trapped **65 hours** in a mountain coal hole, related from hospital beds how they calmly wound their watches and waited minute by minute for death they thought was certain. The plight of William Goodman, 60, and William Burke, 28, finally became so desperate that a priest administered last rites through a one-inch pipe rescue workers had driven down to the imprisoned men, 90 feet below the earth's surface. What amounted to a miracle for the miners came when the rescue squad tunneled through to a cramped gallery where they had been trapped by a fall of debris that choked the mine entrance. "I'm all right," was all Burke could say as he stumbled to a waiting ambulance. Goodman was carried out on a stretcher. Both were near collapse from cold, hunger and foul air. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Fall of Ground Incident and Rescue, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Eleven-year-old Joseph Steindel rested comfortably at his home, seemingly none the worse from his brief entombment when the walls of an eighteen-foot crater near Cornell Park collapsed while he was digging coal. The little victim was jerked from the brink of eternity by four South Scranton men who extricated the victim with their bare hands. When Edward Nowrocki arrived after being attracted by the boy's screams, he saw only a blackened hand extending above the rock and debris. Nowrocki and the others joined in the rescue and digging with their hands, the skin of their fingers torn with each thrust, they piled rock, coal, and dirt to one side and in less than a minute little Joseph's head was unearthed. The youngster was unconscious but started to breathe freely by the time the rescuers had loosed his wedged body from the landslide. The lad was rushed to State Hospital in a police radio car, where he was found to have incurred only minor body bruises and shock. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Golden Key Mine Asphyxiations, Mariposa, California
Four miners overcome by gas fumes were rescued from the Golden Key mine in the Whitlock mining district when a fifth member of the group managed to get to the surface to summon help. A rescue crew of 20 men entered the workings and

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brought the four men to the surface after an **undisclosed period**. The men overcome were Lyon C. Gray, president of the Western Mining Association; Joe Gray, manager of the Golden Key Mine; Paul Mills, Elwyn Lund and Pedro Cosmond. Mills managed to get to the surface and get help. [Source document](#).

- Nov Penn-Anthracite Collieries Company Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Julius Yankowski was rescued after spending **49 hours** trapped by a cave-in in a mine operated by the Penn-Anthracite Collieries Company near Scranton, Pennsylvania. His companion, James Long, was found dead when reached by rescuers. [Source document](#).
- Dec Kent No. 2 Mine Cave-in, McIntyre, Pennsylvania
Five Indiana County miners looked back upon a New Year's they avowed was the happiest they have ever known. After spending **18 hours** at the very door of death, being imprisoned deep in the earth by a rock fall, they were rescued unharmed in time to spend New Year's Eve with loved ones they never expected to see again. The men were trapped in a heading three miles below the mouth of the Kent No. 2 Mine of the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company near McIntyre. Thirteen companions escaped and summoned fellow miners to dig through a 700-foot collapsed section to reach them. [Source document](#).
- Dec [No. 4 Mine Explosion](#), Beckley, West Virginia
Soon after the explosion in the No. 4 mine, five men were brought out and taken to hospitals. The injured included Albert Wade, Harry Sexton, Joe Saunders, Roy Hill, and John Dalton. Physicians said Sexton may die but the others would probably recover.

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- Jan [Crown Hill No. 6 Mine Fire](#), Clinton, Indiana
Nineteen miners were rescued from the [Clinton Coal Company's Crown Hill No. 6 Mine Fire](#) near Clinton, Indiana after being trapped there for **10 hours**. Rescuers waded water waist-deep through another tunnel, abandoned for 20 years, broke down a barrier and reached the men from behind.
- Jan South Comstock Silver Mine Cave-in, Virginia City, Nevada
George Peterson, 35, was rescued after being trapped for **12 hours** when a cave-in occurred in the old South Comstock mine. He was suffering only from shock and had to be carried out of the mine on a stretcher. [Source document](#).

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- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Frank Mischurski, 34, was rescued from a makeshift coal hole in which he had been trapped for **fourteen hours**. At Pottsville hospital, physicians said he suffered bruises and nervous breakdown. Mischurski and a companion were in the coal hole when debris caved in upon them. The companion leaped to safety, but Mischurski was pinned so he could not work his way out. Other miners dug through to reach him. [Source document](#).
- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Newkirk, Pennsylvania
Joseph Franks was rescued from a bootleg coal hole after being trapped for approximately **10 hours**. He was taken to the Coaldale Hospital where he was treated for exposure. Franks was entombed together with two companions, Edward, and George Weidel, who were rescued a short time following the accident. Rescue workers were impeded in their work by a heavy fall of snow but maintained a constant working crew despite the weather. [Source document](#).
- Jan Hazleton Shaft Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Two miners trapped for nearly — **19 hours** — were rescued from the Hazleton Shaft Colliery of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. To free the miners, rescuers cut a new 4x4 hole driven parallel to the rock hole. Both miners were able to walk out of the place where they had been imprisoned and were taken to the State Hospital where they were reported to be in good condition. [Source document](#).
- Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Three miners escaped unharmed but a fourth was critically injured as black damp swept their coal hole, east of Shamokin. Howard E. Bingham, 48, was rescued from the mine after an **undisclosed period** by the three others after they had made good their escape. He was removed to the Shamokin State Hospital where it was announced he was suffering from severe shock, and head injuries. His condition was considered serious. The four men were working at the bottom of the 300-foot shaft when the dreaded black damp swept in, overcoming Bingham immediately. Alert to the imminent danger, the others hurriedly began ascending the shaft, John Lotys grabbed the fallen Bingham by the belt and dragged him along. Risking his own life in a heroic attempt to save Bingham, Lotys managed to get the stricken miner about 60 feet up the shaft when, presumably affected by the black damp to a certain extent himself and exhausted from Bingham's weight he lost his hold on the belt and Bingham tumbled down the shaft. It was discovered afterward that Bingham fell to within ten feet of the bottom or about 50 feet and that he was saved from a further fall by some timber at that point of

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the shaft. Had he fallen the entire distance, he would have drowned. [Source document.](#)

Feb Crown King Mine Cave-in, Prescott, Arizona

Ben Whipple was rescued from his entombment of **more than 11 hours** from the 500-foot level of the Crown King mine. He was in critical condition. Whipple was buried by a cave-in in an old tunnel. The rescue crew was composed of several men who escaped the cave-in by less than 10 feet. [Source document.](#)

Mar Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiation, Centralia, Pennsylvania

Manuel Alves, 28, was overcome by gas or blackdamp while working in a bootleg mine. Alves was in a critical condition when rescued by fellow miners. Alves was taken to Ashland State Hospital, where surgeons administered oxygen and stimulation. The miner was revived, and while his condition was critical, he was expected to recover. [Source document.](#)

Mar Abandoned Mine Rescue, Coalburg, Alabama

This rescue involves a most unlikely pair that became lost in an abandoned mine in Coalburg, Alabama. Cecil Morgan was apprehended and taken into custody when he was found operating a still a quarter of a mile underground. Deputy Sheriff Jim McAdory had captured Morgan and while attempting to make their way to the surface, the pair became lost. More than 100 officers and miners spread through the workings in search for the two men and found them resting on a mud bank after being confined for **18 hours** in the mine, much of the time in total darkness. [Source document.](#)

Apr Lehigh Valley Coal Company Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

One man was killed, and another seriously injured in a bootleg mine cave-in at Franklin stripping of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Wilkes-Barre. Jacob Wasnaias was buried in the cave-in and killed. A volunteer crew of 20 men worked — **eight hours** — to free Wasnaias and his companion, Paul Zianas, who was taken to a Wilkes-Barre hospital. [Source document.](#)

May [Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in](#), Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania

Rescuers worked for **15 hours** to free sixty-year-old Joseph Babatsky after a fall of clay in a "bootleg" anthracite coal mine near Shenandoah in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Thirty rescuers began the work shortly after the fall and as they neared him, he instructed them how to proceed.

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- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Robert Galligan was rescued from a "bootleg" anthracite mine near Shenandoah, Pennsylvania after a cave-in trapped him in the mine for **65 hours**. During the rescue, he was heard joking and singing.
- May Star of Utah Tunnel Cave-in, Keetley, Utah
After being trapped for nine hours by a cave-in of the Star of Utah tunnel, eight men were rescued. The Star of Utah tunnel, owned by the New Park Mining Company, was being used by the Park City Utah Mines Company as a means of egress to its workings. It is a little more than eight miles southwest from Keetley and about three miles in an airline east from Park City. It is reached by a high, winding road. None of the eight men trapped was injured, and a statement from the company said they suffered only the inconvenience of awaiting discovery. Discovery of the cave-in was made by miners returning from their work in the Wasatch tunnel. Source document.
- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Andrew Engle, 52, was reported in fair condition at Locust Mountain Hospital after he and his 19-year-old son were rescued from a fall of rock and coal 100 feet below the surface in a bootleg coal hole near Shenandoah. The elder Engle, rescued after **five hours'** entombment, was covered to the neck by the fall. His son, rescued after **two hours**, was unhurt. Source document.
- Jun Star of Utah Tunnel Cave-in, Keetley, Utah
Eight miners trapped — **nine hours** — by a tunnel cave-in were rescued. The cave-in was in the Star of Utah Tunnel used by the New Park Mining Company as a means of egress to its workings. One of the trapped miners later related how the cave-in dammed the tunnel, causing water to collect along the floor and slowly swell up the sides. The men moved back slowly and took positions as high in the tunnel as was possible. A company announcement said that none of the men were injured. Those trapped included Earl Giles, George Giles, Russell Horrocks, Joe Murdock, Amos Wilson, Jerry Gertsch, Randall Schear, and Darrell Provost. Source document.
- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
A young, free-lance miner, freed from a makeshift coal hole after having been trapped for **eleven hours**, died in the hospital of shock and injuries. Leonard Reidinger, 21, was in serious condition from the exposure when he was rescued from his underground prison. Reidinger was trapped the day before by a fall of earth and timbers in the "slope mine" at nearby Klondike Mountain. Rescuers were able to free his head almost at once, but they worked gingerly throughout

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the day to extricate the remainder of his body. The youth was working at the slope mine when the fall occurred. His father and two brothers were busy at the coal hole with him and directed the rescue work. Reidinger was pinned about fifty feet from the opening of the hole. As rescue work progressed, he was given hypodermic injections and retained consciousness, directing the activities of his rescuers. Source document.

Jul Duvin Mine Explosion, Providence, Kentucky

Five of the men in the explosion area escaped, 4 being slightly cut and bruised. A trip rider standing near a telephone at a parting was knocked down but received no injuries; he called the top foreman and then helped two injured men out of the smoke and fumes to a place where a locomotive was sent to bring them to the shaft. Two of the rescued, Ernest Johnson and Douglas Cates, had been caught beneath the fallen walls, Dennis Walker, was not hurt. William Reynolds, who had been working near the shaft was injured.

Jul Oak Hill Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Minersville, Pennsylvania

One miner was rescued after an **undisclosed period** today from beneath a rockfall in the Oak Hill Coal Company mine, but all hope was abandoned for a companion trapped at the same time. Frank Grippe, 29, was carried from the shaft suffering principally from shock. He was taken to a hospital. A company official said, however, the rush of coal and rock buried Steve Hulock, 27, and there was- no possibility he could remain alive. The men were legitimately employed as "pillar robbers" — the term applied by miners to those removing supporting pillars of coal when a level has been worked out and is to be abandoned. Grippe was pinned by debris that covered all except his shoulder and head. Hulock was working in a pillar hole below. Diggers proceeded slowly because of the danger of another fall and did not expect to reach Hulock's body soon. Source document.

Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Greenbury, Pennsylvania

Raymond Levashausky, 21, was rescued tonight from a "bootleg" coal hole **six hours** after it collapsed on him. The trapped miner sustained life and avoided injury by clinging to a pocket in the side of the shaft. A companion, working at the surface, brought aid. The accident occurred at Greenbury, Pennsylvania, five miles from Pottsville. Source document.

Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Good Springs, Pennsylvania

John Carl, 30, was rescued from the bottom of a 400-foot coal hole where he was trapped the night before by a rock fall. He was not injured and went to his home after being hoisted to the surface by friends who worked throughout the night. They found him huddled in the safety of a passageway that branched off from the

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bottom of the slope at a forty-five-degree angle. The mishap occurred in an abandoned colliery a mile from Carl's hometown of Good Springs. A companion, Homer Smith, 45, scrambled to safety and summoned aid. [Source document.](#)

- Sep Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Rescue crews freed six miners **two hours** after they were trapped behind a rock fall deep in an anthracite mine. None was seriously injured. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Sheppton, Pennsylvania
Faust Bertie, 37, of Sheppton, was caught by a fall of coal and rock in an independent coal hole about 4 miles west of Sheppton and was rescued a **half hour** later. He was given first aid treatment and then directed to enter the State Hospital for observation. His injuries were not regarded as serious. Bertie's plight was discovered by Adolph Ferrari, of Sheppton, who was walking by and heard the victim's moans. Help was immediately summoned, and the rescue was affected by 4 more miners. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Leon Landau, 38, was rescued alive after being entombed **10 hours** in a narrow rock hole of the small mine he operated with Clarence Haertter. Following his rescue. Landau was taken to Shamokin Hospital, where surgeons said his right side was partially paralyzed. He was also suffering from shock. Surgeons said the injured man's condition was "fair," and that barring the unexpected, he had a good chance for recovery. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Wanamie Colliery Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Five mine workers caught behind a fall of roof yesterday in the Wanamie colliery, of the Glen Alden Coal Company, tapped an alarm by way of pipes and were rescued uninjured. The fall cut off the gangway of a slope and the five men were trapped back of the fall. The alarm signals given on water pipes were heard on the surface and within a short time a rescuing force started the work of clearing away the fall. While the rescuers worked, they kept up conversation with the trapped men, who were rescued after having been imprisoned about **four hours**. The trapped men were Edward Makowski, assistant mine foreman; Stanley Symolzak, miner; his son, Edward, laborer; Edward McCloskev, miner; and Edward Wozniak, laborer. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Wilson Mine Fall of Person, Lake Lynn, Pennsylvania
Trapped in a large coal bin after he saved himself from probable serious injuries by catching a two-by-four beam, Millard Johnson, 27, held on for nearly **half an hour** before his screams attracted a trucker, Leslie Morgan, who rescued the man a few

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minutes before a heavy car of coal dumped into the bin. Johnson was mending the track end at the Wilson mine, operated by J. L. Corbin of Lake Lynn, when he fell into the bin. [Source document](#).

- Nov Alaska Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Joseph Wydra, 34, and Robert Morgan, who were rescued after having been closed in several hours in the mines at the Alaska colliery were still feeling the effects of the dampness of their confine but otherwise were alright following their experience. The fall which trapped them was a heavy fall and enclosed the two men in the pillar hole until they were finally rescued nearly **5 hours** later. The night foreman discovered the plight of the miners and immediately summoned other bosses and workmen to begin the work of breaking through the barrier of rock and debris. [Source document](#).
- Nov Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Rescue workers found Edison Schlauch, 34, dead under tons of debris in a coal hole two miles northeast of Mahanoy City. Two companions, Anthony Nackovski, 21, and Peter Bogdanovicz, 31, both of Shenandoah, were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Both suffered shock and exposure but otherwise were uninjured. The Deputy Coroner said the cave-in buried Schlauch but that the two other men were caught near the roof of the hole in such a way that they were able to breathe. [Source document](#).
- Nov Butterfield Canyon Mine Cave-in, Bingham, Utah
Keith Brown, 28, died in the Bingham hospital of a broken neck suffered in a mine cave-in. The victim's brother, Burl Brown, 32, was in good condition. He suffered several broken ribs in the same accident. Officials of the Combined Metals Reduction Company said the cave-in occurred in a slope of the company's Butterfield Canyon mine when timbering gave way while the two men were working. Both men were almost completely buried under timbers and earth and were rescued with difficulty. Burl Brown aided his rescue by crawling out of his hip-length rubber boots, but it was almost two more hours before his brother was extricated. [Source document](#).
- Dec Leggett's Creek Colliery Fall of Person, North Scranton, Pennsylvania
Albert Owens, 17, was recovering from injuries and exposure after a fall down a deep shaft at the Leggett's Creek Colliery of the Penn Anthracite Company near his North Scranton home. He finally was rescued and brought to the surface after he had clung to bracing timbers that had broken his fall. If he had lost his hold, police said, he would have plunged 700 feet to certain death. Young Owens and his brother, Frank, 15, were playing near the mine entrance, when Albert dropped

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down the chasm. The brother ran to a house a half-mile away and State Motor Police were notified. Patrolman John Owens first attempted to rescue the youth, but the rope was too short. A ladder then was placed across the shaft and with a longer rope Nicholas Williams descended and was pulled up with young Owens. Officials were informed there were no guard rails at the shaft. The victim was removed to Scranton State Hospital with a broken right leg, possible internal injuries. He suffered from exposure in the bitter cold in the mine shaft before his rescue. Source document.

- Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pine Hill, Pennsylvania
"I'll be all right now," William Koons, 44, told bootleg miners as they rescued him from the bootleg coal hole on the Pine Hill Mountain in which he and his brother-in-law, Roy Kramer, 38, had been imprisoned. Kramer had been recovered dead 4½ hours earlier. But Koons' injuries and the shock of being buried alive — **more than 24 hours** — in a coal hole were too great and he died about 7 hours later in the Pottsville Hospital. Source document.

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- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Minersville, Pennsylvania
George Todack was rescued from a bootleg coal hole he was entombed in a for **several hours**. He was transported to the Pottsville Hospital, suffering with a possible fracture of the left leg, shock, and exposure. His condition was listed as fair. Source document.
- Jan South Wilkes-Barre Colliery Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Michael Samhoski, 22, was rescued quickly after an **undisclosed period** after he was buried under a fall of rock in the South Wilkes-Barre Colliery of the Glen Alden Coal Company. He was taken to General Hospital, where he was treated for lacerations of his scalp, neck, face, left eyebrow and nose. Source document.
- Jan Marriott Farm Mine Cave-in, Versailles, Missouri
William June, 19, was rescued alive after being **buried for hours** when a cave-in in a tiff mine covered him and 50-year-old Orb Marriott. Marriott was found dead. June and Marriott were working the small mine on Marriott's farm when the clay and dirt of a sidewall rolled down upon them. June was in a waist-deep hole he had dug and said he believed this saved his life as he was able to get air. Marriott died from suffocation. Ray Jones, 15, erroneously reported trapped in the slide, was the youth who discovered the men were imprisoned and who spread the alarm which brought scores of miners and farmers to the rough Ozark farm of Marriott. Source document.

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- Feb Lehigh Valley Mine Inundation, Jeanesville, Pennsylvania
Seven out of eight miners were rescued after being trapped for **18 hours** in the flooded Lehigh Valley Coal Company mine at Jeanesville. The eighth man, Paul Kuritz was found dead. The rescued men were Michael Olexa, Joseph Fidishin, Stephen Stefranko, John Lavaraski, Andrew Havrilla, William Davis, and Paul Molnar. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Bootleg Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Entombed **six hours**, Nicholas Wisneskie, was rescued from a coal hole near the St. Francis cemetery at Shamokin. Protection afforded by a large slab of rock which fell in a leaning position against the side of a mine buggy, saved Wisneskie from being crushed. The entombed man, who refused to be taken to the hospital, went to his home with only minor injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Parriette Mine Cave-in, Roosevelt, Utah
Roy Campbell, 43, was killed and two others, one of them Campbell's son, were rescued after being entombed for — **six hours** — in a mine cave-in. Campbell was crushed between 50 tons of gilsonite. He was working 800 feet underground in one of the mine's deepest shafts. Campbell's son, Darwell, and Everett Pope, another workman, started to his rescue when they were cut off and trapped by a second cave-in. Rescuers reached young Darwell and Pope six hours after the slide. The pair had been able to breathe through the rocks. [Source document.](#)
- Mar McKinley Farm Mine Cave-in, Clintonville, Pennsylvania
A cave-in occurred at the coal mine of Mike Serge on the McKinley farm. Leaving the tippie, one of the cars got loose, and it ran into the mine and dislodged the timbers. Approximately 30 feet of the entrance entry to the mine was closed, leaving four men trapped inside. They were rescued within **four hours** from the time the mine was closed shut. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Delaware and Hudson Coal Mine Cave-in, Silverton, Pennsylvania
Peter Koresky, 65, of Llewelyn, who was trapped in the shaft of the Delaware and Hudson Coal Co., at Silverton, near Llewelyn, had a narrow escape from death, when rescued after about **five hours'** imprisonment. He received treatment at the Pottsville hospital for shock, bruises and bad lacerations of the head and body. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Birmingham, Alabama
Oliver Busby, 49, mine foreman, saved Coleman Burrell, 25, trackman's helper, from bleeding and a cave-in in a mine, Birmingham, Alabama, March 28, 1938. When runaway mine cars in a coal-mine collided with standing cars, Burrell was

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knocked to his knees between the ends of two cars, the car's coming to a stop after one of them had dislodged two roof supports. The roof began slowly to sag above Burrell. Burrell's leg was caught under a car and was fractured; and an artery was severed from which blood spurted. Busby crawled under the sagging roof to Burrell. Lying on his side in a confined space on the floor, he pressed the artery, stopping the flow of blood almost entirely. He was thus engaged for 10 minutes, all the time regarding the sagging roof with apprehension. The car was then raised, and Burrell was carried to safety. A very short time later roof timbers came to rest on the car alongside of which Busby had lain; and a large rock slid down on it, followed by a fall of small rock. Burrell's leg later was amputated. Oliver Busby was given the Carnegie Hero award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

May Oliver Jones Mine Hoisting Accident, Commerce, Oklahoma

While being hoisted out of the old Oliver Jones Mine in a bucket, the cable snapped, and Bill Sholts and Dick Kelton plummeted to the 200-foot level causing an avalanche. Mr. Sholtz and his fellow passenger were hemmed in and crushed by rocks. Both Mr. Kelton's legs were broken. Writhing in agony, the men did not give up hope. They prayed for a swift rescue. It came **two and a half hours** later. Men summoned by the hoist operator dug them out and carried them to the surface. Mr. Sholtz died in a Miami, Oklahoma hospital two hours after his rescue. Mr. Kelton was on serious condition. The rescuers' work did not end when the two men were taken out. Trapped with them at the 200-foot level were four other men. With the hoist shattered and the shaft entrance blocked, their one avenue of escape was blocked. They huddled together in the darkness while men from nearby mines flocked with picks and shovels to aid in the rescue work. The rescuers finally dug through an abandoned slope connecting with the Oliver Jones mine and carried out the trapped men. The mine, abandoned years before as "played out," had been rented by the seven men who manned it. Through makeshift operations, they sought to eke a living out of the abandoned property. The practice was known as "gouging" and was common in the tri-state zone. The bucket and the initial avalanche struck and killed Fred R. Rosson. [Source document](#).

Jun Butler Slope Explosion, Pittston, Pennsylvania

Rescuers were successful in bringing six miners to the surface after an **undisclosed period**. Seriously injured were John Waskiewicz and Peter Morgantini. They were treated at the Pittston Hospital for skull fractures and severe burns. Others hurt were Warner Posdich, Peter Wasluk, Patrick Nardone, and Joseph Lusto. Lusto was the only one who reached the surface unaided. Clutching an injured wrist, he

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staggered out of the mouth. His wife, screaming, darted from the crowd and into his arms.

- Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Ashland, Pennsylvania
A father and son, trapped for **two days** in a makeshift Anthracite mine were freed by rescuers. A physician said both Peter Shinskowsky, 48, and Peter, Jr., 17, appeared to be in good condition. [Source document](#).
- Jul [Praco No. 7 Rock Fall](#), Praco, Alabama
A roof fall occurred in this mine, trapping nine men, three of whom were rescued alive, severely shocked, with minor injuries. One rescued alive, died, probably from shock, enroute to the surface, and the remaining five bodies were dead when recovered.
- Jul [Veta Silver Mine Cave-in](#), Duncan, Arizona
Five miners buried alive for more than **48 hours** following a cave-in at the Veta silver mine at Duncan, Arizona were brought safely to the surface by rescue crews. The entombed men were Alfred Gillenwater, G. C. Robinson, D. H. Grissom, E. D. Wright, and Albert Carlson.
- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Michael Shurpensi, 45, recuperated in the Shamokin State Hospital after being saved from death in a mountain coal hole where he was entombed for nearly **an hour**. He was rescued by WPA workers employed on a nearby road project. [Source document](#).
- Jul American Eagle Collieries Cave-in, Ameagle, West Virginia
Spurred on by the cries of a trapped comrade, rescue workers brought George Nossos, 59, out from beneath a slate fall and went back again for another miner they feared was dead. Nossos was taken to a hospital for treatment of severe injuries. Farther back in the American Eagle Collieries company mine the workers expected to find the body of Clyde Compton, 30. They had heard nothing from him since the big pile of slate fell first fell. [Source document](#).
- Aug Shawnee Mine No. 4 Cave-in, Peckville, Pennsylvania
Four miners were trapped for almost **nine hours** after a cave-in occurred in the No. 4 slope of the Shawnee Coal Company at Peckville, Pennsylvania. The cave-in occurred when a runaway loaded coal car demolished mine props at the mine entrance. The four miners were treated for shock at the Mid-Valley Hospital. [Source document](#).

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- Aug Unnamed Anthracite Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Five miners became trapped when deep in an Anthracite mine when a coal car they were riding hurtled out of control down a steep slope and crashed through timbers supporting the tunnel roof were rescued alive and unharmed after an **undisclosed period**. [Source document](#).
- Sep Oneida No. 1 Colliery Cave-in, Oneida, Pennsylvania
Andrew Kakley, 66, was rescued uninjured **three hours** after he was trapped behind a fall of coal and rock in the No. 13 east slope of No. 1 Colliery at Oneida, operated by the Maurie F. Coal Company. He was working with John Polegra and Steve Roble, both of whom were able to crawl to safety through an air hole. Their exit, however, which was on a steep pitch, was too much for the older member of the trio to navigate. Kakley was rescued by Andrew Mehalick. [Source document](#).
- Sep Phelps Dodge Mine Cave-in, Bisbee, Arizona
Thomas A. Hightower, 50, was recovering in Copper Queen Hospital after having been entombed for **twelve hours** by the collapse of timbers in the 900-foot level of the Phelps Dodge Mine. Hightower was working alone in the shaft, timbering a tunnel when a supporting wall gave way. Rescue crews dug him out unconscious. [Source document](#).
- Oct [Lilly Meade Mine Cave-in](#), Owensboro, Kentucky
Dolar Johnson, 54, was rescued after being lost for **four days** in the Lilly Meade Company mine. Johnson, a miner of 25-years' experience, became lost when his carbide light went out. He suffered no ill effects from being without food and water for that period. [Source document](#).
- Nov Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Two miners, William Bokuniewicz, 52, and Joseph Comisky, 18, were rescued **40 hours** after they were trapped in a bootleg Anthracite mine cave-in at Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. Hospital attaches said both were in fine shape but were being guarded against pneumonia. [Source document](#).
- Nov Nydegger Mine Cave-in, Mill Creek, West Virginia
Freed after **eight hours** of work by their comrades, two miners who were trapped under a big rock were in serious condition in an Elkins hospital. Attendants said they doubted if Samuel Jenkins, 35, would recover. Ralph Starr, 26, was severely but not critically hurt, they said. The men were hurt in the Nydegger mine, near Mill Creek. [Source document](#).

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- Nov Lehigh Navigation Mine No. 6 Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Two men were rescued alive from beneath a rush of coal in a chute on the fourth level of the No. 6 mine of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company. The accident victims, Michael Rock and Frank Byer, were engaged in placing plank in the chute when the rush occurred. Rock was completely covered, and Byer was covered to the shoulders. Rescuers worked from 11:00 in the morning until 2:00 in the afternoon (**3 hours**) when they freed Rock, and an hour later (**4 hours**) succeeded in freeing Byer. Both men were able to walk from the workings and physicians said they had escaped serious injuries. Rock, who had been covered, told rescuers his head was protected between two large lumps of coal, permitting him to breathe. Byer's head was always free. Both men refused to go to Coaldale Hospital for physical checkups, declaring they had escaped injuries and did not suffer any material evidence of shock. [Source document](#).
- Dec Butte King Mine Cave-in, Sterling City, California
Trapped **two days** in a mine cave-in, Bruno Rhinehardt, 39, was rescued from a "living death" and rushed to Butte County hospital suffering serious injuries. Rhinehardt was imprisoned by a cave-in at the Butte King mine at Sterling City, a mountain town 30 miles east of Chico. [Source document](#).
- Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Maryd, Pennsylvania
Frank Morzarko was rescued by nearby miners after being entombed 40 feet beneath the surface for **two hours**. The 50-year-old miner had been working in a bootleg coal hole operated by John Blonis at Maryd, near Tuscarora, when he was caught in a fall of coal and dirt. Other miners nearby rushed to liberate the entombed man. They were assisted in this work by investigating officers of the Tamaqua detail, State Motor Police. Rescue workers dug through from another bootleg hole to reach him and bring him to the surface two hours later. The man suffered only from shock. [Source document](#).
- Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Trevorton, Pennsylvania
Anthony Makoski, 21, escaped serious injury and possible death when he was trapped in a bootleg coal hole by a slide while mining on Cameron Mountain, near Trevorton. Makoski, working with Theron Cressinger, and Ralph Holdren, Sunbury, R. D. 1, was in the hole when the slide started to cave in. Fortunately, he was not totally covered, the debris going to his shoulder line, and his two companions were able to extricate him. He was taken to Mary M. Packer hospital and given treatment. An x-ray picture showed that he was suffering with a fracture of the right leg in addition to minor bruises and cuts. He was reported in good condition. The fact that the hole had not been worked long and was not deep prevented the accident from being more serious. [Source document](#).

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- Jan Delano Mine Cave-in, Montello, Nevada
Entombed for **a day** 300 feet underground, two men were rescued from the Delano mine and brought to Montello, suffering little ill effects. The miners, Jess Baker and a man named Harris, were trapped by a cave-in at the mine. Rescuers succeeding in penetrating the tons of rock and dirt and opened a passage to the two men. [Source document](#).
- Jan Beaver Brook Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
A rescue crew worked for nearly **two hours** to dig William Letcher out from under a fall of rock in the Beaver Brook Colliery, where he was employed. His right side was paralyzed. [Source document](#).
- Feb [Abandoned Coal Mine Incident](#), Flemington, West Virginia
Robert Johnson spent **eight days** without food in utter darkness in an abandoned Flemington, West Virginia coal mine. Guided by his weak cries, Bill McDonald, Minor Cleavenger and Lon Smith found the man and brought him out on a stretcher.
- Mar Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After more than **12 hours**, six-foot, 330-pound Willie Politis was rescued from tons of earth and rock in a mountain coal hole. This was the second rescue needed for "Big Willie" within a few weeks. [Source document](#).
- One news article found spells his name William Tavalitis and states he was trapped for **15 hours** in the abandoned Burnside mine of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. [Source document](#).
- Mar Coaldale Colliery Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Joseph Filowic, a miner at the Coaldale colliery of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company was rescued after being confined for **3 hours** by a fall of top rock. Rescue crews were at once rushed to the scene and worked feverishly to free the man. After being freed, Filowic was able to walk home evidently none the worse for his experience. [Source document](#).
- Mar Miner Victim of Mysterious Ailment, Locust Gap, Pennsylvania
Bernard Cannon, 33, an employee at Locust Gap Colliery, was found lying unconscious on a mine gangway where he had been working alone. He was taken to the Fountain Springs Hospital, conscious and reported recuperating. The plight of Cannon was mysterious. The man didn't know what happened, whether he

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collapsed through illness, was overcome by gas, or was injured. Surgeons at the hospital, after restoring Cannon to consciousness, began a diagnosis of his condition, but had not determined the cause of his ailment. Source document.

Mar Denver Fire Clay Mine Cave-in, Golden, Colorado

Three cold and hungry miners—fed nothing but frankfurters through a pipe—dragged themselves to safety after being imprisoned **18 hours** in a clay mine cave-in of the Denver Fire Clay Company mine. Cheers of 15 other miners echoed through the damp mine as the last of the three, uninjured, wriggled through to greet rescue workers. "Boy, we're glad to get out of that place," they agreed. "It was chilly in there but not cold and the "weinies" helped a lot, but that old daylight looks better to us than anything in the world." The men were Roy Towles, 42; W. J. Foreman; and Peter Bauler. Foreman and Towles were timbering the mine tunnel 200 feet from the portal when suddenly the tunnel ceiling gave way. Source document.

Apr Unnamed Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

Anthony Vinscavage, 48, entombed for — **27 hours** — by a cave-in in a "bootleg" coal hole on Pitch Mountain was rescued and taken to Coaldale Hospital where physicians said he was uninjured but suffered from shock. Vinscavage was engaged with his son, John, 19, in placing timbers in the coal hole when the cave-in occurred. The son escaped and summoned help. Contact with Vinscavage was established by rescue squads who were able to give him a coat, food, and stimulants. When brought home from the coal hole, Vinscavage wanted to walk home to Tamaqua but yielded to the advice of his rescuers that he go to the hospital for examination. Source document.

Apr Unnamed Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Eagle Hill, Pennsylvania

Independent miners, Stanley Pushka, 45, and Anthony Gristitus, 50, became entombed by a cave-in in their mining operation at Eagle Hill. Working on opposite sides of their shaft, 60 feet from the surface, the two men had plunged into openings on either side when they heard the roar of the fall. Gristitus, it is believed, fell into water-filled workings of an old mine vein below the surface of his own shaft. While rescue workers, laboring in cramped positions, dug and timbered their way ever nearer the spot where Gristitus' body was believed to be, those who were directing their efforts expressed the opinion that the dead miner would not be reached for some time. Meanwhile, Stanley Pushka, 45, had been removed alive by rescue workers at 6 a.m., after being trapped for nearly — **24 hours** — suffering only from shock and bruises. Pulled to the surface, Pushka walked away from the hole and said he didn't want to go to a hospital. Friends

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persuaded him to enter the Pottsville Hospital ambulance which had been on the scene since early the day before. Source document.

Apr Fleck Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Carnegie, Pennsylvania

His face still marked by the grit that had pierced his flesh when he was buried under tons of coal and shale in the cave-in of an abandoned mine near Carnegie, Jacob Wright yesterday lay on his hospital cot and painfully told the story of the entombment that nearly cost him his life. Fearful for the health of his three-week-old son, Jacob, Jr., Wright set out yesterday morning to get coal to warm the ramshackle wind-swept dwelling on Hope Hollow Road in which he and his family make their home. Dragging a pick after him, Wright wormed his way into a small tunnel angling into the shaft of the abandoned Fleck Coal Company mine, from which poverty-stricken families in the little valley settlement obtained their fuel.

"I was crouched low, picking away at the roof, and I must have cracked one of the supporting ledges of coal," Wright said. "The first thing I knew the whole roof of the tunnel had caved in, smashing me to the ground. My arms got pinned, but I kept trying to work them loose, so I could poke some air holes through the rock and dirt. I don't know whether I was hurt or not. I only knew that I had to get air. Then I lost consciousness. When I came to, they were working on me out on the hillside."

The rumbling of rock down the steep slope above the mouth to the tunnel first apprised neighbors of the accident. Hearing the noise, Homer Phillips, a neighbor of Wright, exclaimed, "I wonder if that's at the mine?" He and his wife rushed to the tunnel and saw Wright's legs protruding from the debris that cluttered the entrance. Their cries aroused others, and a rescue crew soon was working feverishly to free the entombed man. **Twenty minutes** after he had been trapped by the cave-in Wright was dragged, unconscious, from the tunnel. A neighbor revived him by artificial respiration. He was rushed to Mercy Hospital, and X-rays taken to determine the extent of his injuries. Source document.

May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

William Hosler, 26, was rescued after a **20-hour** entombment in a bootleg Anthracite coal hole. Hosler suffered possible fractures of his left arm and right leg. Twelve fellow miners helped to remove the tons of earth that trapped him. Source document.

Jun Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania

Dorne Starkey, 15, was rescued alive after being buried for an **undisclosed period** under a slide of rock in a coal hole just north of the Reading Company depot at

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Mahanoy City. His companion, Walter McClaren, 17, narrowly escaped the rush. McClaren rushed into Mahanoy City to summon aid, and within a short time a force of men arrived at the scene to find Starkey trapped with heavy rocks pressing against his right ankle. With considerable difficulty the youth was freed and found to have escaped with a crushed ankle and suffering from shock. [Source document.](#)

- Jun Reliance Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
John Zankoskie, 50, was trapped for **four hours** in a rush of coal in the Primrose vein of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company's Reliance Colliery, near Mount Carmel. Throughout the greater part of the miners' period of imprisonment, Dr. A. B. Buczko, company compensation surgeon in the Mount Carmel district, was at the unfortunate man's side, administering surgical and medical treatment and aiding in maintaining his morale. Zankoskie was taken to the Shamokin Hospital, where he was under treatment for a mangled right leg and shock. He was expected to recover. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Abandoned Quarry Fall of Person, Lansdale, Pennsylvania
Nine-year-old, Salvatore Onorato, was rescued after he plunged with his bicycle over the side of an abandoned quarry. He was rescued after clinging for **30 minutes** to a projecting rock. Ross Smith, also nine, who was with Onorato, rode two miles on his own bicycle for aid. Magistrate Howard F. Boorse and three other men lowered a rope to the stranded boy and pulled him from the pit. He was injured slightly. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Llewellyn, Pennsylvania
Four miners trapped 400 feet underground by a fall of coal in a shaft near Llewellyn walked to the surface tonight, grinning over their escape and scorning medical attention. A crew of 50 workers dug through a 40-ton cave-in to get the men out. The rescue followed — **four hours** — of digging by works progress administration workers and miners in the shaft 3½ miles from Pottsville on the property of the Delaware and Hudson Coal Company. The four miners were Arthur Artz, 26; Al Acaley, 40; Albert Wise, 24; and Ralph Neidlinger, 45. Only Wise went to a hospital for examination after coming to the surface. He was found to have suffered no ill effects and went home. The others insisted they were "all right." [Source document.](#)
- Jul [Baker Mine Explosion](#), Sullivan, Indiana
Four men badly burned but still alive, along with about 20 others were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion at the Baker Coal Mine, 5 miles

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northeast of Sullivan, Indiana. The mine was owned by the Glendora Coal Company.

- Jul Summitville Gold Mine Cave-in, Summitville, Colorado
Seven miners said they sang songs and "swapped yarns," while waiting **nine hours** to be rescued from a slide-closed tunnel in the Summitville gold mine a thousand feet below the surface. Three of the men narrowly escaped being trapped beneath hundreds of tons of falling rock. The slide broke through a chute paralleling the manway and closed the entrance to the tunnel. The trapped men signaled to their fellow workers outside they were safe by tapping on an airline. Compressed air was pumped to them during rescue operations, and they were equipped with carbide lamps. Crews directed by Edward Thornton, general superintendent, finally broke through the loose rock and delivered the imprisoned men. The mine is in the San Luis Valley in southwestern Colorado, not far from Alamosa. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Two miners are rescued, and 1 miner was killed when a cave-in occurred at an Independent Anthracite mine at Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. John Micomanico, 56, was rescued and hospitalized after being buried up to his neck for **8 hours**. Benedicto Riccoletti, 36, and buried up to his knees was freed after **2 hours**. A third miner, Angelo Lorendi, 48, was suffocated and died in the incident. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Gopher-Boulder Mine Cave-in, Holden, California
Frank Libby was rescued after being trapped for **several hours** in the Gopher-Boulder Mine. The cave-in occurred when a tractor operating on the surface crashed into some old workings, precipitating a shower of giant boulders into the open cut where 2 miners were working. The second miner, Harry Achzig, was killed in the accident. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Abandoned Coal Mine Rescue, Marion, Illinois
Frank Libby was rescued after being trapped for **several hours** in the Gopher-Boulder Mine. The cave-in occurred when a tractor operating on the surface crashed into some old workings, precipitating a shower of giant boulders into the open cut where 2 miners were working. The second miner, Harry Achzig, was killed in the accident. [Source document.](#)

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- Aug Defender Mine Fall of Person, Amador City, California
Clyde Wright, a diamond drill operator, fell down the Defender Mine shaft. He suffered a fracture of one arm, cuts, and bruises. He was taken to the Sutter Hospital in Sacramento for treatment. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Jermyn Mine Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
John Wannish, 28, was rescued after being entombed in the Jermyn Mine of the Hudson Coal Company for an **undisclosed period**. Four other workers who were trapped with Wannish were brought to the surface the night before around midnight. Suffering from head injuries, Wannish was taken to Carbondale Hospital. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Grier City, Pennsylvania
Gus Sincavage was rescued after an **undisclosed period** after being caught under a fall of coal and rock while working in a bootleg mine in Grier City. He was taken to the Locust Mountain Hospital for treatment. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Badger Mine Fall of Ground, Butte, Montana
William E. Church was rescued by fellow-workmen after being trapped for **15 hours** by a fall of ground in the Badger mine. Church, with three companions, had been working on a sill over a fill stope, when the ground gave way. Church dropped 18 feet. His companions could hear his cries for help but could not see him. They gave reassurance as they worked. Church was protected by the timbers from rock and earth pressure. He was not injured. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Gowen Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Michael Kowalsky, a miner at the Gowen colliery of the Buck Mountain Coal Company, was rescued alive yesterday after being buried under a fall of coal for **two hours**. Hospital attaches said that he walked from an automobile into the Hazleton Hospital. He escaped with abrasions of the face, nose, and legs. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Two miners entombed overnight in a mine air hole on the mountainside four miles south of Tamaqua, were rescued. William Lucas, 24, and Kenneth Lutz, 23, protesting that they were "all right," were rushed to a hospital for observation immediately after a rescue squad dug through the last of tons of rock to reach them. Lutz and Lucas, accompanied by a third miner whose name was not learned went out to the mountain hoping to find a vein of coal. Lutz and Lucas entered an air hole on the mountain, the third man, who remained on the surface, gave the alarm after a cave-in closed the entrance to the hole. [Source document.](#)

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- Sep Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Entombed **7½ hours** his first day in a bootleg coal hole operated by his three sons, Steven Koperna, 57, was rescued alive from his underground prison near Pine Knot Colliery in the Heckscherville Valley. Koperna was walled in when the workings collapsed. He was reported slightly injured, taken immediately to the Good Samaritan Hospital in Pottsville, to be treated for shock and exposure. Koperna said: "From the time I was trapped until I was rescued, I prayed to God to save me, and I promised Him I would never work another day in a bootleg coal hole. Now that I'm rescued alive, I thank God for my rescue and I'm going to keep my promise." Source document.
- Nov Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Rescue workers freed the second of three bootleg miners trapped Friday by a cave-in in a makeshift mine slope near the Potts colliery of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. After an **undisclosed period**, Charles Ruganis, 34, was taken to a hospital in a serious condition with a fractured arm and a possible fracture of the pelvis. He was also suffering from shock. John Plichesski, 29, died soon after he was brought to the top of the slope the night before. Charles Bolinski, 55, remained in the mine. He had not been heard from since the cave-in occurred. Source document.
- Nov Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Duelwel, Missouri
Joe Snyder, age 10, was rescued from an abandoned mine shaft, 90 feet deep, **two hours** after he had fallen into the shaft while fleeing to his home following a fist fight with two schoolmates. Examination at a hospital showed the boy suffered a broken back and skull fractures. His condition was described as critical. Source document.
- Nov Lytle Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Two miners were saved from death in the Lytle Colliery where they had been imprisoned for more than **twenty-four hours**. Rescue crews, working in relays, rescued Harry Hunter, 44, and Albert Muraski, 34, after tunneling through many tons of rock and coal on the fourth level. They were taken to a Pottsville hospital for observation. Physicians said their condition was not serious but that they would be detained until all danger of pneumonia was past. Source document.
- Dec Briar Hill Mine Rescue, Pinckneyville, Illinois
Lawrence Lee, a 28-year-old bookkeeper, was led to safety after being lost for **41 hours** in the Briar Hill workings near Pinckneyville, Illinois. He had gone into the mine to explore some new workings and bring out some empty powder kegs. On his way out he miscounted the rooms he had passed and somehow got lost. His

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clothing ripped and his legs torn and bleeding, he wandered around in the dark until he ended up in the nearby Beaucoups No. 6 mine, whose fans were operating. Feeling the air current on his face, he followed it in the dark until he reached an air shaft where he shouted for help and was rescued. [Source document.](#)

— 1936 —

- Jan Racketbrook Culm Bank Slide, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Rescue crews succeeded in extricating Joseph Zukowski, 16, from the Racketbrook culm bank where he had been trapped for **two hours** while digging coal. Zukowski and three neighborhood companions went to the Racketbrook dump to pick coal. Heavy frosts of recent weeks had cemented the surface, consisting mostly of slate and rock, into a hard mass and the four assumed they were working in comparative safety. During their labors, they sensed the danger of collapse and scrambled for safety. All but Zukowski escaped. He was at first buried up to his chest, then up to his neck from a further slide of material. Once freed, Zukowski was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital, where he was held for observation, suffering from shock and probable internal injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Kulpmont, Pennsylvania
John Butcher, 42, had a miraculous escape from death when he was trapped for **three hours** beneath a fall of top coal in a bootleg coal hole. A nearby miner heard the fall and investigated and found the roof and side had fallen in. The rescue workers were amazed when they found Butcher alive when they uncovered his head. He was treated at the Shamokin hospital for shock and contusions of the back and right arm. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Bird Camp Gold Mine Avalanche, Ouray, Colorado
20 miners were trapped for — **10 hours** — in a tunnel of the Bird Camp Gold Mine by an avalanche of snow. Two men and a woman were killed when the avalanche roared down Devil's Slide of Chicago Hill smashing a bunkhouse and closing the mouth of the mine tunnel. [Source document.](#)
- Feb F. W. Jennings Coal Chute Asphyxiations, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Buried under 40 tons of coal for 15 minutes, Dominick Cardone, was suffocated and died at the retail coal chutes of F. W. Jennings in Pittston. A fellow worker, Nicholas Mancini, 24, was rescued before he smothered and was recovering from the shock of his experience in Pittston Hospital. Cardone was pronounced dead by Dr. B. S. Androsky and Dr. C. W. Prevost after rescuers had worked steadily for 45 minutes with a pulmotor to resuscitate him. The accident happened while

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Cardone and Mancini were in the pit attempting to open the frost-choked chute for a retail coal driver. Above them a hopper car was emptying coal into the bin. It was believed that the fuel loosened the frozen coal in the chute to send a deluge down upon the two men. Members of Eagle Hose Company and other men in the near vicinity hurried to the rescue. They reached Mancini within a few minutes but labored for a quarter hour before getting to Cardone. While the rescue work was in progress. Fred Donofrio, 48, who was in charge of Cardone and Mancini, returned from a business errand to the central part of the city. He was overcome at the tragedy that occurred during his absence and was so affected by shock that he was taken to Pittston hospital for treatment. His condition was listed as good. Source document.

Mar Brown Family Mine Cave-in, Crooksville, Ohio

Gus Brown and his three husky sons rescued "Fannie," their pet pony from the family coal mine in Louis Hollow near Crooksville, Ohio. Fannie, trapped **19 days** due to a cave-in, emerged sleepily and appeared none the worse for her experience. The pony, led through hastily driven shafts was taken into the Brown home and given a warm place by the kitchen stove.

Apr Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

Anthony Treskoloski was rescued after an **undisclosed period** from a cave-in near Shenandoah by fellow-workers who tunneled through the hillside beneath him. His condition was not serious. Source document.

Apr Modern Sand and Gravel Company Cave-in, St. Louis, Missouri

Herbert Thimm, 37, an oiler for the Modern Sand and Gravel Company, was buried in a sand cave-in at the company's plant at the foot of Rutger street for — **more than an hour** — but was rescued uninjured by police and firemen. Thimm entered an opening in a loading station when a sand slide started from a large pile. He grasped the sides of the opening to keep his head from being buried and fellow workmen put a steel cylinder about his head to prevent suffocation. Police and firemen put ropes under Thimm's armpits, and he was dragged out. Source document.

Apr Clyde Westcott Mine Fall of Person, Mt. Sterling, Ohio

Raymond Blackstone, 28, was injured when the coal car which he occupied fell down a 35-foot shaft of the Clyde Westcott mine, three miles south of Mt. Sterling. He was reported in critical condition in Bethesda hospital. Blackstone suffered a fractured skull and a broken jaw. Portions of wood driven into his brain and skull by force of the fall were removed yesterday by the attending physician. He was found unconscious at the foot of the shaft by Robert Lane, a pony-driver in

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the mine. After an **undisclosed period**, fellow workmen assisted in bringing him to the surface where first aid was given. He was taken to the hospital in the Bateman ambulance. The injured man had been employed at the mine for three years. [Source document](#).

May Abandoned Mine Rescue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Two would-be copper thieves were rescued and arrested **15 hours** after they became lost in an abandoned coal mine near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Police arrested Arthur Tonner, 35, and Robert Dyer, 36, after they were rescued from 15 miles of tunnels by a crew from the U. S. Bureau of Mines. The officers said Tonner and Dyer went into the mine to hunt copper wire while another man, Edwin Miller, 35, stayed above ground, on guard. Miller was also arrested. [Source document](#).

Jun Anthracite Bootleg Mine Rockslide, Greenwood, Pennsylvania

Arthur Ulko, 18, was saved from death after an **undisclosed period** by several companions after he was pinned in a hole while digging coal in Greenwood. A slide of rock was reported to have caught Ulko and buried his left leg. Friends succeeded in removing the rock and had him taken to the office of Dr. Serafine Wandalowski. Ulko's injuries were described as brush burns of the left leg and left arm. He also suffered from shock. [Source document](#).

Jun [Helena Mine Cave-in](#), Helena, Montana

Caught by crumbling rock and fallen timbers in a Helena, Montana mine, Ed Moore became held firmly by the jam. One of the owners, John Brophy, who was working with him, managed to get out and get help. Despite being warned by Moore not to come down, rescuers worked for **four hours** to free him and return him to his wife and daughter, who were waiting on the surface.

Jun Dugger-Martin Mine Explosion, Paxton, Indiana

Ivan Alexander was rescued alive from the Dugger-Martin coal mine, **several hours** after he had been overcome by gas while attempting to find two other men believed killed in an explosion. The two men still in the mine were believed to have been killed in the explosion. [Source document](#).

Jul Anthracite Bootleg Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Enock Kuklinski, 35, was rescued **22 hours** after being trapped in a 30-foot make-shift mine near Shamokin, Pennsylvania. He was hospitalized in serious condition. [Source document](#).

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- Aug Anthracite Bootleg Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Edward Hartley, 23, was rescued **several hours** after he became a cave-in victim in a bootleg coal hole near Pottsville. Hartley was conscious when he was removed, however, he was unable to walk since he was engulfed in rock and dirt up to his neck. He was transported to the Pottsville Hospital where he was listed in fair condition. Source document.
- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Simon Kapaczewski, an unhired miner, was rescued from his makeshift mine after he was entombed for **11 hours**. Kapaczewski was caught by a fall of rock far down the jagged hole yesterday afternoon. Other unhired miners heard his screams and for hours shoveled at the several tons of rock. He was removed to a hospital. Source document.
- Aug Unnamed Mine Fire, Downieville, California
A faithful dog ran 900 feet through a fire and smoke-filled tunnel and attracted two miners to the entrance where flames which soon would have trapped them were raging. The miners, Joseph Stark and his son, Herman, left a fire in the stove in their quarters in the mine mill before they entered the tunnel. The stove pipe became hot and ignited dry timbers. The dog ran through the blaze into the tunnel and barked until he summoned the two men. Source document.
- Aug Esry Mine Fire, Moberly, Missouri
Following a **72-hour** entrapment in the burning Esry Mine near Moberly, Missouri, two of four men were rescued. The deceased were Ed Stoner, one of the owners, and George Dameron. The rescued men were Demmer Sexton and Jack McMann.
- Sep Macbeth Mine Explosion, Logan, West Virginia
An explosion of gas and dust resulted in the death of 10 men, and the injury of one man by afterdamp. This man was rescued after an **undisclosed period** and revived. The explosion was restricted to 12 and 13 Right entries. Gas had accumulated near the face of room 14, 13 Right entry, when a door was left open. An arc from a splice in the cable of a cable-reel locomotive ignited the gas, and dust propagated the explosion. Its spread was stopped by rock dust placed in the entries some months earlier and by a pool of water on 12 Right. Cause of Explosion: Ignition of gas by a cable reel locomotive.
- Oct Bootleg Coal Mine Cave-in, Williamstown, Pennsylvania
Peter Rono, 41, was seriously injured and his two companions escaped injury when a rush of coal caught them in a bootleg coal hole north of Williamstown. Rono was caught under the rush and had a vertebra in his back broken, several

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ribs fractured and a possible fracture of the left foot. He was rescued after an **undisclosed period** by his two companions, Archie Shuttlesworth and Paul Garber, who dodged the fall, and was taken to the hospital after receiving first aid treatment from Dr. William Connelly. He was conscious when admitted to the hospital and his condition regarded as fair. Source document.

- Oct Jordan Mine Lost Miner, Fairmont, West Virginia
Rescuers found Pat Dailey, 40, who had been missing for hours, asleep in the Jordan mine of the Consolidation Coal Company. He said he became confused while walking out of the mine, wandered for a **few hours**, then laid down to sleep. Source document.
- Oct Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Green Ridge, Pennsylvania
Joseph Lashendock, 28, and his brother, Andrew, 23, of Marion Heights, were rescued after being covered by a rush of coal for nearly **2 hours**. Joseph had a probable fracture of the leg and minor bruises, while Andrew escaped with a few scratches. Rescuers went down immediately, and several times had the men almost free, only to see them covered again as the soft coal continued to rush in from the soft, two-foot coal vein from above. A discharge of dynamite, fired at quitting time last night, is believed to have loosened the coal above, but the top did not break through until today. Following the heroic rescue, Joe was taken to the office of a local physician, while Andrew, suffering only from slight shock, was taken to his home. Source document.
- Nov Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Merced, California
Alvin Peterson, 22, was critically injured as the result of a fall down a 150-foot abandoned mine shaft. Peterson suffered a fractured pelvis, spine injuries, possible basal skull fracture and internal injuries, arm injuries and numerous lacerations and bruises. He was rushed to the hospital by Dr. J. S. Webster of Mariposa. Source document.
- Nov Abandoned Anthracite Mine Rescue, Morris Ridge, Pennsylvania
Rescuers found Andrew Chuba, 19, and Michael Bolick, 18, alive yesterday after — **7 hours** — entombment in a coal hole at nearby Morris Ridge. The youths were taken to an Ashland hospital suffering from shock. They were trapped after they entered an abandoned hole. Source document.
- Nov Unnamed Mine Asphyxiation, Schullsburg, Wisconsin
Albert Radke, 35, was recovering from gas poisoning after being rescued by Elmer Bertham, his partner, from a local mine. When Radke was overcome, Bertram

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withstood the gas long enough to get a car, load Radke into it and come up the shaft. Source document.

- Nov Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Trevorton, Pennsylvania
Trapped in a rush of coal in an independent mine near Trevorton, Jacob Smeltz, Sr., 65, suffered severe internal injuries and his son, Jacob, Jr., escaped with minor contusions. The aged independent miner was in the Mary Packer Hospital, where his condition was reported as fair. Father and son were at work at the bottom of a 60-foot shaft when the fall occurred, burying both men. Jacob Smeltz, Jr., was buried to the shoulders but was able to shout to his brother-in-law, Kenneth Williams, who was at the head of the shaft. Descending to the foot of the shaft, Williams was successful in extricating Jacob, Jr., and the two then rescued the completely covered aged miner. It was with difficulty they managed to hoist the injured man to the surface, where a truck hurried him to the hospital at Sunbury. Source document.
- Dec Pioche No. 3 Mine Cave-in, Pioche, Nevada
Six miners were rescued from a cave-in in the Pioche No. 3 mine after an **undisclosed period**. The first three were freed uninjured during the overnight hours and the last three were rescued shortly after noon. Only one the last three was injured having been buried to his chin in broken rock. One of his arms and 4 of his ribs were broken. Source document.
- Dec Alden Coal Company Hoisting Rescue, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Ten workers in the Alden Coal Company colliery were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from a cage hanging precariously in a 1,200-foot vertical shaft. The cage was jammed against the walls of the shaft by ice. The miners were brought to the surface one at a time with a block and tackle arrangement. Source document.
- Dec Unnamed Mine Shaft Entrapment, Leon, Iowa
Five miners offered heartfelt thanks to 40 of their neighbors and friends who quickly saved them from imprisonment in a mine to which the entrance was suddenly closed. Two hundred seventy-five feet underground, the men were trapped when a tibble broke, wedging a three-ton cutting machine which was being lowered into the mine. It took **six hours** to cut a hole in the bottom of the safety cage, which also stuck in the shaft, and raise the five men to the entrance, one by one, with a rope. Source document.
- Dec Neighborhood Coal Hole Rescue, Scranton, Pennsylvania
The drive for legislation to prevent mine caves was given impetus with the rescue of four persons from a 35-foot pit in their own back yard and announcement of a

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program by the Scranton Surface Protective Association. Guido Ciaucci, 12, walked into his backyard and plunged headlong into the pit, caused by a mine cave-in. His sister, 19, answered his cries for help and also was trapped. She was followed by Mrs. Mary Zibi, 40, and her daughter, Esther, 5. Firemen rescued them with ladders. The protective association, pioneer in the fight to prevent caves, adopted a legislative program calling for creation of a State Anthracite Commission to have powers over the principal problems of the industry. The commission would deal with cave problems, mining and marketing, control of bootleg mining, and would study means to halt unemployment. [Source document.](#)

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- Jan Utica Mine Fall of Ground, Angels Camp, California
Gus May, miner, narrowly escaped death while at work on a filled shaft of the Utica Mine, 2,000 feet below the ground. The fill began to sink, and the fire department battled mud and water for an **undisclosed period** to rescue him from the muck. May was unhurt but suffered from chills. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Hammond Mine Elevator Entrapment, Girardville, Pennsylvania
Ten miners were imprisoned in a mine cage 350 feet underground for **four hours** when safety catches on a cage jammed as the men were being lowered into the Hammond mine at Girardville. Repairmen descended into the 750-foot-deep shaft and freed the trapped workers. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Stanton Colliery Landslide, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
John Roberts, 56, was almost completely buried beneath a dirt bank slide at the Stanton Colliery at 6 p.m. the evening before, while he was picking coal. Unable to extricate himself, he endured a nightmare until employees on their way to work in the morning, **more than 12 hours** later, found him unconscious. Though suffering from shock as well as injuries to both legs, hips and abdomen, Roberts' condition was regarded as not serious. The slide that buried him also kept much of the cold away from his body, or he would have frozen to death, it was stated at the hospital. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Marlin Lauer was seriously injured when he was covered by a fall of coal in a bootleg mine near Shamokin. He was rushed to the Shamokin State Hospital where an examination disclosed that he had a fracture of the left leg, chest injuries, lacerations of the scalp and face, and possible internal injuries. The accident occurred shortly after Lauer and several companions started work in

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their operation. Lauer was at the bottom of the hole when the fall occurred. He was rendered unconscious when a piece of coal struck him on the head. He was revived by rescuers after being carried to the surface after an **undisclosed period**. [Source document](#).

Jan Juneau Mine Rescue, Durango, Colorado

Stricken four days earlier by paralysis at the Juneau mine, Joe Bari, 60. miner, will live, physicians said, because of the heroic efforts of four Durango men who dragged him on a toboggan 13 hours across 19 miles of snow-drifted mountain trail. [Source document](#).

Feb Consolidation Mine Cave-in, Cumberland, Maryland

Christopher Krause, 55, and William Griffith, Jr., 30, were safe in their homes, unharmed except for the **16-hour** exposure to mine gases while imprisoned in the shaft of Consolidation Mine under a fall of rock. The men became trapped and rescue crews began the tedious task of removing the heavy rock and debris. Rescue was affected after relay crews labored 16 hours. [Source document](#).

Feb St. Clair Coal Co. Mine Cave-in, St. Clair, Pennsylvania

Trapped by a fall of rock for an **undisclosed period** at the St. Clair Coal Company, Franklin Zondorhin, 49, was admitted to the Pottsville Hospital late last night for treatment of his injuries. His face and head were lacerated severely in the mishap and numerous sutures were necessary to close the wounds. [Source document](#).

Feb United Gold Mine Fire, Cripple Creek, Colorado

The rescue of Ernest Kuri and Jack Silver from the bottom of a 65-foot mine shaft in which they had been trapped by fire was affected after a group of men directed by Sheriff Ed Vinyard spent **15 hours** conquering the blaze. Although shaken by the harrowing experience of facing death as the flames slowly ate their way down the mine shaft, the two miners were uninjured. The fire broke out in the hoist house above the shaft, spread to other buildings and had started on its way down the shaft before it was noticed, and an alarm spread. Sheriff Vinyard headed a group of 25 volunteers. Efforts to conquer the flames with chemicals failed and several truckloads of sand and water were hauled to the mine. When the flames were checked, the trapped miners were brought to the surface by a rope lowered into the shaft, the windlass having been destroyed. "We just sat and prayed when the fire broke out," Kuri said. "We had just about given up hope of getting out alive when someone dropped some rocks into the shaft to let us know they were trying to get us out." The property was owned by United Gold Mines Company. [Source document](#).

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Feb Trapped Dog Rescue, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

Seven coal miners pitched in and helped their comrade, George Erbe, rescue his fox terrier dog, trapped 30 feet below solid rock. The pup called "Bum" was caught beneath the ridge of rock when he and three other dogs were chasing a fox. The other dogs came out at the call of their masters, but "Bum" did not appear. Erbe summoned his miner friends who brought picks, shovels, and dynamite. Though the weather was near zero, the men blasted away at the rock and chipped at the boulders for **four days**. After four days of digging, one of the men crawled down into the hole and heard the faint barking of "Bum." The rescuers reached him within a few minutes. They found "Bum" whimpering from hunger and cold, but otherwise the pup was uninjured. [Source document](#).

Mar Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Starford, Pennsylvania

John S. Korfonta sustained fatal injuries attempting to help rescue Francis R. Yaros from a mine cave-in, Starford, Pennsylvania, March 11, 1935. While Yaros, 21, was close to the face of the coal at the end of a heading of a mine, a rock six feet and a half in diameter and from two to 15 inches thick fell from the roof onto him. The rock lay two feet from the face of the coal between two parallel rows of posts eight feet apart. Only Yaros's feet and ankles extended from under the rock. Frank L. Russell, Jr., heard the crash and went to another heading, where he notified Korfonta, 46, miner; J. Clair Irvin; Joseph C. Resovsky; and another man. Irvin, closely followed by Russell, Resovsky, and the other man, hurried through a crosscut and the heading to the rock and then crawled over it to positions between the rock and the face of the coal. Russell placed a crowbar beneath the edge of the rock, and his companions placed their hands beneath the rock to lift it. Korfonta then reached the rock and began to crawl over it. Another rock, five feet wide and eight inches thick, fell and knocked him aside onto loose slate. Slate dribbled from the roof, and the men feared another fall. After standing aside a moment, Irvin and Resovsky lifted a part of the rock, which had been split by the second rock, from Yaros's legs. Russell and Resovsky then lifted the rock from Yaros's back. Irvin grasped Yaros's ankles and pulled him to the face of the coal. Russell and Irvin then carried Yaros toward the other side of the heading, the roof of which was amply supported by crossbeams, then for 25 feet over a pile of slate to a safe part of the heading. Resovsky remained with Korfonta. Russell ran to the entrance of the mine for help. Irvin returned to the rock and crawled over the loose slate to Korfonta and Resovsky. He and Resovsky then carried Korfonta over the same course to the crosscut and the other heading. In the meantime, Yaros died. Korfonta was placed in a mincar and hauled out of the mine. He died of his injuries that evening. J. Clair Irvin, Frank L. Russell, Jr., Joseph C. Resovsky and John S. Korfonta (posthumously) were bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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- Mar Union Collieries No. 6 Mine Cave-in, Newfield, Pennsylvania
Two miners, entombed 300 feet underground, were rescued by 60 of their fellows who dug untiringly for **eight hours**. The men, Gasper Kern, 51, and Mike Kurmisky, 20, were uninjured but exhausted. They were given first aid and ordered to bed. The pair were trapped in the No. 6 mine of the Union Collieries company at Newfield after tons of rock fell, cutting off their escape. Fellow workers dug for five hours, not knowing whether the men were dead or alive. Finally, they heard voices and redoubled their efforts. They dug through 30 feet of debris, about a mile and a half in the mine, before reaching the men. [Source document](#).
- Apr Abandoned Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Newtown Hill, Pennsylvania
Roy Gauntlett, 32, was rescued from an abandoned mine working at nearby Newtown Hill, where he was held trapped by a fall of coal for **eight hours**. Gauntlett was taken to a hospital to be treated for exposure and exhaustion. A score of men tunneled through the fall to the spot where he was buried, while he directed the rescue. [Source document](#).
- Apr U. S. Gold Mine Cave-in, Butte, Montana
Trapped **nine hours** beneath 25 feet of rock in the U. S. mine near Butte, Harvey Konen, 45, had suffered only a few scratches and bruises when rescued by a crew of 20 men. Konen descended the 60-foot shaft of the gold mine shortly before 9:30 a.m. After hearing dangerous rumblings above him, he was ascending a ladder when the timbered shaft crashed in ahead of an avalanche of rock. Workers at the shaft rushed to Butte and recruited veteran miners who were taken to the property where an opening was made in the caved-in shaft and Konen was brought to the surface. [Source document](#).
- May Simpson Mine Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
George Gill, 40, has his foreman John Yancheck to thank for being rescued alive after being trapped under a fall of rock in a slope of the Simpson Coal Company when Yancheck imperiled his own life to return to his fellow workman. With only his hands and a stick, the only instrument available, Yancheck removed a huge pile of loose culm and dirt from his head, saving him from being smothered while others were coming to his rescue. He was left with all except his head buried under a mass of rock and dirt, and it was nearly **five hours** that his body was entirely uncovered, permitting his removal. Gill was transferred by ambulance to St. Joseph's Hospital where he was found to be not dangerously hurt, suffering from bruises of the body and shock. [Source document](#).

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- Jun Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Dillon, Montana
Although he was trapped for **four hours** at the bottom of a 120-foot shaft by a cave-in, George Mickich escaped with a severe nervous shock. Mickich was working with several others in the mine at the time of the collapse but was separated from them. The others immediately launched rescue operations and succeeded in releasing the man, to whom they continually shouted words of encouragement. [Source document](#).
- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Trevorton, Pennsylvania
Charles Hauser, 48, sustained a compound fracture of the right leg, lacerations and other injuries of the head, face, and body yesterday while robbing pillars in a coal hole near Trevorton. Working on a pitch, he lost his balance when a rock fell out of the top and struck him on the head. Hauser, plunging down the hole, caused a slide which buried him for **fifteen minutes**. Unconscious when rescued, he was taken to the Shamokin State Hospital for treatment. [Source document](#).
- Jul Menzel Mine Cave-in, Redding, California
After **nine hours** of frantic rescue work, Walter Straight, 47, a miner employed in the Menzel Mine, walked from the tunnel uninjured. He had been imprisoned in a slide of thousands of tons of broken granite since the previous day. Four workers in the mine immediately started removing the debris, in which Straight was buried shoulder high, and called for help from nearby Iron Mountain. The Mountain Copper Company superintendent rushed eight men to the scene to assist in the rescue. Working in shifts, the miners dug throughout the day, relieved as soon as they became exhausted. [Source document](#).
- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiations, Bunker Hill, Pennsylvania
The presence of mind and courage of Bert Hoffa, 15, was responsible for the rescue of the boy's grandfather, John Bainbridge, from a damp-filled mine hole on the mountain north of Bunker Hill. Bainbridge, a former borough fire chief, was at work in the mine hole with his grandson when he was overcome by black damp. The boy, weakened himself and barely conscious, managed to drag his grandfather 100 feet underground to a point where the air was clearer. There, almost exhausted but realizing that both might die if help was not secured, he climbed to the surface. The boy's sudden emergence into pure air caused him to collapse unconscious at the top of the miniature mine, where he was found by a party of miners working nearby. He was taken to his home, where he was revived by a physician. Both damp victims would recover, physicians said. Miners who found Hoffa and participated in the rescue of Bainbridge declared that the boy's feat of dragging his grandfather to safety was almost unbelievable in view of the

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youth's slight physique and the fact that he was severely affected by the damp himself. [Source document](#).

- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, West Glendower, Pennsylvania
Trapped in an independent mine operation at West Glendower, Edward Kimmel, 30, was rescued alive **four hours** later and escaped with comparatively minor injuries. Kimmel and two fellow workers were driving an independent mine hole when the workings collapsed, trapping Kimmel behind the fall. His companions summoned aid from nearby holes, and within a short time a large force of men was engaged in removing debris. After four hours, the mass of rock and coal was penetrated, and Kimmel was found alive. A physician gave Kimmel medical and surgical attention at the scene, and he was conveyed to his home where he was expected to recover. [Source document](#).
- Jul Lowry Farm Mine Asphyxiation, Thomas Hill, Missouri
Roy Dale, a 25-year-old miner was unconscious for nearly **three hours** from effects of carbon monoxide gas, after he was overcome in a mine near Thomas Hill. He was taken to McCormick Hospital for treatment and recovered. Dale and his father had been operating a slope mine on the Tom Lowry farm near Thomas Hill. Working at the mine, they were pumping water, using a gasoline engine inside the mine to operate the pump. The belt on the engine had been slipping and not working properly. As they worked on the engine, they noticed the gas and realized they were becoming weak, so both started up the slope for the mine entrance. When they were about 40 feet from the opening, Roy fell. With assistance, young Dale was carried out and rushed to his home in Huntsville for treatment, and then was taken to the hospital. [Source document](#).
- Jul Bootleg Anthracite Mine Asphyxiations, Wiggans, Pennsylvania
Three miners were overcome by black damp after being trapped in a bootleg coal hole near Wiggans and transported to the Locust Mountain Hospital for treatment. Whether or not the afterdamp followed a discharge of dynamite, or an explosion of gas had not been determined. Those removed from the hole and rushed to the hospital in a truck were: Joseph Costa, Emanuel Garcia, and James Gonzales. Their condition was reported as good. [Source document](#).
- Jul Wickwire Spencer Steel Plant Coal Hole Fall of Person, Tonawanda, New York
After being a prisoner for — **three nights and two days** — at the bottom of a 20-foot coal hole in an unused part of the Wickwire Spencer Steel company plant, Ruth Cornere, 20, was taken to the Millard Fillmore hospital while police were investigating her story. Slightly hysterical, hungry, and suffering from a bruised ankle and arm, Miss Cornere was taken out of her dark prison by two employees of

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the company who heard her weak cries. She wore only beach pajamas. Police sent her to the hospital in an ambulance. They said Miss Cornere told them she went for a walk near her home Friday evening and can remember little after that except that she was in a Niagara street restaurant. [Source document.](#)

Oct Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania

Mine workers who worked all night, rescued one of two men entombed in a "bootleg" coal mine, 2 miles south of Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania.

Oct Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Steubenville, Ohio

John Henry Wiggins helped to rescue Richard S. Riser from a mine cave-in, Steubenville, Ohio, October 14, 1935. While Riser, 51, was working in an entry five feet high in a mine, a rock 30 feet long, 10 feet wide, and two to three feet thick fell from the top, knocking him down close to a rail of a track and pinning his right arm and left foot. His left knee was pressed against his chest, causing him to breathe with great difficulty. Wiggins, 48, mine loader, ran to the rock and at a point 12 feet from Riser lay prone and crawled under it toward Riser through an opening 14 inches high. The rock rested mainly on refuse coal, and as Wiggins crawled, he pushed rock fragments from in front of him and stacked them to aid in preventing the rock from sinking lower and crushing him. Reaching Riser, he tugged at his left foot and forced off Riser's shoe but was unable to free his foot. Riser urged him to break his leg, if necessary. Wiggins crawled back to the opening, got a jack handle, again crawled to Riser, and tried to raise the rock by means of the handle but failed. He then took hold of Riser's ankle with both hands and pulled his foot free, crawled backward for four feet, and pulled Riser's leg to a straight position. He removed rock fragments from around Riser's right leg and then tried to pull Riser's arm from its wedged position. Failing to do so, he crawled back to the opening and clear of the rock. He had been under the rock for 20 minutes. Later the rock was raised by means of jacks, and Riser was dragged from beneath it. His arm was paralyzed. Two other men who were caught under the fall were killed. John Wiggins was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Oct Abandoned Mine Lost Person, Indiana, Pennsylvania

Suffering from shock, exposure, and exhaustion after spending — **18 hours** — in a dark, partly flooded old mine, nine-year-old Milton Hancock was barely able tonight to tell of his weird experience. "I was too scared to sleep, I just walked and hollered and then sat down," the youngster told Dr. E. M. Bushnell of Black Lick, who was called after a posse found Milton this morning. Barefooted and wearing summer clothing, the boy went into the mine with his uncle, Louis Hancock, yesterday to salvage some coal for the house. Milton wandered away

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and became lost. The uncle hunted, then called friends and firemen. Sheriff A. Eugene Wilson, his deputies and highway patrolmen took up the search through the labyrinthine of passages in the mine, which has not been worked regularly since the World war. [Source document.](#)

- Oct Independent Mine Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Peter Baxter, 38, was released from his underground prison **22 hours** after he and another miner were caught in a coal slide producing a cave-in. The incident occurred at the independent mine owned by the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. The doctor at the Ashland Hospital reported Baxter's condition as good, saying he only appeared to be suffering from shock and exposure. The other miner, John Stankowski, was believed to be dead. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Unnamed Tunnel Cave-in, Los Angeles, California
Ed Olinger, 41-year-old hard rock miner trapped for an **undisclosed period** in a deep underground tunnel through which he sought to reach a hidden chamber believed to contain buried treasure, was freed by firemen. Olinger was hurried to a hospital where his legs were found to be paralyzed. The condition was believed to be only temporary, however. He had been buried for hours up to his armpits in fallen earth. [Source document.](#)
- Dec [Wolf Run Mine Explosion](#), Amsterdam, Ohio
20 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **1 to 2 hours** after an explosion in the Wolf Run mine at Amsterdam, Ohio. Four miners were killed in the incident. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Lehigh Navigation No. 9 Colliery Cave-in, Panther Creek Valley, Pennsylvania
Steve Serina was rescued alive after he had been trapped **several hours** back of a heavy rush of rock and coal at the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company's No. 9 colliery in the Panther Creek valley. Serina was at work alone on the gangway at the time of the accident. Other workmen had gone from the working place to obtain required material. When they returned it was to discover the fall and the entombment of their fellow workman. Rescue forces worked heroically several hours to find Serina safely hidden on a ledge. He was uninjured. [Source document.](#)

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— 1934 —

- Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Taylor, Pennsylvania
Trapped for **more than two hours** in a cave-in which occurred in a bootleg mining operation in Taylor, Dominick Coppola, 22, was found suffering from internal injuries and shock when rescued by Scranton and Taylor police. He was taken to the State Hospital. Coppola and Samuel Karus were digging coal, police said, when the cave occurred, burying Coppola to his waist. Karus escaped unhurt and gave the alarm. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Adolphus Pyers Farm Mine Cave-in, Millersburg, Ohio
Harry McGovern, 60, was imprisoned in a coal mine on the Adolphus Pyers farm, three miles west of Millersburg, for nearly — **10 hours** — by a cave-in at the mine. He was severely bruised and cut and was in a serious condition as a result of exposure. McGovern, who is a bachelor and lives at the Henry Schlarb home, works in the Pyers mine alone. When he failed to return from work searching parties were quickly formed. He was found imprisoned by a cave-in about 300 feet from the mouth of the mine. A large amount of stone and dirt had fallen on him. He was removed to the home of his brother, Ellsworth McGovern of Paint Valley, where a medical examination revealed that no bones had been broken. Eugene Cutshaw, who helped liberate McGovern, was confined to his home from the effects of exhaustion while attempting to remove the slide. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Jermyn Mine Roof Fall, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Three miners, trapped by a roof fall in the Jermyn mine of the Hudson Coal Company were rescued unharmed. They were entrapped for — **three hours** — before rescuers succeeded in digging to them through tons of debris. The victims were Tony Roman, his son, Joseph, and Michael Loftus. [Source document.](#)
- Feb [Glen Rogers No. 2 Mine Explosion](#), Glen Rogers, West Virginia
38 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **several hours** after an explosion in the Glen Rogers No. 2 mine in West Virginia. Four miners were killed in the incident. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Nichols Coal Co. Powered Haulage Accident, Centralia, Missouri
George Noel, 19, suffered a wrenched back and severe lacerations of the hands after falling sixty feet down a shaft of the Nichols Coal Company where he was working. It was believed that another worker lost control of the machinery which operates the shaft elevator upon which Noel was standing. After an **undisclosed period**, Noel was taken to the Boone County Hospital. [Source document.](#)

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- Mar West Kentucky No. 10 Mine Fire, Wheatcroft, Kentucky
Five men lost their lives during a fire at this mine. Evidently, the fire was discovered by the fire boss, but men were permitted to go into the mine. At one point, a man-trip with twelve men was pushed into the smoke, but all escaped except one man who was later found dead about 70 feet in by fresh air. Of the five persons losing their lives, one was rescued alive after an **undisclosed period** but died on the way to the surface. The deaths were caused by inhaling carbon monoxide. Evidently, the fire resulted from blasting coal at the face of Room 64 off 10 Right entry, presumably with pellet powder.
- Mar Indian Head Colliery Cave-in, Tremont, Pennsylvania
Earl Beard, 30, had a narrow escape from death or serious injury when he was entombed for **three hours** at the Indian Head Colliery near Tremont. Following his removal from the debris Beard was taken to the Pottsville Hospital where it was found he was only suffering from shock and lacerations. Beard was employed by the Bazley Construction Company, in a stripping operation at the Indian Head Colliery. He was drilling coal at the time of the accident. A fall of dirt and coal occurred, completely burying him. Fellow workers immediately started rescue work to uncover the buried man. Dr. J. W. Schultz, of Tremont, gave first aid treatment and removed him to the hospital, where his condition was reported as good. Source document.
- Apr Sinclair Mine Fire, Switz, Indiana
Five miners escaped death in the Sinclair mine after fire broke out there. They walled themselves into a space 24 by 12 feet for an **undisclosed period** more than 100 yards away from the blazing wooden shaft, and awaited rescue. The rescued miners were Jack Hineman, Dennis Combs, Thomas Barnett, Henry Johnson, and Roll Himebrook.
- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Trapped more than three hours by a slide of earth and shale while he was cutting coal in a mine opening, Charles Mickel, 38, today owed his life to a rescue squad which worked to free him despite the constant danger of another slide. Immediately upon his exit from death, Mickel was greeted by law enforcement and taken into custody on charges of forcible entry, assault and battery, and malicious mischief made by Mrs. Helen Smith. Source document.
- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tremont, Pennsylvania
Frank Houser, 44, of Tremont, had a miraculous escape from death by suffocation when he was buried yesterday under a rush of coal near his home while engaged with other workmen in screening culm from an abandoned bank. He was caught

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in a hole when the sides collapsed and was held prisoner **15 minutes** before fellow toilers effected his rescue. Houser, victim of internal injuries and shock, was removed to the Pottsville hospital. [Source document](#).

- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania
Entombed for **seven hours** James Farrell, 22, of Lorberry Junction, near Pine Grove, was rescued from a mine hole in which he was digging coal. Rushed to a hospital, he was treated for shock and held for observation of possible internal injuries. Farrell was digging with another man on a private mining property when the timbers gave way and buried him under a rush of earth. His companion escaped. [Source document](#).
- May Jeddo-Highland No. 4 Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Trapped in a mine breast after thirty feet of gangway caved in at the No. 4 Colliery of the Jeddo-Highland Coal Company, five miners were rescued uninjured after an entombment of over **four hours**. The trapped miners included Peter Brobowski, George Clarco, Frank Mussolino, Fred Wald, and Nicholas Parenti. A rescue squad of fifty men worked for more than an hour before establishing communication with the men. [Source document](#).
- Jun Dorrance Colliery Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Buried beneath a fall of coal, Joseph Swelgoskie suffered possible fractures of the small bones of his left foot at the Dorrance Colliery of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company. He was rescued by fellow workmen within a few minutes after the fall occurred. Admitted to General Hospital, Swelgoskie was reported in good condition. [Source document](#).
- Jun Abandoned Diamond Colliery Rescue, Scranton, Pennsylvania
The wanderings of two North Scranton boys in the darkness of the abandoned Diamond Colliery of the Glen Alden Coal Company, ended after — **75 hours** — of torturous travel through pockets of blackdamp and perilous cave squeeze areas. Their underground journey was terminated in a thrilling rescue by Fuhrman Ballus, who on his second attempt in two days to locate the boys, found them without lights, huddled against the gob. The youths, Walter Gilasavage, 13, and John Stasko, Jr., were sadly the worse for their experience when brought to the surface. Both boys were exceedingly nervous and exhausted almost to the point of emaciation. The youngsters each lost nine or ten pounds in the adventure and had been without food for three days. The only water available was the subterranean drippings of sulphur water. Gilasavage was taken to the state hospital and was examined. His physical condition was reported as good considering shock and his long vacation from the dinner table. Stasko was treated

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by a physician and was removed to his home. Both boys had bruises on the leg from tearing along the road and vaulting over fall of roof. The boys were so weakened as to be scarcely able to follow Ballus over the gangway as he piloted them to the surface. [Source document.](#)

- Jun Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Aristes, Pennsylvania
Entombed for nearly — **eight hours** — in a coal hole sixty feet deep near Aristes, Stephen Popilchock, aged seventeen, summoned enough strength to escape from ambulance attendants and make off to his home in a friend's automobile, following his rescue. While being carried from the mine hole on a stretcher to the ambulance, Popilchock startled his rescuers by suddenly leaping from the stretcher and running to the automobile of a friend, he was driven home and apparently was none the worse for his experience. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, McComas, West Virginia
Joseph James Ellis and Armado Bucchi helped to rescue Walter J. Church from a mine cave-in, McComas, West Virginia, July 28, 1934. As Church, 31, was standing between the side wall of a room in a coal mine and a mine car that was three feet from the wall, a block of slate eight feet long, six feet wide, and eight inches thick dropped from a long crack in the roof, covering the car and extending to within four inches of the wall. Church was knocked to his knees, and one arm was pinned against the top of the side of the car. Ellis, 45, miner, who was between the end of the car and the face of the coal, was struck a glancing blow by the slate and then got out of the room. He heard slate dribbling from the roof and knew that dribbling slate often preceded a fall. Calling that there had been a fall and getting an axe, Ellis crawled on his hands and knees four or five feet under the slate, which was but three feet above the floor, and chopped the side of the car four or five inches from Church's arm. Another block of slate similar in size to the first then dropped on the first block, crushing the sides of the car so that the slate was but two feet above the floor. A little later Ellis and Bucchi managed to move the side of the car, freeing Church's arm. The three then backed from beneath the slate. Church's arm was later amputated at the elbow. He recovered otherwise. Messrs. Joseph Ellis and Bucchi were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Jul Peabody Mine Cave-in, Sullivan, Indiana
Caught beneath a heavy fall of slate, John Owen, a miner, dug himself out after — **five hours** — of painful effort. He was severely crushed but would probably recover. The slate fall occurred at the Peabody mine near Sullivan. [Source document.](#)

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- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Rockslide, Coal Castle, Pennsylvania
William Jones, 35, from Minersville, Pennsylvania was rescued from a rockslide in a Bootleg anthracite mine at Coal Castle, Pennsylvania, where he was trapped for more than **24 hours**.
- Aug Derby No. 3 Mine Explosion, Big Stone Gap, Virginia
After an **undisclosed period** following the 7 a.m. explosion, two men, Lawrence Fleener and Walter Bayless, were brought out alive and were taken to the Stonega hospital for treatment. Artificial respiration was resorted to in vain efforts to save some of the others.
- Aug Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Upper Donaldson, Pennsylvania
Harold Dinger was entombed in a bootleg mine hole when a rush of coal and debris covered him as he and a group of men including his father and brothers were working the hole. He was rescued practically uninjured after an **undisclosed period**. The group, including his father, H. Dinger, a brother, Lester, Herman, and Harry Myers were working the coal hole with Harold in the hole digging. He dislodged a large rock which precipitated the slide. Aside from shock and bruises he was uninjured. Source document.
- Aug Wolfe Colliery Cave-in, Oneida, Pennsylvania
Joseph Thomas, of Oneida, near Hazleton, was recovering at the Hazleton state hospital from severe shock and injuries suffered when he was buried — **seven hours** — beneath a fall of coal and rock at the Wolfe Colliery, of the Wolfe Coal Company, where he was employed as a miner. Source document.
- Sep Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Turkey Run, Pennsylvania
John Birchess, 22, was rescued after being trapped for **four hours** in a coal hole near Turkey Run. He was covered almost to the neck, suffering injuries of the left chest, left hip, both knees and legs. He was removed to the Locust Mountain Hospital, where his condition was said to be serious. Birchess was working an "independent" mine hole with his partner when he was caught by a fall of dirt and rock. Source document.
- Sep Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Wiggans, Pennsylvania
Michael Mensick, 32, of Shenandoah, was at work in an independent mine operation near Wiggans when he was buried under a rush of rock and debris. Fellow workmen quickly effected rescue of the unfortunate miner, but not before he had suffered severe head and chest injuries. He was taken to the Locust Mountain state hospital, at Shenandoah, for treatment. Source document.

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- Oct Bootleg Mine Cave-in, New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
John Coyle, age 63, was rescued after **20 hours** from a bootleg mine hole near New Philadelphia. Coyle owed his life-saving rescue to a group of volunteers that drove a 90-foot parallel shaft to reach the trapped miner. Physicians at the Pottsville Hospital reported that Coyle was suffering from severe shock and exposure. [Source document](#).
- Oct West End Mine Cave-in, Mocanaqua, Pennsylvania
Silver Miczalski, 28, was rescued after being trapped in a slide of coal for an **hour and 20 minutes** at the West End Coal Company in Mocanaqua, Pennsylvania. He was completely covered, but loose debris around his head allowed him to breathe until rescued. [Source document](#).
- Nov Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Charleston, West Virginia
Imprisoned for more than — **24 hours** — in a tiny wet niche in the mine wall behind a huge pile of slate and jagged rock, Toni Tianosi was rescued by fellow-workers who labored day and night, working in 20-minute shifts to dig him a tunnel to freedom. He was taken to his home — to bed, to rest, and most important in Toni's opinion, to get warm. [Source document](#).
- Nov Abandoned Lincoln Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Charles Barr, of Pine Grove, was reported recovering from a harrowing experience of being entombed for — **more than six hours** — in an abandoned mine shaft. A rush of earth and coal trapped Barr in the abandoned workings at the Lincoln colliery. Twenty men digging in shifts rescued him. [Source document](#).
- Nov Harmon Mine Cave-in, Placerville, California
Rescued after being entombed by a mine cave-in for **16 hours**, Owen W. Terry declared he would return to his job despite his harrowing experience. Terry, superintendent of the Harmon Mine was uninjured but was still and sore from being pinioned by heavy timbers, which prevented a huge boulder from crushing him. He was trapped by the rock fall which killed another miner, William Stonerook. [Source document](#).
- Dec Wyandotte Dragline Rescue, Wyandotte, California
When the lights on a Wyandotte dragline dredger suddenly went out as he was about to go on his midnight work shift, Charles Anderson of Oroville fell into a 12-foot prospect hole in which there were six feet of water. His calls for help were heard by a fellow employee who threw a cable down the shaft to Anderson and then called to Anderson's son, nearby in an automobile, to throw the car

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headlights over the hole. Wallace found a ladder, tied a rope on it and threw it down the shaft to Anderson who climbed out safely. [Source document](#).

— 1933 —

Jan Bootleg Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Buried to his neck when a slide caught him at the bottom of a bootleg mine hole, Charles Zawacki, 38, had a miraculous escape from agonizing death, 40 feet below the surface. Volunteer workers rescued Zawacki alive after **15 hours'** laborious shoveling and timbering. The man was taken to the Shamokin State Hospital, where an X-ray examination revealed no broken bones. He was sent to the men's ward, however, to be treated for shock and exposure. Zawacki was digging coal at the bottom of the narrow pit when one side caved in, burying him to his neck. Following the cave-in, a companion went down into the hole and raked the loose dirt and rock away from the entombed man's neck so he could breathe easier. The task of uncovering the man was then begun. [Source document](#).

Jan Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania

Imprisoned by a fall of earth and silt for more than **six hours**. Joseph Symborski, 21, was released from a mine hole in the vicinity of the old Lehigh Valley railroad cut west of the Elmwood slope. Reports from the Locust Mountain hospital said that his condition was improving. His injuries were announced as contusions of the body. [Source document](#).

Jan Pennsylvania Mine Asphyxiation, Grass Valley, California

A heroic rescue of Russell Miller, victim of bad air in the Pennsylvania Mine occurred when Donald Pascoe, a young miner, descended alone into the mine and found Miller after an **undisclosed period** in an unconscious condition at the bottom of a winze on the 1,700-foot level. Pascoe, himself feeling the effects of the impure air occasioned by the fact the ventilating equipment of the mine was out of commission through lack of water, succeeded in transporting Miller 4,000 feet to the hoisting station, where he was taken to the surface. Miller, Pascoe, and Sam Veale were sent into the mine to adjust pumps and other machinery for a temporary shutdown. Pascoe and Veale completed their work and returned to the surface, only to find that Miller had not appeared. It was then that Pascoe re-entered the mine alone to search for his companion. [Source document](#).

Feb Lucky Baldwin Mine Fall of Person, Placerville, California

Lester Simmons, engaged with companions, climbed about 30 feet down the shaft, part of the abandoned Lucky Baldwin mine, to bring out some iron ore. He slipped from the ladder, his friends said, and fell about 5 feet before his clothes

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caught on a piece of timber. He dangled in the shaft for an **undisclosed period**, which mining men said was between 1,000 and 1,500 feet deep, until his companions lowered a rope and brought him to the surface. Source document.

- Feb Anthracite Bootleg Mine Cave-in, North Scranton, Pennsylvania
Three North Scranton youths were rescued after they had been trapped behind a cave in a bootleg mine operation not far from their homes, suffered no injuries, but were badly scared when taken out of the mine by rescuers. The trio, James Walsh, 17; John Hopkins, 20; and a youth known only as "Chicago" had entered the mine opening the previous night at 11 o'clock. They had been digging coal 16 minutes, police said, when a cave occurred and blocked the opening. Other young men outside gave the alarm, but it required **more than two hours** to dig through the cave to reach the young men held prisoners by the fall of coal and rock. Source document.
- Mar Abandoned Sayre Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Bootleg anthracite miner, John Cheslock, was rescued from the abandoned Sayre colliery near Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania. In a state of collapse, but conscious, Cheslock was rescued following a — **4-day** — entrapment. Sadly, John Cheslock, Jr., 27, entombed in the abandoned mine near for more than — **100 hours** — after he was trapped by a slide of earth and rock, died in Ashland State Hospital, 12 hours after he was rescued. Mr. Cheslock was trapped in the abandoned working while picking up coal with Stanley Orluskie. Orluskie escaped when he grabbed hold of a ladder as an avalanche of dirt rushed down on them. Cheslock was swept down the untimbered mine hole. After sinking a shaft 775 feet, they finally reached Cheslock. He was removed to Ashland State hospital. First examination of the youth revealed that his injuries were not serious. Physicians at the hospital believed his death was due to shock. See more at <https://bit.ly/3LnL9Lx> and <https://bit.ly/34woo7N>.
- May Unnamed Mine Rockslide, Feather River Canyon, California
Imprisoned for hours by a rockslide in the Feather River Canyon, Frank Bane, 62, miner, was recovering in a hospital at Quincy, California because his dog hovered close to him and kept him warm and because rescue workers refused to give up efforts to save him. He was rescued by sixteen men, who worked feverishly to extricate him when he was pinned beneath a mass of rocks and dirt that broke both his legs, a shoulder, and several ribs. He was brought to Quincy on a stretcher. Source document.

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- Jun Madeira Hill Mine Cave-in, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Joseph Terescavage, a 51-year-old miner, from Shamokin, PA was rescued after having been entombed for **two days** in the collapsed Madeira Hill mine near Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania.
- Jul Locust Gap Mine Roof Fall, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Twelve miners were rescued after having been trapped for **three hours** by a fall of coal in the Locust Gap mine operated by the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company at Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania.
- Sep Truesdale Colliery Inundation, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
After a **14-hour** entrapment, four miners dug through cave-ins and waded through neck-deep water to reach rescue from the flooded Truesdale Colliery. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Michael Lukash, 45, was rescued after being trapped for **17 hours** in a makeshift mine near Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. The walls collapsed as he was carrying out one of the few remaining sacks of coal. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Unnamed Coal Mine Lost Person, Downs, West Virginia
For **seven days and seven nights** without food or water and groping in utter darkness, Charles Montgomery, 64, wandered helplessly through the maze of an abandoned section of a coal mine at nearby Downs. Hardly able to walk, his shoes cut to pieces by jagged slate in the old mine tunnels, the weary miner was rescued far from the point at which he had entered the workings. "Give me a drink of water," was his first cry after two members of the rescue party found him tramping aimlessly in search of the main shaft. Absent from the mine for a week, he entered and decided to look around a bit. In an abandoned section, his light failed. A search began after his family reported him missing and his dinner pail was found at the mine entrance. [Source document.](#)
- Oct McCormick Mine Cave-in, Jacksonville, California
Ed Wilcox, 30, miner at the McCormick Mine near Jacksonville, narrowly escaped death in a cave-in on the 180-foot level when a portion of the tunnel roof fell on him. He saw the slide coming as he was working and attempted to get out, but both of his legs were caught. The left leg was broken in two places, and the right knee was injured. Wilcox was pinned in the tunnel for **two hours** while fellow miners worked to dig him out from under the dirt. He was rushed to the Sonora Hospital by ambulance and treated by Dr. H. D. Rose. [Source document.](#)

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- Nov South Scranton Mine Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Five men were rescued from a mine after an **undisclosed period** in South Scranton, Pennsylvania following a cave-in. Two of the men, Paul Mariello and Carmel Comparta, were seriously hurt, suffering from internal injuries. The other three men left the scene before they could be identified.
- Dec Carson Hill Mine Fall of Person, San Andreas, California
Herman Cordes, Jr., had a bad scalp wound and he was bruised and shaken. Yet Herman was not complaining. He thought it could be worse. Cordes fell 100 feet in an ore stope at the Carson Hill Mine. Fellow workers were about to dump a carload of rock when they heard shouts at the bottom of the stope. They held back the ore and rescued Cordes. Six stitches were taken to close a cut on his head. Source document.
- Dec Idaho Maryland Mine Cave-in, Grass Valley, California
Nineteen men of the night shift of the Idaho Maryland mine, headed by Foreman Charles Mills, were freed after being trapped for **7½ hours** by a cave-in of the 1,000-foot level. Source document.

— 1932 —

- Feb Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Port Carbon, Pennsylvania
Joy of the wife and three children of Joseph Datorick, 28, of Port Carbon, was turned to sorrow, with announcement by surgeons at the Pottsville hospital that the entombed miner rescued after having been held prisoner **24 hours** 40 feet below the surface in a bootleg mine shaft is dying. Datorick was apparently unhurt when rescued last night, and his family rejoiced after a night and a day of terrible uncertainty. No bones were broken, but this afternoon it was discovered he was not only suffering from serious internal injuries, but also from excessive loss of blood. Surgeons said there was a great pressure constantly on the miner's body from the tons of earth under which he was buried. The pressure forced blood out of the lacerations and scratches he suffered about his entire body from the jagged rocks which closed him in. Source document.
- Apr Hammond Collieries Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania
Four imprisoned miners were rescued after — **15 hours** — behind a fall of coal in the Hammond Collieries near Girardville. The four were rescued after a crew of 20 men had worked cautiously all night lest their boring loosen more coal. They kept up communication with the imprisoned miners through a compressed air pipe. Source document.

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- Apr Mary Ann Lead and Zinc Mine Shaft Entrapment, Picher, Oklahoma
Toddling after his work-bound father, Gerald Collins, age 3, fell into a 250-foot drill hole and became wedged in the hole about 20 feet down. He remained trapped there for **11 hours** until rescuers dug a parallel shaft to reach and free the child. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Midway Mine Fire Asphyxiation, Picher, Oklahoma
Marked improvement was reported in the condition of Garfield Gray, who was overcome by gas at the Midway mine while extinguishing fire among timbers underground. Gray was dismissed from Picher hospital, where he was taken after being gassed. When taken to the hospital he was in a semi-conscious condition, and it was several hours before he fully regained consciousness. In becoming overcome by the gas he fell to the ground, being discovered by fellow-workmen within a few minutes. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Lehigh Navigation Co. No. 8 Colliery Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Buried up to his neck in coal and debris since up for an **undisclosed period**, John Slavy, a miner, was rescued. Slavy was trapped in the No. 8 Colliery of the Lehigh Navigation Co. when a rib in a gangway collapsed. Taken to the Coaldale State hospital, his condition was reported as good. [Source document.](#)
- May Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Milton Frantz, 20, Tamaqua, buried in a sitting posture for **22 hours** and rescued apparently unhurt died suddenly at the Coaldale State Hospital, a victim of "shock" according to the hospital records. Frantz was removed from a mine breach in which he had been trapped at the bottom of a narrow hole by a collapse of earth while he was digging for coal in a "homemade mine." The hole was so narrow that only one rescuer at a time could dig his way toward the trapped youth. Most of the time there was no room to swing a shovel and the dirt had to be scooped away by the handful. Meantime Frantz sat in a cramped position unable to move. A heavy iron plate, used to support the sides of the excavation, lodged in the opening just above Frantz's head and kept him from being completely buried and suffocated. Acetylene torches cut the plate away. The plate was so near Frantz's head that he suffered burns from the flame. After the removal of the plate, Frantz was fed and given restoratives. He was conscious and conversed with the rescue party, all expert miners. When he was finally freed and taken to the hospital, doctors report he was not seriously injured. But shock and exposure contributed to a relapse which caused his death unexpectedly. [Source document.](#)

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- May San Gabriel Canyon Gold Mine Cave-in, Covina, California
Mrs. Naomi Jarvis was killed when a cave-in occurred in an unnamed gold mine in the San Gabriel Canyon near Covina, California. Mrs. Jarvis and another miner, David Workman, were caught in the collapse. Mr. Workman was freed from the material by rescuers after an **undisclosed period**. [Source document](#).
- Jun Silver King Western Mine Cave-in, Park City, Utah
Rescuers toiled **30 hours** to free six Silver King Western miners, after having furnished the imprisoned miners fresh air, food, candles and electric heating elements. The six miners, caught behind a cave-in in a drift Friday noon, were released, none the worse for their experience. Their greatest discomfort was suffered from the water until it was drained. The water rose to a depth of four feet and the six men took turns in sitting on the one ore car in the drift which could accommodate only three men at a time, forcing three to stand in the water. [Source document](#).
- Jul Yatesville Mine Cave-in, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Two unemployed miners were killed when they were trapped in a mine tunnel at the Yatesville mine. The roof of the mine opening collapsed. **A third unnamed man was rescued alive after an undisclosed period**. The dead were Salvatore Mantagna, 39, and Sam Duminuco, 30. The three became trapped when the roof collapsed, and a slide of earth blocked the opening of the tunnel. One of the men managed to escape when he heard the rush of earth but too late to signal his fellow workmen. According to officials at the workings, the men were illegally bootlegging coal. Police had begun a campaign of arrests to break up the practice because of the numerous fatalities. [Source document](#).
- Aug Abandoned Badger Mine Fall of Person, Little Lost River, Idaho
Ole Meddaugh, 50, Little Lost River miner, was suffering from an imprisonment of **six days and nights** in an abandoned mine shaft 45 miles east of Arco, Idaho. He was rescued the day before in a weakened condition after his continued absence had given rise to fears for his safety. A week earlier Meddaugh lowered himself with a rope for 60 feet into the abandoned shaft of the Badger mine and descended the remaining 40 feet to the bottom of the shaft on timbers. When he attempted to ascend the timbers gave way and he saved himself from dropping to the bottom by hanging to a projecting rock. Since he was unable to reach the dangling end of the rope, he found a seat on a rock and waited for help to arrive. [Source document](#).

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- Sep Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Redding, California
Happy Holbrook, 42, a miner, was released from a 40-ton rock trap which kept him imprisoned for more than **12 hours** while a crew of men worked frantically to release him. Holbrook suffered no serious injury from the accident, except for a severely pinched leg. While excavating at the mine, a large quantity of dirt gave way, causing the heavy rock to pin him down. He was fed during the work of releasing him and chatted cheerfully with the rescue crew. [Source document](#).
- Oct Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Trapped by a cave-in 1,000 feet underground in Pittston, Pennsylvania, Park Tucker, 21, was rescued after an **undisclosed period**. His resulting injuries included a severed arm and his legs broken in 13 places. His two work companions were killed in the disaster. While trapped Mr. Tucker prayed. "Deliver my body and soul, Lord." he said he prayed," and I'll promise to preach the Gospel the rest of my life." Mr. Tucker stated that he spent 13 months in a hospital and resumed his schooling in the seventh grade at the age of 23. He later attended Wheaton Academy in Illinois and Houghton College in New York in preparation for ministerial studies. Mr. Tucker graduated from the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and on October 1, 1943, he was ordained before a congregation that packed the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Chillicothe, Ohio, fulfilling the vow he made years before. [Source document](#).
- Nov Unnamed Anthracite Coal Mine Cave-in, Avoca, Pennsylvania
Robert Hughes and Joseph P. Tigue helped to rescue Thomas A. Coleman and Louis J. Doran from a mine cave-in, Avoca, Pennsylvania, November 8, 1932. While Coleman, 37, miner, and Doran, 45, mine laborer, were digging coal in an abandoned entry that connected with a narrow shaft, a collapse occurred. Coleman was buried under shale at the bottom of the shaft. Doran was knocked to the floor of the entry and lay under shale four feet deep 18 feet from the shaft. Using their hands, Hughes, 50, miner, and Tigue removed the shale from Coleman. Occasionally shale sloughed off the sides and dropped from overhead. In three hours, they removed enough shale to free Coleman, who was pulled out. Hughes and Tigue worked all afternoon and far into the night to make a trench to Doran. They erected posts, piled the shale behind boards resting against the posts, and finally reached Doran. While they were removing debris from over him, the sides of the entry caved in. Hughes and the other man ran to the shaft and were hoisted out. During the remainder of the night and the next morning all the shale and other debris were removed by men under safe conditions, adequate braces having been placed, and Doran was taken out. He suffered injuries from which he died seven hours later. Both men were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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- Nov Jackson Hill Mine Cave-in, Portsmouth, Ohio
Trapped under a fall of slate, Robert Hayslett, 40, and James DeLong, 40, were rescued after an **undisclosed period** by fellow workmen at the Jackson Hill coal mine. Hayslett was injured seriously. [Source document](#).
- Nov Brookside Colliery Inundation, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Four miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the flooded Brookside Colliery near Pottsville, Pennsylvania. A shot fired by workers released an underground pocket of water. The four trapped men waited for hours for the aid they knew was coming toward them. Charles Deichert, 23; and Simon Bohr, 36; drowned in the incident. [Source document](#).
- Nov Pennsylvania Colliery Cave-in, Green Ridge, Pennsylvania
Albert Dellabrida, 28, narrowly escaped death when a rock estimated at a ton rolled upon him at the Pennsylvania Colliery at Green Ridge. Dellabrida and his three buddies, Sylvester Getrick, Mike Kulick, Ralph Bridy were working in No. 1 slope, east No. 5 vein at the time of the mishap. All the miners but Dellabrida escaped from a large piece of top rock which fell near where the group was working. The unfortunate miner failed to escape from the scene in time to avoid the rock which rolled upon him and held him prisoner for a **half hour**. The three buddies, with the aid of another succeeded in extricating the injured man from beneath the rock. Dellabrida was rushed to the Shamokin state hospital where his condition was reported to be not serious. His injuries were confined to the body. [Source document](#).
- Dec Moweaqua Mine Explosion, Moweaqua, Illinois
Cut off by a fresh fall of rock and shale, twenty-three rescue workers had to dig themselves to safety in the community cooperative Moweaqua coal mine. The fall occurred shortly after the rescue squad discovered two more bodies in the north shaft of the mine where most of the 54 men trapped there the previous Saturday were working. Seven men were still unaccounted for but there was no hope they might be found alive. The group of 23 workers were cut off from the main shaft for a short time when the roof of one of the tunnels collapsed. They succeeded in digging their way through to safety. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Morgan Jones Mine Explosion](#), Madrid, New Mexico
Following the first impact of the explosion, some ten men near the outer edge of the area made a dash for the main passageway. Three of these, including Jimmie Taylor, 19, son of H. L. Taylor, assistant superintendent of the company's Madrid mines, were overcome. They were picked up and carried out safely by their comrades. Andrew Sampria, rushing out, picked up a prostrate form and carried it

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with him. When he had reached the area of clean air, he learned that it was his own son, Pete, he had rescued.

— 1931 —

- Jan Little Betty Mine Explosion, Dugger, Indiana
Seven miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the Little Betty Mine at Dugger, Indiana. The men who were rescued had barricaded themselves in an entry off one of the main corridors. Those rescued included Locie Hale, William Bedwell, Ben Snyder, Herman Brown, Charles Love and Charles Centers, all of Linton, and Jule Wellington of Sullivan.
- Jan Unnamed Gold Mine Fire, Centennial, Wyoming
Three men trapped **four hours** in a gold mine by a fire were rescued alive. They were Bernard Holtum, owner of the mine, and two brothers named Crites. The men were working in the 1200-foot shaft when the fire started. Source document.
- Jan Mitchell Tunnel Rescue, Livermore, California
Imprisoned for **24 hours** in the Mitchell Tunnel of the Hetch-Hetchy water system, 20 miners were brought to the surface, uninjured, but weak for the want of food. Oscar Nelson, 39, was the first man brought to the surface. The others were brought to the surface within half an hour and were being taken care of at the first-aid headquarters. Source document.
- Feb Powderly Colliery Roof Fall, South Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Two of the five Carbondale men, Frank Cretelli and Alex Docalavich, who were entombed in the Powderly colliery of the Hudson Coal Company, South Carbondale, at 10:30 o'clock yesterday morning, were rescued alive by fellow workmen. Neither was seriously injured but both suffered greatly from shock following their removal from their hazardous positions in which they were forced to remain for more than **seven hours**. The body of John Caruso, one of five men entombed was recovered and no trace has been found of John Rogish, 62, and Thomas Chadwick, 59, both of Carbondale. Source document.
- Feb Enterprise Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Bidding one another goodbye when they were trapped beneath a fall of coal and rock at the Enterprise colliery, Ralph Kerstetter, 38, and Clement Poliniak, 37, awaited an anticipated second fall which they knew would completely cover and smother them, when the former suddenly detected a small aperture, leading from the prison-like cell in the mines and through which he made exit and subsequently

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rescued his companion, the latter having suffered numerous injuries when crushed under rock and coal. Kerstetter escaped with minor injuries.

Kerstetter and Poliniak were employed as buddies in a breast at Enterprise slope. The former was engaged in drilling a hole in rock while Poliniak was close by shoveling down coal and rock when without the slightest warning the liners supporting great quantities of rock and debris broke out directly over the two workmen, pinioning them beneath.

Poliniak was buried to a point above his waist, while Kerstetter was in a more secure position. Imprisoned in the darkened underground cell, as their carbide lights had been extinguished by the unexpected rush, the two men were horrified to hear the top over them rumbling and cracking and evidencing a second sudden rush. It was while thus imprisoned and certain of the coming of death, that the men exchanged their farewell blessings upon each other and then awaited the coming of the expected fall.

Cautiously moving one hand and arm, Kerstetter was successful in reaching to his pocket despite the tight quarters, obtained a match and lighted his carbide lamp. Slowly moving it about in search of a possible means of exit from behind the fall, the workman warned his buddy not to struggle and after a time Kerstetter was successful in making a small aperture. Gradually he widened the opening until it was of sufficient size to permit him to crawl thru.

Once free of the debris and disregarding the threatened break at any moment of the top, Kerstetter quickly set about to effect the rescue of Poliniak, who was tightly held behind the shattered liners and beneath rock and coal. After considerable work, Kerstetter rejoiced in being able to extricate his painfully injured buddy, whom he dragged to a place of safety while he went to summon aid.

Both men were removed to the emergency hospital at the colliery, where their injuries were dressed, after which they were taken to their respective homes. Kerstetter suffered but slight bruises and lacerations, while Poliniak was less fortunate, having been badly injured about the legs, hips and back and it will be several weeks before he will be able to resume work. It was estimated that the men were held prisoners in the fall for **more than two hours** before Kerstetter was successful in effecting an opening to make his escape and then effect the rescue of his buddy. [Source document.](#)

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- Apr Tunnel Ridge Colliery Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
After being entombed in a gangway at the Tunnel Ridge colliery for about **eight hours**, rescue crews found Charles Walaconis uninjured. Twenty feet of debris separated Walaconis from freedom. When the entombed man responded to tapping signals on a pipeline that ran through the debris, the rescue party worked faster in the hope of reaching the man before serious injury or death could occur. He was guided by instructions carried over the pipeline and was finally taken to his home without a scratch. [Source document.](#)
- May Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Clearfield, Pennsylvania
Seven youths were rescued from a mine in which they had been trapped by a cave-in for **10 hours**. Rescue workers cut a shaft from the top of a hill overlooking the mine and pulled the youths to safety with ropes. Two sons of the owner of the mine were digging coal when the five other youths entered and asked them to play baseball. The seven started for the entrance, but near the surface their car jumped the track and struck a prop. The roof collapsed, and slate closed the entrance. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Bulan, Kentucky
Jesse Engle rescued Charles Napier from a mine cave-in. While Napier, 31, was working beside a mine car in a mine, a rock weighing approximately 56 tons fell from the roof, knocking him down, and rested on hard-packed coal 20 inches above the floor. The fingers of one of his hands were pinned between the rock and the top of a box on the car, and his other arm was pinned under the end of the car. For 40 minutes, Engle he made thrusts against the top edge of the box with iron bars, chipping it, and inserted wedges. Napier then was able to free his hand. Engle then reached under Napier and helped him free his other arm. Engle backed out from beneath the rock, and Napier followed him. The rock settled four inches during the act, and a half-hour later the rock had crushed the car and settled within three inches of the floor. Two of Napier's fingers had to be amputated. He was not otherwise injured. Mr. Engle was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Aug Unnamed Mine Cave-in, Silver City, Nevada
William Donovan, miner, was rescued after **three hours** of frantic digging after becoming buried in a cave-in. Only his head was protruding when rescuers began their work. Loose rock and fresh slides threatened to bury the entire rescue crew. [Source document.](#)

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- Aug Richards Colliery Coal Rush, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Joseph Yusinski, a miner employed at the Richards Colliery of the Susquehanna Collieries Company, had a miraculous escape from sometime later by a force of rescuers. Yusinski was employed as a miner in a breast in the west No. 10½ vein, first lift, south dip workings. He was taking a skip off the rib of the breast to prepare a manway when he started a serious rush of coal. Realizing the danger, Yusinski flattened himself against the rib at a heading, thus leaving a small air pocket about him when he became buried in the coal. Rescuers were rushed to the scene and a **half-hour** later succeeded in rescuing the miner alive. He had escaped with a few minor bruises. Source document.
- Sep Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Charleston, West Virginia
Aukstock Carter, 30, was rescued after an **undisclosed period** following a cave-in in an unnamed coal mine near Charleston, West Virginia. His rescue came after company physician, Dr. W. B. Davis, amputated his right arm.
- Oct Mocanaqua Mine Explosion, Mocanaqua, Pennsylvania
Two miners who never gave up hope after 4 comrades were killed in an explosion in the Mocanaqua Mine of the West End Coal Company were rescued after **133 hours** of entrapment. The survivors were John Thomashunis, 40, and John Metz, 22.
- Oct Kehley Run Colliery Coal Rush, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
John Burgness, who was picking coal on the rock bank of the Kehley Run Colliery, was caught in a rush, and was buried to his hips for about **one-half hour** before rescue workers could remove him from a very dangerous position. The men who formed the rescue party had to work very carefully due to the condition of the mine breach in which Burgness was held prisoner. They finally succeeded in getting the man out of the hole and to safety. It was said at the Kehley Run colliery office that the man was not injured. The accident occurred about 1,000 feet east of the breaker. Source document.
- Dec Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Clarence Bohman, 31, trapped by a fall of slate and dirt digging coal in an abandoned mine near his home was rescued by nearby residents after an **undisclosed period**. Source document.

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- Jan Jermyn Mine Cave-in, Jermyn, Pennsylvania
Patrick McAndrew was rescued **2 hours** after being trapped by a large cave-in at the Hudson Coal Company's Jermyn mine. He sustained a broken hip and was recovering at the State Hospital in Scranton. Three others died in the same incident. They were Harold Vansickle, James Charles, and William McAndrew, Patrick's brother. [Source document](#).
- Jan [Lillybrook No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Lillybrook, West Virginia
After an **undisclosed period**, the bodies of eight men, six of whom were Negroes, were recovered. R. L. Meadows, one of the injured men, was found lying with the dead. He was considered by physicians to have a chance for recovery.
- Jan Blackstone Mine Cave-in, Rutland, Ohio
Harry France, a miner in the Blackstone Coal mine at Rutland narrowly escaped death when he was completely covered by slate and stone as a part of the mine collapsed. The falling stone and slate miraculously fell in such a way that the miner suffered only cuts and bruises. His calls for help summoned fellow-workmen, who rescued him a short time later. [Source document](#).
- Feb [Standard Mine Explosion](#), Standardville, Utah
Five were rescued by crews from nearby mining communities. The five, taken out after an **undisclosed period**, had bratticed themselves from the deadly gas fumes, far back in the workings and had left notes directing their rescuers where to find them.
- Feb Ellangowan Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Felix Zegunis was rescued after an **8-hour** entrapment in the Ellangowan Colliery at Pottsville, PA. A fall of coal occurred in the pillar hole, middle split, knocking out timber and shutting off his escape. The rock hole was closed above the fall. The miner's buddy was coming up the manway when the fall occurred. He gave the alarm, and, in a few minutes, officials had a big force of rescuers at work. [Source document](#).
- Feb Wildcat Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy Plane, Pennsylvania
George Schadel was painfully injured when entombed as the result of a fall of coal at the "Wildcat," formerly the Lawrence Colliery, located near Mahanoy Plane. Schadel, a loader boss, and Elmer Evans, a motor runner, entered the mine early in the morning to reset some timbers at the bottom of the slope. They were engaged in the work when a terrific fall of top occurred, burying Evans beneath it

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and entombing Schadel back of it. Other workmen heard the fall and rushed to the scene. From behind the fall, they heard the moans of Schadel and later learned from him that Evans had been caught under the rush of coal. Hurried rescue work was started but it was not until 1:00 p.m. that the rescue party succeeded in reaching Evans' body. He had met instantaneous death; his body having been frightfully crushed. An hour later Schadle was released from back of the fall, suffering from severe bruises. He declared that when the fall occurred, he had stepped back to get some tools, thus miraculously escaping the fate of his fellow workman. Source document.

Mar New Peerless Mine Explosion, Helper, Utah

Eight men escaped alive after the blast. A. L. Ross and L. S. King were burned about the face and hands and badly gassed. They owe their lives to Vic Bain and Tony Canrinker, who placed the injured men in a mine car and signaled to have it drawn from the mine, but the apparatus was damaged by the explosion and failed to function. Bain and Canrinker then carried Ross and King toward the entrance of the mine until they encountered fresh air. Others rescued were B. W. Hall, Ole Swenson, Roy Story and Frank Hensley.

Mar Wolf Run Mine Fire, Amsterdam, Ohio

Owing their lives to the desperate work of the Steubenville Fire Department and mine rescue squads, 87 miners were brought out of the mine after an **undisclosed period**. About a dozen of them were unconscious when carried to the surface. Two rescuers, Sidney Wales, and Arnold Horton, collapsed from exhaustion after trampling for miles searching for workmen. Two other miners died in the accident.

Mar G. Pabst Mine Cave-in, Ironwood, Michigan

Caught by a fall of ore in the G. Pabst mine, Steve Barnes was rescued uninjured after **two and one-half hours** work by fellow employees. Barnes' partner escaped the rush of ore and summoned help. Barnes was buried to his shoulders, which made the task of freeing him difficult. Source document.

Apr Carbonado Mine Explosion, Carbonado, Washington

16 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **several hours** after an explosion in the Carbonado mine in Carbonado, Washington. Source document.

Jun Waterworks Tunnel Explosion, Detroit, Michigan

Fifteen men in a waterworks tunnel 227 feet below the surface of the Detroit river were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following a premature explosion of a dynamite charge. Six laborers were killed and six were injured in the accident.

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The injured were rushed to the hospital while rescue gangs started mining for those trapped in the tunnel by sand and rock. The explosion occurred in a tunnel in which the men were working when an electric drill struck a charge of dynamite.

[Source document.](#)

Aug Scranton Mine Subsidence, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Ralph Massankiel, age 25, and William Williams, age 52 were caught in a residential fall of ground in Scranton, Pennsylvania which trapped them for **9 hours**. Williams body was free above his hips and no more than Massankiel's head was free during their ordeal. This was the second of 2 subsidence events that took place. The first occurred at 2 a.m. and the one which caught these two men occurred while workmen were repairing damages from the first. [Source document.](#)

Aug Hudson Coal Mine No. 3 Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania

Edward DeLaney and Nicholas Muschamto, miners at the No. 3 shaft, Hudson Coal company, were entombed for more than **six hours** by a rock fall on Saturday afternoon and made their way to safety only after rescue workers drove a tunnel through the debris. Presence of mind of the men, who are said to have run behind the fall as they heard the roof cracking over them, saved the two from being crushed under the rock and coal. Neither of the men was injured. The rescue squad brought the entombed men to safety without any great difficulty. [Source document.](#)

Sep Red Ash Colliery Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania

Nine men were trapped yesterday at the Plymouth Red Ash Colliery by a cave-in and excitement ran high as reports of loss of life spread. A crowd outside the slope waited anxiously for news from the inside until officials calmed their fears with the prediction that there were probably no fatalities. The entombed men were released uninjured after being **imprisoned a few hours**. Excellent rescue facilities were responsible for the quick delivery. New forces of men were put to work after the rescue clearing away the debris. Timber men following them restored damaged props. [Source document.](#)

Oct West End Mine Cave-in, Mocanaqua, Pennsylvania

August Carucci, 30, was resting at home after being trapped in a cave-in for **14 hours** in the mine of the West End Coal Company at Mocanaqua, Pennsylvania. [Source document.](#)

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- Nov Lutie No. 5 Mine Explosion, Lutie, Oklahoma
The explosion sealed only one entry, known as number 10 1-2. About 17 men were said to be in this entry. Workmen reached entry 10 1-2 about **two hours** after the explosion and brought one man to the surface alive. Bodies of the other men were brought up slowly and taken to a morgue.
- Nov Millfield No. 6 Mine Explosion, Millfield, Ohio
19 miners were rescued **10 hours** after the explosion. The miners, most of them unconscious, were found behind a ventilation partition. John Dean, Inside Foreman, is credited with saving the lives of the rescued miners, including him. Dean and the other miners erected and gathered behind a ventilation partition which protected them from the deadly gases. Dean risked several trips into the smoke-filled entries to carry some of his comrades to safety before he collapsed and had to be carried to safety.
- Nov Lehigh Navigation No. 1 Colliery Cave-in, Cranberry, Pennsylvania
Florian Pucchule, 45, a miner employed by the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company, was instantly killed at 9 o'clock yesterday morning when he was caught under a rush of coal in the No. 1 slope of the Cranberry operations. He was completely buried, and it required six hours to extricate the body. Pucchule's laborer had a narrow escape from also being buried alive. He escaped the main rush of coal was quickly rescued unhurt after an **undisclosed period**. Source document.

— 1929 —

- Jan Shenandoah Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Anthony Benasheski was rescued after being entombed for **one hour** behind a fall of rock at the West Shenandoah colliery of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. He suffered a fractured ankle. Source document.
- Jan Harco Mine Fall of Person, Harrisburg, Illinois
Everett Bowlin, a Harco coal miner, was recovering from injuries suffered in a miraculous escape from death. Confused by a cloud of steam which belched from a 500-foot mine shaft, Bowlin stepped into the opening, thinking the hoist was at the top. After plunging approximately 300 feet he managed to grasp the ropes which operate the cage, and for **15 minutes** held on until the cage raised to meet him. Then he collapsed on top of the cage and was hoisted to the surface. Source document.
- Feb Twin Falls Avalanche, Twin Falls, Idaho
Miners working in a canyon near Twin Falls, Idaho, dug in the snow **an hour** to rescue a fellow worker buried in a slide. The miner was unconscious and almost

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frozen to death, but physicians said he probably would recover. [Source document.](#)

- Feb No. 8 Mine Cave-in, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Imprisoned **eight hours** beneath slides of coal and earth that buried him twice when rescue was in sight, Robert Parfitt, 25, was liberated alive from a shaft in the Number 8 mine at Coaldale. He had been kept alive during the day by means of oxygen lines brought to him when the debris was first removed from about his head, shortly after the accident happened. The debris was cleared, and an oxygen line placed at the nose of Parfitt as the workers began clearing the remainder of his body. They had nearly liberated him when another fall buried Parfitt again. The work was resumed once more and was near completion during the afternoon when another fall imprisoned Parfitt. The work was resumed a fourth time and the workers were able to bring Parfitt from under the debris. Parfitt was taken to the Coaldale hospital where he was reported as resting comfortably and was expected to recover. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Delano Copper Mine Cave-in, Contact, Nevada
Charles Chambers was rescued alive in a severely shocked condition after workers had tunneled through debris on the 100-foot level for **three hours**. The rescue squad was directed by faint cries of the victim. Both he and his brother Jack were working together when the tunnel collapsed. No trace of Jack was found in the mass of ore surrounding Charles. [Source document.](#)
- Mar [Kinloch Mine Explosion](#), Parnassus, Pennsylvania
Lawrence Allshouse, aged 28, was found alive and carried from the pit. Still alive after lying in an injured condition for **twenty-seven hours**, Allshouse was removed to a hospital where it was said he probably would die. He was semi-conscious.
- Apr Frisco Mine Cave-in, Wallace, Idaho
Oscar Johnson and John Amonson were rescued **48 hours** after a cave-in occurred at the Frisco mine at Wallace, Idaho. The cook of the Frisco mine was the chief hero of the rescue party. At 2-hour intervals, food was carried up the mountainside including great bowls of savory smelling soup and warm milk which were passed through a pipe to the trapped miners. [Source document.](#)
- May Nesquehoning Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
John Prelana, 40, was rescued after being buried alive for **fourteen hours** from a fall of rock in the No. 2 shaft of the Nesquehoning colliery, near Tamaqua. Andrew Sweetick, 38, died in the accident. [Source document.](#)

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- Jun South Eureka Mine Cave-in, Sutter Creek, California
Three miners became ensnared in a cave-in at the 750-foot level of the South Eureka Mine, Sutter Creek, California. George Carevich escaped unaided and reported the accident. After **several hours**, Thomas Rodovich, who was entombed with Mike Matlick, was taken out alive but badly lacerated. While no further news about Matlick could be found, it was agreed by company officials that his chances of survival were slim.
- Jun Empire Lead and Zinc Mine Cave-in, Picher, Oklahoma
Robert Luster and Charles Ashen, miners, were alive after being buried in a rock avalanche in the Empire Lead and Zinc mine. They were painfully injured. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Franklin, Pennsylvania
Suspended on a rock, 80 feet down in an abandoned coal mine, with a pool of water below, William Harrison, 10, was rescued suffering from a broken leg, cuts, and bruises. He was removed to Grove City Hospital. The boy and a playmate went to the shaft and attempt to throw a heavy club into the hole. A nail in the wood caught in the boy's clothing and caused him to plunge into the opening. Rescuers worked for more than **an hour** before bringing the lad to the surface. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Sherman Mine Explosion, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
After an explosion struck the Sherman Coal Company mine near Pottsville, Pennsylvania, forty trapped miners were rescued after **1½ hours** of absolute horror and hopelessness. A second explosion rocked the colliery, sending another sheet of flame roaring through the corridor. This flame seared the rescuers "like a breath of hell," as one of them described it. The rescue squad made its painful way back to the surface and the four injured were rushed to a hospital. The third blast occurred, literally blowing the imprisoned men through the chute to safety. All the men who were in the mine made it safely to the open. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Terrible Edith Mine Fire, Murray, Idaho
Three miners were rescued from the Terrible Edith silver-lead mine. They had been trapped for **several hours** by fire which swept the mine portal. Rescuers from the Hecla Mine reached the imprisoned men who were crouched behind a barricade. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Aladdin Divide Mine Cave-in, Chico, California
Charles Ernest Richards was rescued from a cave-in in the Aladdin Divide Mine near Chico. From his bed in the Enloe Hospital, Mr. Richards yesterday expressed

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his intention of returning to the project whereby only a few inches he escaped meeting death with Jess C. Burton, a fellow employe, beneath a mass of loose rock. Held a prisoner for at least half an hour when a huge boulder pinned his arm and leg down. Mr. Richards related how he lay in the tunnel, 400 feet from the portal and hundreds of feet below the mountain side, fearing that each moment would bring another cave-in that would crush the life from him as the first one had his fellow worker. So hoarse from continually crying out for help that he could hardly talk above a whisper. For what seemed to him a matter of hours, but which later proved to be about half an hour, he lay in the shaft, hoping that each moment would bring rescuers. His cries for help were not heard until Emil Shultz, a fellow employe, heard him. Source document.

Sep Buck Mountain Colliery Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Buried alive in a sitting position for **twelve hours**, Edward Warning, a miner, spent the time while waiting for what seemed certain death for himself in a futile struggle to keep alive one of his mates, the foreman of a crew of six men, trapped by a cave-in here yesterday. After a frantic struggle rescuers finally reached the buried men. Warning and another worker, Edward Mokaitis, were still alive, but William Wolfgang and three others were dead. Warning was working beside Wolfgang, the foreman, when the cave-in occurred as the men were setting tunnel supports in the south side of the Buck Mountain colliery workings of the Lehigh Valley Company. A fallen timber held Warning down, but he was kept free of the clay by the collar of the timbers set. During the hours in which the rescuers were digging, Warning could reach Wolfgang, who was almost buried, with more earth sliding on him. Warning managed to keep clay brushed away from the foreman's nose and mouth to permit him to breathe, but after hours of this struggle in their tomb Wolfgang died from internal injuries. It was some time after Wolfgang died that the rescuers reached the buried men, but before that time they had heard the voice of the miner trying to encourage the man under the earth beside him. Warning, who was 42, was in the Locust Mountain Hospital on the road to recovery. Mokaitis, the other man rescued, was caught only by the tail end of the fall, suffering a dislocated shoulder and head injuries. He was at Ashland Hospital. Source document.

Sep Calaveras Copper Mine Cave-in, Copperopolis, California
Tons of rock loosened in a cave-in on the 1450-foot level of the Calaveras Copper Company at Copperopolis trapped five men. **An hour later**, one miner had been rescued, crushed badly but alive. J. Davis, shift boss, began immediate rescue operations, and sent word to Angles camp for physicians and other medical assistance. Miners returning to the top works in the 1450-foot level, report

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hearing screams and groans of one of the trapped men. Others, they fear, were killed. Source document.

- Nov McNeil Coal Company Mine Cave-in, McGregor, Colorado
Three miners entombed 400 feet below the surface in the rock works of the McNeil Coal Company mine were liberated. A crew of 50 men had worked in relays for — **13 hours** — clearing away an avalanche of dirt, rocks and coal which had blocked the way. The entombed men were suffering from intense cold but otherwise were none the worse for their experience. They were supplied with air through a pipe. Source document.
- Dec Old Town Mine Explosion, McAlester, Oklahoma
Two miners found their exit blocked after the explosion. At this point, one of these men, Frank Gonzales, saw a third miner, Arnold Kissinger, collapse. Mr. Gonzales and the second miner, Joe Ponsella, next dragged Mr. Kissinger into a room where there wasn't much smoke and worked with him for about three hours. "After a while, said Gonzales, when no one came to help us, we believed we would die. I said my prayers, but I was not scared." Rescue workers reached the three men **five hours** after the explosion.
- Dec East No. 5 Mine Explosion, Stotesbury, West Virginia
12 miners were rescued from behind a barricade three hours after an explosion in the East No. 5 mine in West Virginia. Two miners were killed in the incident. Source document.
- Dec Brock Mine Cave-in, Cassville, West Virginia
Three men, trapped by a fall of coal 200 feet in length in the Brock Mine of the Continental Coal Company at Cassville were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. A crew of 100 men worked with cutting machines in the hope of saving the lives of the three. It was thought they might have been crushed by the fall. Source document.
- Dec Croft Mine Cave-in, Crosby, Minnesota
Rescuers were denied seeing the victim of this cave-in continue a normal life. For **six days** they toiled and successfully released Gus Snyder, 47, from his tomb. He was removed from the mine to the hospital, but due to his extensive internal injuries he died there. Source document.

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— 1928 —

- Jan Peabody No. 18 Mine Explosion, West Frankfort, Illinois
Eight miners were brought out of the Peabody Coal Company Mine No. 18 alive and uninjured. They were Bill Reed, Alex Hamlin, Tony Strauss, Charles Peebles, Will Allen, Ruel Parks, Charles Mitchell, and James Benn. Reed crawled out of an air shaft while Hamlin and Strauss were in another part of the mine and built a protecting wall to prevent the deadly gas from reaching them. W. E. Wade, another rescued miner was suffering from the effects of gas.
- Jan Gaylord Mine Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Thirteen mine workers, trapped in the Red Ash vein of Gaylord Colliery at Plymouth, were released from their entrapment last night after having been imprisoned for — **seven hours** — behind a barricade of top rock and timber, caused by a fall. All were uninjured save for a severe fright. The fall occurred as the mine crew was walking down the plane in their lunch hour. They were warned of the coming fall by fellow employees and managed to reach a place of safety from the flying debris, although they found themselves blocked from exit. Rescue crews, hurriedly organized, released the captive men. The Gaylord mine was the scene of a disaster in February, 1894, when thirteen men were killed. Strange to say that accident occurred on the thirteenth of the month, while in this disaster, there were thirteen workers imprisoned. Source document.
- Jan Oneida No. 1 Mine Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Just before 2 o'clock on the morning of January 17, the nine entombed men who were caught behind a rush of coal in the Oneida No. 1 mine were rescued. None of the men suffered any injuries or appeared weakened by this ordeal of more than — **twelve hours'** — imprisonment. Officials of the company announced last night that a barrier of coal more than 50 feet in thickness blocked the gangway. A hole about four feet in height was driven over this fall of coal to allow the men an avenue of escape. Source document.
- Feb Buck Run Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
After being shut in by a rush of coal in the Buck Run Colliery for **24 hours**, John Drenosky was rescued and removed from the mine uninjured. Source document.
- Feb Mama No. 3 Mine Explosion, Jenny Lind, Arkansas
Immediately after the early morning explosion in the Mama No. 3 mine, every miner in the district and volunteers were hurriedly formed into rescue parties. Shortly before noon, an entrance was blasted into the tomb where the miners

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were trapped, and 105 men were rescued. About 35 of these were injured in the explosion and others were suffering from the effects of gas.

- Feb Kinlock Mine Explosion, Parnassus, Pennsylvania
One miner was found alive after an explosion at the Kinlock underground coal mine of the Valley Camp Coal Company in Parnassus, Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh. The rescued miner was trapped for nearly **1 day**. 12 miners were killed in this accident. (Parnassus was later renamed New Kensington).
- Feb Potts Colliery Cave-in, Ashland, Pennsylvania
Henry Knock, 51, was entombed for **three hours** in the Potts Colliery at Ashland, Pennsylvania. He became trapped when falling timber caused the top to give way and close in on him. Source document.
- May Mather Mine Explosion, Mather, Pennsylvania
Frank Bucsha was found alive and said to be in good condition after he was found **55 hours** following the Mather Mine explosion in Mather, Pennsylvania on May 19, 1928. 195 miners were killed in the blast of the mine owned by Pickands-Mather and Company. Another miner, John Wade, was rescued from the same mine after **147 hours**. Mine officials said he must have been wandering around in the mine and was missed by the rescuers.
- Jun National No. 1 Mine Explosion, National, West Virginia
Five miners were killed, and seven others were injured seriously when an explosion occurred in the National mine of the National Fuel Company. All other men in the mine at the time escaped or were rescued alive. Ten men, rescued alive after an **undisclosed period**, were rushed to a hospital. Seven were burned and otherwise injured. The National mine is a drift operation and normally employs about 100 men. Two of the injured were not expected to live. The blast occurred shortly before the night shift was scheduled to leave the workings. Twenty-five miners were in the mine and thirteen escaped or were rescued. Most of them suffered injuries of a less serious nature. The injured were brought to the Monongalia County hospital here. The explosion, it was said, was caused by gas. Source document.
- Jul Locust Springs Colliery Inundation, Locust Gap, Pennsylvania
A dam burst without warning and flooded the shaft in the Locust Gap Colliery. Hearing the rush of the water, forty-nine men barely had time to reach a travelway, crawl into safety holes and make their way to the No. 1 level where they were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Only one of the men, James Carey, of Girardville, required medical attention. He suffered from shock.

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Aug Irvona No. 3 Mine Explosion, Coalport, Pennsylvania

A gas and dust explosion occurred in this mine. There were 102 men working on the shaft, but some left the mine and only 14 were in the affected section when the explosion occurred. Eight men were killed by violence, five were overcome by afterdamp and one man, Marina Coccia, who was overcome, was rescued, and resuscitated after an **undisclosed period**. The explosion was probably caused by an open-type mining machine, another of the long list of electrical ignitions in closed light mines.

Aug Buckhorn Mine Cave-in, Buckhorn, Pennsylvania

Trapped — **four hours** — in a mine in the Buckhorn district, Jesse Marlett, 22, John Lauer, 28, and John Biggleman, 36, narrowly escaped death. They were rescued from an air shaft after being trapped by a fall of dirt at the entrance of the mine. The cave-in was not discovered until truck drivers, failing to find anyone at the entrance made an investigation. The cave-in was discovered, and a search made for the three men. Assistance was sent from adjoining mines and after attempting several means of communication with the entombed men, it was decided to try the air shaft. Russell Lauer, nephew of the mine owner, descended the shaft and located the trio. The three men were considerably weakened by the long stay in the mine. Source document.

Aug Old Orchard Mine Asphyxiations, Cambridge, Ohio

Benjamin and William Kissenger, brothers, aged 28 and 26, were rescued from the abandoned Old Orchard coal mine, after being overcome by gas in the old workings for **30 hours**. They were revived and tonight and apparently are out of danger but were too weak to relate their unusual experiences. The thrilling rescue of the brothers was effected by State Mine Inspector Jerome Watson and a crew of experts from his office in Columbus. Several attempts were made to find the men which proved unsuccessful because of the dread black damp. Late in the afternoon, after the rescue car had been brought to the scene, the squad found the unconscious men 3,000 feet from the mine entrance. Search for the Kissenger brothers was started after they had failed to return home from an expedition to explore the abandon workings. The state mine inspector rescue office was notified, and Watson, with his squad, rushed to the scene. Fresh air was pumped into the old mine, enabling the workers to search for the men in comparative safety. The Old Orchard mine had been closed for the previous 15 years. Source document.

Oct McAlpin Mine Explosion, McAlpin, West Virginia

A coal dust explosion occurred, killing six men. There were twenty men in the mine at the time of the explosion. Sixteen men escaped the affected area; two of

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this number started to erect a barricade but were rescued shortly after starting construction. The explosion was undoubtedly started by a firing of an "adobe" shot on a piece of sandstone.

- Nov Anthracite Mine Hole Fall of Person, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Anthony Ravenis, age 5, was playing with companions when he slid under a guard rail about a deep mine hole and dropped into the water far below. He managed to hang on to some bushes until companions got ropes and help and succeeded in getting him from the hole. [Source document.](#)

— 1927 —

- Jan Newport Mine Cave-in, Ironwood, Michigan
One miner was rescued, and the body of a companion recovered from under a fall of rock and ore which trapped them at Newport mine after an **undisclosed period**. Peter Clement was slightly injured. Angelo Angelini was killed. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Bunker Hill Mine Fall of Person, Kellogg, Idaho
Spese Paladin, a miner employed by the Bunker Hill, lived after experiencing a fall of approximately 130 feet down an ore chute at the mine. Paladin was found by fellow workmen sometime later. He was removed to the Wardner hospital. Dr. George H. Kennett stated that the miner was suffering from concussion of the brain but would recover. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Raven Run Colliery Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania
Two men were missing because of a fall in the Raven Run Colliery of the Hazlebrook Coal Company near Girardville when nine men were trapped. Six were rescued alive shortly after the fall and one man was killed when crushed in the main gangway. The six miners who were rescued were not so deeply entombed as the two missing men and were kept alive by pumping oxygen into their underground prison until rescuers could remove the debris. When the six miners started to make their escape, they found the body of Frank Jacobs, 35, held by rock which kept him prisoner. After several attempts rescuers freed him of the rock, however, he died fifteen minutes after being rescued. [Source document.](#)
- Feb [Henry Clay Colliery](#), Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Joseph Schultz, a miner at the Henry Clay Colliery near Shamokin, Pennsylvania was entombed **4½ hours** in a blind heading after a pillar crumbled when disturbed by a shot. He was penned behind hundreds of tons of coal and rock in a space about 3 feet wide and 6 feet long. Rescuers found him exhausted.

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- Feb Highland Mine No. 5 Cave-in, Highland, Pennsylvania
Andrew Zippi, and his laborer, Andrew Danko were both caught under a fall of coal in the Highland No. 5 mines of the Jeddo-Highland Coal Company and held prisoners for **three hours**. The men were found by members of the night shift who were reporting for duty. A call for help was immediately sent and thirty men responding to the call. The thirty men loaded 30 cars of coal and rock, and they succeeded in freeing the two men. At the hospital, Zippi was found to be suffering from injuries of the back and contusions of the body, and Danko, his laborer, was found to be suffering from injuries of the head and contusions of the body. Source document.
- Feb Archbald Mine Cave-in, Taylor, Pennsylvania
Three mine workers crawled to safety after being held prisoners by a massive fall of roof in the Archbald mine of the Glen Alden Coal Company at Taylor for **27 hours**. The men seemed to show no ill effects for their experience. After being examined by physicians at the mines they were taken to their homes and today seemed to have recovered completely from their nerve-racking incarceration. The trapped men were Michael Kleback, aged 27; Peter Saynuk, aged 22; and Stanley Glinko, aged 19. Source document.
- Apr Wise Mine Inundation, Henryetta, Oklahoma
Nineteen miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the flooded Wise mine near Henryetta, Oklahoma. Two mules had also been trapped and the men. Knowing what it meant to be imprisoned underground, the rescued miners volunteered to work without pay to man the pumps and free the mules. Source document.
- Apr Gimlet Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Joseph Dragon and Steve Kieski were rescued from their **20-hour** entrapment in the Gimlet Colliery of the Shipman Coal Company. The two miners became trapped when a squeeze closed the manway. After a span of 25 feet of heading was opened, rescuers worked night and day to drive a pillar hole 50 feet up the pitch. Source document.
- Apr Federal No. 3 Mine Explosion, Everettville, West Virginia
Nine men were cut off in the south main section until one came out through the smoke and returned with a party wearing self-rescuers. The eight men who had barricaded themselves in a room were supplied with self-rescuers and walked out after an **undisclosed period**.

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- May Delagua No. 3 Mine Explosion, Delagua, Colorado
One hundred and thirty-two men were in the Delagua No. 3 mine at the time of the blast and all except for the dead and one injured man reached the surface safely through air shafts. John Walker, 62, was seriously injured and was brought out of the mine **four hours** after the explosion.
- Jul Hauser Construction Rock Quarry Rockslide, Marshfield, Oregon
Ben Bennettson was rescued from a tunnel at the Hauser Construction Company rock quarry on Coos River after being entombed for **twenty-four hours**. Bennettson was drilling a tunnel underneath a rock cliff for a charge of dynamite when a rockslide of hundreds of tons shut off the entrance. More than 100 men had worked to release him. Air in the tunnel and air filtering through the rocks saved him and he was able to walk when brought to daylight. Source document.
- Jul Rahn Colliery Inundation, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Two miners were rescued after being confined for **two hours** in the flooded Rahn Colliery near Tamaqua. The rescued miners were Peter McHugh and John Smith. Palmer Jones, 19, drowned in the incident. Source document.
- Jul New Jersey Zinc Company Mine Asphyxiation, Franklin, New Jersey
One man died, and two others were in a serious condition in Franklin Hospital because of having been overcome by gas in the lower levels the New Jersey Zinc Company mines in Franklin. The dead man was Harry Sheldon. The men in the hospital were Mike Kiski, mine foreman, and a laborer who attempted to rescue Sheldon. Four other workmen were overcome during the rescue work but were not taken to the hospital. Source document.
- Aug West Kentucky No. 7 Mine Explosion, Clay, Kentucky
Sixteen of the miners who were preparing to come to the surface at the time of the explosion were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. They were 10 white men and six negroes. None of them was seriously injured. The explosion wrecked the cages used to lift the miners and coal from the pit and those saved had to be carried through a mine hole used to circulate air.
- Sep Brindle Mine Asphyxiation, Latrobe, Pennsylvania
N. Mack Morley lay for **6 hours** in the Brindle mine before he was finally rescued. Fastened together with a rope so that if one of their number was overcome by the treacherous blackdamp the others could drag him, three members of a rescue crew, succeeded in getting through the pocket of gas which for hours had baffled their efforts to rescue Morley. Working as quickly as possible, the first man in the chain passed his arms under the prostrated man and he was dragged to safety.

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The successful rescue attempt had been preceded by a number of futile efforts to reach the miner. The chain of men which finally succeeded in making the rescue was composed of: Kermit Topper, Andy Hefflefinger, and Floyd Hefflefinger, with the latter in the lead. Morley was unconscious when rescued. He was placed in Gosnell's ambulance and rushed to the Latrobe hospital. [Source document.](#)

- Sep Mather Mine Lost Person, Mather, Pennsylvania
Earnest Grewshock, aged 44, was rescued by a searching party after being lost for **18 hours** in the Mather mine. He appeared none the worse for his experience when brought to the surface. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Clarence Lozier Mine Cave-in, New Derry, Pennsylvania
Benjamin Rosman, a miner employed at the Clarence Lozier mine at New Derry suffered a fracture of his right leg and had an artificial leg smashed off near the hip when he and his brother William Rosman were caught under a ton of rock which fell from the roof. William suffered a fracture of the right ankle. Both men were brought to the Latrobe hospital after an **undisclosed period**. Benjamin had just raised his pick into the air to test the roof when the huge rock fell without warning, pinning both men beneath it. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Turkey Run Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Rescuers worked more than **ten hours** to release Julian Jecken, a miner who was imprisoned in the Turkey Run colliery after being caught under a fall of rock and coal. He was removed at once to the Locust Mountain State hospital, where it was said he was suffering from contusions, a possible fracture of the pelvis, and lacerations on the forehead. He was treated by the company surgeon of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company immediately after being released from his precarious position. The injured man's condition was reported as serious. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Mammoth Mine Fire, Mammoth, Utah
Twenty-five miners who were trapped for 4 hours on the 1300-foot level of the Mammoth Mine were rescued. None of the miners suffered serious effects from their imprisonment. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Peck Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Between forty and fifty miners, trapped in the Peck Mine of the Glendale Coal Company were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. All were in good condition and apparently suffered but slightly from their imprisonment. The men were shut off from the outside world when a wheel in the tower of the colliery collapsed, dropping the heavy steel cable bolding a mine cage filled with rock. The cage ran

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wild down the shaft and became wedged just above the Hudak vein, which was the upper level of the mine and 200 feet below the surface. More than 200 workers in two lower veins got out through an opening so small, that some of the stouter miners had their clothing torn off as they were pulled through the tiny holes in the earth. The men in the Hudak vein, however, had no other way out except through the main shaft and were forced to wait until the obstruction could be cleared. Source document.

Dec Luke Fidler Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Twenty-one hours after they had been entombed in the Hickory Swamp slope of the Luke Fidler colliery, two men were rescued alive, without a scratch to show for their experience. The men, John Kowloski, and Wasil Rapunski became entombed when a shot of dynamite they had fired brought down tons of coal and earth, blocking the slope in which they were working. Mine officials began an investigation when wives of the two men told them the men did not return home after work. It was the first day of work for both men as miners in this mine. Source document.

Dec Coal Hollow Mine Cave-in, Princeton, Illinois

William Glover and James Terrando were saved by a pile of coal they had mined when a cave-in occurred at the Coal Hollow Mine near Princeton. The men were working alone in a pocket of the mine and had a large quantity of coal piled and when they heard props crashing above them took refuge behind the coal. A great slide of earth came upon them, partially covering them, and it is believed that the coal saved their lives, holding back the full force of the slide. Miners in a nearby room heard the fall and rushed to the rescue and within **half an hour** they were freed. Both were recovering in the Princeton hospital. Glover received a deep scalp wound, a fractured shoulder, and a badly bruised ankle. Terrando's injuries were cuts and bruises and were not serious. Source document.

Dec Lehigh Coal and Navigation No. 9 Colliery Inundation, Lansford, Pennsylvania

Joseph Valenski, a contract miner was overcome by a rush of water and coal at the third level of the No. 9 Colliery of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. Joseph Shirla, 35, was badly injured by the same rush, but was rescued before he was engulfed. Four other men working in the same compartment escaped when the rush of coal and water swept in another direction. It was at first feared that four men had been trapped, but when the rush subsided, it was found Valenski had been forced into an air gangway but that the others had reached another shute higher than the source of the slush. When the cry was raised that the water had broken through, Earl Cuning, a bottom man at the fourth level, deserted his post and ran through the galley warning the men. This act saved several lives, as

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the employees in the lower level made their escape through a mule-way, as the water came pouring down the shaft and overflowed the sump. Source document.

— 1926 —

- Jan Jamison No. 8 Mine Explosion, Farmington, West Virginia
21 miners managed to escape death's clutches after being trapped for **24 hours** in the mule stables following an explosion of the Jamison No. 8 mine in Farmington, West Virginia. 19 miners were killed in the disaster.
- Jan No. 21 Mine Explosion, Wilburton, Oklahoma
Eight negro miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the No. 21 mine in Wilburton, Oklahoma. And in a truly heroic effort, Julius Graham, one of the first 7 rescued negroes, rushed back in and saved his stepbrother, Roy Gray.
- Jan Mossboro No. 1 Mine Explosion, Helena, Alabama
After an **undisclosed period** following the Mossboro No. 1 mine explosion, twelve men were brought out of the mine alive in one group to be followed by another squad of 13 workers.
- Jan Bear Canyon Coal Company Mine Explosion, Trinidad, Colorado
Between 25 and 30 men were trapped in the Bear Canyon Coal Company's mine in Bear canyon near Trinidad following a gas explosion. All the men were taken out of the mine after an **undisclosed period**, according to word from the state mine inspector. Ten of the miners received serious burns, two whose recovery was uncertain. The condition of three others was considered extremely serious.
Source document.
- Mar Crab Orchard No. 5 Mine Explosion, Eccles, West Virginia
In Eccles, West Virginia, ten miners were imprisoned in the Crab Orchard No. 5 mine for **26 hours** following an explosion there. The men credited their rescue to the experience and coolness of P. J. Davis, night foreman and the leader of the little band. He had the men build a wall of lumber, stones, and soft mud, which experts said, would have successfully repelled the foul air indefinitely.
- Mar Morning Mine Cave-in, Wallace, Idaho
Clarence McMurray and Dan Knuppenberg, miners trapped on the 1800-foot level of the Morning Mine for more than **36 hours**, were rescued. Rescue workers penetrated the final six feet of rock and debris in less than an hour and the two

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men were taken from the mine tunnel uninjured, trapped by a cave-in when walls of a tunnel in which they were working collapsed. George Sinew, another miner, escaped at the time of the cave-in. During most of the time the rescuers were able to talk with the two men. [Source document](#).

Apr Grizzly Mine Cave-in, Oroville, California

Thomas B. McDermott was rescued after being entombed for **72 hours** in the Grizzly mine near Oroville, California. He was the lone survivor of the cave-in. Two others, Billy Cope and Horse McBride, did not last to be rescued. [Source document](#).

Apr Jones-Laughlin Mine Cave-in, Iron River, Michigan

Imprisoned for — **10 hours** — behind a wall of debris following a cave-in at the Jones-Laughlin mine near Iron River, Felix Norman was brought out alive. Norman was kept alive by air which surface workers pumped down into the cavity where he was entombed. Matt Coronski, who was with Norman in the portion of the mine where the cave in occurred, was killed by falling rock and earth. Miners recovered his body while chopping through the wall to release Norman. [Source document](#).

May United Verde Mine Cave-in, Jerome, Arizona

After he was caught in a slip of the muck at the 2,150-foot level of the United Verde Mine, William Scarlett, 31, mining engineer, was rescued alive after an **undisclosed period**, only to die from shock later. Scarlett was buried in ore when he was carried down into the raise but talked with his rescuers up until the hour they took him out, apparently little injured. [Source document](#).

May Rogers Shaft Asphyxiation, Tonopah, Nevada

Overcome by gas in the Rogers shaft, two miles from the Gypsy Queen Mine, Patrick Sarsfield was rescued after considerable difficulty and his life saved. Sarsfield was stricken down by gas from old workings in the bottom of the forty-five-foot shaft. After striving to extricate him, companions secured help. [Source document](#).

May Mount Lookout Mine Fire, Wyoming, Pennsylvania

Between 60 and 70 miners trapped behind a fire in the Mount Lookout mine were all safely rescued and accounted for after an **undisclosed period**. The hero of the rescue was the mine foreman, Thomas Heslop, who led the miners back through the gangway where they erected lattice work lifting themselves to an airshaft where they remained until the flames were extinguished. [Source document](#).

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May Unnamed Bituminous Coal Mine, Dunbar, Pennsylvania

Attilio Pallygus saved Thomas J., Martin L., and Martin F. O'Hara from suffocation, Dunbar, Pennsylvania, May 6, 1926. While Martin F. O'Hara, 61, coal operator, and his two sons were working in an abandoned entry of a mine, Martin L., 21, hoisting engineer, was overcome by gas. Thomas, 22, hoisting engineer, left the mine to get help. Pallygus, 27, automobile repairer, who had had no experience in mines, and Thomas went 250 feet into the mine and found both men overcome.

As Pallygus and Thomas tried to lift Martin L., Thomas was affected by gas and fell to his knees. Pallygus helped him 100 feet to the main entry in which the air was good. They returned and again tried to lift Martin L., but Thomas fell, and Pallygus dragged him to the good air again. Then Pallygus alone returned to Martin L. and dragged him 50 feet, went to the main entry again for a moment, and returned and dragged Martin L. to the main entry. Another man helped him carry Martin L. out of the mine. Pallygus returned alone and dragged Martin F. a few feet. He then went out for aid, but no one would help him. He returned to Martin F. and made two futile efforts to move him. He then went to the entrance of the mine and called for help, and an experienced miner and his son volunteered and helped him carry Martin F. out of the mine. Martin L. and Martin F. were revived. Thomas had been only dazed. Pallygus had been in and out of the gaseous area a total of 30 minutes but was affected only by weakness. Attilio Pallygus was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

May Animal Attack Rescue, Tacoma, Washington

If hero medals were given to animals, Henry B. Spencer of Tacoma would have applied for one for "Rex," his nine months old bird dog. He credited his life to the dog which proved his bravery in a hand-to-hand fight with a mother cougar and her three cubs. Mr. Spencer, who was mining in the Olympic mountains was suddenly confronted with the animals. He was unarmed and the beasts showed fight. Spencer threw rocks at the mother cougar, but in doing so he lost his balance and fell. Before the enraged cougar could spring, "Rex" appeared and attacked one of the cubs. This distracted the mother who turned on the dog. Spencer was able to retreat. The dog came through with only minor injuries. [Source document](#).

Jun Alpha Portland Cement Asphyxiation, Ironton, Ohio

The last of eighty miners overcome by gas in the mine of the Alpha Portland Cement company were rescued alive by 11:45 a.m., **five hours** after they had entered the mine. Officials are unable to account for the accumulation of gas. On reaching the workings this morning the men began to lose consciousness. Those

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nearest the shaft left the mine and reported the condition and a rescue crew was hurriedly organized. Source document.

Jun Kaiser Bunkers Landslide, Black Butte, California

Voyle Richardson, 21, was unscathed except for shock, after he was buried for **seven hours** beneath twenty-five feet of rock. A quick wit, nimble muscles and a waiting steel bucket saved the young man's life. When he saw tons of rock and debris hurtling from the mountainside, he leaped beneath the large container, which tipped and sheltered its occupant as the slide thundered over. Richardson was employed at the Kaiser bunkers at Black Butte. He was engaged in splicing a cable to one of the buckets in the deep, narrow cut. When the slide started, he realized that he was trapped and took the desperate choice of crouching under the bucket rather than to make the futile attempt of flight in the path of the slide. Source document.

Jul Peach Orchard Mine Roof Fall, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania

Seven miners were killed, and eight others injured, some seriously, in a roof fall at the Peach Orchard mine of the Glen Alden Coal Company. Four bodies had been recovered. After an **undisclosed period**, eight others were rescued and taken to hospitals. Source document.

Aug Hudson Zinc and Spar Mine Cave-in, Salem, Kentucky

Five miners were trapped for **six days and seven nights** by a cave-in at the Hudson Zinc and Spar Mine near Salem, Kentucky. Rescuers worked through much difficulty to free the men who were mostly affected by the cold and their thirst. The 5 rescued miners included Randolph Cobb, Roy James, George Catillo, U. B. Wilson, and Harry Watson. Underground prayer meetings had caused conversion of last man, read the New York Times headline on August 12, 1926. All were ready to die. "If we are dead when you find us, we are saved," was written on their cloth caps.

Aug Clymer No. 1 Mine Explosion, Clymer, Pennsylvania

Four miners were rescued by the first group of rescuers that entered the shaft after an **undisclosed period**. They were working at the foot of the shaft and were dragged to safety before the gases ended their lives. All were said to be suffering broken bones and internal injuries. Several minutes later four other men were found and brought out. They were still warm, and first aid was given. After two hours' work and all means known to medical science had been exhausted, they were pronounced dead.

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- Sep Tahoma No. 29 Mine Explosion, Tahoma, Oklahoma
After about **3 hours**, George Adams saved himself and three workmen, including Sam Cox. Cox was burned and was bleeding about the body. Adams dragged him through the debris to the surface and then returned for the two other men. At another location, Lee Carter was almost overcome by gas fumes when a rescue party carried him to safety.
- Sep G. Pabst Iron Mine Rescue, Ironwood, Michigan
43 miners were rescued after nearly — **6 days** — of imprisonment more than 700 feet underground in the G. Pabst iron mine near Ironwood, Michigan. The hero of the disaster was Captain Thomas Trewartha, their 67-year-old mine boss who displayed courage and kept the men cheerful throughout their ordeal.
Source document.
- Nov Gardner Mine Fall of Person, Brazil, Indiana
Buck Carter, a coal miner, was injured seriously when he fell down the shaft of the Gardner mine. He was suffering from a fractured skull and injuries to his back besides severe lacerations. The mud and water at the bottom of the shaft broke the force of the fall. He was taken to the Community Hospital at Brazil. Source document.
- Nov Tomhicken Mine Inundation, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Six miners were trapped by water in the Tomhicken Mine of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Pennsylvania on November 16, 1926. One man died, but five men were rescued **8 days** later. The five rescued were Henry Kirchdoerfer, August Yensick, Michael Lorincz, John Gondera, and Mike Lawrence.
- Nov Mound Mine Explosion, Moundsville, West Virginia
An explosion killed 5 of the 18 men in the mine. Two died of burns and 3 from carbon monoxide poisoning. Two injured men were rescued **several hours** later and 11 escaped uninjured. Gas accumulated by the wrecking of a door, was ignited by the arcing of a trolley wheel of a locomotive. Coal dust was ignited, but the explosion was stopped by rock dust and water on the entries.
- Nov Morea Colliery Mudslide, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Two men entombed when a mud swamp gave way blocking the entrance to the Morea Colliery were brought to the surface uninjured. The men who were trapped were rescued after **13 hours** of feverish work by squad of 50 men assembled by officials of the Madeira, Hill and Company, owners of the mine.
Source document.

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- Dec Locust Run Mine Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Caught underneath a fall of top at the Locust Run mine, William Shemanski suffered fractures to both legs, several broken ribs, and possible internal injuries. Following an **undisclosed period**, he was taken to the Fountain Springs Hospital where he was listed in very critical condition. Source document.
- Dec Mine No. 2 Explosion, Francisco, Indiana
One man was killed, and a score injured in an explosion which wrecked the shaft of the Francisco, Indiana Mine No. 2, shortly after fifty-two men had been lowered to work. The shaft was badly wrecked, but not completely blocked and rescue work was started at once. At 10 a.m. forty men had been brought to the surface and twenty of them were taken to hospitals. Many were walking home uninjured. Some were painfully burned. Two hours after the explosion, two dazed workers crawled to safety through a manway, but they could tell but little of what had occurred. Source document.
- Dec Premature Explosives Detonation, Little Squaw, Alaska
Carrying a scribbled note from two miners crippled by an explosion, one of them blinded, a Malamute dog crossed a 3,000-foot pass in the Brooks Mountain range at night with the mercury at 40 degrees below zero, to his master's cabin. Oscar Ottersoniz, Little Squaw miner, was awakened by his dog, whining, and scratching at the door. A note on the husky's neck read: "**Come. Both seriously injured. Explosion.**" One week earlier, Ottersoniz lent the dog to J. S. Shaw and C. Dunlap, who were mining on Tobin creek, beyond the pass. Two rescuers, hurrying over the pass with a sled and a team of dogs, found Shaw and Dunlap shot full of copper by the explosion of a box of detonators. Dunlap was blinded. Word was sent to Fairbanks, Alaska, to rush an airplane to take the patients to a hospital. Source document.

— 1925 —

- Jan Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Mount Washington, Pennsylvania
Tony Bertullo, 14, was rescued from an abandoned mine in Mount Washington after having been imprisoned for **twenty hours** by a cave-in. The boy was exploring the mine Saturday when a portion of the roof fell, confining him in a space about five feet square. He was rescued by his father and a neighbor after an all-night search had led them to the abandoned mine. Apart from being hungry, the boy showed no ill effects. Source document.

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- Jan Sterling Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Caught under a rush of coal and debris while driving a hole, preparatory to firing a shot in the Sterling Colliery of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company at Shamokin, Paul Erdman was in a critical condition at his home. Engaged in the precarious occupation of robbing pillars, Erdman was just finishing the hole when a large piece of rock became dislodged from the rib, causing about two tons of coal and debris to completely cover him. Fellow workmen, hearing the rush were quick to the side of the man and within a short time had him free. He was removed to his home and found to be suffering from lacerations about the entire body, a fracture of the foot and internal injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Abandoned Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Galena, Kansas
Jesse Toller, 8 years old, was saved from a watery grave when he was rescued following an **undisclosed period** after plunging fifty feet into an abandoned shaft containing twenty-five feet of water. Aside from being badly frightened and ducked twice in the icy cold water, the second time when he fell from a rope while being hoisted from the shaft, the child suffered no ill effects from his perilous experience. The boy fell into the shaft while on his way home from school, at noon. Several other school children were with him when the accident occurred, and they notified several men nearby. They shouted into the shaft and when the youth replied a looped rope was lowered. The boy could not swim but was clinging to the walls of the shaft. He was instructed by his rescuers to place the loop under his arms. This he did and was hoisted about fifteen feet when he slipped out of the loop and again plunged into the water. Percy Watson, who was in the rescue party, volunteered to go into the shaft after the boy. He was lowered and found the child clinging to the loop of the rope. The boy was tied securely and pulled out. An ambulance from the Clark Undertaking Company took him to his home where an examination failed to reveal any injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Low Ash Mine Rescue, Crown City, West Virginia
John Robinson was rescued in a semi-conscious condition after being lost for **nine days** in the Low Ash mine at Crown City, West Virginia. Robinson had gone into the mine to repair a pump. His carbide lamp fell into the water and being unfamiliar with the mine, he wandered aimlessly in the dark. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Flat Creek Mine Cave-in, Redding, California
Pablo Ortiz, a laborer on the Mountain Copper Company's bunkers at Matheson, as well as John Nelson, was a hero in the rescue of Fred Ekstrom from the cave-in at the bottom of the shaft in a Flat Creek mine. Nelson, partner of Ekstrom, leaving his comrade imprisoned up to his neck in a mass of rock and sand, went to

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Matheson and motioned to summon aid. Ten men responded, but of the ten Ortiz was the only one who would venture down the shaft with Nelson. Ortiz remained with Nelson for — **five hours** — at the bottom of the shaft. He remained until Ekstrom was set free and a rope tied around his body. Ekstrom recovered from the shock. [Source document.](#)

Feb Mountain Copper Company Mine Cave-in, Flat Creek, California
Pablo Ortiz and John Nelson were both heroes in the rescue of Fred Ekstrom from a cave-in at the bottom of the shaft in a Flat Creek mine on February 28. Nelson had to leave his partner, Ekstrom, who was imprisoned up to his neck in a mass of rock and sand and go to Matheson for help. Ten men responded, but of the ten, Pablo Ortiz was the only one who would venture down the shaft with Nelson. Ortiz remained with Nelson for — **five hours** — at the bottom of the shaft until Ekstrom was set free. Ekstrom recovered from the shock of his ordeal. [Source document.](#)

Feb [City Mine Explosion](#), Sullivan, Indiana
Emery Davidson of Sullivan was the first injured man to be brought from the workings after an **undisclosed period**. He had a badly crushed chest, suffered when slate and rock loosened from the roof of the mine by the blast fell on him.

Mar Peabody Mine Asphyxiation, Riverton, Illinois
Seventeen miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following the detonation of a windy shot in the Peabody mine near Riverton, Illinois. The miners were overcome by the bad air following the explosion. The shotfirer was also overcome and injured in the incident. [Source document.](#)

Apr Eagle Hill colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
After being buried **several hours**, Norman Lavenberg, a miner at Eagle Hill colliery, was rescued alive. Lavenberg was imprisoned when a big mass of coal blocked him off from his fellow miners. Miners worked frantically to rescue him before he became a victim of mine gas and when rescued he was taken to the Pottsville Hospital without any apparent serious injuries. He was suffering severely from shock. [Source document.](#)

Apr Hecla Mine Fire, Burke, Idaho
Fourteen men, trapped by fire in the lower working of the Hecla silver-lead mine at Burke, seven miles from Wallace, put into commission a pump within the mine, fought the flames for more than **twelve hours** and came out alive and well. They had been imprisoned in the Star workings of the Hecla, about two miles from the shaft. Mine rescue crews had poured water down the shaft of the mine upon the

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blaze that had broken out in the pump station of the 2,000-foot level. The fourteen men, turned back by smoke and fumes when they sought the shaft after discovering the fire, had gone into the Star tunnel and obtained a pump. Then it was simply a matter of pumping water on the fire and waiting for the smoke to clear. [Source document.](#)

Jun Baltic Gold Mine Cave-in, Grass Valley, California

Robert Hill was rescued after being imprisoned for **57 hours** in the black hole of the Baltic mine. Had he been a few feet closer to the mouth of the tunnel, he would have been crushed in the cave-in which imprisoned him. For 24 hours he did not hear a sound and had no means of knowing whether rescue work was under way. He felt confident, however, that he would be rescued. After his rescue, Hill was in good physical condition, but was pale and worn from his experience. [Source document.](#)

Jun M & S Mining Cave-in, Joplin, Missouri

Harry Long, 34, entombed by a fall of rock and dirt for **5 hours** in the M & S Mining Company shaft was rescued. Aside from a cut on his head, he was none the worse for his experience. A mass of timbers falling over a mining tub formed a protecting barrier for Long, keeping the heavy rocks from crushing him. A timber struck him across the head, knocking him unconscious. It was forty-five minutes before he regained consciousness and it was then that his shouts reached the ears of his brother, William Long. [Source document.](#)

Aug Tilden Mine Cave-in, Bessemer, Michigan

After being buried under a slide of earth and rock for nearly **ten hours**, Suvie Guianni, 34, was rescued from the Tilden mine. He became trapped while attempting to reach Adolph Stencer, who had been crushed to death in an earlier slide. Guianni was engaged in removing the fallen earth from Stencer's body when the second slide occurred. Everyone but Guianni jumped in time to escape. [Source document.](#)

Aug Grant Mine Cave-in, Yreka, California

After being trapped for — **six hours** — by a cave-in at the Grant mine, Simeon Barrendon, 65, was rescued unhurt when miners and citizens dug a passageway through a cone-shaped pile of quartz rock that had imprisoned him. Barrendon crawled through the small opening to safety and was greeted by the rescue party and his wife who waited at the shaft throughout the ordeal. [Source document.](#)

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- Nov Trenton Coal Mine Cave-in, Trenton, Missouri
Seven miners dug their way to freedom after having been entombed for **eleven hours** more than 200 feet underground by a cave-in of the shaft of the Trenton Coal Mine. They were none the worse for their experiences. They had taken food into the mine with them and there was ample air supply. Rescue workers, who had dug feverishly at the fallen earth and rock shutting the men in, heard the click of shovels on the other side of the barrier. Soon the entombed miners tunneled through to the open passage. Source document.
- Dec Overton No. 2 Mine Explosion, Acmar, Alabama
A Negro miner owed his escape to his mule. Back somewhere in the pit when the gas was worst and conditions appeared darkest for the entombed men, out through the slope opening flashed a big fat mule. Clinging to the mule's tail was the Negro who had become temporarily blinded by the blast and took this means of saving himself. He said he knew the mule would "get out if there was any getting."
- Dec Cardinal Mine Fire, Nederland, Colorado
20 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **sixteen hours** after a fire in the Cardinal gold mine in Colorado. One miner was killed in the incident. Source document.

— 1924 —

- Jan McClintock Mine Explosion, Johnston City, Illinois
Nine injured miners were removed by rescuers after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the McClintock mine which killed 33. Eight of the injured were hospitalized. Two were believed fatally hurt.
- Jan Potts Colliery Cave-in, Ashland, Pennsylvania
Elias Lovell was rescued after — **four hours** — when he became trapped behind a fall of top in the Potts Colliery at Ashland. Mr. Lovell was employed as a miner and was closed in while at work in the West Primrose. He was found uninjured and practically none the worse for his experience. Source document.
- Jan Park Place Colliery Cave-in, Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania
Frank Kasian was released from his prison **30 hours** after becoming trapped in Slope No. 7, Park Place Colliery of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company. But the story doesn't end there. A second miner, John Koszeinik, was still unaccounted for. Rescuers continued their vigil for seventeen days. Koszeinik's body was found five

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feet from reaching a chute that would have protected him from death. Source document.

- Jan Calumet & Hecla Mine Cave-in, Calumet, Michigan
John Haun, underground foreman for the Calumet & Hecla Mining Company owed his life to the heroism of James Phillips, a miner, who permitted a mass of falling rock to slide upon his body so that he might protect Haun, who lay beneath him. Haun was struck by a large block of loose ground and was pinned under the rock, with only his head, face upward, protruding. While in that position, Phillips observed another area of loose rock slowly sliding down the slope toward Haun's head. Realizing that the rock would crush and perhaps kill Haun, Phillips stood in such a position that his foreman would be protected and with his back arched, waited until the sliding rock struck him. Haun's face was sheltered while Phillips received the brunt of the burden. Workmen extricated the two a few minutes later, Haun received severe injury to the spine, while Phillips back and hips were badly injured. Source document.
- Feb Milford Mine Inundation, Crosby, Minnesota
Fourteen-year-old Frank Hrvatin was responsible for saving the lives of two men when a surface cave-in caused water to flood the Milford mine from nearby Foley Lake a few miles north of Crosby. Frank reached the mine's one vertical shaft and began to scurry up the ladder. With water climbing fast, Frank wormed around an older miner, Harry Hosford. But another exhausted miner, Matt Kangas, clogged their escape route. Frank recalled the "superhuman strength" that took over and enabled him to squirm between Kangas' legs and hoist the man rung-by-rung up to safety. Then he reached back down and grabbed the wrist of Hosford, who was up to his waist in rising muck, hollering: "For God's sakes, hurry!" The three miners were among only seven that got out.
- Mar Yukon No. 2 Mine Explosion, Yukon, West Virginia
After an **undisclosed period** following the explosion, six of the thirty-two men in No. 2 mine escaped death, and were rescued by fellow workmen from the No. 1 mine.
- Mar Buck Mountain Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Stephen Roca, 22, and his two mules were rescued after their **15-hour** entombment in the Buck Mountain mine of the Lehigh Valley mining company. Source document.

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- Mar Alden Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Daniel Wallace was rescued after enduring an entombment of **eleven hours** by a fall of rock in the Glen Alden Coal Company mine where three men were killed on March 11. Rescue squads, working in relays, took out hundreds of cars of rock and coal to reach Wallace. While his injuries were minor, he was suffering greatly from shock. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Henshaw Mine No. 1 Explosion, Henshaw, West Virginia
Rescue workers dug through debris to the three men entombed in Henshaw Mine No. 1, of the Bingham Valley Coal Company at Henshaw, and found Joseph Madill, 62, dead, and rescued Joseph Madill, Jr., 21, and John Cosier, 30. The men were trapped by a gas explosion for an **undisclosed period** when they went into the mine to start pumps working. Young Madill and Cosier were exhausted when found. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Black Diamond Mine Cave-in, Seattle, Washington
Stanley Cooney, 24, was rescued alive after being trapped for **more than a day** in the Black Diamond mine near Seattle, Washington. Two other miners died in the accident. The body of Robert Pouchette was recovered and the search for O. C. Wise was called off. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Anthracite Mine Fall of Person Rescue, Centralia, Pennsylvania
John Lavelle had a narrow escape from death while returning to his home from the Germantown colliery shop where he was employed as a laborer, when he fell into a treacherous mine breach and was rendered unconscious for a considerable length of time. The unfortunate miner was homeward bound before daybreak after working on the night shift and was walking along the path from Germantown to Centralia when he veered from the path and walked into the mine hole. He was found several hours later by miners who had occasion to pass that way. He was found to be badly bruised and lacerated and suffered greatly from shock due to his frightful experience. [Source document.](#)
- May Black Iron Mine Cave-in, Gilman, Colorado
Five miners entombed for **3 days** in the Black Iron Mine of the Empire Zinc Mining Company were rescued when a drift was driven through virgin granite to the slope in which the men were confined. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Rekley Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Adolph Minnick and Lester Miller, miners in the Buck Mountain section of the Rekley Colliery of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, were closed in by a fall of roof.

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They were rescued unharmed **two hours** later by fellow workers. [Source document.](#)

- Aug Unnamed Anthracite Coal Mine Cave-in, Sugar Notch, Pennsylvania
Joseph P. Riley, 34, mine trackman, rescued Chester Stavinski, 12, from a mine cave-in, Sugar Notch, Pennsylvania, August 4, 1924. While Chester and several other boys were gathering berries on a hillside, Chester fell into a narrow hole at the top of an old chamber of a mine. The chamber had been abandoned for five years, and the top had caved in. Nothing was known of its depth or condition. Riley, having a rope tied around him, was lowered 200 feet to Chester, who lay at the bottom of the chamber. He held Chester as men at the surface pulled them to the surface. Chester died in a few hours as a result of injuries received when he fell. Mr. Riley was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Sep William Penn Colliery Rescue, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Anthony Stervis, 41, was found nearly frozen in an abandoned breast of the William Penn mine after he went missing for **nearly a day**. From what could be learned, Stervis, who was a night shift employee at the mine, had attended a funeral the day before where he was said to have taken several drinks of hootch. When found, he was completely naked and suffering from exposure. An examining physician said he was suffering from the cold, had several minor cuts, and appeared to be in a semi-demented condition. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Hart Coal Corp. Mine Explosion, Madisonville, Kentucky
Six miners who were imprisoned by an explosion in the Hart Coal corporation mine near Madisonville, Kentucky were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Witnesses declared the force of the blast threw a pillar of flame 100 feet into the air from the mouth of the shaft. The tibble was partly wrecked, and the cage jammed in the shaft. This caused an accumulation of debris in the shaft and hampered efforts of rescuers to reach the men imprisoned underground. The explosion prostrated high tension electric lines which crossed the mouth of the shaft, adding to the difficulty of rescue workers and throwing this place in darkness for an hour. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Thomaston Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Although he was rescued alive after being entombed under a fall of coal, Edward Haughney died half an hour after he had been released by fellow-miners. It was believed the reaction after the terrible strain caused Haughney's death as much as any injuries. All precautions failed to save Haughney. Richard Pippsett, a miner

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entombed with Haughney, was rescued after an **undisclosed period** with slight injuries. The accident occurred at Thomaston colliery. [Source document](#).

— 1923 —

Jan Morning Mine Fire, Mullan, Idaho

An early report from the Morning Mine at Mullan, Idaho said the mine was afire and that two men were dead. A later report from Wallace, Idaho, said that two men had been overcome by gas, but that they had been rescued after an **undisclosed period**. The fire was discovered when the day shift went on duty, it was stated. [Source document](#).

Jan Oakdale No. 4 Mine Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Rescuers worked for **seven hours** to reach the body of George Polinski, aged 26, a miner at Oakdale No. 4 shaft of Jeddo-Highland Coal Company. When found, Polinski still alive. Polinski's chest was crushed, however, and he died twenty minutes later. [Source document](#).

Jan Scotch Valley Mine Fall of Person, Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Andrew Witko, 41, was employed at the inside working of the Scotch Valley mine and in some manner fell 50 feet down the shaft. His fellow workers hurried to the bottom of the shaft expecting to find his mangled body, but he was on his feet and refused aid. He returned to work the next day but in a few days' time, he developed pneumonia and passed away at his home. [Source document](#).

Jan Silver Creek Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

After **eight hours** spent in a living grave, John Sharp and Michael Dugan, miners, were rescued uninjured. They were entombed by a fall of top rock at the Silver Creek mine, with many yards of debris forming a solid barrier between them and liberty. The men were engaged in tearing down pillars when the entire top fell in front of them. At first, they were thankful for their escape from death, and did not realize the predicament they were in. [Source document](#).

Mar Stanton Mine Rescue, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

On March 21, lost miner James Kowolski was found in the Stanton Mine at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Despite being located by a bloodhound that was lowered into the mine, Kowolski's **4 days** of wandering came to an end when he was located by rescuers led by mine superintendent J. B. Pamblyn. He was found 2,000 feet from his working place half naked and semi-conscious. Kowolski's troubles began on March 17 when he started to leave the mine early, complaining to his helper of not feeling well. [Source document](#).

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- Mar Arista Mine Explosion, Arista, West Virginia
Lloyd Lypscomb, once given up for dead, was rescued early Saturday from the Weyanoke mine at Arista, and the feeble spark of life, all but extinguished by suffocating gases in which he lay for **15 hours** was fanned back to a flame so strong that physicians attending the injured man said he was sure to recover. Rescue of Lypscomb made the death toll of Friday's dust explosion to ten, all of whose bodies were brought up by rescue parties. The remaining 17 workers, trapped when the walls of the mine crumbled, were saved by rescuers. They were only slightly injured. [Source document](#).
- Mar Lehigh Coal and Navigation No. 1 Mine Cave-in, Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania
Thirteen miners, entombed behind a fall of rock and earth in the No. 1 drift of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. They were entombed there the day before when sixty feet of the gangway workings caved in. [Source document](#).
- Apr Maple Hill Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Charles McCloskey was trapped for **5 hours** after a fall of rock occurred at the Maple Hill Colliery at Pottsville, Pennsylvania. He was uninjured with the exception of slight bruises of the legs. [Source document](#).
- Apr Cactus Mine Cave-in, Globe, Arizona
W. Castanado was rescued **24 hours** after he became entombed in the Cactus Mine sixteen miles from Globe, Arizona. He was uninjured when reached by rescuers who had to dig through 30 feet of dirt in the tunnel to reach him. [Source document](#).
- May Hoosier Mine Lost Person, Globe, Arizona
Frank Chadwick, a prospector, was recuperating from his horrifying experience, when he was lost **24 hours** in the bowels of the earth after his lamp went out while he was exploring the famous crystalline cavern of the Hoosier mine near Globe. Searching parties brought him to the surface after he had spent a day and night aimlessly wandering in the cavernous depths. He was suffering severely from nervous shock and cold and from lack of food and water. [Source document](#).
- May Coleraine Mine Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Imprisoned for — **11 hours** — by a cave-in at the mouth of the No. 7 slope at the Coleraine Mine of the A. S. Van Winkle Estate, John Harris, 65-year-old pump runner on duty at the bottom of the shaft, was rescued alive and unhurt, and taken home in the automobile of his son, Gordon Harris, of Hazleton. A crowd cheered as Harris came forth with the rescuing party, which started operations as

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soon as the accident was reported and dug through piles of debris to reach him. Harris said he had felt no fears for his safety. [Source document](#).

- May Susquehanna Collieries Roof Fall, Lykens, Pennsylvania
Trapped by a fall of rock in one of the shafts of the Susquehanna Collieries, two men were killed and another injured. The dead: M. J. Keady and George Welker. The injured man, **Lewis Enders, 47**, was taken to the Harrisburg Hospital. The mine shaft was blocked by a fall of rock. Keady, Welker, and Enders were sent into the mine to inspect the fall and to devise means of clearing the debris away. They had been down only a short time when the roof of the shaft caved in, and they were caught under the fall of rock and coal. When they failed to return to the surface after several hours had passed, mine officials began to fear for the safety of the inspectors and a searching party was sent after them. It then was discovered that the inspectors had been trapped and work or rescue was started. The injured man was reached after the rescue party had been working **eight hours**. An automobile was placed at the disposal of the mines, and Enders was hurried to the hospital. It was said that he would recover. Enders suffered bruises about the head and body. Because he was bringing up the rear of the inspection party, he was not caught under the heaviest part of the rockslide. [Source document](#).
- Jun New Mine Cave-in, Bicknell, Indiana
Three miners were rescued **80 hours** after a cave-in occurred at the New Mine at Bicknell, Indiana. The 3 men were identified as Jim Bertillo, Joe Bernardi, and Frank Maberto. The men were near the shaft when the hoist rope broke and the cage, full of coal, went crashing to the bottom, causing the cave-in. More than 2,500 people waited at the shaft for their rescue. [Source document](#).
- Jul Northside Mine Animal Rescue, Bicknell, Indiana
Three miners and a Shetland pony were trapped by a cave-in at the Northside mine in Bicknell, Indiana. On June 28, the three miners were rescued. Because of the dangerous conditions, mine officials decided that the pony could not be rescued. At the urging of the rescued miners, company officials consented to let the men continue with **the rescue effort for the pony**, and after — **10 days** — of confinement, the pony was rescued. [Source document](#).
- Jul Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Lamberton, Pennsylvania
Robert J. Royal rescued Albert E. Roby from a mine cave-in, Lamberton, Pennsylvania, July 12, 1923. While Roby, 23, timberman's helper, and Royal, 29, miner, were clearing a mine entry, which had been blocked by falls, a large chunk of slate fell, striking Royal on the back, temporarily paralyzing his legs. It also fell

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on Roby, breaking his legs and pinning him to the ground. Royal crawled 14 feet to a point in the entry which had been protected by timbering. Upon calling to Roby and learning that he was injured and unable to move, Royal crawled to Roby, using his arms, and dragging his legs. He raised the chunk off Roby with considerable effort and held it up, using his left elbow and forearm as braces, while Roby moved from under it. Small pieces of slate fell, but there was no further cave-in. Roby and Royal then crawled to safety, and Royal dragged himself into a mine car and drove a horse hitched to the car 2,000 feet for help. He was disabled seven months and Roby nine months from their injuries. Mr. Royal was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Aug Frontier No. 1 Mine Explosion, Kemmerer, Wyoming

At 5 o'clock rescuers found a man lying in the main slope who was nearing death from inhalation of smoke and gas fumes. He was revived by a pulmotor and brought to the surface, where he was taken to a hospital. He was expected to recover. A short time later, two men who had hidden in a remote corner of a room off the main slope were taken to the surface, apparently not suffering greatly from their entombment. Another man, found further in along the main slope, showed signs of life when rescuers reached him, but when doctors attempted to revive him, it was found that he had died.

Aug Unnamed Ore Mine, Bonanza, Colorado

William W. Smith, 26, mine foreman, Samuel M. Fowler, and William A. Davidson helped to save John Wechselberger, 22, cage tender, from suffocation, Bonanza, Colorado, August 14, 1923. Smith was the first man to enter the ore chute to aid Fowler in freeing Wechselberger. He stood a short distance above Fowler with a short plank to keep lumps of ore from sliding down while Fowler shoveled the ore away from Wechselberger, and later he shoveled the ore while another man held the plank. Smith was in the chute almost two hours with Wechselberger and was left in 35 minutes longer, having been overlooked while Wechselberger was being removed from the mine. He was taken out on a rope, and, just as he reached the top, four tons of ore slid from the top to the bottom. Messer's Smith, Fowler and Davidson were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Aug Co-operative Mining Company Cave-in, Silver City, New Mexico

Six of seven miners trapped for an **undisclosed period** in a cave-in at the Co-operative Mining Company were rescued. The seventh man was killed in the incident. Source document.

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Aug Bovis Salt Plant Bin Entrapment, Lyons, Kansas

D. Lego, a workman at the Bovis salt plant, was buried for **nearly ten minutes** under a huge mass of table salt in a cave-in at a bin. Although he was rescued alive, it was expected he could not recover. Lego was in a bin, shoveling the salt, when a carload of it was dumped in. The salt, when dumped, usually ran in slowly and gave the workman time to get out of the way, but this time it came down in a large quantity and Lego could not escape. It was almost ten minutes before Lego could be recovered, and he had lost consciousness. He was taken to the Lyons hospital, where it was found his injuries consisted of lungs filled with salt and minor bruises. [Source document.](#)

Aug Mine Subsidence Fall of Person, Mahanoy Plane, Pennsylvania

Mary Gussie, age 12, was playing at Mahanoy Plane when earth settled into a mine breach beneath her feet, and she was carried into the cave-in. An alarm was sounded by her companions and a large force of rescuers **saved her after several hours**. A rope was thrown to the girl, and she tied it around her body to prevent sinking deeper. An effort to draw the girl from her perilous position failed because her feet were caught, and she was in danger of being buried alive as rushing culm encircled her body. [Source document.](#)

Sep Turkey Run Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

Joseph Bartinsavage, a contract miner at Turkey Run Colliery, had a narrow escape from being buried alive when he was closed in behind a heavy fall of coal and rock for almost **six hours**. Fellow workmen, at the risk of their lives, owing to the top continually caving in, finally rescued him, only slightly injured. [Source document.](#)

Oct Decatur Mine Fall of Persons, Decatur, Illinois

Two men were dying, and two others were suffering from serious injuries as the result of a fall of 100 feet in the shaft of the Decatur Coal Company mine. The men were being lowered to the 600-foot level in a huge cage. At the 500-foot level the cable broke, precipitating the cage and men. One of the men suffered a broken back, another, injuries to the head and body, while the other two sustained broken legs and possible internal injuries. It was not until **seven hours** after the accident that the cable was repaired and the injured were taken to the surface. [Source document.](#)

Oct Glendower Colliery Inundation, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

Two mules were trapped in the Buck Mountain Slope, South Dip, at the Glendower Colliery, but were rescued by the daring efforts of one of the employees who struggled for **two hours** in water up to his waist before he could bring the animals out to safety. A huge volume of water had broken through and

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the old workings in various parts of the mines were flooded up to the timber.

Source document.

- Oct Utah-Apex Mine Cave-in, Bingham, Utah
Joseph Norden, superintendent, and Joseph Ratalaza were rescued unhurt from the Utah-Apex metal mine after being entombed for **56 hours**. The bodies of two others were in the rock pile near the place where Norden and Ratalaza were freed, but because of the immense pile of stone and timbers it was impossible to identify them. One man was still unaccounted for. Source document.
- Oct Number Eight Colliery Coal Slide, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
At 12:30 a.m. Harry Demcheck and Stiney Ambrose were rescued from the Number Eight Colliery where they had been entombed since the previous morning by a rush of coal. The rescue force removed the men to their homes. They suffered no ill effects from their experiences. Source document.
- Dec Unnamed Clay Mine Cave-in, Brazil, Indiana
Reuben A. Brown, 50, mine driver, attempted to save Andrew J. Hamilton, 35, clay miner, from a mine cave-in, Brazil, Indiana, December 3, 1923. Hamilton was caught under a fall of shale in a crosscut in a clay mine. Brown, who was 14 feet from Hamilton, hurried to him but was unable to lift a large slab of shale that rested on his back. Three other miners were attracted, and as Brown and two of them attempted to lift the slab off Hamilton, a second fall occurred. Brown was struck and held fast against the wall, and one of the miners, J. Franklin Elson, was instantly killed. Four other miners then arrived, and although bits of shale continued to drop, they freed Brown and Hamilton. Hamilton sustained a broken arm and cuts and bruises. Brown was severely lacerated and bruised and was disabled five weeks. The following men were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery: Reuben A. Brown; J. Herbert Batchelor; Amos J. Stamper; R. Delane Tabor; Walter Penman; Robert F. Buchholz; John E. Martin; and J. Franklin Elson (posthumously). See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

— 1922 —

- Jan National Colliery Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
A cave-in in the Dunmore No. 2 vein, National Colliery of the Glen Alden Coal Company came without a moment's notice. While most people were in bed, there came a hissing, and then a trembling. People were tossed about in their beds, some thrown to the floor, the buildings creaked and swayed. The populace ran to the streets, many clad in night clothes, there to face greater terror as they saw the street veritably bobbing up and down, the surface opening and steam hissing

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through. For a time, no one knew what it meant. Cool heads realized that it was but another evidence of the mine menace to which Scranton had been long subject. Word came that nineteen miners were entombed. Investigation proved that a fall occurred trapping 16 miners. Three others were injured. These men were found, brought to the surface, and rushed to the hospital. The three men rescued were James Daugherty, John Kearney, and Anthony Collett. [Source document](#).

- Feb Unnamed Mine Coal Bin Entrapment, Leipsic, Ohio
Reuben H. Arnold, 42, crane engineer, helped to save W. Stanley Moratt, 39, coal heaver, from a coal-bin cave-in, Leipsic, Ohio, February 7, 1922. Moratt fell to the bottom of a coal bin, 15 feet deep, when a slightly frozen mass of coal at the top on which he stepped gave way, and he was buried in coal to his hips and was unable to free himself. A rope was lowered from the top of the bin, and Arnold, holding to the rope, descended a slope of coal to Moratt. Vertical walls of coal extending inward from two adjacent walls rose from points near the middle of the bin to the top of the bin, and there was danger of their falling. After Arnold had worked alone for about 15 minutes, three other men stood on the slope above him, and for 1.5 hours coal was removed from around Moratt and passed by Arnold to the man above him and then to the other men in turn. They made slow progress because of more coal sliding to the bottom. The bin was in darkness. The man next above Arnold then descended to the bottom and helped Arnold, both piling the coal behind boards, to prevent further sliding. After working 1.5 hours longer, they finally freed Moratt, and they were aided to the top by means of ropes. Reuben Arnold and Clyde W. Jameson, 38, brakeman, were awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Mar Cortez Mine Fall of Persons, Picher, Oklahoma
Two miners were killed and two were injured when a can bumped while descending the shaft at the Cortez mine in northeast Picher. Charles Ross, 36, and Frank Smalley were hurled from the can and fell about 100 feet to the bottom of the shaft, being instantly killed. Jake Blenzor was rescued from death by Roy Harris, who was the only one of the four men to remain in the can. Harris caught Blenzor's foot and prevented him from falling to the bottom. Blenzor suffered serious injuries to his head but was expected to recover. Harris was slightly injured. They were taken to the Picher hospital. [Source document](#).
- Mar Idaho-Maryland Gold Mine Cave-in, Grass Valley, California
Three miners entombed on the 1,000-foot level of the Idaho-Maryland gold mine were rescued uninjured after having been buried for **fourteen hours**. [Source document](#).

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- Jun Quartet Mine Fire, Searchlight, Nevada
All the men trapped by fire in the Quartet mine at Searchlight were rescued after an **undisclosed period**, except two that were known to be dead. Previous advice said four of five men had been trapped in the mine in addition to the two, known to be dead. [Source document](#).
- Jul National Mine Fire, National, Nevada
After being imprisoned for **four hours**, Superintendent Joseph Bolam and Peter Madison were rescued from the National mine, 75 miles north of Winnemucca, Nevada. The two men were working 1000 feet from the tunnel entrance and their escape was cut off because rock and dirt caved in as the fire progressed. [Source document](#).
- Jul Midway Mine Fire, Murphysboro, Illinois
Four men that went into the Midway Coal Company mine to investigate the fire became trapped and in need of rescue themselves. They were all safely removed uninjured from the mine after an **undisclosed period**. [Source document](#).
- Sep Issaquah Mine Cave-in, Seattle, Washington
After being buried alive for **10 hours** in the Issaquah mine, Mike Pedlock was back at work none the worse for his experience. While working in a coal chute, Pedlock was caught by an avalanche of coal that buried the entrance to the chute forty feet deep. Although sure that he had been killed by the slide, his comrades worked unceasingly to rescue him. About dark they broke through the wall and found Pedlock. A crevice in the chute had admitted plenty of air, and hunger was the only inconvenience he had suffered. [Source document](#).
- Sep [Lake Creek Mine Explosion](#), Johnston City, Illinois
Seven miners were imprisoned for an **undisclosed period** following the [Lake Creek Mine Explosion](#) in Johnston City, Illinois, but were taken from the shaft by rescue teams hastily called. The seven men had taken refuge in another entry and by doing this prevented the gas from killing them.
- Oct Lost miner in Pomeroy, Ohio Mine
After becoming lost in an abandoned coal mine for **two days and a night** at Pomeroy, Ohio, Jack Gobel was found by a searching party. Gobel became lost after a dynamite explosion jarred him enough to put out the light on his miner's cap. The search party was formed after his wife notified mine officials. [Source document](#).

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- Oct Babbitt Mine Fire, St. Augustine, Illinois
Three miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the Babbitt mine at St. Augustine, when smoke from the burning hoist house and horse shed at the top of the shaft trapped them 175 feet from the mouth of the mine. They were suffering from the effects of the smoke and gases but would recover. One miner, Joe Ackerson, was dead when the rescuers reached him. Fresh air pumped into the mine by the Galesburg fire department made it possible for the rescuers to reach the entrapped men, after several attempts to bring them out had failed because of the denseness of the smoke. The rescued miners included Jim Anno, Will Anderson and Sherman Babbitt, the mine owner. Source document.
- Nov Hamilton No. 6 Mine Explosives Detonation, Cherokee, Kansas
Thirteen men, trapped in the pit of the Hamilton Coal & Coke Company's No. 6 mine explosion were all rescued alive after an **undisclosed period**. Reports at first thought these men to be dead. The explosion was caused by powder. Source document.
- Nov Dolomite No. 3 Mine Explosion, Dolomite, Alabama
An unidentified foreman assembled thirty workers after the blast took place and ordered all to remain with him and work on fixing up brattices with stones and canvas to shut off the dreaded afterdamp gas that he felt sure was to follow the explosion. When the fans started up again, the air cleared sufficiently to indicate that it was safe to tear down the temporary wall and the foreman led his men out. One miner, who objected to remaining with the rest of the men was found only a few feet away from the temporary brattice. He had become a victim of the gas.
- Nov Reilly No. 1 Mine Explosion, Spangler, Pennsylvania
33 miners were taken out alive after an **undisclosed period**, but three succumbed to their injuries. Of the remaining 30 rescued, all were at the Spangler Hospital and the attending physicians, who were doing everything in their power for them, said all would recover.
- Nov Anthracite No. 4 Mine Explosion, Cerrillos, New Mexico
14 injured miners were rushed to the surface by the volunteer rescue crew and were taken to a doctor's, a dentist's offices, and a nearby home, which were hurriedly turned into hospitals. Women of Madrid worked as nurses with the aid of doctors and other volunteers. First aid was administered here, then the injured were placed in a box car and taken to Albuquerque, where they were placed in hospitals. The injured were burned and in some cases their arms or legs broken.

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- Nov Anthracite Mine Cave, Branchdale, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Loretta Kehler, 71, was found alive in a mine cave near the Otto Colliery after being missing for **a week**. A party of men who had given chase to a rabbit heard her cries for help and rescued her. [Source document](#).
- Dec Fox Mine Cave-in, Marshall, Colorado
Kenneth Baldwin, 30, was rescued **18 hours** after he became trapped in the Fox coal mine at Marshall, Colorado. He was brought out alive and uninjured. A companion miner in the same stope with Baldwin barely escaped the slide and rushed thru the mine calling to other miners. Fifty men started the work of rescue. An hour after the cave-in, Baldwin's companions were so certain that he was dead that they called the coroner. Note: The headline says 18 hours and the article says 9 hours. It is unknown which is correct. [Source document](#).
- Dec Vulcan Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
After having been closed in for **several hours** at the Vulcan colliery, Michael Grando was rescued alive. He said he had sufficient mental torture to last the rest of his days. [Source document](#).

— 1921 —

- Jan Kohinoor Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Penned in behind a heavy fall of coal and rock, two contract miners at the Kohinoor colliery were rescued after **three hours** by swift action of fellow workers. Both escaped with slight bruises but were near death from fright and shock when taken out. [Source document](#).
- Jan Old Ben No. 8 Mine Explosion, West Frankfort, Illinois
Forty miners were rescued from the fume-filled shaft of the No. 8 mine of the Old Ben Coal Corporation following an explosion. Ten were seriously injured and were taken to a hospital. Physicians said two probably would die. The miners were rescued after having been held prisoner in the mine for **three hours**. [Source document](#).
- Feb Racketbrook Colliery Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
A searching party of six men was assembled after they learned from his family that Joseph Spatz, 32, did not return at his usual hour the evening before. Spatz was employed at the Racketbrook colliery where he had been working alone in his section of the mine in the afternoon. After being located at 2:30 a.m., he was hurried to the Emergency Hospital. He was unconscious and his condition was

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serious. His injuries were about the head and shoulders where a fall of roof struck him. [Source document](#).

- May Old Midwest Mine Fire, Henderson, Kentucky
Upward of 100 miners were employed at the Old Midwest mine of the Southland Coal Company at the time the fire started and several of them were rescued through the air shaft before the tibble fell. The others escaped through an air shaft. Although none was injured, several suffered from the effects of the smoke. [Source document](#).
- May Kaska-William Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
After being entombed alive for — **36 hours** — at the Kaska-William Colliery, Irving Reed, aged 22, a miner was rescued uninjured. Rescuers were working frantically to uncover Anthony Vermoek, Reed's companion who has also been entombed. [Source document](#).
- Jun Packer No. 3 Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Entombed behind a heavy fall of coal and culm in Packer No. 3 mine for an **undisclosed period**, Jacob Romansky was rescued without a scratch. Romansky's partner heard the coal working and ran to safety just as the fall occurred. [Source document](#).
- Aug [Harco Mine Explosion](#), Harrisburg, Illinois
Seven miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the [Harco Coal Company mine](#) near Harrisburg, Illinois. The men were suffering from the effects of blackdamp and taken to local hospitals.
- Aug Gibbons Mine Cave-in, South Scranton, Pennsylvania
Mathew Schrader was held prisoner for over **six hours** after a cave-in occurred in the mine workings of the Gibbons Coal Company in South Scranton. Schrader directed the work of rescue telling his comrades where to dig. He was removed to a hospital where it was said he was not seriously injured. [Source document](#).
- Aug Unnamed Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Pittston, Pennsylvania
The two-and-a-half years old son of Joseph Bigsigani was engulfed by a mine cave while playing in the yard at his home. The child was imprisoned **four hours** before being rescued and was unconscious when found. Soon after the child was found, the enraged father led a mob of about two hundred foreigners against the home of John Gibbons, owner of the mine in which the cave occurred, threatening violence. A riot call was sent in, and the mob was dispersed by the police. It was not known whether the child would recover. [Source document](#).

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- Sep Coalbrook Mine Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Peter Sufjack and Stanley Falosky, two of the four miners entombed for **twenty-four hours** in the Coalbrook mine of the Hudson Coal Company at Carbondale were rescued alive at noon today. William Morcum and Dominick Alving, the other two miners were rescued alive earlier in the day. [Source document](#).
- Oct Sioux No. 3 Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
After being entombed for **5 hours**, five miners were rescued at the Sioux No. 3 Colliery. They were working in the west seven-foot gangway when it caved in for 150 feet. The men suffered only from shock. [Source document](#).
- Nov Monarch Mine Fire, Louisville, Colorado
Following an outbreak of fire in the surface buildings of the National Fuel Company's Monarch mine, nine men who were reported to have been trapped in the mine were said to have been rescued through an air shaft. [Source document](#).

— 1920 —

- Jan Laughlin Mine Explosion, Martins Ferry, Ohio
An explosion occurred in the Laughlin mine of the American Sheet & Tin Plate Company, near Martins Ferry. Eighteen men were said to have been trapped in the workings but were freed after an **undisclosed period**. [Source document](#).
- Jan Jeanesville Mine Cave-in, Jeanesville, Pennsylvania
Edward Moore and Jere Donovan were rescued from the Jeanesville mines of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, where they were entombed for **several hours** by a fall of coal. Moore was taken to the State Hospital suffering from injuries to his back, but Donovan escaped unhurt. [Source document](#).
- Feb Draper Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Peter Burfosky was entombed by a sudden rush of coal at the Draper Colliery for **several hours**. An alarm was sounded when it was found Burfosky was a prisoner in his chamber behind tons of rock and coal. He was taken from his perilous position in an exhausted condition due to his efforts to release himself. [Source document](#).
- Mar Eastbrook Colliery Asphyxiation, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Overcome by gas, Jacob Slonine, a miner, fell 135 feet down a manway at the Eastbrook Colliery and may survive his injuries, although he was in serious condition. Slonine had fired a blast and not waiting long enough for the smoke

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and fumes to clear away he was overcome and staggered into the manway.

Source document.

May Deering Mine No. 8 Cave-in, Clinton, Indiana

Andrew Steen, fire boss at the Deering Coal Company Mine No. 8 lay for more than **five hours**, expecting to be killed any moment before he was found by workmen entering the mine. The heavy weight on his chest prevented him from calling for help. He was pinned under three tons of slate, unable to move anything except his head and one hand with heavy pieces of slate falling all around him.

Source document.

Jun National Mine Cave-in, South Scranton, Pennsylvania

Louis Buffalino was freed from a cave-in after an **undisclosed period** that occurred in the National mine at South Scranton, Pennsylvania. All the time the rescue party was at work, Buffalino kept uttering comforting words to his wife, who stood at the edge of the cave-in watching the rescuers work. Buffalino's companion, Pasquale Ballino, was crushed to death in the incident. Source document.

Jul Brookside Colliery Cave-in, Tower City, Pennsylvania

Glen Jones, employed at robbing pillars in No. 4 slope, Brookside colliery, was caught by a fall of coal and for a time it was thought he had been killed. It required several hours of hard and careful work to release him. For almost **two hours** he had been doubled up with his knees against his breast and the heavy weight of the coal resting on him. He was badly sprained and bruised and it will be some time before he would be able to be about. No bones were broken.

Source document.

Aug Arnold Mine Fire, Earlington, Kentucky

Ten miners were rescued from the burning Arnold Mine. The rescue was affected by tunneling around the fire which had shut off the single entry of the mine and came **20 hours** after the flames broke out. Source document.

Sep William Penn Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

Martin Becker was rescued from his entrapment after an **undisclosed period** from a cave-in at the William Penn Colliery in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. Felix Mack, a co-worker of Becker, was probably responsible for saving the life of a driver who was bringing a trip of cars into the gangway. Mack saw the fall was coming and flagged off the driver. Source document.

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- Oct Plymouth Red Ash Mine Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Two miners employed by the Plymouth Red Ash Coal Company, owed their lives to the clear-headed calculation of a mine foreman and the faithful and heroic work of fellow-miners who rescued the miners from an entombment of more than **twelve hours**. William Young, 35, and Joseph Hillard, 48, were erecting timber in a gangway when a sudden and unexpected crash brought tons of coal and rock down within fifteen feet of them. The cave-in blocked the slope and imprisoned Hillard and Young. When word reached the surface, the mine foreman, John D. Maxwell, directed that a hole be bored from the top of the tomb and, by a mathematical deduction, he was able to reach exactly the spot where the miners were imprisoned. With picks, axes, and other tools, nearly two score miners set to burrowing a passageway for their helpless fellow-workers. The digging and cutting of the mountain of coal which separated the pair from freedom started at 1 o'clock p.m. and ended with the rescue of the men at about 1:45 a.m. the next morning. The two miners walked home, unhurt. [Source document](#).
- Nov Crescent Mine Fire, Peoria, Illinois
One hundred and fifty miners were rescued from the Crescent mine after being trapped for **more than an hour**. The fire was caused by a spark from a circuit breaker. The miners were freed by an escapement in another part of the mine. Several were overcome by smoke. Considerable damage was done to the mine. [Source document](#).
- Dec George F. Lee Mine Cave-in, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania
Ten mine workers caught behind a fall in the gangway of the George F. Lee Mine were rescued after **nine hours** imprisonment. Rescue forces worked throughout the night to reach the men. [Source document](#).
- Dec Abandoned Bellaire Mine Rescue, Bellaire, Ohio
Ross Julian, 40, gave thanks for his life to the promptness of the helmet men in effecting his rescue from asphyxiation by black damp in an abandoned mine at Bellaire, Ohio. Julian said that if the rescuers had been a half-hour later, he would have succumbed to the deadly gases. The man's lamp gave out while he was in the mine and, becoming confused, he walked away from the mouth of the mine. He wandered around in the darkness for several hours and was beginning to lose consciousness when mine inspectors reached him. [Source document](#).

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— 1919 —

- Jan Mount Braddock Mine Fire, Mount Braddock, Pennsylvania
As the result of fire and gas fumes in the Mount Braddock mine of the W. J. Rainey Coal Company, two men died, four were trapped in the mine and two were rescued. The dead miners, Samuel Hardy, 28, and Clyde Foltz, 33, lost their lives attempting to aid their trapped comrades. The missing men were James Russell, 45, Frank Largen, 25, Charles Lurch, 27, and Elmer Matthews, 38. **Jack Cole, 32, and Herman Earhart, 36, were rescued at 6 p.m. on January 20.** Cole, Earhart, and the missing men entered the mine on an inspection tour when gas was discovered earlier in the morning. When they did not return, Hardy and Foltz entered in a coal car to which a cable was attached. Miners on the outside were to withdraw the car on signal. After waiting 20 minutes the men withdrew the car and found both occupants dead. Little hope was held out for the men that were still trapped. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Plymouth Consolidated Mine Cave-in, Plymouth, California
Unhurt except for bruises, Vinve Frizonti, a young Italian miner, was buried **fourteen hours** by a cave-in at the Plymouth Consolidated mine. Frizonti was caught in a stope on the 1,000-foot level. Rescuers removed carload after carload of debris while the imprisoned man kept communication by taps on a pipe. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Indian Ridge Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Stiney Narbut, a 36-year-old contract miner was buried alive for **several hours** at Indian Ridge Colliery. Although seriously injured, he directed the rescue work, but lost consciousness as he was being taken from beneath several tons of coal. An examination at the State Hospital showed that he had sustained internal injuries. [Source document.](#)
- Mar South Willis Mine No. 7 Fall of Person, Morristown, Washington
Victim was standing on a pile of timber just below the battery with his partner passing timber to him when one of the posts, supporting the timber on which he was standing, fell out, allowing him to fall down the pitch, which was about 60 degrees. The timber striking him, bruising his chest, face, and ribs. He was removed to his home as soon as possible where he died 5 days later from pneumonia, which set in because of the accident. [Source document.](#)
- May Nottingham Mine Asphyxiations, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Forty men were overcome by blackdamp in the Nottingham Mine of the Lehigh & Wilkesbarre Coal Company at Plymouth. All were brought to the surface. There

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were no fatalities, but the condition of most of the men was serious. [Source document.](#)

- May George F. Lee Coal Mine Asphyxiations, Avondale, Pennsylvania
Blackdamp overcame five employees of the George F. Lee Coal Company in the Avondale section of Plymouth township and six or eight others were affected by inhaling the dangerous fumes. Prompt and heroic action on the part of fellow employees who risked their own lives, saved the lives of the five men who were overcome. The men who were overcome were carried out of the mine and given first aid treatment at the company emergency hospital. [Source document.](#)
- May [Old Colony Mine Cave-in](#), Ligonier, Pennsylvania
After almost **10 hours** of tunneling, Andrew Coshosky, trapped under a fall of slate in the Old Colony Mine, Ligonier, Pennsylvania, was rescued and expected to recover. Covered to a depth of 30 feet, the only way to reach him was to drive a tunnel under the fallen mass of rock.
- Jun Henry Clay No. 1 Colliery Inundation, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Rescuers worked for **60 hours** endeavoring to locate Vistor Aughustine, one of the two men caught in a breast at the Henry Clay No. 1 colliery of the Reading Coal and Iron Company, when a body of water mysteriously broke into the workings. Bart Mirolli, the other man entombed, was rescued alive. He was swept into a heading and was in a semi-conscious condition when reached. He was in the Shamokin hospital with several ribs broken, one of which penetrated the lungs, causing an injury likely to result fatally. [Source document.](#)
- Aug [Oakdale Mine Explosion](#), LaVeta, Colorado
One man was rescued alive in the Oakview mine of the Oakdale Coal Company near LaVeta, which was wrecked by an explosion. William Davis, a miner, was brought out by rescue crews after an **undisclosed period** and resuscitated. Eighteen miners were killed in the incident. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Abandoned Rudisill Mine Shaft Fall of Person, Charlotte, North Carolina
After his fall to the bottom and being trapped **all night and half a day**, Miles Pegram was pulled from the 36-foot Rudisill gold mine shaft. Nearby residents who heard his calls went to his rescue and sent ropes down and hauled him to the top. He was not injured. Mr. Pegram was in the vicinity of the old mine, when he stepped into some honeysuckle vines and fell. Before he could recover, he had plunged into the hole and went to the bottom. At police headquarters it was said the entrance to the shaft was so hidden by the growth of vines that it was not surprising than an accident had come. [Source document.](#)

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Oct United Verde Mine Explosives Detonation, Jerome, Arizona
A Mexican mucker, Pablo Morales, proved himself a hero when, with one eye blown out by a blast, he carried an unconscious fellow worker, William Hess, 200 yards to reach assistance. Hess, a miner, and Morales, a mucker, were working in a drift on the 500-foot level of the United Verde. Hess was loading a round of holes that he had just drilled. It was assumed that while he was engaged in this work his lamp touched the powder in a short hole. At any rate, there was an explosion that knocked both men down. Both Morales' eyes were filled with rock and dirt, and one was so badly injured that what remained of the orb was later removed at the hospital. For a miracle, he was not knocked unconscious. When he picked himself up and peered about with his good eye, he saw Hess lying covered with blood. Morales, who was much smaller than Hess, picked up the other and carried him until he met assistance. From the point where the accident occurred to the place where Morales gave up his burden was fully 200 yards. At the hospital it was found necessary to amputate Hess' right arm. Otherwise, he was only slightly hurt. Aside from the loss of his eye, Morales' injuries were of no great consequence. Source document.

Nov Gold Hunter Mine Cave-in, Mullan, Idaho
Emil Sayko and Peter Grant were rescued **14 days** following a cave-in at the Gold Hunter mine near Mullan, Idaho. When they were finally reached, Grant and Sayko were wrapped in blankets and their eyes were bandaged to protect them from the unaccustomed light. They were described as "looking fine," although "a trifle weak." In the same incident, Jacob Delmarh and James Collins were rescued from a secondary cave-in after being trapped for **15½ hours**. Source document.

— 1918 —

Jan Barnum Mine Cave-in, Duryea, Pennsylvania
Two cave-ins caused by pillar robbing, covering approximately 5 acres, occurred at the Erie Mining / Pennsylvania Coal Company's Barnum Mine near Duryea, Pennsylvania trapped more than 100 men underground for a period. Two men were killed and 15 injured. Five of the men were rescued 10 hours after the accident. Thomas Huntley, who won the Carnegie Hero Medal for a mine rescue at the PCC No. 14 mine in 1907, lead one of the rescue parties that brought the missing men to the surface. Source: Anthracite Heritage Foundation. Source document.

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- Feb Amasa-Porter Mine Inundation, Crystal Falls, Michigan
Following an inundation of water in the Amasa-Porter Mine at Crystal Falls, Michigan, one miner was found unconscious by rescuers after an **undisclosed period** and brought to the surface. Three others managed to escape unaided.
- Mar Alden Coal Mine Cave-in, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania
Adam Krezinski was rescued from his **three-day-entombment** in the mines of the Alden Coal Company following a cave-in that trapped both he and his laborer, Andrew Bartek. Bartek was rescued at about 11 o'clock a.m. the previous day, ending his **two-day-entrapment**. Company doctors who attended Krezinski said that he would recover. Source document.
- Apr Winchester Magnesite Mine Cave-in, San Jacinto, California
After being imprisoned in the Winchester magnesite mine for **fourteen hours** because of an earthquake, Foreman Edward Sexton and Edward Cole, a miner, were rescued. 20 men who had labored frantically to release them. Shut in an airtight, pitchy dark hole, six feet long and four feet high, Sexton and Cole breathed thru a 10-foot pipe that was forced down thru the imprisoning rock and dirt. With lips pressed tight about the ends of the pipe, the two prisoners sucked air from the outer world. That the men were still alive was proved by faint sounds of tapping on the pipe. When released Cole and Sexton were weak from lack of food and anxiety, but it was believed they would be none the worse for their ordeal. Source document.
- Jun Short Mountain Colliery Cave-in, Lykens, Pennsylvania
Five men were standing timber, when without warning the ground caved, catching all five. One man was able shortly to free himself and went for assistance. Soon a rescue party arrived. In a short time, the party got a man out; with medical assistance his life was saved. The next three men were alive when removed but died soon after; the last man was dead when taken from under the fall.
- Jun North Mahanoy Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
John Wasnoski, 50, was taken out of an old chamber in the North Mahanoy mine after being entombed for **ten hours**. He was only slightly injured. Wasnoski spent most of the hours of his underground imprisonment in prayer. He embraced his rescuers and walked home, refusing to ride in the colliery ambulance. Source document.
- Jul Benton Mine Lost Miner, Benton, Illinois
Tony Dooering, a miner, was rescued from the Benton Coal Company mine at Benton, Illinois after being lost for **two days** without food or drink. He was said to

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have started for the main shaft and became lost, wandering around in abandoned parts of the mine. Several hundred searched the mine before he was found.

Source document.

- Aug Men Lost in Abandoned Mine, Morgantown, West Virginia
Lost in an abandoned coal mine, without lights, and prisoners for five hours, Walter Mayfield, Harley Warman and J. C. Fortney, prominent residents of this city, were saved by a searching party after they had given up hope of rescue. The men went into the mine to investigate it when their lamp went out and for **five hours**, they wandered about vainly in an effort to find their way out. Source document.
- Aug Sayre Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
After being closed in a blind heading for **five hours** at the Sayre colliery Saturday afternoon and evening, Frank Leski was rescued alive and well, without a scratch. The entombment was discovered immediately, and the officials quickly had a force of men on the scene to rescue the man. Rapid headway was made and by working carefully, Leski was taken out of his underground tomb safe and without any injury. Source document.
- Sep Coon Hollow Mine Explosion, Pikeville, Kentucky
Seven miners trapped in the Coon Hollow Coal Company's mine near Pikeville were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. They were imprisoned behind a wall of fire caused by a gas explosion. Source document.
- Sep Vindicator Mine Cave-in, Victor, Colorado
J. Anderson, a machine drill miner, employed at the Hull City property of the Vindicator mine, was caught by a cave-in of rocks while working at a station on the sixth level. Rescue work was immediately started, and after **three hours** of labor, communication was established with Anderson, who was uninjured save for minor contusions. An air pipe was forced through the debris, and the rescue party got Anderson out. Source document.
- Nov Consolidated Mine Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Vince Frizonti, a young Italian miner, was rescued after being trapped for **14 hours** by a cave-in at the Consolidated mine near Plymouth, Pennsylvania. Frizonti was caught at the 1000-foot level when the crash came. He was standing by a drilling machine, and this prevented the falling rock crushing him to death. He was unhurt except for bruises. Source document.

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- Dec Cleveland-Cliffs Mine Cave-in, Ishpeming, Michigan
Confined **63 hours** in an area four feet square from a cave-in, three miners in the Cleveland-Cliffs mine were rescued alive. A fourth miner in their group died. Although the other three had existed without food or water, they were able to climb 400 feet to the shaft. They were in the best of health, apparently. As a last resort they had planned to feed themselves on cedar bark from a timber protruding into their tiny prison. [Source document](#).

— 1917 —

- Jan No. 14 Pennsylvania Colliery Explosives Detonation, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Abandoned by his miner following an accident several days earlier, Andrew Marashak, a laborer at No. 14 Pennsylvania colliery, lay in the mine unattended and undiscovered for **eleven hours**. Mine and State authorities investigated and found that the miner, John Kuroski, evidently believed that his laborer had been killed by a tardily fired shot, and thereupon was so frightened that he fled, not only the mine, but the region. He had just returned home. It is understood that Kuroski had warned his laborer not to go back into the mine chamber after a shot had failed to explode. But the laborer went, the charge exploded, and the laborer was partly buried under debris. Kuroski found him prostrate and apparently lifeless. He wrapped a sweater about Marashak's head and then left the mine without notifying anybody. The accident occurred at 3:30 p.m. It was 2:30 a.m. before a fireboss, making his regular rounds, found the injured man. He was taken home. He had a fractured collar bone and barring the possibility of pneumonia developing because of his long exposure on the damp ground, it was believed he would probably recover. [Source document](#).
- Jan Brunswick Mine Fall of Persons, Grass Valley, California
Two miners fell thirty feet down a shaft at the Brunswick Mine at Grass Valley. Louis Faccina, one of the victims, was painfully injured and was taken to the hospital. His hurts were not considered very serious. His companion, whose name not given out, was practically unhurt. [Source document](#).
- Jan Primrose Mine Fire, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
While fighting the fire in the Glendon section of the Primrose mines, eleven miners were overcome by the fumes of white damp and dropped unconscious in the mine. After an **undisclosed period**, a searching party brought them to the surface, where they were treated in the mine rescue car. It was thought all would recover. The men were sent out from the supply base properly equipped with helmets and when they failed to return, rescuers were sent over the same route.

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It was believed their breathing apparatus failed to work properly. [Source document.](#)

- Jan Pittsburgh-Idaho Mine Fire, Gilmore, Montana
Ten miners were rescued after being trapped for — **12 hours** — behind a barricade in the Pittsburg-Idaho mine following an explosion of gasoline on the 400-foot level of the mine. Gasoline used in an engine on the 400-foot level caused the explosion, which brought down tons of earth upon the miners working on that level. Thomas D. Thomas, age 41, was suffocated in an attempt to escape. The explosion and fire started when another miner, in attempting to draw a five-gallon can of gasoline from a faucet in the pump station, for use in a small hoist at another point, carelessly carried a lighted carbide lamp in his cap and ignited the fumes from the gasoline, which filled the mine with white smoke and gas. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Isle Royale Mine Inundation, Houghton, Michigan
After more than **fifty hours** imprisonment, three miners were found alive tonight in the flooded Isle Royale mine. Owing to the weakness of the men they would not be moved through the water to safety until the next day. They had no knowledge of the fate of the two other men, also entrapped and still missing. The Isle Royale mine was flooded when a blast broke through the drift wall into an adjoining abandoned working. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Wiconisco, Pennsylvania
Samuel Snyder became trapped when the top fell, and a rush of coal covered him completely. When help arrived, it took **four hours** to get him uncovered. The only thing that kept Snyder from smothering was the fact that the coal that covered him was in large lumps, which allowed some ventilation. Snyder was unconscious when uncovered, but soon became responsive. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Silver Belle Mine Cave-in, Gleeson, Arizona
Pat Noland was severely injured in a cave-in in the Silver Belle mine when tons of earth came down upon him. He was rescued by his comrades after an **undisclosed period** and brought to the company hospital, where word today was to the effect that he was not expected to live, owing to the severe injuries. No word was received as to how the accident happened and where the blame lies. [Source document.](#)
- May Abandoned Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Two boys, Sylvester W. McKeon, age 12 and Robert E. Fear, age 13, were rescued after they descended the slope of a hole that had caved in the ground and entered

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the chamber of an old mine to gather coal. They were caught by a fall of earth overhanging the entrance to the chamber. Sylvester was buried to his hips, and Robert was buried to his chest. Cracks at the top of the hole and the dropping of clay earth overhanging the chamber indicated another cave-in was imminent. Their rescuers were Michael J. Franklin, Edward F. Norton, and Patrick J. Gallagher, both track layers. After an undisclosed period, the men first extracted Sylvester followed by Robert. The three men were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Jun Rock Salt Mine Explosion, Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York

21 hours after the explosion of gas, one man was found alive at the bottom of the shaft by a Bureau of Mines rescue party. His leg had been caught and he was trapped by some timber. He was freed and taken to the surface. The party started to recover the body of the other man and brought it to the surface about two hours later.

Jun Granite Mountain Copper Mine Fire, Butte, Montana

Twenty-five of 29 miners imprisoned on the 2400-foot level of the Speculator Mine of the North Butte Mining Company were brought to the surface after being trapped for **36 hours**. They owed their lives to crew member, Manus Duggan, a 20-year-old nipper boy, who didn't make it out himself. According to Nyrja Johnson, the first man to the surface, Duggan directed all the work in their effort to barricade themselves from the gases. He had the men strip naked and use their clothes to block out the toxic gas. Duggan became lost when he went ahead of the crew to test for gases. 163 miners were killed in this disaster.

Aug Lincoln Mine Fire, Virginia, Minnesota

Thanks to the heroism of Frank Mattson, two miners who were overcome by smoke in the Lincoln mine fire at Virginia, Minnesota were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Mattson was lowered into the mine without a mask where he found Oscar Pakkala and Joe Reinshe. Mattson found the victims near the flames and carried both to the surface. All three were revived by a pulmotor.

Aug West Kentucky No. 7 Mine Explosion, Clay, Kentucky

Forty-six had been brought to the surface alive from the West Kentucky Coal Company's No. 7 mine explosion after **3½ hours**. Of the rescued, 24 were uninjured. The remainder were suffering from burns, none of which were said to be serious.

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- Aug Short Mountain Colliery Coal Slide, Lykens, Pennsylvania
Eight miners were entombed in a shaft of the Short Mountain Colliery, owned by the Susquehanna Coal Company. Six were rescued. Two others were missing. The men were caught by a slide of coal. The rescued men were William Kiener, Harry A. Miller, John Pasco, Peter Roman, Paul Budwork, and Davis David. The missing included Lewis Shadler, and John Charney. [Source document](#).
- Sep Empire Mine Asphyxiations, Grass Valley, California
James Harris, Nick Fungus and a third miner named Eldridge were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the workings of the Empire Mine, where they had been overcome by gas when a large rock fell on the air pipe valve, cutting off their supply of fresh air. All three were removed to their homes and it was believed they would recover. [Source document](#).
- Oct Independent Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Thomas Kilroy, 50, was rescued after being trapped for **twenty-four hours** in an unnamed Anthracite mine. He was held as a prisoner in the depths of the mine 1,000 feet below the surface by a fall of rock and coal. As the rescue men progressed with their work, the fall of the top continued, endangering their own lives. Suffering severely from exposure, shock and hunger, Kilroy's condition was critical, however, it was believed that he would recover. [Source document](#).
- Nov Henry Clay Mine Coal Slide, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Michael Jacobs, covered by five wagon loads of coal in a chute at the Heading Company's Henry Clay shaft was smothered for an **undisclosed period** when Frank Smith, fireboss, appeared. Amid great peril, he caused the coal to flow into a gangway and rescued Jacobs, who was in a critical condition. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Acme Mine Explosives Detonation](#), Fleming, Kentucky
Four men entered the mine on a Sunday to blast some holes; after the holes were loaded and lighted, they started to leave the mine, but when they were about 500 feet from the point of blasting, all the holes went off at about the same time. A rush of wind down the entry caught the men and extinguished their carbide lights. Two men jumped into a room and the other two stayed on the entry. The rush of wind was followed by a gust of flame. The two men that stayed in the entry were badly burned but were able to make their way out of the mine, where they were found by a rescue party.

The rescue party found the other two men, both badly burned, in the room into which they had gone. Their lights had been put out by the explosion and they had

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become so badly confused that they were unable to find their way out. All four men had entered the mine without the consent of the mine officials.

— 1916 —

- Jan Pennsylvania Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
A miner employed at the Pennsylvania colliery was entombed **four or five hours**. Officials acted promptly and soon had the man removed alive from his tomb. Source document.
- Jan Abandoned Mine Fall of Person, Globe, Arizona
L. Lepi, a miner, was found and rescued by men working at a nearby mining lease after being robbed and thrown down a 40-foot shaft of an abandoned mine **two days** earlier. The miner was suffering from bruises of the face and knees, declaring he was nearly famished and that he was minus a \$20 gold piece taken by the robbers. Lepi said that he was attacked by two men. They took his gold, but overlooked \$300 in currency, and then hurled him into the shaft. He called for help frequently throughout the two days. The men who rescued him said they heard a voice yesterday but did not recognize it as a call for help. Source document.
- Feb Davis No. 42 Mine Explosion, Kempton, Maryland
Those not directly in range of the blast hurried to the main entries and started for the foot of the shaft in which the cages were still operating. There they were met by rescue parties from the surface and quickly hoisted. Other rescuers made their way into the mine and located other miners who had been unable to reach the main lines of communication. These men were brought out after an **undisclosed period**.
- Feb Ernest No. 2 Mine Explosion, Ernest, Pennsylvania
Five miners were rescued alive, four of whom were transferred to the hospital and the fifth at his home in Ernest. The patients in the hospital, all of whom were badly burned about the face, hands, and body and who were suffering from shock are: James McGuire, a member of the mine rescue team; W. R. Nord, Mike Carrel, and Tony Wilish.

No one on the outside heard the explosion. It was Jimmy Moody, the motorman, who brought the news to the surface. Moody discovered the body of one of the miners only about a mile from the entrance. Hurrying back to the surface, he quickly summoned help.

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One of the men, Ben O'Hara, was just walking out of the mine when he felt the force of the explosion on his back. While on his way to the entrance of the mine he had passed George Bunton, Jr., going to work and as soon as O'Hara realized what had happened, he started back after his friend. Before he reached Bunton, however, O'Hara encountered two other men lying on the floor of the mine. He succeeded in dragging both fallen miners to safety and went back after Bunton but was unable to reach him. Bunton's body was brought to the surface shortly before 9:00 p.m. that evening. The exact time of the tragedy was later determined from a watch found hanging from a pocket of one of the dead men. The watch was smashed, and the hands pointed to 3:20 p.m. Source document.

Mar King Mine Explosion, Kimball, West Virginia

Following the explosion, rescuers worked throughout the morning to free a large number of miners. Masses of coal and slate and cut off their escape. At 2 p.m., it was stated that all the men who had entered the mine had been accounted for.

Mar Sesser No. 1 Mine Fire, Sesser, Illinois

95 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **two hours** after a fire in the Sesser mine in Illinois. There were no fatalities in this incident. Source document.

Jun Anaconda Mine Fall of Person, Butte, Montana

John Corbett sustained painful injuries when he fell 75 feet in the shaft at the Anaconda mine. He was rushed to the St. James hospital where it was found that two ribs had been fractured, one of them puncturing the lung. It was considered probable that Corbett also sustained internal injuries. Source document.

Jun Hickory Swamp Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania

Caught under a fall at the Hickory Swamp colliery, Frank Ringcavich, 41, was instantly killed while his "butty" Michael Droblefski, 29, was imprisoned behind a second fall and was rescued after **20 hours** work on the part of rescue gangs. The men were working as miners in No. 4 vein. Mr. Ringcavich was completely buried under the first fall, and his "butty," who was dressing off a shot, when the fall occurred, went to his assistance to try and rescue him. As he was trying to free Ringcavich, a second fall occurred, making him a prisoner. Droblefski was only slightly bruised and walked out of his tomb. Source document.

Jun Nevada Mining Company Explosion, Pleasanton, Kansas

Ernest Stockton was rescued after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the jack mines of the Nevada Mining Company, two miles southeast of Pleasanton. Left for dead, mainly by a statement from his buddy, the doctor proceeded to render first aid to the buddy's burns and injuries, also doing what he

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could to alleviate the pain of the mine superintendent. However in passing the mine, someone saw the wire upon which the safety lamps were operated shake violently, proving that the man, Ernest Stockton, whom the buddy thought dead, had recovered consciousness, and was signaling for help. Those present immediately got busy with floods of water to keep him from suffocating, while others let down a rope with a noose fixed and told him to tie it about him. No sound came from the mine for several minutes, but finally he was able to talk and apprised the people on top where he was, and the rope was pulled from the main shaft and lowered into the air shaft. He put his foot through the noose, taking hold of the rope with one hand, while with the other hand and his loose foot he kept himself from bumping into the timbers while the rescue party pulled him from the mine hand over hand. He retained his faculties until he was safely out of the mine and then collapsed. He was in alarming condition but a little improved. He contracted such a cold while lying in the water and inhaling the gas that the physician was having a hard time to keep him from a spell of pneumonia. Source document.

- Jul Babcock Mine Cave-in, Joplin, Missouri
Four miners were rescued — **56 hours** — after becoming trapped by a cave-in at the Babcock mine near Joplin, Missouri. Source document.
- Jul Continental Colliery Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Caught behind a rush of coal at the Valley Coal Company's Continental colliery, John Mulligan, 50 years old, was a prisoner for **eight hours**, while rescuing forces took turns in working frantically to release him. Mulligan was engaged in the hazardous task of removing pillars. A safety Inspector making the rounds discovered the miner's predicament and volunteers were quickly secured. Mulligan failed to respond to rappings, and the men thought that he had been crushed to death. Mulligan said he felt exceedingly uncomfortable and that it was not until the last hour that he heard them working to dig him out. The mine is the same in which Joseph (or John) Tomachefsky was imprisoned for eight days. Source document.
- Jul Lake Erie Tunnel Explosion, Cleveland, Ohio
On July 25, 1916, Garrett Morgan made national news for using his gas mask to rescue 32 men trapped during an explosion in an underground tunnel 250 feet beneath Lake Erie. Morgan and a team of volunteers donned the new "gas masks" and went to the rescue. After the rescue, Morgan's company received requests from fire departments around the country who wished to purchase the new masks. The Morgan gas mask was later refined for use by U.S. Army during World War I. In 1914, Garrett Morgan was awarded a patent for a Safety Hood and

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Smoke Protector. Two years later, a refined model of his early gas mask won a gold medal at the International Exposition of Sanitation and Safety, and another gold medal from the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

- Jul Lehigh No. 12 Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
Joseph Kellert was rescued after a **32-hour** entrapment in the No. 12 Colliery of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. He was caught by a fall of top rock and rescued uninjured after rescuers dug a 60-foot rock chute to reach him. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Central Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Chariton, Iowa
Joe Montgomery, who was employed at the Central mine, was painfully injured and had a narrow escape from death in a powered haulage accident. He was driving the mules to a car of coal, when they got loose and the car ran over him, throwing him down and crushing his foot and ankle quite badly. He was alone in the dark for an **undisclosed period**, and knowing that another car was coming, he called loudly for help. A man happened to be close by, heard him and rescued him from his perilous position, and stopped the other car before it reached him. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Tennessee Mine Cave-in, Chloride, Arizona
After being pinioned — **seven hours** — against the wall of a drift in the Tennessee mine at Chloride, W. A. Peterson was extricated by miners who dug him out of the fall of rock which had caught him. Peterson seemed only slightly hurt and ate a hearty meal after his rescue. He died a short time later. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Woodward No. 3 Colliery Explosion, Westmoor, Pennsylvania
Six men were dead because of a gas explosion in the Woodward No. 3 slope of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Coal Company at Westmoor. Three were killed instantly and the remaining three died within a few hours at Nesbitt West Side Hospital where they were taken as fast as modern methods could convey them. The injured were taken from No. 3 shaft at Westmoor. Those injured received first aid in the mines and their wounds were re-dressed when they reached the surface, and then they were immediately rushed to Nesbitt West Side Hospital. They were all horribly burned, and they died one after another within a few hours after they reached the hospital. Those instantly killed were burned almost beyond recognition. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Good Spring Colliery Cave-in, Tremont, Pennsylvania
Jacob Dixon and William Gammell became enclosed by a rush of coal in the Good Spring Colliery of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company near

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Tremont, Pennsylvania. After **five hours**, Dixon succeeded in getting into a blind heading where he was rescued. They were engaged in the hazardous work of "robbing pillars." No further news could be found regarding the rescue of William Gammell. His survival was unlikely.

Oct Lytle Colliery Explosion and Fire, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

The sixteenth miner closed in by an explosion of gas at the Lytle colliery was rescued after an **undisclosed period**, the other fifteen having been taken out safely earlier, all will recover. The fire, which was started by an explosion, is well under control and the officials say it will be speedily extinguished. Source document.

Oct No. 14 Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

John Kellet, 32, was rescued uninjured after having been entombed for **24 hours** behind a fall of coal at the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company's No. 14 colliery. Source document.

Nov Bessie Mine Explosion, Palos, Alabama

About **15 hours** after the explosion, a trained apparatus crew of 5 men found 3 men at a break in the air line. The party was then about 1,000 feet from fresh air, and the men were able to proceed to safety with the aid of the apparatus crew. Thirty men were killed by the explosion, 5 escaped unassisted, and 3 were rescued as noted.

Dec Oliphant-Johnson No. 1 Mine Explosion, Bruceville, Indiana

42 miners were rescued from behind two barricades **2¾ hours** after an explosion in the Oliphant-Johnson No. 1 Mine at Bruceville, Indiana. There were 25 miners in one group and 17 in another. Two miners were killed in this incident. Source document.

Dec Fidelity No. 9 Mine Explosion, Stone City, Kansas

Eleven miners were rescued from the Fidelity No. 9 mine after an **undisclosed period**. Overcome by the toxic gases, these men had to be resuscitated by pulmotor. Some of those rescued were badly burned.

Dec Degnan-McConnell No. 5 Mine Explosion, Wilburton, Oklahoma

Twelve rescuers descended into the Degnan-McConnell Coal Company's No. 5 mine following an explosion which killed two shotfirers, the only occupants of the mine at the time. The rescuers were not able to proceed far before they were overcome by afterdamp and fell prostrate in their tracks. Each group succeeded in carrying back the fallen before they themselves were overcome by the gas.

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Volunteers had to be called in to drag out the rescuers, and finally, when the last man was rescued, there were twelve prostrate men lying at the mouth of the slope. Students from the Oklahoma School of Mines and citizens of Wilburton worked heroically with these men, resorting to artificial respiration. All were saved except Tom Vickers. A pulmotor was used in his case, but to no avail. Several of those resuscitated re-entered the mine to continue with the rescue work. Source document.

— 1915 —

- Jan Black Diamond Mine Cave-in, Luzerne, Pennsylvania
Four miners were rescued after **seven hours** by parties led by company officials. Source document 1. Source document 2.
- Jan Unnamed Zinc Mine Cave-in, Joplin, Missouri
Thomas French, a miner who was caught by a cave-in in a zinc mine near here, was rescued after having been imprisoned more than **eight hours**. French was held by a mass of rock and earth with his head free. He directed the work of his rescuers, trying energetically to free himself. Although seriously injured, French would live, physicians said. Hope of rescuing Harry Hubbell, French's fellow workman, was abandoned. He was believed to be buried under fifteen feet of rock. Source document.
- Feb Maple Grove Mine Cave-in, Terre Haute, Indiana
One man was killed, and eight other men were trapped in an entry at the bottom of a shaft of the Maple Grove mine when the timbers of the shaft gave way in a cave-in. After an **undisclosed period**, the eight miners were rescued by "first aid" workers through an air shaft about 100 feet from the main shaft. The men were brought to the surface by means of a rope. One miner, Frank Simmons, 52, was killed in the accident. Source document.
- Feb Carlisle Mine Explosion, Carlisle, West Virginia
Twenty-one men were killed and four were rescued soon after the explosion by parties led by company officials. One of the rescued men, suffering from burns, was sent to a hospital. Source document 1. Source document 2.
- Feb Gagnon Mine Cave-in, Butte, Montana
After being entombed beneath tons of rock and earth for **thirty-two hours**, Richard Rogers, who was buried with four other miners by a cave-in in the Gagnon mine of the Anaconda Copper Company, was rescued alive. Rogers was weak from hunger and thirst but only slightly injured. He escaped with a few bruises

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about the body. The bodies of two men who were instantly killed, have been recovered, and two others caught in the cave-in were taken out alive, but died after being brought to the surface. The men were timbering up an inclined shaft when fifty feet of rock gave way. Another miner saved his own life by climbing a ladder as the rock came down. Source document.

Mar Layland No. 3 Mine Explosion, Layland, West Virginia

On March 2, 1915, an explosion occurred at the Layland No. 3 Mine in Layland, West Virginia. The explosion occurred at 8:30 a.m., resulting in the deaths of 114 men inside the mine and 1 outside. Fifty-four men afterward escaped alive from the mine. Seven came out from **2 to 5 hours** after the explosion; 5 more escaped unassisted at 8 a.m. on March 6 (**4 days** later), and 42 others were rescued **an hour** later. Of those killed, 44 died from suffocation. The store porter passing the drift mouth at 100 feet at the time of the explosion was hurled against a post and killed.

Mar Lost Boys Found in Abandoned Mine, Banksville, Pennsylvania

When searchers, peering into the dark recesses of an abandoned coal pit, lighted only by their pit-lamps, saw a young boy staggering toward them, dragging a limp form that might have been a sack, a search that had continued a week ended and a ghastly tragedy came to light. The boy who dragged his burden toward the dim flicker of the pit lamps was Albert Tomlinson, 10 years old, of Banksville. The limp form was Willie Hale, a five-year-old playmate. "Willie is dead," the searchers heard the elder boy sob. Almost starved when found, bruised, and cut from contact with sharp slate and coal as he had groped about in the unlighted working, the boy quickly lapsed unconscious. He was hurried to St Joseph's Hospital for treatment. The boys had been lost for — **8 days** — in the mine. The Banksville entry of the abandoned mine was in the back yard of the Tomlinson home. Although within probably 200 yards of home, young Tomlinson and his companion had not been able to find their way out of the working, and even daily searches of the pit by members of the family and neighbors had been futile. Source document.

Apr Abandoned Mine Rescue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

After they had gone missing for **a week**, two small boys were located by searchers in a long-abandoned mine. The boys were in a small 5-foot drop that had several inches of water in it. Albert Tomlinson, age 10, was found barely alive, and hungry. His companion, William Hale, age 5, was dead, believed to have starved to death. The Hale boy was partly submerged in water and his head was held in the lap of Tomlinson. Source document.

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- May Wanamie Colliery Cave-in, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Buried beneath tons of coal and other fallen debris for nearly **one hour**, Jacob Dombrow was rescued alive from the mines of the Wanamie Colliery of the Lehigh & Wilkes-Barre Coal Company. [Source document.](#)
- Jun [Longacre-Chapman Zinc Mine Inundation](#), Neck City, Missouri
Six men were imprisoned. Four were rescued alive after **120 hours** of difficult work by company men, volunteers, State mine Inspectors, and Bureau of Mines men. Two men found were dead on the fourteenth day following the accident.
- Jul Eckhart Mine No. 3 Cave-in, Cumberland, Maryland
After having been imprisoned nearly a mile back in the earth behind 300 feet of fall of roof for **24 hours**, four miners were rescued unscathed from the Eckhart Mine No. 3 of the Consolidation Coal Company. State Mine Inspector William Walters headed the rescuing party. The four imprisoned men walked out of the mine little the worse for their experience and sought their homes. After the fall the trapped men could be heard talking, and this spurred on the rescuers. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Johnson Colliery Lost Person, Dickson City, Pennsylvania
Lawrence Brady, 60, was found in an abandoned working of the Johnson mine at Dickson City, near Scranton. He had been wandering aimlessly for nearly **3 days** in the darkness of an underground prison which seemed to offer no means of escape. Brady was employed for a number of years at the Johnson colliery. About three months earlier he quit his job, but instead of removing all his tools, he hid some of them in an abandoned part of the workings. Recently he became re-employed and decided to gather his hidden tools. Knowing that he would be gone for some hours he carried a lunch with him in a dinner pail. According to Brady's story, he had only proceeded a short distance through an old chamber when the light of his lamp played out, and he was left in the darkness, not having any matches with him. Rescuers found his dinner pail at the top of the heading and following the course indicated by its position, found the missing man. [Source document.](#)
- Jul William Penn Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Julius Kramitzski was rescued without a scratch after being trapped at the William Penn colliery for **5 hours**. Kramitzski was employed in the West Mammoth vein, No. 1 level. He was engaged in chopping down an old prop when the top gave way closing him in. When the entombed man was taken out, he said he did not feel any ill effects from his experience. [Source document.](#)

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- Jul No. 14 Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
After spending **a day and part of a night** entombed behind a rush of rock and coal at the No. 14 mine of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, Frank Clausius, 28, was rescued. He was suffering greatly from shock, but only slightly from bruises which he sustained. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Camp One Mine Entrapment, Ninsbew, California
Five men worked strenuously to move a huge boulder that had rolled ten feet down the side of an embankment in a little canyon a mile from Camp One and pinioned C. F. Seward, a miner, in a shallow stream, crushing his left leg. At the end of his **two-hour** entrapment, when the rock finally had been moved, the five men carried Seward a mile out of the canyon over an almost impassible trail to Camp One. Their efforts probably saved Seward's leg for him. From Camp One the injured man was rushed to Ninsbew. Dr. P. L. Hamilton went to his assistance there last night. Seward was later taken to Chico and placed in the Sacramento Valley hospital. Seward was at work at a little mine in the canyon near Camp One. Suddenly the rock toppled from its resting place a few feet above and crashed down the embankment. It struck Seward low, knocking him down and holding him in a nearby shallow stream of water. The left leg was crushed from the knee to the ankle. Dr. Hamilton did not believe amputation would be necessary. [Source document.](#)
- Aug [Orenda Mine Explosion](#), Boswell, Pennsylvania
After an **undisclosed period**, a foreman and others rescued 10 miners who were overcome by afterdamp following a local explosion in the Orenda Mine near Boswell, PA. Two of the rescued men were among the 19 that perished in the disaster.
- Sep [Rahn Colliery Explosion](#), Coaldale, Pennsylvania
On September 27, an explosion caused a rush of water and coal which cut off and entombed 11 men. Two of the men were rescued **12 hours** after the disaster, but the others were not reached until October 3, after an imprisonment of **6 days and 5 hours**. Three hundred men working 3 shifts per day drove the tunnel to reach the trapped miners.
- Sep Archbald Colliery Roof Fall, Archbald, Pennsylvania
Twenty-seven hours of imprisonment behind hundreds of tons of rock ended for four miners in the Archbald Coal Company's colliery who had been trapped by an extensive fall of roof. One-half slice of bread was all the food the four men had in more than thirty hours. They divided that before their matches gave out. A little cold coffee in their dinner buckets was all they had to drink, and that, too, they

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divided. But they are hardy men and strong and used to exposure. And when they were hauled to the surface over a 3,000-foot slope that tops the vein they were penned in, they leaped from the mine cars and half ran to the company's office. [Source document.](#)

Sep Logan Coal Company Mine Explosion, Hanna City, Illinois
Seventy-five miners who were imprisoned by a fall of rock caused by the explosion were rescued after **several hours** of desperate work. Immediately following the explosion, fire broke out in the mine a mile from the shaft and 250 feet below ground where the accident occurred, and for two hours it was feared the entombed would be burned to death. Deceased in the accident were Martin Perrit and Frank Robinson who were shot firers in the act of setting off a charge when the explosion occurred. [Source document.](#)

Oct [Continental Colliery Cave-in](#), Centralia, Pennsylvania
On October 4, John Tomaschefski was rescued after **187 hours**, imprisoned by a cave-in at the colliery which occurred on September 26. A 2-inch diamond drill hole was drilled 50 feet to provide food, water, and dry clothing. It took 85 hours to drill this hole. Following this, the rescuers drove, by pick mining, a 4-foot by 4-foot passageway to reach and rescue the trapped miner. It required 4 days to accomplish this.

Oct Foster Tunnel of No. 11 Mine Inundation, Coaldale, Pennsylvania
Six men and three boys were rescued after nearly **seven days** following the group's entrapment in the Foster Tunnel of the No. 11 mine when a blast released water from an abandoned working. Eleven were initially confined, but two of them, William Watkins, and George Hollywood, escaped a day after the accident happened. The other nine miners trapped sustained themselves on the remaining food in their dinner pails, lamp oil, and chicken bones. The Coaldale mining operation was the property of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. The nine trapped miners included:

- John McAndrews (boy)
- Joseph Murphy (boy)
- John Boner (boy)
- Elmer Herron
- Peter Lemmock
- Charles Matokis
- Dominic Holchek
- Joe Lagonis
- Dominic Dotori

[Source document 1.](#) [Source document 2.](#) [Source document 3.](#)

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- Oct Ramago No. 4 Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Webb City, Missouri
Four miners were dropped almost the whole distance down a 200-foot shaft at the Ramago No. 4 mine. The first "tub" had just started down with the underground men, carrying four, the usual number, when something went wrong with the hoister. The presumption was that the hoist operator was lowering these men on the brake instead of having his air on in order to get them underground quickly and the four men were dropped to the bottom of the shaft. All four men were more or less severely injured and were rushed to the Jane Chinn hospital. All the men were expected to recover. [Source document](#).
- Nov [Boomer No. 2 Mine Explosion](#), Boomer, West Virginia
27 miners were rescued from behind a barricade **seven hours** after an explosion in the Boomer No. 2 mine in Boomer, West Virginia. [Source document](#).
- Nov [Northwestern Mine Explosion](#), Ravensdale, Washington
A rescue party under the superintendent at once commenced recovery and repair of the auxiliary slope and rescued 4 men; 3 were unconscious and were given artificial respiration, but 1 died.
- Dec Richards Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After being entombed by a rush of coal at the Richards colliery for a period of **96 hours**, Joseph Renock, a miner, was taken out alive. A force of 120 men had been working for four days at the risk of their lives in an effort to rescue the imprisoned man. The rescue work was exceedingly dangerous owing to the many hundreds of tons of loose rock and coal which separated the workers from the miner. The men encountered a large steel car in the gangway, and it was necessary to chisel the car away before the rescue work could be continued. When released, Renock was able to talk, but was in such a weakened condition from exhaustion and lack of food that he was immediately rushed to a hospital. He would recover. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Newcastle Mine Rock Fall](#), Seattle, Washington
A rockslide choked the main gangway in the Newcastle Mine of the Pacific Coast Coal Company near Seattle, Washington, trapping Thomas Zathias for **nine hours**. Rescuers expected to find his crushed body when they broke through the 60 feet of debris, but instead, they found him calmly sitting on his dinner bucket, awaiting deliverance.

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— 1914 —

- Jan Miner Avalanche Burial, Philipsburg, Montana
Eli Marfhi, aged 35, a miner, was rescued from an avalanche that buried him near Philipsburg. For **48 hours** had lived in the snowdrift, eating snow to satisfy a fierce thirst and fighting desperately to free himself. He was unconscious when miners on their way to a remote claim beyond Philipsburg saw Marfhi's head above the drift and rescued him. His right leg had a double fracture, and his left arm was broken in two places. The miners improvised a cast from splints off trees, strapped the injured man on their backs and carried him several miles. Then they secured a wagon and dragged Marfhi to the Northern Pacific tracks. [Source document.](#)
- Feb [Cannon Mine Inundation](#), Franklin County, Washington
Andrew Churnick, 50, was killed by an inrush of water and gravel in No. 11 chute on the water level in the Gem seam. His body was recovered **4 days** later near the first crosscut in the No. 12 chute. His partner, Mike Bobchurnick, was rescued after being imprisoned for **7 days** near the 6th crosscut in the same chute.
- Feb No. 4 Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
John Washaloski was closed in for **several hours** in No. 4 Colliery. When rescued he was pulled down a chute along with about fifteen tons of coal. Strange as it may appear, when he struck the bottom, he shook the coal off the top of himself and started away as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened to him. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Hickory Ridge Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Rescuers penetrated a breast at the Hickory Ridge Mine and recovered the body of John Mrowka, a miner, who had been entombed since the day before with Paul Poplaski, his partner. Poplaski was brought to the surface earlier in the day in a dying condition following an **undisclosed period**. The men had been imprisoned in a gangway by the roof collapsing. [Source document.](#)
- Apr [Eccles Mine Explosions](#), Eccles, West Virginia
A rescue party was rushed to the scene of the disaster from Beckley, which is only two miles away, but after removing two men from the debris of No. 6 their activities were checked by the deadening fumes of coal gas. Later the party was more successful in bringing forty more men to the surface. Two of the men, P. M. Ellison, and N. Jones, were seriously injured.

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May Mary D Colliery Hoisting Disaster, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania

An over hoist accident occurred in the tower of the south hoist way, main shaft of the Mary D Colliery, when the self-dumping cage containing 8 men was hoisted above the dumping chute in the shaft tower. Six men were instantly killed, 5 falling into the opening over the shaft. Five men fell to the bottom of the shaft, a distance of 600 feet. One man fell to the surface, landing 20 feet below the dumping chute and was also killed. The seventh man was thrown into the dump chute, sustaining a fractured leg and lacerations about the head. The eighth man clung to the crosshead of the cage and when rescued after an **undisclosed period** was found to be suffering from shock and a few scratches.

May Central Mine Cave-in, Grass Valley, California

His face, shoulders and arms buried in dirt and rock, Hugh McCann managed to attract the attention of other men in the Central mine by wiggling his feet and escaped possible death following an **undisclosed period**. When he was rescued from his painful plight, he was almost stifled. Aside from a badly bruised face and slight lacerations of the hand, he was none the worse for the accident. [Source document](#).

May Unnamed Mine Fall of Person, Irwin, Pennsylvania

Tim McDonough, according to tale, dove headfirst into a mine shaft after a falling child and grabbed the tot while speeding by — he hit the cage at the bottom of the shaft and was badly hurt but would recover. **Diving down a 400-foot mine shaft to the successful rescue of a falling child and only sustaining several broken ribs, a broken ankle and contusions about the entire body was the unusual and startling experience of Tim McDonough, mine guard.** McDonough had promised several children he would take them into the mine and about twenty were gathered at the mouth of the shaft waiting for the cage to ascend. Tony Andy, age 2, got too close and toppled into the hole. McDonough saw the child lose his balance and without hesitation dove into the shaft after him. He dropped faster than the child, and in the descent, he caught the little fellow in one arm. His shoulder struck a timber and he bounded to the center of the shaft. There his free arm encountered the wire cable on which the cage was suspended, but the rapidity with which he was descending caused the cable to burn his hand and he let go. He was bounded from side to side and finally thrown against the cable a second time. This time he wrapped his legs about the cable and threw his free arm around it, still holding the child. He slid down the oily cable with lightning-like rapidity and then struck the cage at the bottom. He was partly stunned but scrambled off the cage with his burden. Once off the cage, he crawled about twenty feet, where he collapsed. He was taken out of the shaft and carried to his

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home. The child escaped without a scratch. The physician said McDonough would recover. [Source document](#).

Jul [Banovich Silver Mine Asphyxiation](#), Tonopah, Nevada

Two men overcome by powder smoke at the bottom of a 95-foot shaft were brought out by two Bureau of Mines men from car 5. The rescuers descended the shaft, tied ropes under the armpits of the unconscious miners, and had them hoisted to the surface, where oxygen and artificial respiration were used for two hours. One miner fully recovered, but no sign of life appeared in the other miner.

Jul Hillside Cave-in of Earth, Marion, Indiana

Paul Williams, age eleven, and Claud Collins, age twelve, narrowly escaped death when they were caught in a cave-in beneath the Pennsylvania tracks, near their homes. The boys had dug a cave and were inside when a passing train jarred the ground to such an extent that the dirt was loosened until it fell, burying them completely. Several other boys who were near observed the accident and summoned help. In a short period of time the boys were extricated in an unconscious condition. [Source document](#).

Aug William Penn Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

After firing a blast at the William Penn colliery, Michael Wasso was caught in a rush of coal and buried up to his chin and was being gradually carried to a terrible death, down a chute, when his cries for help brought rescuers. It took 12 miners **seven hours** to extricate the victim from his perilous position, owing to the continuous falls of top coal. Wasso collapsed five times, but a doctor on the scene revived him. He was lacerated from head to foot. [Source document](#).

Aug Cameron Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

After being entombed for **48 hours** in a low breast at the Cameron colliery, Leo Bulcosky was rescued alive. Bulcosky was working in the breast when the face broke. He put up props to hold it, but the push was too strong and forced the timber and carried props and man down the breast. The battery broke and the miner was entombed. He was taken to the State Hospital where he was listed in good condition but would remain until he regained his strength and to guard from the danger of him collapsing. [Source document](#).

Sep Alderson Mine Cave-in, Placerville, California

William Williams, a miner, who was buried alive by a cave-in at the Alderson Mine, was dug out safe and sound after having been imprisoned for **12 hours**. He had plenty of air to breathe and was not cramped for space in which to stretch his

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limbs. A hole large enough for a man to crawl through was dug through fifteen feet of gravel and Williams crawled to liberty by means of it. Source document.

Sep Centennial Gold Mine Cave-in, Eureka, Utah

Twelve men were imprisoned. One man was rescued by company men, who, in **seven hours**, drove a drift 15 feet in country rock without shooting. Source document.

Sep Rockwood Mine Explosion, Rockwood, Tennessee

The explosion killed one miner, and another miner was overcome while trying to escape. An apparatus crew of four company men several hours later advanced 1,000 feet, rescued this miner, and carried him to fresh air, where he quickly revived.

Oct Royalton North No. 1 Mine Explosion, Royalton, Illinois

An accumulation of gas was ignited by open light. Doors to an old room were left open and gas accumulated. One man was rescued from the affected area **10 hours** after the explosion had occurred.

Oct Mulga Mine Explosion, Mulga, Alabama

Sixteen men were killed and 12 were rescued by parties led by company officials.

Oct Patterson No. 2 Mine Explosion, Elizabeth, Pennsylvania

Following the explosion, the superintendent and the pump man were overcome by afterdamp. A rescue party in the charge of the mine foreman carried the unconscious men to fresh air. The superintendent soon recovered, but the pump man could not be revived. Breathing apparatus was not used.

Oct American Zinc, Lead and Smelting Mine Cave-in, Webb City, Missouri

As by a miracle, there was no loss of life when fifty zinc miners were caught in the drifts of the American Zinc, Lead and Smelting Co., when the roofs of mines Nos. 1, 2, and 3 caved in. Thirty acres of ground caved to the working levels 250 feet below. All the men were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Fifteen miners climbed to the surface after finding their way through darkened drifts by liberating a blind track mule and following him as he made his way over a path he had trod unseeingly for years to the shaft. All of these men were injured, none of them dangerously. Source document.

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- Nov Bonar Mine Asphyxiations, East Bernstadt, Kentucky
Three men were overcome by powder smoke. They were rescued by the State mine inspector and the mine superintendent. One miner was revived by artificial respiration; the other two died.
- Nov West Brookside Mine Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Two men were imprisoned for **four days**, when they were rescued by a party led by company officials. Source document.
- Nov Sibley Mine Cave-in, Ely, Minnesota
Entombed for **five days and nights** in a black hole ninety feet below the surface in the Sibley mine, Joseph Skusik gasped out a tale of horror from his hospital cot last night. For — **112 hours** — Skusik fought hunger, thirst, and fear that he was going mad. A few yards away, in the blackness of the mine drift, he heard another miner, imprisoned by the cave-in, shouting to him in despair while the dirt seeped slowly down for hours and hours. "Then the dirt came with a rush" said Skusik. "I heard him yell once — then it was all quiet and I knew he was gone." The body of the smothered miner was brought to the surface when Skusik was hoisted to the top of the shaft. It lay a short distance from the spot where rescuers found Skusik. Efforts to find four other miners entombed in the cave-in were redoubled while their wives and little children waited about the hospital where Skusik lay. Mine officials, however, held out little hope for finding the men alive. Source document.
- Nov Diamond Colliery Hoist Rescue, Scranton, Pennsylvania
On December 9, 1914, about 6:20 a.m. the north cage failed in the north hoistway of the Tripp Shaft, Diamond Colliery of the D.L. & W.R.R. Coal Mining Department. During the act of lowering the third cage load of men from the surface to the Dunmore Seam, 13 men were dropped in the cage to the bottom of the shaft. The floor of wooden cage gave way dropping men to the bottom of the shaft, about 200 feet. After an **undisclosed period**, one man was rescued from the wrecked cage at the Clark seam, 15 feet below the point of failure, or 330 feet from the surface. John Bolinski, the man who escaped, had an instinctive fear of the mine cage and had made it a practice for several years to cling to the side bars every time he rode up or down. Aside from the severe shock Bolinski was uninjured, but on account of the severe shock he has not returned to work in the mines. This text taken from MSHA's fatality database. Source document.

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- Jan Burnside Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After working most of the day, a rescuing party at Burnside Colliery penetrated a big coal barrier caused by a fall of top coal, which entombed Frank Sandrick. He was pinned to the ground by a big lump of coal and lay helpless and **unable to move for hours** before his brave rescuers reached him. He was found almost dead from his injuries and for want of fresh air. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Draper Colliery Inundation, Gilberton, Pennsylvania
Three miners were imprisoned for **3 days and 3 nights** when the Mahanoy River flooded the Draper Colliery near Gilberton, Pennsylvania. The face of an old breast collapsed allowing the river to flow in upon them. The rescued miners were Joseph Drobas, William Kokas, and John Servillas. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Scranton Mine Fire, Charleston, West Virginia
Forty men were rescued with difficulty from the Scranton Mine of the Paint Creek Collieries Company after the fan-house was destroyed by fire. The damage occurred within an hour after orders had been issued for the withdrawal of part of the military on duty in the coal country of Kanawha County, where martial law had reigned for almost two months because of the strike of miners. The fire ate into the workings and at a late hour was burning 300 feet from the mouth of the mine along the main entry. [Source document.](#)
- Apr [Cincinnati Mine Explosion](#), Finleyville, Pennsylvania
Sixty-seven miners escaped from the Cincinnati Mine following the explosion that claimed 98 lives on April 23, 1913, including one apparatus wearing rescuer. Two miners were rescued after **60 hours**.
- Apr Stanton Colliery Cave-in, Mahanoy Plane, Pennsylvania
Frank Oronosky, employed at the Stanton Colliery at Mahanoy Plane, was buried in his breast early on April 16th by a rush of coal. He was rescued **twelve hours** later. He was badly scared but uninjured. [Source document.](#)
- May [Imperial Mine Explosion](#), Belle Valley, Ohio
After an **undisclosed period**, rescuers found Roy Yeager about 300 feet from the scene of the explosion. Yeager, who was alive, was unable to rise on account of a broken leg, and he probably owes his life to the broken leg. Lying on the floor, he did not inhale the fumes of the afterdamp. The rescue party carried him to a mine car and started toward the entrance.

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Jun Scott Mine Explosion, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

The results of the gas explosion in the Scott mine were fortunately not as serious as was feared. Two men were killed, four others were severely burned, one badly squeezed, and seven overcome by bad air. All except one would probably recover. Twenty-four men had a very narrow escape with their lives. There were exciting scenes at the head of the shaft until late in the afternoon. Stanny Silkus, one of the first men sent to his home after he was removed from the mines, returned to the colliery to help in the work of rescue. He said he was seated on a supply box along the gangway, and he added: "Something came just like a storm and a big spark, a big roar followed, and I was knocked with my two buddies about fifteen feet. They were burned. I ran out yelling for help. First aid fellows took charge of me, and when I came up, I jumped into an ambulance and went home." It was generally believed that the explosion was caused by a miner either opening his safety lamp to light a shot, or by a pipe. In all probability the gas had gathered in a vast quantity at the face of one of the breasts. Source document.

Jul Spruce No. 1 Mine Inundation, Eveleth, Minnesota

Due to a heavy rainstorm causing a nearby creek to overflow its banks, fifteen miners became trapped in the Spruce No. 1 mine. Ten of these miners were freed later in the day of the flood, after more than **12 hours**. The remaining 5 miners' freedom required much more difficulty which lasted nearly **4 days**. While they had suffered greatly from bad air and hunger, it was believed they would all recover. Source document.

Aug Barnes No. 2 Mine Roof Fall, Willis Creek, Ohio

Lester Jennings was saved from death after an **undisclosed period** when a large rock under which he was working in the Barnes No. 2 mine at Willis Creek fell and pinned him to the ground. The rock rested upon piles of waste when it came down and Jennings was alive, thankful to have escaped with bruises, a dislocated shoulder, and a twisted knee. Source document.

Aug Reading Railway Colliery Asphyxiation, St. Claire, Pennsylvania

A remarkable case of the resuscitation of an apparently dead man by the use of the pulmotor was reported from St. Claire, when Joseph Mango, a miner employed in a colliery of the Reading Railway, ran into a pocket of mine gas, and when found by his companions life was apparently extinct. Although the case seemed hopeless, three members of the first aid corps rushed for the pulmotor, with which the mines are provided, and began the work of resuscitation. The body was first wrapped in seven blankets to retain any heat that might remain, and the machine for producing artificial respiration was operated vigorously. As they worked the men shouted loudly into the ears of the patient to breathe, and

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finally they were rejoiced to observe signs of life. Keeping up the work of pumping pure oxygen into the lungs of the man they had him breathing freely at the end of **an hour and a half**. Persons who saw Mango when his apparently lifeless body was found, said the feat of bringing him back to life was unequaled in the coal regions. He was at his home, still very ill, but physicians said he would recover. Source document.

- Sep Valley Crystal Ice and Storage Co. Lost Person, Charleroi, Pennsylvania
Fred Lambert, aged 23, became lost in the coal mine of the Valley Crystal Ice and Storage Company and wandered **a day and night** in the mine without sleep or anything to eat before by accident he stumbled into the right entry to find himself in the arms of friends who had gone to search for him. Source document.
- Oct Shenandoah Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
John Render, a well-known miner, had a narrow escape from death at the Shenandoah colliery, where a heavy fall of coal and rock took place, making him a prisoner. Rescuers, after **six hours** of hazardous work, finally took Render from his living prison, painfully but not seriously injured. Source document.
- Oct Vogel and Lawrence Lignite Mine Cave-in, Rockdale, Texas
Seven Mexican miners, trapped for **6 days** in the Vogel and Lawrence Lignite mine at Rockdale, Texas were found unconscious, and barely alive. The men were imprisoned by a cave-in following a cloud burst which flooded the mine. Laying near the men was their mule, still alive.
- Oct Continental Mine Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Trapped in an abandoned chamber of the Continental Mine operated by the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Centralia, Pennsylvania, Thomas Toshesky was finally freed by rescuers after **8 days**. He was in good condition and spirits, refusing a stretcher and making it out of the mine under his own power.
- Oct Stag Canon No. 2 Mine Explosion, Dawson, New Mexico
Nine miners, found unconscious near the bottom of the airshaft, were rescued by an apparatus crew after about **5 hours**. They were revived by the use of pulmotors. At 6:15 p.m., the first miner to be rescued alive within **12 hours** was taken from the main entry. He was found unconscious, two miles within the mine. Source document.
- Oct Vogel & Lawrence Lignite Mine Cave-in, Rockdale, Texas
Seven Mexican miners entombed for — **5 days** — in the Vogel & Lawrence lignite mine near Rockdale were rescued. Two other men found in another part of the

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mine were dead. A mule also was rescued alive. The miners were entombed when heavy rains caused a creek to cave in on the mine. The seven taken from the mine were unconscious and barely alive. If rescue had been delayed several more hours, they likely would have died. They were ninety feet underground and continual digging, day and night, was necessary in order to reach the spot. The men were so weak they had to be carried from the mine. Source document.

Nov Richards Colliery No. 1 Slope Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Joseph Stankoskie and Charles Wycotski, of Mount Carmel, were working in the Richards Colliery No. 1 slope, east 9¾ vein, No. 11 breast. The breast was 60 feet long, and 12 feet from the face there, was a blind heading. The men fired a shot and the top ran away. Before firing the shot the men had gone into the blind heading for protection and when the top ran, they were closed in. The accident occurred at quitting time. The miners failed to report off after quitting time. Safety Inspector Michael Mannion made an investigation and discovered the accident. In a short time, there was a force of workmen engaged in removing the coal that blocked the manway and in **fifteen minutes** the two miners were released. They were not injured in any manner. Source document.

Nov Sunday Creek Mine No. 9 Lost Miner, Shawnee, Ohio
Ben Arbaugh, 37, was rescued from the Sunday Creek Mine No. 9, after being lost for — **three days and nights** — in an abandoned part of the mine without food or water. He went into the mine on October 31st to get some tools and became confused. He wandered into an old tunnel and tramped for hours trying to find his way. Arbaugh's lamp finally burned out and he groped around in the dark for 48 hours. Exhausted and partly overcome by black damp, he gave up all hope of escape. When found he was in a semi-conscious condition, but soon regained his senses after being brought out to light and fresh air. He would recover. Source document.

Dec Golden Cycle Mine Cave-in, Cripple Creek, Colorado
Fighting against tons of rock and dirt, hundreds of miners working in shifts of 25 minutes each, struggled to reach the remaining three men entombed in the Golden Cycle mine at Cripple Creek, Colorado. Grave fears for the safety of these men were expressed by rescuers that a second slide had occurred between them and the imprisoned men. Four men were entombed in the Golden Cycle mine by a cave-in the day before. One miner, Thomas Spindel, was rescued alive following an **undisclosed period**. A fifth miner, Frank Cabris, who was entombed in the adjoining Christmas mine was rescued after **nine hours**. Source document.

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- Jan Corbin Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After being entombed in the Corbin mine at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, Benjamin Smith, a miner, was rescued from under a fall of rock by fellow workmen after **twelve hours** work. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Ellen Mining Claim Fall of Person, Avawatz Mountains, California
Walter Crawford, an aged miner, was rescued from the abandoned shaft of the Ellen mining claim in the Avawatz mountains by Burt Lawrence and Chris Holman after the old man had been **held prisoner for over a day**. He had started to lower himself into the shaft for the purpose of examining the ledges when the rope broke, and he was precipitated to the bottom. The rescuers were passing the shaft and were attracted by Crawford's hat, which was lying near the mouth. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Fairmount Coal Co. Mine Entrapment, Danville, Illinois
After being imprisoned in the shaft of the Fairmount Coal Company's mine near Danville for **15 hours**, 50 miners were released by men who had chopped the ice from the shaft. The men were entombed by the breaking of a wheel on the cage, while the cage was about 100 feet below the surface. [Source document.](#)
- Feb [Bunker Hill Mine Cave-in](#), Sutter Creek, California
With 140 rescuers tearing at the rock and earth blocking the shaft of the Bunker Hill Mine at Sutter Creek, California, freedom came at noon on February 8 for sixty-two miners trapped for **23 hours**. Wives and daughters of the trapped men held torches through the nights while rescuers assailed the jam.
- Feb Eddy Creek Mine Rescue, Dickson City, Pennsylvania
Michael Hudy was rescued by a searching party after being lost for **3 days** in the Eddy Creek mine of the D & H Coal Company. Hudy was found in an abandoned working, exhausted, starving, and lying in a ditch. He could not explain how he lost his way. He was expected to recover. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Western Coal and Iron No. 5 Mine Fire, McAlester, Oklahoma
Mexican youth, Reifne Rodriguez, was rewarded for his bravery by the United Mine Workers' 21st district executive board. When it was discovered that the No. 5 mine was on fire, Rodriguez ran through the workings warning all 100 workmen except for 9 of the danger allowing them to exit before the fire gained headway. Nine miners died from suffocation in the fire. For his bravery, the board authorized to set aside sufficient funds for the education of the young Mexican. [Source document.](#)

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Mar Richards Colliery Fall of Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

After Mary Doyle, a 17-year-old schoolgirl, had fallen 100 feet down a mine breach near the Richards colliery, she found herself in total darkness, almost frightened to death, and covered with bruises. She had been walking along a mountain path, talking to several girlfriends, when the path caved in. She was in the lead, and as she sank from sight, her companions barely escaped. Close behind the girls was John Rack, a miner, on his way home from work. Hearing Miss Doyle's friends call for help, he ran to the scene, called to the missing girl, and was overjoyed to hear her faintly answer. She told him she had fallen a long distance but did not think any of her limbs had been broken. Rack told her to remain as quiet as possible, whereupon he ran to a house and procured a clothesline. Again, reaching the cave-in, he lowered one end of the rope to Miss Doyle, who faintly told him she was too weak to tie it about her. Several miners appeared, tied the rope about Rack and lowered him fully 100 feet, until he found the girl, who had become unconscious. He tied the rope about her and had the men pull her up, after which he also was drawn to the surface. Miss Doyle was resuscitated and taken home, where doctors found, she was badly bruised. [Source document.](#)

Mar Bast Colliery Cave-in, Ashland, Pennsylvania

Two miners, Peter Orbitsky and Stephen Muskah, were rescued after an **8-hour** entrapment following a cave-in in the Bast Colliery at Ashland, PA. Both men were in a state of utter collapse with just enough strength to fall upon the necks of their deliverers in a hysteria of joy when reached. [Source document.](#)

Mar San Bois No. 2 Mine Cave-in, McCurtain, Oklahoma

Following an explosion and cave-in, a total of 25 workmen were rescued after an **undisclosed period** from the San Bois No. 2 coal mine near McCurtain, Oklahoma. Of the last 14 rescued, three had to be removed by stretcher. They were located in a small area where they had placed a curtain to exclude foul air. Tapping sounds through a water pipe led to their discovery. 73 miners perished in the disaster.

Apr Five Points Mine Cave-in, Globe, Arizona

Henry Paryman was rescued after being trapped for **100 hours** following a cave-in that occurred in the Five Points Mine of the Manitou Copper Company at Globe, Arizona. Aside from the obvious hardships he was forced to contend with, rising water in the space in which he was confined was an issue throughout his ordeal. [Source document.](#)

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- Apr **No. 8 Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania**
After having been imprisoned for **36 hours** by a fall of coal at the No. 8 colliery, John Rubicar, a laborer, was rescued practically uninjured. Evan Tonkin, imprisoned at the same time, but rescued shortly after, was fatally injured. [Source document.](#)
- Apr **Unnamed Tunnel Cave-in, Santa Barbara, California**
H. Frank Fizer, 27, motorman, saved Thomas Bowen, 32, foreman, and seven other men from a tunnel cave-in, Santa Barbara, California, April 7, 1912. Fizer, while taking a train of muck cars out of the tunnel, discovered that a cave-in, which would cause water to back to the face of the workings, was imminent at a point about two miles from the entrance. To warn the other men, he waded back in the tunnel over 4,400 feet, through water from 12 to 20 inches deep, against a current of 2.5 m.p.h. All escaped. The cave-in closed the tunnel for three hours after they got out. Frank Fizer was awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- May **Norrie Mine Cave-in, Ironwood, Michigan**
A party of 10 miners and 3 trammers on the night shift was walking home from the boundary of the property above the twentieth level of the mine. Hearing ground dropping, they retreated to what they thought was a safe place, the main drift, which was securely timbered and had 35 to 40 feet of solid ore above it. The cave, however, did not occur at the place where the men had been working, but in the very place of refuse to which they had retreated, crushing in the drift timbers over a length of about 80 feet. Six men were rescued alive after about **24 hours**, but one died about a week later. In all, 7 miners were killed.
- Jun **Hastings Mine Explosion, Hastings, Colorado**
Rescuers who entered the Hastings mine early on June 19 returned soon afterward with a Greek, who was badly burned. [Source document.](#)
- Jul **Panama Mine Explosion, Moundsville, West Virginia**
An explosion occurred in this mine causing the death of eight men. There were 10 men in the mine at the time of the explosion. Seven of these men died almost instantly from burns and suffocation; two others, badly burned, made their way to the shaft bottom, and were hoisted to the surface. One of these two men died on July 13. The tenth man was found by the rescue party and brought out alive about **24 hours** after the explosion. It was the opinion of investigators that the explosion occurred when an accumulation of gas was ignited by an open light.

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- Jul Superba No. 2 Mine Inundation, Uniontown, Pennsylvania
At Evans Station, three miles from Uniontown, thirteen men were drowned in Superba No. 2 mine, better known as Polecat mine. Following a cloudburst, a flood rushed into the mine way of the mine. Thirty-seven men were rescued after a terrible experience. The men were down 1,000 feet from the mouth of the mine. Source document.
- Jul South Eureka Mine Cave-in, Stockton, California
When Matt Pitalo, a miner, employed at the South Eureka mine, chanced accidentally to glance up from his work, he saw death bearing down upon him in the shape of a mass of falling rock. Death was in an awful hurry and so was Matt. Just why he glanced up at the right moment is a matter for psychology to thresh out, although Matt thought that it was his guardian angel that saved him. At any rate, when he looked up, he saw an avalanche of rock rolling with frightful velocity. Just at that moment the miner saw a little niche in the clammy side of the big dark hole and just as he climbed into it, the huge body of moving rock thundered by and piled up all around the niche, imprisoning the miner. The roar had been heard up above and a few minutes later a report was sent to the nearest town that one Matt Pitalo had been killed in a most horrible manner. This sensational news brought the inhabitants to the mine in a body, and after an exchange of eulogistic comment concerning Matt's many sterling qualities, a band of miners set to work clearing away the debris. In the meantime, it was said, an undertaker in a nearby village made grim preparations for a certain unpleasant duty which he was confident would soon devolve upon him. After — **five hours** — of work on the part of the rescuers, Matt emerged from his tomb and insisted on shaking hands with everybody present. Source document.
- Aug White Mine Inundation, Broad Ford, Pennsylvania
Caused by the most terrific rainstorm in recent years, the White mine of the H. C. Frick Coke Company became flooded, trapping two miners. Their rescuers, led by Superintendent John Shields waded into the mine and finally reached the two men after an **undisclosed period**. The trapped miners were Jesse Addis and another miner identified only as a Slav. Source document.
- Aug Unnamed Ore Mine, Joplin, Missouri
L. Winston Chew, 36, stationary engineer, helped to save Robert S. Cathers, 58, and Noah Goss, 33, miners, from suffocation, Joplin, Missouri, August 12, 1912. Fire broke out in buildings at the shaft of a mine, and burning embers fell into the shaft. Timber cribbing in the shaft was destroyed, and from time-to-time small stones fell down the shaft. The pump was disabled almost at once. Heat and smoke were drawn down into the mine, and the water in the sump rose from 75

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to 100 gallons a minute. The shaft was filled with smoke and steam to a point 20 feet below the surface. The workings were less than 2,000 square feet in area. Men attempted to pump air into the workings through a six-inch drill hole but had little success. The air that issued from the drill hole was so hot as to nearly scorch the faces of men who stood over the hole. Cathers and Goss, the only men in the mine, could be heard at the drill hole for a time, and then nothing more was heard from them. A wet apron was tied over Chew's mouth and nose and he had himself lowered into the shaft by means of a rope and windlass. Forty feet from the surface the air was so hot that he was nearly overcome. He was drawn to the surface, where he vomited. Another man was then lowered 100 feet to the floor of the mine with a rope around him and a wet apron over his mouth and nose, and then Chew was lowered. Both went 40 feet from the shaft and found Cathers and Goss. They were choked at every breath by the smoke. They took Cathers, who was unconscious, to the shaft and tied the rope around him, and he was hoisted. On their way back to get Goss, Chew's companion became sick and had to return to the shaft. Chew tied the rope around him and sent him to the surface, then Chew went to Goss and assisted him to the shaft and sent him to the surface. The rope was delayed while being lowered to Chew, and he begged the men handling it to hurry. The rope was lowered to him, and he was hoisted about 30 minutes after the beginning of the act. He was sick from the hot air and smoke and was disabled five days. Cathers and Goss recovered. Mr. Chew was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Aug Abernant Mine Explosion, Abernant, Alabama

The day after the explosion, an exploring party found a man in the 14th right aircourse, still alive. He was brought to the surface, but in such a condition that he never regained consciousness. Another miner, after repeated efforts to penetrate the afterdamp, took refuge at the face of 14th right aircourse and came out unassisted after about 3 hours.

Aug J. F. Aldrich Mine Equipment Fire, Joplin, Missouri

A hand bellows at the top of a drill hole leading into a drift of the J. F. Aldrich mine at Joplin, furnished the air that saved at least two men's lives when debris from a burning derrick fell into the shaft. One man, however, would probably die. He was Joe C. Cathers, an aged workman. He was overcome by fumes and was in an unconscious condition. Source document.

Sep Bolan-Darnell Mine Explosion & Fire, Craig, Oklahoma

Imprisoned for **sixteen hours** in the burning Bolan-Darnell mine at Craig, Oklahoma, Frank Spanevelli was taken out alive. He was badly burned but would recover. The body of Antonio Piatza was found not far from the cave-in where

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Spanevelli was found. They were the only two men in the mine when it caught fire after an explosion. [Source document](#).

- Sep Central Coal Mine No. 42 Cave-in, Wier, Kansas
Antonio Mullain, a miner who was imprisoned in the Central Coal Company's mine No. 42 was rescued following an **undisclosed period** after the rescue party had dug through twenty feet of solid coal. Mullain's worst injury was a broken leg. [Source document](#).
- Sep Mocanaqua Colliery Explosion, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Five employees were seriously burned by an explosion of gas at the Mocanaqua Colliery. Details of the accident were meagre, and repeated telephone calls to the company's office failed to elicit the character or identity of the man's injuries. The men were removed from the colliery in ambulances, and it was said two of them were on their way to the Nanticoke Hospital. Two victims reached the City Hospital, Walter Doeoznski, 27, and William Blakeslee. The company did not announce the names of the others. [Source document](#).
- Sep Boston Colliery Water Rescue, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
While repairing a sluiceway at the Boston colliery of the Delaware and Hudson Company, James Lawson was nearly drowned when the pumps of the mines began to work, sending great quantities of water into the sluiceway. As he attempted to make his escape, Lawson became fastened in the woodwork and water was creeping gradually up about him. The force of the pump was terrific, and as it reached its highest speed, Lawson was hurled from his fastening and carried away in the overflow water. He was almost dead when rescued, but first-aid work restored him to consciousness. [Source document](#).
- Oct East Lehigh Colliery Animal Rescue, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
After being entombed for exactly — **eleven days** — without anything to eat and only mine water to drink, a mule at the East Lehigh Colliery was rescued none the worse for its experience. A fall of top suddenly occurred and two miners, George Walter, and William Berry, both narrowly escaped death, but the mule was imprisoned back of the mass of rock and coal. A force of men was put to work clearing up the debris but no thought of reaching the mule was entertained as it was presumed it had been smothered to death by the foul air. When the last inch of wall was penetrated yesterday morning workmen were dumbfounded to find the mule living and evidently none the worse for its confinement. It had stood during the eleven days up to its body in water, had no fresh air, drank only mine water, and ate nothing but the bark off the mine timber. [Source document](#).

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- Nov Horn Silver Mine Explosion and Cave-in, Frisco, Utah
A party of 7 was entombed for **14 hours** following an explosion and cave-in at the Horn silver mine near Frisco, Utah. The group, which included the 2 teenage daughters of the mine foreman, was on a sightseeing tour of the mine. The group was imprisoned at 10 o'clock the night before when an explosion occurred. A cave-in that followed blocked their exit until rescuers removed the mass of earth and timbers. [Source document](#).
- Nov Delaware and Hudson Mine Fall of Person, Scranton, Pennsylvania
To fall 68 feet and escape uninjured, except for slight lacerations of the scalp and face, was the unusual experience of Sank Mimce, 31, of Olyphant. While standing at the opening of the Delaware and Hudson mine shaft, Mimce suddenly became dizzy and tumbled down the shaft pit. That he was not killed was due to the fact that there was three feet of water at the bottom of the shaft, and this broke his fall. [Source document](#).
- Dec [Copper Mountain Avalanche](#), Cordova, Alaska
Nine miners were killed when a snow slide on Copper Mountain carried away seven buildings of the Great Northern Development Company. Two miners, John McCarthy and a Japanese named Kee, were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. McCarthy was seriously injured about the body and Kee's legs were broken. [Source document](#).
- Dec East Lehigh Coal Colliery Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania
After being imprisoned nearly — **40 hours** — behind a fall of coal and rock, eight of the nine men entombed in the East Lehigh Coal Company colliery were rescued. The other man, Joseph Walters, was believed to have been killed. [Source document](#).
- Dec Alaska Colliery Asphyxiation, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
After rescuing his buddy from a gangway after he had been rendered unconscious by bad air at the Alaska Colliery, George Lindy returned to the gangway for his friend's tools, ignited a pocket of gas with his naked lamp and was badly burned about the face and hands. George Lindy and Bartello (Ino), both of Mount Carmel, were driving a gangway to meet another gangway. Bartello fired a shot which broke the partition between the two workings and then went to see the effect of his shot. As he approached the opening, he was nearly suffocated by some bad air but before he dropped unconscious, he gave a shout to Lindy. Lindy quickly went to his assistance, carried him to safety, revived him and then returned to the gangway to get Bartello's tools. As he was walking up the gangway, he ignited a pocket of gas and was badly burned. [Source document](#).

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- Dec Happy Thought Mine Fire, Creede, Colorado
Thirty-five men were imprisoned when the Nelson tunnel of the Happy Thought mine caught fire, and all were rescued after fifty tons of debris were removed. Two hundred volunteers responded when the alarm was sounded. Men, women, and children rushed from their beds and many of the braved the cold in scanty garments. Through a connection in the Regent mine, the property adjoining, a way was made to the imprisoned men. Ropes were lowered to them, and they clambered out nearly exhausted from the smoke and fumes but otherwise uninjured. When thirty-three men had climbed to safety it was learned that Charles Hamilton and Clyde Sprague, the pit boss, were imprisoned in another part of the mine. A hole was broken through the ceiling and the two were also rescued. At midnight, after the mine had been on fire for sixteen hours, it was believed that the blaze was under control. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Bootleg Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Stiney Bellsky was caught under a rush of coal while dressing down coal and rock after a shot had been fired. When rescued from underneath the coal his head touched his feet. He was taken to the Shamokin hospital where he was suffering from contusion of the head and abdomen and internal injuries. [Source document.](#)

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- Jan [Carbon Hill No. 1 Mine Explosion](#), Carbon Hill, Virginia
6 men who were injured in the explosion at the Gayton Mine at Carbon Hill, Virginia were returned to the surface after an undisclosed period. It is not clear whether all these men survived their injuries. A total of seven miners died as result of the explosion.
- Jan Mills Hamilton Mine Explosives Detonation, Wingate Pass, California
George Kramer, a miner, was rescued after **thirty-two hours** imprisonment in the shaft of the Mills Hamilton mine at Wingate Pass. A premature blast buried him under tons of earth, but the heavy timbers protected him. The rescuers found him unconscious, but he would recover. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Unnamed Anthracite Coal Mine, Sebastopol, Pennsylvania
John T. Brown, 46, mine foreman, helped to save Joseph Lucas, 33; James E. Dougher, 27, and Anthony Gowrey, 43, miners, and saved Frank Kleisch, 21, laborer, from suffocation, Sebastopol, Pennsylvania, January 10, 1911. Brown led four other men into a heading of a coal mine, one-half mile from the shaft, immediately following an explosion that had deflected the air current and filled that and other headings with after damp. They found Lucas, unconscious, and

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carried him into fresh air. Returning, Brown and four others found Dougher, whom they also carried out. All had been somewhat affected by the after damp. Brown and three of the men went through another heading into the gangway where the explosion had occurred, where they found Gowrey. A second explosion seemed imminent, but Brown stayed alone with Gowrey until the others brought a stretcher. While the men carried Gowrey out, Brown continued through the gangway until he found Kleisch, delirious, and carried him out. Brown was completely exhausted, but after going to the surface he soon recovered. Lucas and Dougher were revived, Gowrey was badly burned, and Kleisch died from his burns. From the same incident Andrew J. Devers, Michael J. Madden, Martin F. Mangan and Andrew J. Horan along with John Brown were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Jan Unnamed Metal Mine, Butte, Montana
Frank Faulkner, 28, miner, and Murdoch Murray, 39, helped to save Dennis Lynch, 53, repairman, and Stephen Hogan, 57, pumpman, and assisted to save Michael L. Belangie, 33, miner, from suffocation, Butte, Montana, January 14, 1911. Faulkner was one of a party of four men, among whom was Belangie, who made two trips to the pump station on the 1,000-foot level in search of Lynch and Hogan, who had been overcome by smoke from a fire in the mine. On the second trip, Belangie was overcome. Faulkner and the others went on and rescued Lynch and Hogan. Descending a third time, Faulkner and three others located Belangie. When gotten out, about 10 minutes after the rescue of Lynch and Hogan, Belangie was dead. Lynch and Hogan were revived. Messer's Faulkner and Murray were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Jan Unnamed Metal Mine, Butte, Idaho
Frederick A. Babcock, 25, miner, saved Joseph Harkins, 23, and David McPherson, 38, miners, from suffocation, Butte, Montana, January 14, 1911. Babcock made his way through dense smoke on the 2,200 - foot level toward Harkins and McPherson, who were working at the face of the level. He met four men whom he warned of a fire in the mine. One of these men shouted the warning to Harkins and McPherson. Before Babcock could retrace his steps to the shaft, from breathing smoke, he sank from weakness, and had to be helped to the shaft by Harkins and McPherson, who found him. When he reached the shaft, Babcock was unconscious but revived in half an hour. Mr. Babcock and Philip D. Joughin were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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Jan Hoyt Mine Explosion, Port Griffith, Pennsylvania

Martin F. Mangan, 26, mine footman, helped to save Joseph Lucas, 33; James E. Dougher, 27; and Anthony Gowrey, 43, from suffocation at the Hoyt shaft of the Pennsylvania Coal Company on January 10, 1911. Mangan went with four other men into a heading of a coal mine, one-half mile from the shaft, immediately following an explosion that had deflected the air current and filled that and other headings with after damp. They found Lucas, unconscious, and carried him into fresh air. Returning, Mangan and four others found Dougher, whom they also carried out. All had been somewhat affected by the after damp. Mangan and three of the men went through another heading into the gangway where the explosion had occurred, where they found Gowrey. A second explosion seemed imminent, and Mangan went with two of the men to obtain a stretcher. They returned and carried Gowrey out while the fourth man in their party continued, to save another man. Lucas and Dougher were revived. Gowrey was badly burned. Those that participated in rescuing miners affected in the incident on January 10, 1911 and were awarded the Carnegie medal for their bravery included those listed below. Numbers in parentheses are assigned by the Carnegie Hero Award site.

- Michael J. Madden, 37, assistant mine foreman (6419)
- Martin F. Mangan, 26, mine footman (6416)
- Jacob Modlo, 22, mine driver (6879)
- Andrew J. Horan, 44, miner (6418)
- Thomas F. Gallagher, 25, car-runner (6420)
- Andrew Devers, 54, miner (6417)
- James L. Conlon, aged 36, assistant mine foreman (6415)
- John T. Brown, 46, mine foreman (6414)

Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

Feb Cokedale Mine Explosion, Trinidad, Colorado

The Cokedale mine was wrecked by an explosion on February 9. There were seventeen men in the mine at the time of the explosion, and only two shot-firers were rescued after an **undisclosed period**. Superintendent Bailess of the company declared that the explosion was due to the accidental discharge of blasting powder. The mine is owned by the American Smelting and Refining company. Note: the news article called this the Gale Mine, however, the actual mine name is Cokedale, according to the final investigation report. Source document.

Feb Homestake Mine Cave-in, Lead, South Dakota

Larry Nichols, who was imprisoned in the Homestake workings by the cave-in which killed Shift Boss Joe Thomas, was dug out after **almost a day**, and removed to the hospital. He was not seriously injured. Source document.

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- Mar Elba Mine Cave-in, Gilbert, Minnesota
Captain Benny and two miners were entombed 250 feet down in the Elba mine. After an undisclosed period described only as "hours", Captain Benny was rescued alive and taken to his home. His condition was reported as extremely critical. William J. Stone, an Englishman, and Joseph Bovich, an Austrian, are the men who lost their lives. Source document.
- Apr Banner Mine Explosion, Littleton, Alabama
Following the explosion that would kill 128 miners, forty-five of the miners either reached the outside to safety or got within hailing distance in the shaft and were taken out by rescuers. Scores of volunteers were on hand, brought by the alarm spread through the valley, and many made heroic rushes into the mine to bring out the victims. This work proved effective until the deadly gases reached the main shaft into which the men were headed, and then it meant death for all who entered the workings. Source document.
- Apr Boston Mine Fire, Larksville, Pennsylvania
Five lives were lost in the Boston mine of the Delaware & Hudson Company at Larksville by suffocation. Several rescue parties at the risk of their own lives entered the workings and succeeded in taking out John Morrissey, Patrick Lloyd and John Benditus after an **undisclosed period**. When brought to the surface they were quickly revived. Several of the rescuers were overcome by the smoke and one of them was prostrated, he was rescued by a fourth rescuing party. Regarding the investigation as to the cause of the fire, it was said that a workman left a naked light in the shaft, which fired the timbers. The blaze worked its way down the shaft timbers, sending the smoke into the various chambers. The men were trapped in one of the inner gangways. The flames and smoke drove them forward, and all avenues of escape were cut off. Source document.
- Jun Kokomo Mine Cave-in, Brazil, Indiana
George Faulkner, a miner at the Kokomo mine, near Brazil, Indiana, was buried alive for several hours by a huge mass of slate. Faulkner was entirely covered, but retained consciousness, and when a mule driver went by **several hours** later. He yelled to him for aid. He was rescued with great effort by several miners and was found to be injured about the back with serious internal injuries. Source document.
- Jul Whirlwind Mine Cave-in, American Fork, Utah
Timothy Smith and Albert Durrant were rescued from the Whirlwind mine, 20 miles from American Fork. The two men were imprisoned by the cave-in of a tunnel for — **36 hours** — and suffered only from hunger. Source document.

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- Aug White Oak Mine Cave-in, Villa Heights, Missouri
Rescuers worked for **three days** to free Joseph Clary, 32, from the White Oak Mine near Villa Heights, Missouri, where a cave-in had occurred on July 30. Once a drill hole was large enough, a fried chicken dinner, water and whiskey were lowered to Clary along with a telephone from which he conversed with his family and rescuers.
- Aug Rose Hill Mine Cave-in, Cannelville, Ohio
Charles Pringle, aged 35, was buried under a pile of slate in the Rose Hill mine at Cannelville for **an hour**, and was so seriously injured that it was believed he would die. He was unconscious when found, cut and bleeding on all parts of the body when rescuers finally freed him from the mass of rock. Many bones were broken, and his head was badly cut. Miners worked for an hour in rescuing Pringle. Source document.
- Aug Bast Colliery Cave-in, Big Mine Run, Pennsylvania
After working without cessation for **48 hours**, two of the three men imprisoned in the East Holmes Gangway of the Bast Colliery at Big Mine Run, near Ashland, were rescued alive. The rescued miners are John Dolan and Anthony Tamashitos. The third man, Peter Zemonskie was buried beneath the fallen rock which had imprisoned the three men at the face of the gangway. He was dead. Dolan and Tamashitos were uninjured. The men said they could hear the muffled sounds of the work of the rescuers which grew more distinct as they approached nearer to the small place where they were imprisoned. They knew nothing of their missing companion, Peter Zemonskie, who was probably killed outright by the first fall of top coal. The men had been in the mine 50 hours. Source document.
- Sep Morning Star Mine Cave-in, Leadville, Colorado
Fred Caski, Andrew Perle, and Nat Jacobson, the miners who were imprisoned in the Morning Star mine for **sixty hours** as the result of a cave-in were rescued. Their rescue was affected through a hole made in the obstruction in the shaft. Source document.
- Oct Black Top Mine Fire and Asphyxiations, Doro City, Ohio
Using the new apparatus recently purchased by the state, Chief Mine Inspector Harrison and Deputy Inspectors Wheatley and John L. McDonald saved from death eight men overcome by gas in the Black Top mine of the Morris Coal Company of Cleveland, located at Doro City, near Cambridge, Gurnsey County. The mine caught fire from some unknown cause. Source document.

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- Oct King Solomon Mine Cave-in, Randsburg, California
Imprisoned for **twelve hours** under a mass of rock and earth Samuel Walker, an aged miner, was rescued in the King Solomon mine near Randsburg by companions. He had been working on a rich lead eighty feet below the surface. Suddenly the earth above him dropped and he was buried except for his head. Unable to move from the great pressure which held him down, the entombed man suffered for hours, crying out to attract help. When missed a search was started, and he was found unconscious. He had been in a stooping position when imprisoned, and great difficulty was experienced in freeing him without bringing down the entire wall above. Besides internal injuries, Walker sustained a broken leg, fracture of the shoulder blade and otherwise was badly crushed and lacerated. Source document.
- Oct O’Gara Mine No. 8 Explosives Detonation, Harrisburg, Illinois
Eight miners were killed, and eight others temporarily overcome by an explosion of powder in the O’Gara mine No. 8. The dead and those made unconscious were removed from the mine by rescuers, three of whom were overcome by gas. They were resuscitated at a hospital. The explosion occurred as the shifts were changing and, but sixteen men were in the north entry, where the explosion occurred. Three hundred and sixty men had reported for work, but all had not gone into the workings. It was not definitely known what caused the explosion, but that it was possible that the insulation on an electric cable had become loosened and that the exposed wire touched some spilled powder. Source document.
- Oct Shakespeare Placer Gold Mine Cave-in, Dome Creek, Alaska
The fourteen miners entombed in the Shakespeare Placer gold mine cave-in at Dome Creek, Alaska were freed after **84 hours**. The Keystone drill hole was enlarged by thawing until it was large enough to permit the body of a man to pass. Then the imprisoned miners were pulled up one after another 174 feet to the surface. Those rescued included Edward Carlson, John Smith, Oscar Burg, Peter Peterson, Frank Albani, Robert Forasino, George Sakoff, Taze Gabeso, Antone Mareno, Kabof Sakkoboff, Nik Moreff, Zip Moreff, Michael Morzof, and George Zakaloff. This accident occurred on September 28, 1911.
- Nov Needmore Zinc Mine Explosion and Cave-in, Oronogo, Missouri
A cave-in, caused by an overloaded mill hopper, caused six men to be buried alive for an **undisclosed period** in the Needmore Zinc Mine at Oronogo, but they were rescued soon afterward when a hole was blasted through to them. The pumps were disabled by the crash of earth, which took down the mill and all machinery.

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The mine was operated by J. H. Magee and John Newland of Carthage. Source document.

- Nov Bottom Creek Mine Explosion, Vivian, West Virginia
By heroic work the rescuers reached the scene of the disaster after an **undisclosed period** and found engineer Alexander Williams and 3 other men who were brought out alive. All were injured. Hoping to reach others of the entombed men the rescuers pushed the work with all haste. One after another they found the victims and by midnight all but two had been brought out of the mine. The dead included 4 other engineers.
- Dec Cross Mountain Mine Explosion, Briceville, Tennessee
Four miners were found alive after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the Cross Mountain mine at Briceville, Tennessee. Discovery of Andrew Johnson was made when a dead miner was found in a sitting position in one of the interior chambers. Johnson and the other three were suffering from black damp.
- Dec Packer Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Joseph Reed and Thomas Levan, two miners who were entombed in the Packer Colliery of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company were rescued and would spend Christmas at home with their families. The men were working on the night shift when there was a rush of coal and refuse, preventing escape. So immense was the wall that mine officials feared it would take several days to dig through and that the men might be asphyxiated if not crushed to death by a further movement of the cave-in. All available men, working in short relays at high speed, made rapid progress and the men soon were reached. Source document.
- Dec Maryland Mine Cave-in, Grass Valley, California
After being buried alive for **half an hour**, Louis Adge was rescued from a cave of earth and rocks in the Maryland mine, in which he had been working. Adge was at work at the bottom of a stope when a huge mass earth and rocks broke loose from above and fell on him. His comrades believed him to be killed but went at work with the rescue. After a half hour of frantic work, the entombed miner was rescued and was transported to a hospital suffering badly from an injured back. It was also feared he was hurt internally. Source document.

— 1910 —

- Jan Dunkleberger Colliery Cave-in, Trevorton, Pennsylvania
While James Latsha, a coal starter at the Dunkleberger colliery, was at work a sudden rush of coal piled many feet in the chamber containing the workingmen,

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and when the rush started, he managed to protect himself from being crushed by pressing tight against two big lumps of Anthracite. Coal piled around him, wholly concealing Latsha from view. He remained a prisoner **six hours**, when a rescuing party drew near him and began drilling a hole to blow the coal away with dynamite. The explosive was inserted in a niche and the fuse was about to be ignited when somebody saw Latsha's foot sticking out between coal which had parted. They got him loose shortly afterward, badly injured. Source document.

Jan Primero Mine Explosion, Primero, Colorado

After an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the Primero Mine, one man, Dio Nardine, was rescued. He was found badly injured beneath a mass of earth and timbers.

Feb Ernest No. 2 Mine Explosion, Ernest, Pennsylvania

Andy Kragear was overcome by the gas arising from the explosion. A rescue party using an oxygen helmet rescued and brought him to the surface about 8 hours after the explosion. Shortly afterward he gained consciousness and was able to tell where he boarded. He was the only man in the mine in the vicinity of the explosion that escaped.

Feb No. 4 Mine Cave-in, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania

After 150 men had worked continuously for **fifteen hours**, they succeeded in rescuing alive John Yonke, Peter Dube and Alex Franke, three Lansford miners. The men were imprisoned by a fall of rock and coal in No. 4 mine. Source document.

Feb Sholl Mine Fire, South Bartonville, Illinois

After an **undisclosed period**, a rescue party entered the escape shaft of the burning Sholl mine at South Bartonville, a mile from the main shaft, and brought two miners, nearly dead from suffocation to the surface. The fire is believed to have had an incendiary origin and started in the tibble at 5:30 p.m. All the upper works and wooden construction in the main shaft were burned. The blaze was extinguished by volunteers two hours later. Only the two men were in the mine. The mine is owned by Sholl Brothers of Peoria. Source document.

Mar McTurks Colliery Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania

John Meducas was rescued from behind hundreds of tons of coal in a breast at McTurks Colliery, where he had been imprisoned for **36 hours**. Meducas spent the entire time in the dark since he lost his lamp when the rush of coal first occurred. Except that he suffered slightly from hunger and thirst, he experienced no ill effects from his thrilling experience. Source document.

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- Mar Gardner Mine Fall of Person, Bisbee, Arizona
Falling a considerable distance down a manway at the Gardner shaft, A. D. Creamer, a miner, was rendered unconscious and for a time it was feared he was seriously injured. After an undisclosed period, he was removed to the surface and conveyed in an ambulance to the Copper Queen hospital where he regained consciousness. An examination showed that no bones were broken, but he was still suffering from the shock. His bodily injuries amounted to only a few scratches. At about the same time as the accident at the Gardner, Peter Hirgo, at the Lowell shaft, was overcome by gases in the mine and was rendered unconscious. He was also revived at the hospital and went home later. Source document.
- Apr Packer Mine No. 5 Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania
After being imprisoned for **18 hours** by a fall of coal at the Packer No. 5 mine of the Lehigh Valley colliery, near Girardville, Robert Metukas was rescued uninjured, but died an hour later from an excess of joy on being taken from the tomb. Source document.
- Apr Amsterdam No. 2 Mine Explosion, Amsterdam, Ohio
Seven bruised and burned men were rescued alive after an **undisclosed period** from the pit of the Youghioghenny and Ohio Coal Company's mine at Amsterdam where a terrific explosion snuffed out the lives of fifteen other miners.
- Apr Nazareth Limestone Quarry Explosion, Nazareth, Pennsylvania
A large force of men made every effort to reach the victims, but it was some time before the first man was found. He was still breathing, but unconscious and that he might die at any moment. All the victims were Hungarians and Italians and were known about the quarry only by numbers.
- Oct Ernest No. 2 Mine Explosion, Ernest, Pennsylvania
Andy Kragear was overcome by the gas arising from the explosion. A rescue party using an oxygen helmet rescued and brought him to the surface about **8 hours** after the explosion. Shortly afterward he gained consciousness and was able to tell where he boarded. He was the only man in the mine in the vicinity of the explosion that escaped.
- Nov Fremont Mine Fire, Carson City, Colorado
The 200 men caught in the Fremont mine of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company were all hoisted to safety after the fire started in the mule stable underground. The miners were hoisted to the surface one by one, through an air shaft which offered the only way of escape. The Fremont mine was worked through two

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shafts, a haulage shaft, and an air shaft. It was believed all the men in the mine were on the air shaft side of the fire and made their way safely to the surface. The mule stable, where the fire broke out is about 1,500 feet from the bottom of the haulage shaft. Source document.

Nov Shoal Creek No. 1 Mine Explosion, Panama, Illinois

Fifty men who were working in the section of the Shoal Creek No. 1 Mine where the explosion occurred were rescued after an **undisclosed period** according to the mine management. Six miners died in the incident.

Nov Jumbo Mine Explosion, Jumbo, Oklahoma

After an **undisclosed period**, just one miner was rescued from the shaft explosion of the Jumbo Mine, operated by the Choctaw Asphalt Company of St. Louis. Five miners descending in cars were blown to atoms and eight others were entombed and asphyxiated by the deadly fumes.

Nov Victor American No. 3 Mine Fire, Delagua, Colorado

18 miners were rescued from behind barricades **5 days and 21 hours** following a fire in the Victor American No. 3 mine in Delagua, Colorado. 79 miners were killed in the disaster. Source document.

Dec Greeno Mine Explosion, Tacoma, Virginia

Four miners were either rescued or otherwise made their way to the surface after more than **twelve hours** following the explosion in the Greeno mine which killed eight. The four included John Swede, James Rosenberg, John Ritsky, and G. E. Lehman. Rosenberg was badly burned on his head, face, and hands. The others were reported to be in good condition. Note: corrected name spellings are taken from the final accident investigation report.

Dec Cameron Mine Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

After — **17 hours** — of perilous work in the Cameron mine, rescuers, headed by General Superintendent Rinehardt and Mine Inspector McLaughlin, took out William Faust. When the barriers of coal which had fallen between his place of working and the next breast were removed, he made a noise which was heard by the rescuers. He was not seriously injured. Source document.

— 1909 —

Jan Sutro Tunnel Fire, Virginia City, Nevada

Flames raged for more than 30 hours in the \$6,000,000 Sutro Tunnel, which drains all the Comstock mines. In the dangerous work of fighting the fire, nineteen

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miners were overcome and were rescued with difficulty. Of those rescued, seven were expected to die. [Source document](#).

Jan Barnard Mine Cave-in, Saginaw, Michigan

After receiving the full force of 1,000 pounds of falling slate on his back and being buried completely beneath the heavy debris, John Winship, a miner employed in the Barnard coal mine, was rescued alive and had a fair chance to recover.

Winship, in company with another miner was working about a mile from the main shaft of the Barnard mine, when without warning the roof over their heads came tumbling down. Winship was stooping over at the time wielding his pick and half a ton of slate struck him squarely on the back. His companion, Fred Ferham, who was standing but a few feet away, escaped without a scratch and hastily summoned aid from other parts of the mine. Winship was extricated unconscious and taken to St. Mary's hospital where he later revived. It was not believed any bones were broken and if serious internal injuries did not develop Winship was expected to recover. [Source document](#).

Feb Black Diamond Colliery Fire, Luzerne, Pennsylvania

Five men were entombed by fire in the Black Diamond Colliery of the Plymouth Coal Company. Three of them were rescued **4 hours** after the fire started. They were found a short distance from the foot of the shaft. Overcome by the thick smoke, the men had fallen to the ground in a state of unconsciousness. A doctor worked over them for an hour before they recovered sufficiently. [Source document](#).

Mar Los Angeles Aqueduct Cave-in, Pinto, California

After being buried alive for **four days**, John Marconi resumed his duties as a miner on the Los Angeles aqueduct, having returned to work 24 hours after his rescue. Timbering collapsed in Tunnel No. 40 at Pinto, California. Marconi's escape was cut off by a bank of sand, thirty feet thick. A two-inch pipe was driven through the sand and air admitted to his dungeon. For four days and nights aqueduct employees worked at the bank of sand, but it ran like water and little progress was made. Marconi was rescued on March 12th, he took one day's rest and then returned to work. [Source document](#).

Mar Erie Coal Explosion and Fire, Port Blanchard, Pennsylvania

An explosion of gas occurred in the colliery of the Erie Coal Company at Port Blanchard. A fire followed the explosion, and sixty miners were entombed back of the fire. After **several hours** they were all gotten out alive. [Source document](#).

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Mar St. Patrick Mine Cave-in, Murray, Utah

After enduring the horrors of an underground prison with death at their elbows for — **50 hours** —, George and Jerry Peterson were dragged through an 18-inch hole to freedom and safety. They were blindfolded, wrapped in blankets, refreshed with hot coffee, and hurried home. The incident began when the roof of the drain tunnel on the St. Patrick property, four miles east of Murray, gave way and a huge mass of earth blocked the passage 160 feet from its mouth. The Petersons were on the wrong side of the cave-in. Warned by previous experience, they had with them a long pipe two inches in diameter. They drove this tube through the debris to secure ventilation and undertook to burrow out. Their digging was useless for the loosened earth ran down faster than they could remove it. At supper time they were missed, and their predicament was soon learned. Ranchmen and a miner formed a relief party which set to work and labored heroically night and day. Hope grew high as the barricade was reduced to a few feet, only to vanish as fresh masses of shale rumbled down from the insecure roof. The prisoners, although supplied with air through the pipe, were weak from hunger, chilled by the water which rose to their knees and terrified by the constant peril of instant burial. When the rescuers had removed but two or three feet of the obstruction, they were driven back 15 feet by a new earthfall. News of the new danger spread and brought to the rescue work the chief engineer of the Newhouse mining staff. Heavy timbers were brought from Murray, four miles away. Timber after timber was sent into place and progress was slow but there were no more retreats. Daylight finally burst into the tunnel prison. Fearing delay, Mr. Johnson told the imprisoned men to stick their feet out. Muddy boots appeared in the opening and in a moment, George Peterson was being brushed and hugged by his friends. Jerry, who was rescued in the same manner, insisted on walking to the works. Source document.

Apr M & B Mine Cave-in, Duenweg, Missouri

Thomas Gibbs, the remaining miner of five entombed by the M & B mine cave-in near Duenweg, Missouri was rescued after an **undisclosed period**, but he died just as he was brought to the surface. His death was the third in this incident along with Charles Evans and George Bennett. Two other miners caught in the cave-in, Albert Winthrop and James R. Jones, fought desperately for their liberty and managed to escape. Source document.

May Pennsylvania Coal No. 6 Mine Explosion & Fire, Inkerman, Pennsylvania

James M. Flanigan, 20, mine car tender, rescued William Derrig, 19, laborer, and John W. Mullery, 21, mine car tender, in a mine after an explosion, Inkerman, Pennsylvania, May 7, 1909. Flanigan went into an abandoned drift, immediately following an explosion of gas, and brought out Derrig. He returned, others

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refusing to go with him, and got Mullery. Both Derrig and Mullery were severely injured, the former dying one week later. Flanigan's hands were burned from beating out fire in the men's clothing, and he was disabled 18 days. Mr. Flanigan was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

- Jun Lackawanna No. 4 Mine Explosion, Wehrum, Pennsylvania
Twelve miners were unconscious when rescued on the 23rd but were revived through the use of oxygen. They were placed in the temporary hospital, a machine shop, and at 3 p.m. were sent to Spangler on a special train provided by Trainmaster Henry Taylor, of Cresson.
- Jul Pennsylvania Railroad No. 14 Colliery Rescue, Plainsville, Pennsylvania
Caught fast in a pump in the No. 14 colliery of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company at Plainsville, Pennsylvania, Robert Taylor, the night engineer, was held while the water slowly rose about him. It had reached his chin, as he stood on his toes, when rescuers reached him. In a few minutes he would have been drowned. He went into the working early in the morning to repair the pump and his hand was caught in the machinery. As the pump stopped, the water began to rise. His cries for help were not heard until **four hours** later. Source document.
- Nov Greenwood Colliery Fall of Person, Scranton, Pennsylvania
John Duff, a Greenwood colliery miner who walked into a shaft and fell a distance of 124 feet was not only alive, but, as far as could be ascertained by the doctors, was not seriously injured. There was a foot of water in the place where he landed. Source document.
- Nov Unnamed Bituminous Coal Mine, Gilchrist, Illinois
James Bennie and Thomas J. Mills, 53, helped to save Andrew Bogus and assisted in an attempt to save Edward Wyatt from suffocation, Gilchrist, Illinois, November 22, 1909. Bogus, 29, and Wyatt, 41, shot firers, were in a mine when an explosion occurred, extinguishing their lights, damaging the ventilating system, and making useless one of two hoisting cages. Ten minutes after the accident, Bennie, 51, miner, with a lamp in his cap, descended steps in a section of the air shaft, followed by two officials of the mine. When he was 15 feet from the bottom, he found the steps gone, and he dropped, in darkness, to the bottom. The other men followed him, and they walked about 285 feet through smoke-filled entries and found Bogus and Wyatt. The former was delirious, and the latter was unconscious. While one man remained with Wyatt, Bennie and the other walked toward the hoisting shaft with Bogus, a distance of more than 425 feet. The smoke grew denser, and after a time Bennie proceeded alone. When he felt that

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he was being overcome by gas, he stooped close to the floor until he felt somewhat revived and then made his way back to Bogus and the other man. He again went forward alone, reached the shaft, and called to have a cage lowered. He did not wait for the cage but returned and helped get Bogus to the shaft. After the three were hoisted, Bennie again descended and went with other men to where Wyatt and the other man had been left. The air in the mine was then better, and all left in safety. Bogus recovered, but Wyatt died three days later of pneumonia, brought on by the inhalation of smoke or gas. Messer's Bennie and Mills were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

- Nov London Mine Fire, Ducktown, Tennessee
Eight men imprisoned in the London mine of the Tennessee Copper Company as the result of a shaft house fire, were rescued. None were injured. Mine Expert Ramsay, of the rescue station recently established by the federal government at Knoxville, arrived with helmets. The helmets were found to be of such weight that they could not be worn with ease into the levels, and they were returned to the surface and abandoned. A rescue party of three was then formed and without helmets descended the shaft, finding the eight men on the sixth level. The miners were protected from smoke and gases by a partition they had built. [Source document](#).
- Nov Copper King Mine Cave-in, Reno, Nevada
Charles Moody and Harry Anderson, miners who were buried under tons of rock and timbers in a cave-in in the Copper King mine were rescued alive. Falling rock warned the men that something was wrong and gave them time to crawl up to the 170-foot level. They had barely reached safety when the cave-in occurred. Forty men worked — **47 hours** — to rescue the buried miners. [Source document](#).
- Nov St. Paul No. 2 Mine Fire, Cherry, Illinois
There were tales of unbelievable suffering and endurance following the Cherry Mine Fire. One group of miners, 500 feet underground, had built a wall of mud, rocks, and timbers to block off the poisonous gases. They were in total darkness with only a pool of water leaking from a coal seam to drink. After **8 days** of confinement, they could bear it no longer. They tore down the barricade and began crawling through the tunnels. Finally, they heard the sounds of a search party. Twenty-one men still alive from this group were rescued. 259 miners were killed in the disaster.

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- Dec Mine "A" Explosion and Fire, Herrin, Illinois
James Guinney, Superintendent of the mine, and Robert Hueston, manager, headed the first relay of rescuers within five minutes of the explosion. Despite the blackdamp, they penetrated the workings. After sending to the surface three unconscious persons, they found the first of the deceased miners. Afterdamp then forced them to retreat.
- Dec Negaunee Iron Mine Cave-in, Negaunee, Michigan
Frank Cobdello, entombed for **7 days** in the depths of the Negaunee mine, was rescued alive. He was found in a pocket behind the cave-in which had trapped him and Peter Mundi. The latter's dead body was beside Cobdello's barely conscious form. Two others were trapped in the same incident, Victor Mattila and Peter Makki. The body of Victor Mattila was recovered on the 23rd, terribly crushed. No further word was found on the location of Peter Makki. In 1902, ten miners were killed in a cave-in in this mine. Source document.
- Dec Bolen Darnell Mine Explosion, McAlester, Oklahoma
Superintendent John Brown was rescued alive after being trapped for **twenty-eight hours** in the Bolen Darnell Company mine. Brown risked his life attempting to save Angelo Ascinar, a shot firer who was entombed following an explosion in the mine. It was speculated that Brown would have died within another hour. Source document.
- Dec Hammond Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Buried to the neck in the rush of hundreds of tons of coal that swept into the gangway in the West Holmes vein at Hammond Colliery, Anthony Connell, 21 years old, was rescued alive and practically unhurt. He had been hemmed in **twenty-four hours** and at one point given up for dead. Miners acquainted with conditions said he could not survive the entombment. A rescuing force working in relays of eleven men removed over three hundred tons of coal and rock before reaching him. Source document.

— 1908 —

- Jan Packer Colliery No. 5 Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania
For **ten hours** Alexander Donaldson was trapped by a cave-in at the Packer Colliery No. 5 at Girardville, Pennsylvania. Earlier, Donaldson fired a shot at the face of a breast, but as he sought to get away, he fell and was swept down the chute by the rush of coal and dirt freed by the shot. Rescuers found him lying upon his face, with his head pillowed on his arms, conscious but unable to move hand or foot. He was unhurt except for a few bruises. Source document.

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- Jan Catsburg Mine Fire, Monongahela, Pennsylvania
Miraculously escaping death after a fire started by a "blown-out" shot in the Catsburg mine of the Monongahela River Consolidated Coal & Coke Co., forty men, whose escape by a nearer entry cut off, stumbled in the dark for a distance of seven miles and finally reached the surface. All were severely bruised, and their clothing torn by numerous falls. Fortunately, there was only a little gas in the mine, so no explosion occurred. It was believed that the fire could be extinguished with small loss. Source document.
- Jan Giroux Mine Cave-in, Ely, Nevada
After having been entombed for — **46 days** — in the Alpha shaft of the Giroux mine, A. D. Bailey, P. J. Brown, and Fred McDonald were rescued. At 8:30 on the night of January 18, 1908, Bailey was the first to be brought out. Fourteen minutes later, McDonald came to the surface, and ten minutes afterwards, Brown was brought up. Whistles all over the district blew loudly, while crowds cheered in the streets of Ely and every bell in the town was ringing. On the morning of December 4, 1907, McDonald, Brown, Bailey and two Greeks were working in the bottom of the third compartment shaft, eighty-five feet below the pump station and 1,085 feet below the surface. The cave-in occurred at 9 o'clock. The cable used to haul the cage from the third compartment to the shaft snapped and thousands of tons of rock, debris, and timbers fell down into the shaft. From the bottom of the compartment in which the men were working to the pumping station a distance of eight-five feet a series of rickety ladders offered the only means of escape. With falling rocks and timbers streaming down upon them the five struggled up these ladders. Halfway up falling timbers knocked the two Greeks from the ladder killing them. At first it was thought that all the men had perished, but twenty-four hours after the cave-in the three men who occupied the pumping station managed in make themselves heard by tapping on a pipe that was the means of saving the lives of the three men. Source document.
- Feb Mid-Valley Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
All but one of the miners who were entombed in the Mid-Valley colliery were rescued alive. One of the miners was killed following the accident which entombed the men and two were injured. When the rescuing party penetrated to the entombed men it was found that the men had dug for a great distance through fallen coal. Source document.
- Feb Tombstone Consolidated Fall of Person, Tombstone, Arizona
John Ashcroft, a miner in the employ of the Tombstone Consolidated Company, met with an accident that might have cost his life. While going toward the ore shute, he accidentally stumbled into it and fell. He struck on a timber about ten

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feet down and, grabbing hold of it, saved himself from falling to the bottom of the shoot, about fifty feet. After an **undisclosed period**, he was rescued from his perilous position by fellow workmen and immediately taken to the surface and then to his home. A physician was summoned, and an examination showed that Mr. Ashcroft had escaped with but a few slight bruises and a small cut on the side of the head. Source document.

Mar Bunker Hill and Sullivan Mine Cave-in, Wardner, Idaho

Paul Emmanuelson, the timberman who was imprisoned at the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mine at Wardner, Idaho, by the caving in of an abandoned stope, was rescued alive after **thirty hours**. His companion was rescued late the previous evening. Source document.

Mar Sutro Tunnel Animal Rescue, Dayton, Nevada

Here's a mine rescue with a different twist. Buried for — **30 years** — in the heart of Davidson Mountain, on the Comstock, twelve mules which had been used on the Sutro tunnel's ore-carrying railroad were brought to the surface for the first time. In the future, electricity would furnish the power for ore carrying, and the mules would never be returned to the 1,700-foot level of the shaft. The animals stood in the blinding snowstorm blinking at the unusual scenery and in their fright tried to stampede. Their faithful service was ended, and they would be placed on a fertile pasture near Dayton. The mules saved the entire town of Virginia from starvation in 1890, when the great snowstorms cut the camp off from outside communication. Supplies were hauled to the hoist underground and then lifted to the hungry inhabitants. Source document.

Apr Hammond Mines Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania

Richard Brown rescued alive after being entombed in Hammond Mines at Mahanoy City for more than **thirty-six hours**. Brown was unhurt and except for his enforced abstinence from eating, which had weakened him, he was in good condition. Source document.

May Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Salineville, Ohio

Francis C. Skinner, 32, stationary engineer, died attempting to rescue Wesley J. Wright, 48, and John W. Rowe, 36, in a mine, Salineville, Ohio, May 27, 1908. Wright and Rowe were disabled by an explosion, and Skinner, with others, was lowered 180 feet down a shaft, where the carriage stuck, ropes being used to get to the bottom 20 feet farther. Having been released from debris, Wright was being carried to the shaft when a piece of timber fell, striking Skinner on the head and killing him instantly. Francis C. Skinner was posthumously bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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- Jun Markle Mine Cave-in, Jeddo, Pennsylvania
After an **undisclosed period**, Michael Lebon was rescued unhurt from a cave-in at the G. B. Markle and Company mine in Jeddo, Pennsylvania. Two falls occurred in the mine during this event. The first narrowly missed entombing seven other miners. The second fall, also called a "squeeze", trapped Lebon in between two large pieces of a room, ahead and behind where he ended up. Thought to be dead, Lebon escaped injury, even directing the rescuers how and where to dig. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Williamstown Colliery Explosion, Williamstown, Pennsylvania
Ten miners were removed from the mine after an **undisclosed period** badly burned and torn by the force of the explosion. It was feared that several of them would die. One of the injured men was taken to the morgue and it was not until an identification of the bodies was made that it was found that he was living. The exact number of miners rescued is not known. Seven miners perished in the disaster.
- Aug Knickerbocker Colliery Explosion, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
A fall of top rock occurred following an explosion in the Knickerbocker Colliery near Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. Two miners died, but John Kuza, William Suso and Charles Cowley were rescued. The three men were seriously injured.
- Sep Chauncey Colliery Cave-in, Avondale, Pennsylvania
After being entombed in a mine working for over **ten hours**, Andrew Harris, a miner, was rescued from under the debris in the Chauncey colliery, at Avondale. Harris was shut in by a fall of roof, and the miners had little hope of his being alive. Soon however, faint tappings from behind the debris told of his existence, and gangs of men were called to work on the fall. They worked without interruption till they could hear the voice of Harris directing them the way nearest to him. He was considerably exhausted when the last shovel of rock and coal was cleared off, but in a short time he felt as well as usual. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Wilson Creek Mine Lost Person, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Patrick Hart, 70, was rescued in the Wilson Creek mine after he stood in water up to his waist for **twenty-four hours**. Knowing that his one chance of being found lay in standing in a channel which his rescuers would follow. His fellow workmen originally missed him, and when a systematic search finally led them to the spot where the old man stood. He was on the verge of collapse. [Source document.](#)

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- Dec Lick Branch Mine Explosion, Switchback, West Virginia
At 11 o'clock p.m., **8 hours** after the explosion, eighteen of the entombed men had been taken out of the colliery alive. They had been stifled by smoke and were not seriously injured enough to make their removal to a hospital necessary.
- Dec Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Brockwayville, Pennsylvania
William P. Harris, 30, boss mine driver, assisted to rescue Michele Rubino, 28, miner, and helped to rescue Francis P. De Santis, 28, miner, from a mine cave-in, Brockwayville, Pennsylvania, December 12, 1908. De Santis and two others were trying to rescue Rubino, who had been caught by a fall of rock, when a second fall occurred, catching DeSantis's trouser leg, and pinning him to the floor. While other falls impended, Harris crawled close enough to hand De Santis a knife, with which he freed himself. Rubino, along with his two companions, Guiseppe Petruccelli, and Vincenzo Stefanelli, when released, were found to be dead. Mr. De Santis survived. For their demonstrated bravery in the rescue operation, Messrs. Harris, Petruccelli (posthumously), and Stefanelli (posthumously) were given the Carnegie Hero Award. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

— 1907 —

- Jan Ontario Mine Cave-in, Park City, Utah
Henry Drew, 25, had a narrow escape in the Ontario mine at Park City. Several tons of dirt and rock came down, knocking him over and burying him up to his chin. His light was extinguished, and he lay in the darkness for several minutes expecting that at every moment more rock would come down and bury him alive before his partner could summon a party to rescue him. The party soon arrived and for **two hours** they worked desperately to release the imprisoned miner. When he was finally released, he was carried through the tunnel on a truck and conveyed to his mother's home. Examination showed that Drew was badly bruised about the shoulders and legs, but, otherwise, he appeared to be uninjured. [Source document](#).
- Jan Penco Mine Explosion, Penco, West Virginia
Following the explosion, almost eighty men were still at the bottom of the shaft. Almost suffocated, they huddled closely together and cried pitifully up the shaft for assistance. Several rescuers took possession of the elevator car and quickly ran it down into the shaft. There were accommodations for only about twenty of the men at a time, however, and the foreign miners, who were crazed from fright, fought like demons to board the car, greatly retarding the work of rescue. On the last two trips most of the miners were unconscious and had to be carried from the car.

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Jan Abandoned Mine Cave-in, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

After being imprisoned for **nearly two days** in an old coal mine near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, John Stevens managed to dig himself out and drag himself to his home. He was at work in the old mine when he found himself hemmed in by fallen material all around. With nothing but a shovel handle, he managed to dig through the wall of coal. He fainted from exhaustion repeatedly and was scarcely able to drag himself to his home. Searching parties had been looking for him.

[Source document.](#)

Mar Homestake Mine Fire, Lead, South Dakota

A fierce fire was raging in the great Homestake mine at Lead. Following an **undisclosed period**, twelve miners were rescued with great difficulty after having been overcome with gas and smoke. The fire started in the stables located in the 600-foot level and it soon imprisoned 12 miners who were working beyond. After burning nine horses to death the flames spread quickly to the timbered slopes between the Highland shaft and the Star hoist. [Source document.](#)

Apr Otto Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania

Although buried alive under tons of coal dirt for over **half an hour**, James Maley of Branchdale was rescued alive at the Otto colliery. He was unconscious for several hours after being dug out, but it was believed his life would be saved. Maley was shoveling at the base of a high culm bank when the top collapsed and fell upon him, completely burying him. [Source document.](#)

Apr Good Enough Stope Fall of Horse, Tombstone, Arizona

A remarkable cave-in occurred near the corner of Fifth and Toughnut streets in Tombstone at 1:00 p.m. on April 21, 1907. A horse and wagon belonging to the Tombstone Improvement Company were suddenly precipitated some 75 feet below street level. The driver had climbed down to see why his horse had stumbled only to find himself standing on the edge of a gaping aperture with his horse and wagon far below. Although considerably bruised, the horse was found to have apparently suffered no serious injury. The animal was found pressed beneath the wagon and some timbers and was rescued before the rapidly descending earth smothered him. The wagon was badly wrecked, both front wheels being broken. By means of ropes the vehicle was pulled out through the opening on the surface, while the horse was taken through the drifts of the old workings and brought to the surface near the old Visna shaft, some distance from where he went under. [Source document.](#)

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- Apr Berwind-White Mine No. 38 Inundation, Foustwell, Pennsylvania
Seven miners were rescued **after 100 hours** in the flooded Mine No. 38 of the Berwind-White Operations at Foustwell, Pennsylvania. Their rescue was made possible by the bravery of Stiney Rodon and Charles Ream who located the men by swimming 50 feet through a water-filled heading. Earlier, four others made a similar attempt, but were unsuccessful and returned half-drowned. Mike Boyla, a mine contractor, took charge of the group of trapped men and led them to the highest point in the heading where they waited for rescuers.
- May Mandabach Mine Cave-in, Washington, Indiana
Joseph Summer, 50, was buried alive beneath several tons of coal in Mandabach's mines. It required almost **an hour** for workmen to dig him out. He was still alive when rescued, but so badly injured that it was believed he would die. [Source document.](#)
- May Royal Mine Powered Haulage Accident, Madisonville, Kentucky
Seventy-one men were rescued from the Royal Mine near Madisonville, after having been underground for **36 hours**. The rope attached to the big cage used in hoisting the cars from the mine broke and both cages fell into the bottom of the shaft, bursting into small bits and blocking the entrance so that it was impossible for the workmen to get out. A rope was lowered into the air shaft and the men were pulled out one by one. The men reached were hurt. About 200 men were employed in the mines, which was one of the largest in western Kentucky. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Hope Mine Cave-in, Basin, Montana
As a result of a cave-in at the famous Hope Mine, at Basin, Montana, Charles Collins, a miner, was caught beneath many tons of debris. The rescuers were more than surprised at the end of **17 hours** of work to find him uninjured, the timbers having protected him. So great was the fright from the experience, however, that Collins decided to lay off and went to Butte, where he dropped dead. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Phillips Mine Cave-in, Salisbury, Pennsylvania
After having been entombed in the Phillips mine near Salisbury for an **undisclosed period**, Tom and Lawrence Fallon were reached by a rescuing party. Lawrence Fallon was found alive and well, but his brother Tom was seriously injured. The two men were imprisoned by a cave-in of the roof of the heading in which they were working. [Source document.](#)

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- Jul Shenandoah City Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
In the Shenandoah City mine, Michael Wilcoski, a miner, was rescued from almost certain death by a rescue party. Wilcoski was loading a car in a gangway when a fall of coal occurred, extending for over forty feet. Large lumps of coal fell in such a position that Wilcoski was pinned fast, but the lumps served as support and the full weight of coal did not rest on him. Rescuers worked for **five hours** before a tunnel was made, and the walls braced so he could be released. [Source document.](#)
- Jul North Franklin Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After being entombed **thirteen hours** by a rush of coal in the North Franklin Colliery, the rescuing party reached William Crawford alive, but badly injured. His brother, Emanuel, was found dead. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Unnamed Anthracite Coal Mine Cave-in, Inkerman, Pennsylvania
Thomas Huntley, 40; John Merrick, 50; George R. Jopling, 55; and Patrick F. Walsh, 29 helped to rescue John R. Eustice, 52, timberman, from a mine cave-in, Inkerman, Pennsylvania, August 22, 1907. Eustice and four others had been caught by the caving of the roof. While the roof was working, the walls squeezing, and small stuff falling at intervals, Huntley, with the assistance of the others, dug Eustice from under the coal and debris where he lay injured and carried him to safety. Eustice recovered. All four rescuers were given the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Aug Butler Colliery Rescue, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Lost miner Paul Swanbeck was found on August 19th, just in time to avoid the postponement of his daughter's wedding. Swanbeck had been missing for **48 hours** in the Butler Colliery at Pittston, Pennsylvania. He had wandered into some remote workings, lost his light, and been sickened by foul air. He was semi-conscious when found. Safe and sound after his ordeal and lying on the sofa at home, he was able to witness the wedding. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Unnamed Mine Rescue, Duluth, Minnesota
Paul Meliege was rescued from an unnamed mine near Duluth, Minnesota after an **undisclosed period**. He was 265 feet underground when he was caught in a sinking depression taking him down another 115 feet. When dragged out, Meliege fainted from exhaustion. He was rushed to a nearby hospital where it was said he would recover. [Source document.](#)

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- Sep California Winery Construction Cave-in, Winnehaven, California
After being buried for — **four hours** — beneath an immense cave-in on the side of a hill at Winnehaven, near Point Richmond, three workmen were dug out of their earthy prison in a terrible state of injury and exhaustion. Their names were E. Steele, C. Duggan, and P. O'Brien. The former was so badly crushed that he would probably die. The legs and arms of the others were broken, and they were bruised. They would recover, although they may be crippled for life. The men were engaged in blasting away part of a hill where the California Wine association was to build a winery and failed to reach a place of safety after lighting a fuse. The explosion tore away the side of the hill and buried the three men under a great mass of earth and rocks. When rescued they were more dead than alive. September 13, 1907 occurred on a Friday. [Source document](#).
- Nov [Draper Mine Inundation](#), Gilberton, Pennsylvania
A cave-in deep inside the Draper Mine at Gilberton, Pennsylvania, followed by an inrush of culm and water from the surface trapped Michael McCabe for **87 hours** before rescuers managed to free him. He was released from his prison barely alive.
- Dec [Giroux Mine Cave-in and Rescue](#), Ely, White Pine County, Nevada
The longest mine entrapment in the United States occurred following the Giroux Mine Cave-in at Ely, Nevada on December 4, 1907. After having been entombed — **forty-six days** — in the Alpha shaft of the Giroux mine, three miners were rescued on January 19, 1908. The trapped miners were A. D. Bailey, P. J. Brown and Fred McDonald. Two other miners, C. W. Turner and Hercules Constanti, died in the accident. [Source documents](#)
- Dec [Monongah Mine Explosion](#), Monongah, West Virginia
In his book, Davitt McAteer talks about Monongah survivor Peter Urban. Urban, a Polish immigrant, was found by rescuers sitting on the body of his injured brother, Stanislaus, trying to protect him.
- "Peter and Stanislaus had run to escape the explosion, but Stanislaus fell, and Peter stopped to try and help him up," McAteer writes.
- "He was unable to move Stanislaus, and they remained there for **five and a half hours**. Underground, the rescuers attempted to remove Stanislaus, but just then, he expired. Stanislaus, a father of four, would be brought out days later."
On Oct. 9, 1926, almost 19 years later, Peter Urban was killed by a fall of coal in the same Monongah Mine. [Source document](#).

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Dec Fridley, Murry & Mosher Mine Fall of Person, Jamestown, Illinois
Harry Mosher of Jamestown in Scott County fell fifty feet down a mine shaft into ten feet of water and received no more than a few bruises. Mr. Mosher was employed at the Fridley, Murry & Mosher mine. He stood on a plank over the mouth of the shaft, hoisting a plug to release water from a tank. The plank broke in the middle and Mr. Mosher went twisting and somersaulting down the shaft. The water at the bottom of the shaft saved his life. When he came to the surface of the water, he seized a piece of the plank which had fallen with him and thus sustained himself until help arrived. [Source document.](#)

Dec Ellsworth Mine No. 1 Explosives Detonation, Ellsworth, West Virginia
After being imprisoned for **three days** in Ellsworth No. 1 mine, at Ellsworth, John Ommilian, a young Slav miner, was released from his underground dungeon a raving maniac and taken to the county home at Arden. On December 26, he imprisoned himself by setting off a blast that loosened enough earth to block all exit. He was accidentally discovered by mine officials who were making a tour of inspection. [Source document.](#)

— 1906 —

Jan Lincoln Mine Quicksand Inundation, Virginia, Minnesota
Victor Peltoniemi was rescued alive after having been buried under 20 feet of quicksand for nearly **10 hours** in the Lincoln mine near Virginia, Minnesota. Peltoniemi owed his life to a large boulder weighing several tons, which fell in such a way as to rest on some mining timbers and form a small cavity about his chest and head, the other parts of his body being held by the dirt as tightly as if gripped in a vice. [Source document.](#)

Jan Belmont Tunnel Shaft Fire Rescue, New York, New York
Six negro laborers were trapped while working twenty feet below the level of the East River in a shaft being sunk for the Belmont tunnel, and four were lost. The two who were saved after an **undisclosed period** were Earle Jones and Nathaniel White. They owed their lives to the heroic work of H. R. Shailer, the night Superintendent and Kaerle Verbecke, a Dutchman, who worked at the shaft as air lock tender. Fire started, apparently spontaneously from oil and dust, in the air receiver from which the workers received their supply, and gusts of dense and hot fumes caused by burning rubber were forced down instead of pure air. To effect a rescue the lock had to be opened, and with the usual pressure removed, water gushed in in a small flood. Whether the four who died were suffocated by the fumes or were drowned the Coroner did not know. The dead men were William Ray and Isaac Ross. [Source document.](#)

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- Feb Parral Mine Explosion, Parral, West Virginia
After an **undisclosed period** following the explosion, rescuers removed twelve miners alive, but it was believed that most of them would die from their injuries.
- Feb King Jack Mine Cave-in, Joplin, Missouri
Graves Jett, a miner, lived **twenty hours** pinioned under hundreds of tons of rock, which fell from the roof of the King Jack mine. He was rescued by thirty of his fellow workmen, who had worked incessantly since the falling of the material and who did not know that he was alive until a short time before the rescue was affected. Jett recognized and spoke, cheerfully to his wife when taken to the top of the ground and declared that he would live, but despite his struggle for life, he died later at his home, his lungs having been affected by the foul air which he breathed while imprisoned. Source document.
- Feb Rosco Mine Cave-in, Forest Ranch, California
For **twelve hours**, James Larkin, a miner in the Rosco Mine at Forest Ranch, lay pinioned under a mass of rock and timbers which had settled down on him while putting in a set of timbers. The tunnel was known to be dangerous, but the work had to be done and Larkin volunteered to do it. Twice when within a few feet of Larkin, the ground caved in again and it was feared he would die before aid could reach him. Finally, after twelve hours of hard work, their efforts were rewarded, and Larkin was rescued. Both legs were broken, and it was feared internal injuries would cause his death. Source document.
- Feb App Mine Cave-in, Stockton, California
Tomo Sablich and Gero Buvlch, who had been imprisoned in the App mine by a cave-in for — **five days** —, were rescued. Fortunately, there was plenty of water at hand and they did not suffer from thirst. They were extremely weak from lack of food when rescued but were otherwise in good condition. Source document.
- Mar Century No. 1 Mine Explosion, Century, West Virginia
Within **one hour** after the accident Superintendent James Ward had a relief gang in the mine. The first trip out brought ten men, five dead and five badly burned. During the second expedition, twenty injured men were making their way towards the bottom of the shaft and were brought to the surface by the rescuers.
- May Unnamed Fairview Mine Cave-in, Fairview, Nevada
While working on the stope in a mine at Fairview, Felix Noe was buried under thirty-seven feet of dirt, rock, and timbers, which caved in on him. A rescue party worked for hours getting him out. He was badly injured internally. Source document.

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- May Abandoned Mine Asphyxiations, Greensburg, Pennsylvania
Wasall Kircera gave up his life while trying to save three boys from death in an abandoned mine, where blackdamp was known to escape from the old workings. The boys were playing and soon became senseless under the influence of the deadly gas. Kircera saw the boys' peril, plunged down into the hole and hurled two of them to the outside. Then Kircera fell, overcome by the gas fumes. A friend went down after him and, after throwing the remaining boy out, dragged Kircera up the bank. The gas was too much for Kircera and he died in a few minutes, while his friend was in a serious condition and not expected to live. Source document.
- May Hazel Kirk Mine No. 1 Fire, Washington, Pennsylvania
Three hundred miners were rescued from the fire in the Hazel Kirk Mine No. 1 of the Pittsburg and Westmoreland Coal Company. A trapper boy had volunteered to go into the mine and warn the men and gained an entrance through a winding stairway in the air shaft. While the men outside fought the flames with buckets of water and kept the blaze from the air shaft, miners poured from the pit. The mules in the mine, almost suffocated by smoke, stampeded, and were beyond control eighty feet from the surface. Source document.
- Oct Unnamed Coal Mine Cave-in, Stockdale, Pennsylvania
Arthur Smith and Albert W. Simpson helped to rescue George Spencer from a mine cave-in, Stockdale, Pennsylvania, October 9, 1906. Spencer, 54, was caught by a fall of slate. There was room for only one person to work at his release. Smith, 28, driver, was first to go, and, while he was digging away the debris, another fall occurred but missed them by a narrow margin. Fatigue compelled Smith to stop, and Simpson took up the work and after 15 minutes' labor, Spencer was extricated. Another fall seemed to be impending and did occur an hour later. Arthur Smith and Albert Simpson were bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Oct Anthracite Mine Fall of Person, Middleport, Pennsylvania
Falling 400 feet down an abandoned mine shaft, Joseph Schroeder of Pottsville was rescued alive, after he had been virtually **buried all day** and all hope of his rescue abandoned. When examined it was found Schroeder had not even a broken bone. At the time, it was the most extraordinary escape known in the history of anthracite mining. Young Schroeder left town in the morning in company with William Kalbach, to shoot pheasants. While pushing their way through the brush toward the mountain top Schroeder took the lead. He walked into a drift, lighted a match, and called to Kalbach to follow. Suddenly he gave a

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cry of surprise and attempted to step back, but the ground at the edge of a hole gave way with him, and he plunged feet first down into an abyss.

Kalbach hurried forward and he, too, almost plunged down the hole after his companion. Had he done so the mystery of their disappearance probably never would have been solved. Seeing he could be of no aid to his unfortunate companion, Kalbach started down the mountain for Middleport on the run and in a short time a dozen men accompanied him back with long length of rope. They went as close as they possibly could in safety and called down the shaft. Nothing but the echo of their voices greeted them. Then they tied a weight to the end of a rope and lowered it carefully into the black pit. It struck several times along the side of the jagged opening, but finally it was lowered to its full length, but the bottom had not been reached.

Men were sent back to town for more rope and when they came back the attempt was again made, but again the end of the rope failed to reach bottom.

Messengers were dispatched to the collieries at Kaska and Silver Creek, whence experienced mining men were sent by officials with a long coil of stout rope. This was lowered, and, although 200 feet of it was used, the bottom of the shaft could not be touched. Not a sound came from the black hole, except the rattling of the weighted rope.

Again, messengers were dispatched for more rope. The boy's father also arrived, accompanied by several employees of the shops. One of them, John Calloway, was lowered into the opening, and after going down 200 feet he heard cries for help. Calloway was then hoisted to the surface, where he related his discovery to the great joy of the boy's father. Calloway again went into the shaft, this time at the end of a rope more than 400 feet long. He found young Schroeder at the bottom of the pit and was drawn to the surface with him. Schroeder was terribly bruised and shaken, but no bones were broken, and he would recover. [Source document.](#)

Nov [San Toy No. 1 Mine Shaft Disaster](#), Corning, Ohio

Three men, who clung to the cage in which they were riding, were saved after an **undisclosed period**. The men were ascending in the mule cage when the door, which had been left open, caught against the sides of the shaft. Five were killed when they were thrown from the cage and fell 150 feet to the bottom of the shaft.

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- Dec Edison Tunnel Cave-in, Bakersfield, California
Rescuers worked around the clock to release Lindsay B. Hicks from his tomb in the Edison Tunnel near Bakersfield, California. Trapped there with five other miners on December 7, Hicks' freedom finally came after his **15-day entrapment**. He was the only survivor. On December 12, speaking through a pipe, Hicks told rescuers that he had survived on 40 cents of chewing tobacco. Victory finally came for his rescuers on December 22nd at 11:25 p.m.

— 1905 —

- Jan Decatur Mine Fire, Decatur, Illinois
About 20 miners were imprisoned by smoke in distant entries because of fire in the stables of the Decatur coal company mine but were rescued after an undisclosed period. Fire communicated from the stables to timbers of the mine but was put out by firemen after a long struggle. Damage to the mine was believed to be small. Source document.
- Jan Hartzel and Gottschalk Mine Cave-in, Ironton, Pennsylvania
Pinned to the ground by a piece of heavy timber and covered over by a mass of earth, William Brown was rescued after being buried alive for **11 hours** in a mine at Ironton, Pennsylvania. Source document.
- Apr Cabin Creek Mine Explosion, Kayford, West Virginia
Nine men were still within the mine when the explosion occurred. Of these, four reached safety with the assistance of friends. Three of the number were so seriously injured that they are not expected to live. Those rescued were William Jacobs, George Eastman, Morrey Darby, and William Robinson. The last three men were seriously injured.
- May Gunnison Reclamation Tunnel Cave-in, Montrose, Colorado
At least five men were killed and two seriously injured by the cave-in at the Gunnison Reclamation tunnel. Twenty-one men were rescued uninjured but exhausted by their terrible experience. They were hoisted with ropes through a shaft which had been sunk sixty feet in **less than 24 hours**. Two workers were pinned under heavy timbers and terribly injured. They would have been drowned but for the efforts of their entombed companions who improvised a dam to hold back the water, which poured into the tunnel. When the roof of the tunnel was opened, the entombed men were found standing in water above their knees and still working with a will to prevent further disaster as the soft dirt was constantly sliding. Source document.

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- Jun Unnamed Metal Mine, Ketchum, Idaho
John M. Parks, 19, laborer, with Wallace O. McPheters, 24 and Leroy McCoy, 19, rescued Charles A. McCoy, 28, from a blast in a mine, Ketchum, Idaho, June 13, 1905. Parks, after having been knocked down by the concussion from a premature explosion, rushed to the assistance of McCoy, who had been rendered helpless and was lying near other blasts which were momentarily expected to go off, and helped carry him to safety. The three men were awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for their bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Jun Carbonate Hill Mine Explosives Detonation, Ketchum, Idaho
Three miners rescued their mine foreman, Charles A. McCoy, from the Carbonate Hill mine near Ketchum, Idaho after an **undisclosed period**. Included in the rescue were John M. Parks, 19; Leroy McCoy, 19; and Wallace O. McPheters, 24. These three miners were awarded the Carnegie Hero Medal. Source document. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Jul Fuller Mine Explosion, Searights, Pennsylvania
The rescuing party had a remarkable escape from death. They had gone to the bottom of the shaft for the last body and had the body securely fastened to the bottom of the temporary rigged bucket when the concrete wall and timbering about the top of the shaft tumbled down a distance of 70 feet. The timbers caught in such a manner over the top of the bucket as to save the men who were huddled in it from instant death. They were buried, however, by hundreds of tons of concrete and scaffolding. Enough crevices were left in the wreckage to supply them with air until they were rescued in **half an hour**.
- Jul Pond Creek Mine Rescue, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
John Dusheck saved the life of Miss Emma Martin while conducting a sight-seeing party of the Pond Creek mine near Hazleton. While in the mine, a gust of wind blew out the lights and Miss Martin went ahead in the darkness. Just as she came upon the brink of a 100-foot shaft, Dusheck seized her, saving her from an awful death. The end of the article states "the incident broke up the trip." Indeed! Source document.
- Jul Jeddo Mine Cave-in, Upper Lehigh, Pennsylvania
For nearly **seven hours** Andrew Wisda, a miner, was entombed in the Jeddo mines, and was rescued alive. Wisda was working in a breast fifty feet up from the gangway, when a heavy fall took place below him. He was unconscious when taken out, but soon revived in the air. Source document.

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- Aug Mountain Consolidated Mine Cave-in, Butte, Montana
After facing death for **24 hours**, Con Sullivan was rescued by a force of about 50 miners, who worked in gangs of three and four with feverish haste. He was working on the 100-foot level of a section of the Mountain Consolidated mine, when a cave of many tons of rock, covering over 40 feet, entombed him, and narrowly escaped crushing him to death. Sullivan had barely enough room to stretch himself out and with rare presence of mind, though death hovered over him. He devoted many hours of his imprisonment to sleep, believing he could better preserve his strength, as the air was rapidly growing bad, and he feared suffocation. When the rescuers reached him, the man emerged from his narrow prison with a smile on his countenance, and unassisted climbed the ladder to the top. Over 100 miners had gathered at the shaft, and he was accorded an ovation. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Kirtley Mine Cave-in, Georgetown, Colorado
After men worked continuously for **44 hours**, John O'Day was rescued from a perilous position in the Kirtley mine at Georgetown, Colorado, where he had been confined without light, food, or water. O'Day seemed none the worse for his long confinement. He wanted to walk to town, but a carriage conveyed him to his hotel in Georgetown. This was the second experience of entombment for O'Day. He was confined once before for 36 hours. [Source document.](#)
- Oct North End Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Joe Oinesky was trapped under a fall of coal for **14 hours** in the North End Coal Company's mine near Scranton, Pennsylvania. He was finally released after forty carloads of coal and rock were dug from around him. Remarkably he was saved from injury by the fact that two big slabs of rock formed a sort of tent over him. [Source document.](#)
- Oct Tunnel Ridge Mine Cave-in, Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania
Charles Rineawage was rescued — **8 hours** — following a cave-in at the Tunnel Ridge Mine at Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. His work companion, Joseph Skernolis, died in the accident. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Unnamed Bituminous Coal Mine, Belleville, Illinois
Theodore Boettcher, 37, coal miner, saved Daniel Hopp, 38, from a blast in a mine, Belleville, Illinois, November 16, 1905. Boettcher, from a place of safety, rushed to a blast and pulled out the fuse, which had burned to within a quarter of an inch of the powder, to save Hopp, who had been pinned to the floor by a fall of slate, 6 feet from the blast. Mr. Boettcher was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.

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Dec Horton Mine Fire, Horton, West Virginia

After an **undisclosed period**, two of the miners who were in the more remote sections of the mine were rescued. These men, who were overcome by smoke, were revived after being brought out.

Dec Coxey Shaft Mine Rescue, Pittston, Pennsylvania

Joseph Davies, a miner, was found in the Coxey Shaft of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company almost starved to death having gone without food for **eight days**. When found, he was slightly demented and could not account for his wanderings. While lost, he had nothing to eat and drank the sulfur water of the mine. Source document.

Dec Springville Prospect Cave-in, Wallace, Idaho

James Cozzaglio, the miner imprisoned by a cave-in in the Springville prospect, was rescued after — **13 hours** — by a crew of men from Wallace and Mullan at 4:30 a.m. He was unhurt. The tunnel in which the miner was working was about 55 feet long and the first cave took place about halfway between the tunnel's face and its mouth. Cozzaglio was working in the extreme face when the accident happened. Several caves occurred following the first and when the man was rescued by the crews, working since 3:30 the day before he was confined in a space about four feet in width. Source document.

Dec Pennsylvania Railroad Tunnel Cave-in, Long Island, New York

Three swimmers rescued two Italian laborers, who for more than — **forty hours** — had been imprisoned in the East river tunnel of the Pennsylvania railroad by a cave-in at the Long Island City end of the underwater bore. A large force of men had been sinking a shaft to rescue the imprisoned men and powerful pumps were kept running constantly in an effort to lower the water level in the tunnel. A boat could not be forced into the tunnel and three men volunteered to swim in. They did so and returned soon after carrying the two upon their backs. Source document.

— 1904 —

Jan Harwick Mine Explosion, Cheswick, Pennsylvania

Adolph Gunia was brought to the surface still alive after an **undisclosed period** following the explosion in the Harwick mine in Cheswick, Pennsylvania. He was the lone survivor of the mine blast which took 179 lives.

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- Jan Gap Mine Fire & Asphyxiations, Locust Gap, Pennsylvania
Ten men were overcome by gas fighting a fire of unknown origin in the top west gangway of the Gap mine. The fire bosses discovered the fire and hurried for assistance. In the work of extinguishing, several of the men were seen to stagger and fall and others who hurried to their assistance fell under the influence of the powerful blackdamp, and before the men were rescued ten had gone down. All the men will entirely recover from the effects of the gas, but for some the call was a close one. [Source document](#).
- Jan Silver King Consolidated Mine Rescue, Park City, Utah
Multiple fatalities in the Silver King Consolidated Mine at Park City were prevented through the heroism of Mine Foreman John C. Collins. Twelve men were in the bottom of a shaft. As the men were being lifted up to escape a blast the cage stuck. When the cage stuck Collins jumped to the bottom of the shaft to cut the fuse. His light went out, and he could do nothing. He climbed back to the cage, where the miners were penned up like rats. In the top of the cage was a "bonnet" or cover of iron, three-eighths of an inch thick. With a desperate exertion of strength Collins bent back the lid, and despite the heavy spring tension held it open while the miners climbed out to safety. Hogan was the last man to try to leave the cage, except Collins, who made no effort to escape. The blast went off, shattering the cage into junk. That both men were not instantly killed seemed a marvel. Hogan dropped, and was caught by Collins, who succeeded in getting him through the aperture. The heroic foreman was then forced to strip off his clothing before he could himself get through. He then fell, bleeding from the mouth, and unconscious. It was thought he might live. Hogan lost a foot. [Source document](#).
- Feb No. 1 Mine Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania
While at work in the No. 1 mines, John Chalice was buried almost to his neck, requiring many minutes' work of a force of men to rescue him. He had been working alone in a chamber, being engaged in knocking down overhead coal, using a pick and bar for the purpose. Without any warning large chunks of the coal and rock fell and paved the way for an avalanche that threatened to smother the miner. He shrieked for help, and men in other sections of the mines were not slow in answering his appeals. After considerable work Chalice was released. The injured man was taken to the Emergency hospital in the mine ambulance, and his injuries attended to. He had suffered two fractures of the leg and was also badly bruised about the body. [Source document](#).
- Mar Excelsior Clay Mine Inundation, Brazil, Indiana
Twelve rescuers saved 10 miners trapped by a surging torrent in a flooded mine by clasping hands in a long line. The ten men were brought to safety after an

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undisclosed period, although two were unconscious due to the foul air in the slope where they had sought refuge. The two quickly recovered when they were brought outside. No one was seriously injured. [Source document](#).

- Mar Madison Mine No. 4 Inundation, Glen Carbon, Illinois
Glen Carbon, a mining town of 1,200, about four miles south of Edwardsville, was demoralized by a cloudburst Thursday night. At Madison Mine No. 4 the presence of cool heads averted a possible panic. The water poured in a flood into the boiler room and rose rapidly. Soon the stream was a couple of feet deep, and as it continued to rise it was feared that the fires would be put out, and all the men marooned in the mine. Orders were given to get them out quickly. The cages shot back and forth at high speed, bringing the workers to the surface. and did not cease until all were above ground. When the engine was shut down at last the water was within three inches of the grate bars in the boiler room. [Source document](#).
- Mar Unnamed Mine Explosion, Henry, West Virginia
Albert Cronkin, a miner of Henry, West Virginia, was rescued after **seven days'** starvation in a coal mine. He was entombed by an explosion in which three were killed. Cronkin was badly burned, but it was thought he would recover. [Source document](#).
- Jul Unnamed Coal Mine, Sherodsville, Ohio
Daniel Davis died attempting to save William Monroe from suffocation at Sherodsville, Ohio on July 11, 1904. Davis, 23, coal miner, was overcome by black damp while walking into a mine to rescue Monroe, 38, who was helpless from the gas but was later rescued. [Source document](#).
- Jul Belle View Mine Fire, Laporte, California
Four miners trapped in the burning Belle View mine were rescued shortly before midnight. The miners were working in the tunnel when the fire broke out. The mill, engine room and other buildings close to the mouth of the mine were destroyed by fire earlier in the day. There was a strong force of water at the mine for fire protection, but the fire broke out just where the hose was placed, and it was impossible to make use of the water supply. The four rescued miners included L. Byrnes, Morgan Bean, D. McDonald, and Bert Cumley. [Source document](#).
- Aug Lykens Valley Coal Mine Cave-in, Wiconisco, Pennsylvania
Frank Paul was completely buried in a mass of coal which fell down upon him while he was working in what is known as the Little Vein of the Lykens Valley Coal

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Company and was so terribly bruised that he was unable to move. Morris Woest and William Plark were working with Paul, when suddenly coal from only a few feet above him came down and covered every portion of his body. His two companions were uninjured by the cave-in and were able to render him immediate assistance and succeeded in extricating his body after an **undisclosed period** before he was suffocated. Source document.

- Sep Unnamed Anthracite Coal Mine Cave-in, Kingston, Pennsylvania
William Watkins, 24, coal miner, rescued Brinley R. Davis, 22, mine car tender; Rees J. Williams, 19, driver, and Joseph Winchent, 45, coal miner, in a mine, Kingston, Pennsylvania, September 3, 1904. Watkins successively took the men from the place of an explosion, where there was imminent danger of the roof falling, to a position of safety. Mr. Watkins was bestowed the Carnegie Hero Award for his efforts. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Oct Sioux Colliery Cave-in, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
Caught by a fall of coal at the Sioux Colliery, Michael Kennedy lay buried with his face exposed for **fifteen hours**. No one witnessed the accident, and when he did not return home in the evening searching parties entered his place of work and found him nearly dead from exhaustion, but he was expected to live. Source document.
- Oct Unnamed Slate Quarry, Bangor, Pennsylvania
Richard X. Hughes, 42, laborer, saved John R. Owens, 36, from an explosion, Bangor, Pennsylvania, October 17, 1904. Hughes ran from behind a shelter in a slate quarry, in the face of a blast (the fuse being lighted), picked up Owens, who was blinded by burning powder, and near a precipice, and carried him to safety. Mr. Hughes was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award for his bravery. See more at <https://bit.ly/3Intvpc>.
- Oct Abandoned Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
Frank Borjerko, an old miner, was digging coal for his family's winter supply in an abandoned drift at the Furnace colliery when the roof caved in, completely covering him. Fellow coal pickers, at the risk of their own lives, set to work and soon uncovered the victim's head, so that he could breathe. For **twelve hours** they feverishly worked to free him, despite another threatened fall, and finally got him out alive. He was seriously injured about the body and limbs. Source document.

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- Nov Hudson Coal Company Fall of Person, Jersey City, New Jersey
Buried under ten tons of coal, with life sustained by means of a piece of gas pipe forced through the heavy mass, while his comrades worked heroically to rescue him, was the experience of Hugh Kelly, an employee of the Hudson Coal Company. Kelly had been at work on the top of a thirty-foot trestle, up to which big steel cars, each carrying fifty tons of coal, were run from the barges. Kelly was on a car fastening the brakes when another employee, Thomas Haggerty, pulled the lever which releases the coal from the bottom of the car. Kelly fell with the coal thirty feet, and in an instant was buried under tons of it. Kelly's fatal plunge was seen by Haggerty and his cries for help brought other employees, headed by the superintendent of the yard, to the scene. A long piece of gas pipe was shoved down through the coal, and fortunately reached the entombed man, who was thus saved from suffocation. When Kelly was reached his teeth were clinched viselike on the end of the gas pipe. An ambulance was summoned, and Kelly taken to the hospital, where an examination proved that his injuries were fatal. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Woodside Coal Company Mine Fire, Springfield, Illinois
After being imprisoned for hours in the burning shaft of the Woodside Coal Company, 14 men were rescued. The top works of the mine were destroyed, and the flames spread to the underground workings. [Source document.](#)
- Dec Eldorado Mine Explosion, Eldorado, Illinois
Thanks to the bravery of Patrick Reed, mine boss, four miners were rescued and were resting in their homes following an explosion in the Eldorado Coal and Coke company's mine. The explosion, the cause of which was unknown, damaged the machinery and the cage could not be raised. Mine Boss Reed volunteered to go down to aid the men and was lowered in a bucket. He groped his way through the blinding fumes and found the four after an **undisclosed period**. Four other men were entombed in the mine, with no hope for their rescue. [Source document.](#)

— 1903 —

- Jan Quincy Mine Avalanche, Park City, Utah
One of the most disastrous snowslides in the history of Park City swept down the mountain upon the works of the Quincy Mine killing three men, burying six more beneath twenty feet of snow, and doing serious damage to the shaft house. The six miners were caught and buried for **nearly an hour**, but they were rescued before death made them victims. All of them were severely injured by the slide. Every man on top of the ground was caught by the slide, and had it not been for the prompt and heroic work of Mike Wynne in digging his way out through the

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mountain of snow, all six men would, in all probability, have met death in the avalanche. Had the slide occurred ten minutes later the entire shift of forty men working underground would have been caught and the fatalities would in all probability have been very great. [Source document.](#)

Feb Hostetler-Connellsville Coke Company Mine Explosion, Latrobe, Pennsylvania
Five miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** following an explosion in the Hostetler-Connellsville Coke Company mine near Latrobe, Pennsylvania.
[Source document.](#)

Mar Scott Shaft Fire, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania
An overheated journal at the Scott shaft set fire to the tower, and for a time a dangerous conflagration was feared. Ten men were at work in the bottom of the shaft, 800 feet below, and their only means of egress was through the fire. Al Sheets, foreman of the shift, jumped on the cage and was lowered to the bottom, where the men were notified and hastily hoisted to the surface, the flames scorching them as they landed. [Source document.](#)

Mar Nellie V. Mine Cave-in, Victor, Colorado
After being entombed by a cave-in of many tons of rock in the Nellie V. mine on Squaw Mountain for — **seventeen hours** —, Frank Schreiber was rescued. He was not injured in any way and not any worse for his confinement. Schreiber and his partner went into an abandoned stope in the 60-foot level of the mine on Squaw Mountain to prospect. Schreiber's companion escaped the cave-in and went to the Ajax mine for assistance. A large force soon gathered and willing hands were shoveling away the rock with superhuman energy, and fear that life was ebbing from him hastened the lifting of every shovel. A physician was ready to minister to the prisoner as soon as he was released. When the miners rapped on a small pipe, he would also rap in reply. Communication in this way continued until the imprisoned man was taken out. After breakfasting he was ready to return to work. [Source document.](#)

Apr Farrel Shaft No. 2 Fire, Butte, Montana
Had it not been for the heroism of Peter Keri, two men working in a crosscut in Farrel Shaft No. 2, of the Pittsburg & Montana Mining Company, might have suffered death because of the fire which occurred at the mine. How the fire started was a mystery. Keri came to the surface, and as soon as he discovered the true condition of affairs, ordered the engineer to lower him into the mine again, going to what at the time appeared to be certain death. The engineer demurred and told Keri he was going to his death, but Keri insisted, and the engineer began letting him down. One hundred feet from the bottom of the shaft, the engineer

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driven from his post by the flames, put on the brakes and stopped the cage. Kerl, below ground, realized what had happened, but still maintained his wonderful self-possession. Setting the dogs on the cage, the safety devices, he took the extra precaution of lashing the cage as fast as possible to the side of the shaft. He knew the cable would be burned through and feared the cage might fall. Keri crawled through into the other compartment and after making the trip in safety started into the crosscut after his two companions, Nick Frantia, and Ike Peterson. They started back at the utmost speed and began the long and tedious journey up the ladder in the pump shaft. At the best this was a terrible task for even a strong man, but with death both above and below them the three men climbed like monkeys toward the surface. At one of the lower levels, the three were met by a rescue party. It was stated by miners that it was one of the bravest deeds ever performed in the history of the many in the list of mining rescues. [Source document.](#)

May Tombstone Mine Cave-in, Tombstone, Arizona

George Pollock, a miner, narrowly escaped death while working on the 600-foot level in one of the mines. For **three hours**, Pollock lay buried underneath several hundred pounds of rock, while hardy miners dug him out. All the time he suffered a great deal but stood the ordeal bravely. Pollock was at work in a winze, when, without warning, a large part of the overhanging wall fell upon him. He tried to get out of the way, but the rock had him pinned down before he could take a step. [Source document.](#)

Jun Hanna No. 1 Mine Explosion, Hanna, Wyoming

About **3 hours** after the explosion, four men were taken out alive and a half hour later they were followed by forty-two others. Many were unconscious and had to be carried from the workings. Several were in a serious condition, but it was believed all would recover.

Jun Fortune Mine Fire and Explosives Detonation, Leadville, Colorado

Two hundred and fifty pounds of giant powder exploded at the shaft house of the Fortune mine, destroying the shaft house and machinery. Five men were entombed in the mine in the aftermath and after an **undisclosed period** all were rescued excepting the superintendent, Patrick Barker, who was found dead in the bottom of the shaft with his head cut off. The explosion was caused by a fire which ignited the powder, and the explosion completely wrecked the surface buildings. [Source document.](#)

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Jul Big Mountain Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Eighteen miners were rescued from a cave-in after an **undisclosed period** in the Big Mountain Colliery at Shamokin, Pennsylvania. All the miners were found alive and uninjured. [Source document](#).

Nov [Ferguson Mine Explosion](#), Dunbar, Pennsylvania
After **an hour** of frantic search, nine miners were picked up by the rescuing party in different positions of exhaustion. As they reached the open air, they fell prostrate in the arms of their wives and children, who had spent that long, weary hour at the pit's mouth fearing that they would never see their loved ones again. Their faces were blackened, their hair scorched, and clothing burned almost to shreds from the flames that followed the explosion.

— 1902 —

Feb Bon Air No. 5 Mine Explosion, Bon Air, Tennessee
Over fifteen men received injuries in the No. 5 mine dust explosion at Bon Air, Tennessee. All were rescued after an **undisclosed period**, and all would probably recover. Five of the miners were seriously burned. About 100 men were employed in this mine. When the explosion occurred, all were in the main entry, which made their rescue possible. Medical attendants say that none of the injuries were necessarily fatal, though five were very serious. The explosion was caused by the shots fired by the miners to knock down the coal for the day's run. If the men had been in the driveways and inner entries when the explosion occurred many lives would have been lost either by the concussion direct or by their being cut off from escape. [Source document](#).

Mar Catsburg Mine Explosion and Fire, Monongahela City, Pennsylvania
The Catsburg Mine of the Monongahela River Coal Company at Monongahela City caught fire from a premature explosion in one of the rooms. Three hundred miners were rescued with difficulty after an **undisclosed period**, and it was thought all had been taken out. [Source document](#).

Jul [Rolling Mill Mine Explosion](#), Johnstown, Pennsylvania
Four men who were brought out alive the night of the Rolling Mill mine disaster were taken to the Memorial Hospital, controlled by the Cambria Steel and Iron Company. Among these were John Rotalick, Henry Rodgers, Valentine Schalla, and William Robinson. And the next day, at 2 o'clock p.m., rescuers sent out for medical assistance to treat three others found alive. They were John Cook, Philip McCann, and George Hologyak.

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- Sep Stafford Mine Explosion, Stafford, West Virginia
Six badly wounded miners were rescued after an **undisclosed period** and placed under the care of Mine Superintendent Stewart. Several others were also hurt in the incident. The most serious cases were sent to the hospital.
- Sep Big Four Mine Explosion, Algoma, West Virginia
H. F. Frankenfeld, a mine boss, and George Gaspie, a Hungarian miner, succeeded in crawling over fallen coal and slate after the explosion to the lights of the rescuing party and were taken out alive although burned and nearly suffocated by the gas and smoke inhaled.
- Oct French Brothers' Mine Fall of Persons, Newton, Iowa
Five men fell thirty feet down a coal shaft at Newton, Iowa, and some of them cannot recover. The men were being elevated to the surface of the French Brothers' mine at the close of work. The cable broke just as they reached the top, and they dropped to the bottom of the shaft with lightning rapidity. The men were found piled in a heap at the bottom, all unconscious. But one, Andrew Fleming, has regained consciousness. Hugo Smith cannot recover, and the fate of the others; John Snook, Eugene Welsh, and John Walsh, was uncertain. Each of the men had a family. Source document.
- Nov Luke Fidler Mine Explosion, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
Several miners working near the scene of the accident made a rush for the foot of the shaft and were overcome by the after damp following the explosion. They were rescued after an **undisclosed period** by the relief party and sent at once to the gangway.

— 1901 —

- Jan Lost Miner Found at O. S. Johnson Mine, Dunmore, Pennsylvania
Joseph Fhinol, 17, was located after being lost without food or water for — **six days** — in the O. S. Johnson mine at Dunmore, Pennsylvania. Fhinol was a greenhorn to this mine, having previously worked there for only a day. As many as 200 men and even dogs participated in the search for Fhinol and all types of noise making devices were used in the effort. His examining physician found him to be in good condition and was confident he would improve if he followed his prescribed diet. Source document.

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- Feb Hospital Mines Inundation, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
After an **undisclosed period**, ten of the thirteen Negroes entombed in the hospital mines were rescued at about 6 a.m. The other three were found dead. The rescued men are being taken care of by the authorities. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Linden Tree Mine Fire, Linden Tree, Ohio
For **four hours**, when egress for 40 miners became cut off due to smoke and gases, the miners carried water in their dinner buckets and threw it on the flames. In the meantime, a rescuing party had been organized that fought the fire from the other side. All were finally rescued without being injured. [Source document.](#)
- Apr Rosebud Mine Cave-in, Aurora, Missouri
Two were rescued alive after an **undisclosed period** in the Rosebud mine. One was found dead and the other two are supposed to be lifeless. Grant Shard was mangled by falling rocks and earth and undoubtedly died instantly. The two rescued were William Shane and George Foster. A large stone boulder had Foster pinioned by the foot, in which position he had remained for a day. He was nearly famished when reached by the workers but was revived with the aid of stimulants. Shane, who was pinioned by the foot with a dead man underneath him, was scarcely able to talk. His arm was broken, and it was feared that he might lose his mind. [Source document.](#)
- May Unnamed Coal Mine Fire, Salinesville, Ohio
Patrick Connelly was rescued from a burning mine at Salinesville where he had been confined since the night before. Connelly had been in the mine tending to some pumps near the bottom of the shaft when all escape was cut off. When rescuers were able to reach him, he was alive but almost exhausted. [Source document.](#)
- Jun Baltimore No. 2 Breaker Fire, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Six hundred men were at work in the mines when the fire started at the Baltimore No. 2 breaker of the Delaware & Hudson Coal Company, and Samuel Smith, outside foreman, and John Matthews, inside foreman, set about to rescue them. Matthews was sent down the shaft, while Smith communicated with them by telephone. Hurriedly they ran to the foot of the shaft and were hoisted to the surface. Matthews coolly mastered the situation and prevented a panic among the men in their eagerness to get out. He, with seven others, the last in the mine, who had run from the distant workings, reached the hoist as the engineer was forced to leave his station by the heat. Seven men were reported missing when the hoisting engine stopped, and it was thought they had perished, but **an hour later** they appeared on the surface. The men had a thrilling experience. Finding

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the mine filling with smoke, they made their way through some abandoned workings to an opening. They had to crawl on their hands and knees and were well exhausted when they reached the surface. Source document.

Jun Port Royal No. 2 Mine Explosion and Fire, Port Royal, Pennsylvania

A temporary rescue party entered the shaft after an **undisclosed period** and started toward the spot where it was thought some of the entombed men may be found. Lying at the bottom of the shaft were Lawrence Settler and John Stakes. Unconscious and covered with dirt, the men quickly were taken to the top of the mine.

Aug Belmont Tubes Construction Fire, New York, New York

The following story is related to the construction of the Belmont Tubes under the East River between Long Island City and Manhattan. On August 14, 1901, the two-story shaft house caught on fire. During the rescue which followed, a man named G. C. H. Van Duzen became most prominent, by virtue of his heroism and perseverance. Van Duzen was the last to leave the crib, and he finally sprang overboard with a plank and aided in keeping the others afloat until succor reached them several hours later from the city, three miles away. Then, despite the fact that everybody around the workings believed that the twenty men in the tunnel below had been suffocated by the smoke from the shaft house, he insisted on rigging up a temporary windlass and was himself lowered down the shaft, only to be repeatedly driven back half suffocated by the gas that filled the shaft. He finally reached the imprisoned men underground, **and they were all rescued**. When the names of the workmen were checked up, **he insisted that two of the men were still missing**, although the books apparently showed that every man was accounted for. Six days later, when clearing away the wreckage from the top of the burned crib, he was startled by hearing a signal coming up from the depths of the shaft along an old air pipe. The signal sounded: one, two; one, two; one. This meant "danger, call out the gang." Without saying a word to anyone he picked up a piece of iron and going over to the air pipe, returned the signal. For the first few minutes, those about the crib thought the exertions and scenes of the few days had driven him insane, and they were about to seize him, when clear and distinct came the answering signal from the depths – one, two; one, two; one. Then everybody was crazy said Mr. Van Duzen, relating the incident: "and the wonder is that in the excitement and haste, somebody didn't fall down the shaft. After supplies were sent out, Van Duzen was lowered into the depths of the shaft. "I found the two men five hundred feet back from the mouth of the shaft, too weak to walk. We got them out and for all I know they are both well and living today." These stirring scenes are recalled to Van Duzen every time he pulls out a heavy gold watch, for inside the case of that timepiece is the inscription:

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"Presented to G. C. H. Van Duzen by the workmen of Crib No. 2 for services rendered on the fourteenth and twentieth of August 1901." [Source document](#).

Aug Bossworth Mine Explosion and Fire, Belleville, Illinois

The lives of twenty miners at the Bossworth mine were saved by women and children. The mine was near French Village. The entrance to it is by a sloping shaft, which descends from a hillside. An explosion happened at the lower end of this slope. It set fire to the coal and the timbers of the shaft and imprisoned the miners. Alarmed by the explosion, they ran to the slope, only to be turned back by a wall of flames. The women and children heard the explosion and ran to the opening and saw what had happened. A hundred feet from the shaft was a rude reservoir in which water had been collected for the engine. They dug a trench down to the shaft opening and turned the water into the mine. The fire was extinguished, and the men came out unhurt. [Source document](#).

Aug Lake Erie Waterworks Tunnel Rescue, Cleveland, Ohio

Adam Kest and Joseph Engine, who were working on the new water works tunnel under Lake Erie were rescued from their living tomb. The pair were cut off from communication with the world the — **5 days** — earlier by the burning of the crib at the outer end of the tunnel. The crib was burned when all hands were asleep. A number of men were burned to death or drowned. A crew was in the tunnel below. By the burning of the crib the pumping machinery was stopped and the first notice those in the tunnel had of anything wrong was the rising of the water and the increase of gas. Rescuing parties went down from the crib and a number of those below were brought up in safety, but a number could not be found, and some had perished. Two of the rescuing party died from the effects of the gas. All who were not found after a diligent search were supposed to have perished, but while a force of workmen were repairing the crib and machinery, the superintendent of the work at the crib heard a faint rapping on one of the pipes that ran down into the tunnel. Going to the pipe he listened closely and again heard the faint signal. He immediately gave a responsive signal on the pipes. The two men were nearly starved and were becoming prostrated from the effects of the gas and water and did not know how many days they had been in the tunnel when rescued. They remained in the hospital for several hours before they could converse but were later out of danger. Ten men in all lost their lives by the accident. [Source document](#).

Oct [Buttonwood Colliery Explosion](#), Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Directly after the explosion occurred several brave rescuers, at the risk of their lives, entered the mine and brought out the bodies of the dead and nine injured miners. The injured men were taken to the hospital as fast as they were brought

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to the surface. Except for Inspector Daniel Davis, it was thought that all would recover.

- Oct Highland Boy Mine Cave-in, Bingham, Utah
Charles Nutting was rescued after being trapped for **61 hours** by a cave-in at the Highland Boy Mine at Bingham, Utah. Very weak when found, Nutting was confined in a space so small, he was unable to stand up. Another miner, William Anderson, was also missing in the incident and there was little hope of finding him alive. [Source document](#).
- Nov [Pocahontas Baby Mine Fire](#), Pocahontas, Virginia
Four days after the start of the [Pocahontas Baby mine fire](#) in Pocahontas, Virginia, Fritz Moulter was found barely alive, entombed in a room on the east side. Six physicians worked with him before he was restored to consciousness.
- Nov Abandoned Anthracite Mine Rescue, Pittston, Pennsylvania
John Zuranki was rescued in a pitiable condition after spending **4 days** lost without food and light in an abandoned Anthracite mine near Pittston, Pennsylvania. He was discovered accidentally by a watchman who had entered the mine. Zuranki was not missed from his boarding house since he told his family he was going away. [Source document](#).
- Nov Packer No. 5 Colliery Cave-in, Girardville, Pennsylvania
Stephen Casper was rescued after being trapped for **more than 12 hours** in the Packer No. 5 Colliery at Girardville, Pennsylvania. He was uninjured but badly frightened. This was the second time Casper experienced such an ordeal, having been entombed in a similar manner in a mine near Wilkes-Barre several years earlier. No further information on the latter incident involving Mr. Casper has been found. [Source document](#).
- Dec [McAlester No. 1 Hoisting Disaster](#), Hartshorne, Oklahoma
Two miners were rescued from the McAlester No. 1 mine after an **undisclosed period**. The cage was ascending with eight men and about 100 feet from the bottom of the shaft, it jumped its guidings and 6 of the 8 dropped to the shaft bottom to their death. The other two, who held on to the cage had to be drawn up to the surface with ropes. These men were said to be injured slightly.

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— 1900 —

- May Cumnock Mine Explosion, Cumnock, North Carolina
The accident was in what was known as the east heading. Between forty and fifty men were in the mine at the time. Five were brought out alive from the east heading after an **undisclosed period**, while none of the men in the other parts of the mine were injured.
- Jun W. P. Rend No. 2 Mine Explosion, Glouster, Ohio
Two hundred miners were imprisoned at 7 a. m. on June 8 by an explosion of gas in mine No. 2. It was thought at first that the loss of life would be large, but the work of the rescuers was carried on so energetically and successfully that all were rescued and saved later that same night except three. The explosion set the mine on fire, adding to the difficulty. A second explosion occurred at about 6 p. m. and shortly afterward a third, in which the system of fans used to force fresh air in the mine was destroyed. There were 400 men employed in the mine. Had the explosion occurred a few moments later, after all the men had entered and taken their positions, the destruction of human life would have been fearful to contemplate. Source document.
- Jul Lehigh Coal Company Colliery Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
Rescuers successfully removed two miners that were trapped nearly **12 hours** in the Lehigh Coal Company Colliery near Centralia, Pennsylvania. John Shutt from Bucks Patch suffered no injury, however, the second miner rescued, George Bulla, was found with a huge piece of coal on his chest and died as soon as he was brought to the surface. Source document.
- Aug Parrott Mine Fire, Butte, Montana
The shaft house of the Parrott mine was destroyed by fire, entailing a loss of \$100,000. The mine was 1,600 feet deep, and 200 men were underground. They were rescued through the levels of an adjoining mine after an **undisclosed period**. The shaft, it was feared, was badly damaged. The property was owned by the Parrott Copper and Silver Mining Company, which was one of the corporations controlled by the Amalgamated Copper Company. Source document.
- Dec Nay Aug Mine Cave-in, Dunmore, Pennsylvania
A serious cave-in occurred at the Nay Aug mine, near Dunmore. Fifty-one men were entombed. The rescuing party, after nearly — **three hours** — hard work, succeeded in digging into the chamber in which the men were entombed. All were rescued, not one being seriously injured. Source document.

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— 1899 —

- Mar Bon Air Mine Cave-in, Leadville, Colorado
Two miners were rescued after being trapped for — **13 days** — following a cave-in at the Bon Air mine near Leadville, Colorado. Fortunately, a large water pipe was not broken and allowed rescuers to communicate with the trapped men and pass them food and water while they sunk a new 200-foot shaft to free them. The trapped miners were Charles Reuss and Bert Froy. [Source document](#).
- Jun Gaylord Mine Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Ignatz Cosmoro was entombed in the Gaylord mine of the Kingston Coal Company for **76 hours** following the inrush of an unusually large amount of coal after a blast made by Cosmoro and another unnamed miner. With no serious injury, Cosmoro was able to walk home after his release. [Source document](#).
- Jun Park Regent Mine Asphyxiations, Aspen, Colorado
A fire in the shaft house of the Park Regent mine, on Smuggler Mountain, caused the death of P. A. Headman, who was working in a drift of the mine. A number of miners were overcome by smoke and gas and taken out in an unconscious condition after an **undisclosed period**. All recovered but Headman, who left a wife and five children. [Source document](#).
- Aug Quincy Mine Fall of Persons, Houghton, Michigan
Four Finnish timbermen were standing on a ladder in No. 2 shaft of the Quincy mine at Houghton, Michigan at a depth of 4,900 feet, when the ladder broke, precipitating all four to the 5,200-foot level. Andrew Millimakki was instantly killed, two others were fatally injured, and one man received serious internal injuries, but may recover despite the fall of 300 feet. [Source document](#).
- Aug South Hecla Mine Fall of Person, Calumet, Michigan
William Kitti fell down the shaft at the South Hecla mine of the Calumet & Hecla company and fractured his skull all the way around. Strange to say, although the entire brain was exposed, Kitti lived. He was taken to the hospital and his wounds dressed, the skull placed back in position and the physicians claimed that, unless a severe type of brain fever sets in, he will recover. He was resting nicely. [Source document](#).
- Aug Valley Mine Fall of Person, Bessemer, Michigan
While repairing a steam pipe in the Valley mine from a bucket which was 120 feet down a shaft, Fred Albert was scalded and was compelled to catch the under strap of the bucket. He hung on with one hand until he reached within twenty feet of

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the top, when he called to his partner that he was unable to hold on any longer. His partner in the bucket was unable to give him assistance. Albert had to let go and he dropped to the bottom of the shaft into about six feet of water, a fall of 320 feet, without serious injury. When a rescue party went down after what they supposed to be his remains, they were surprised to find him with his head above water. Source document.

- Sep Michael Oroko was rescued from a mine breach near Shenandoah, Pennsylvania after an **undisclosed period**. The breach was sixty feet deep with perpendicular sides thwarting his ability to climb out. His plight was discovered by a miner returning home from work. Oroko was almost dead when taken out suffering from hunger, thirst, and exposure. He was forced to stand in knee-deep water the entire time he was confined. Source document.
- Oct Shenandoah City Colliery Explosion, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
All the men trapped in the Shenandoah City colliery were rescued. Several were injured but none was seriously hurt. Twenty-two men were entombed by an explosion, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the imperiled men were safely rescued. Source document.
- Dec Carbon Hill No. 7 Mine Explosion, Carbonado, Washington
Two men were rescued more than **18 hours** after the explosion. They are Peter Merp, a Frenchman, and Michael Kulsh, a Pole. Merp had been blindly groping around in the darkness most of the night on his hands and knees, seeking for some avenue of escape.
- Dec Unnamed Anthracite Mine Cave-in, Wadesville, Pennsylvania
While John Wagner and a party of miners were filling an air hole at Wadesville, the earth gave way and Wagner, falling into the hole, was buried alive. Leaping after Wagner, one of the miners shoveled him out of the earth just in time to save his life. Source document.

— 1898 —

- Jan Anaconda Mine Tunnel Cave-in, Anaconda, Montana
After — **forty hours** — of imprisonment and anxiety, four of the five men were in the tunnel near this city that caved in near its entrance as the result of a dynamite explosion, crawled through a hastily constructed exit into the light of day. An improvised tunnel had been driven through the debris that closed the entrance to the tunnel itself. The construction of this was a painfully slow process, owing to the constant shifting of the ground. The rescue tunnel was fifteen feet long.

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When they crept through it into liberty the miners who had been imprisoned were found to be in good physical condition, and they hastily left the place. Jack McLeod was the only one of the five imprisoned men who died. His comrades say that from the moment of the explosion he suffered from the fumes of the powder, which bothered them all for about five hours. McLeod could not endure it. He died in a few hours. The rescued miners included Mike Konza, Matt Pratirz, Andrew O'Hara, and Andrew Ulsher. [Source document](#).

Jan Mt. Carmel Coal Mine Explosion, Chicopee, Kansas

An explosion occurred in a Mt. Carmel Coal Mine near Pittsburg, Kansas killing three and calling for the rescue of 5 others. The gas generated from the detonation of two windy shots caused the explosion. The last miner rescued, James Zimmerman, was found alive after a — **15 hour** — entrapment. The other miners rescued alive included Ben Shirard, Robert Boyd, Joe Zeitter, and John Tavernaro. [Source document](#).

Jul Richmond No. 3 Mine Fire, Scranton, Pennsylvania

After an **undisclosed period**, 40 men were saved from a fire in the Richmond No. 3 mine of the Elk Hill Coal & Iron Company near Scranton, Pa. The miners owe their rescue to the bravery of Foreman Hugh McCutcheon. Fire broke out in the engine and fan houses at the head of the shaft. McCutcheon was lowered to the bottom vein and gave the men warning. As he stepped away from the carriage, the fan house collapsed and fell down the shaft. Within five minutes smoke and gases filled the workings, but the men were able to reach the surface via a slope to the 2nd and 1st veins. [Source document](#).

Oct Midvale Mine Fire, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania

The last bodies were recovered from the Midvale mine and soon after the fire was extinguished. The bravery of Tommy Hantz, a 15-year-old boy employed as a nipper, resulted in saving 20 lives. While making his way through the smoke to a place of safety, he remembered that 20 men were in a distant working, where they would probably be quite surrounded by smoke before they realized their danger. Turning back, he managed, with great effort, to reach and warn them. He was Just In time. Young Hantz, on the way, unhitched a pair of mules, and while trying to drive the frightened animals out was overcome. Fortunately, a miner chanced to stumble over his prostrate form and carried him out. [Source document](#).

Nov Sampson Mine Cave-in, Lone Elm, Missouri

Three miners, Joseph Childress, Trix Krokoskia and William Schmulback, narrowly escaped being buried alive in the Sampson mine at Lone Elm. Fourteen men were

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working in the mine when several falling rocks warned them that a cave-in was threatened in a drift in which they and Hawkins were working. Hawkins hurried out and escaped, but 50 tons of earth and rock fell from the roof and sides of the drift, imprisoning his three companions. Help quickly came and the rescuers worked for **four hours** before they got the entombed men out. All three were alive and uninjured. [Source document.](#)

— 1897 —

- Jan Unnamed Coal Mine Fall of Person, Sharon, Pennsylvania
Howard Williams, 24, superintendent and operator of coal mines near Hubbard, was rescued after an **undisclosed period** after he slipped and fell sixty feet to the bottom of the mine shaft. He was seriously, but not fatally hurt. [Source document.](#)
- Jan Pierce Coal Company Mine Cave-in, Archbald, Pennsylvania
Nine miners had a narrow escape from death in the Pierce Coal Company's mine in Archbald. They were cut off from the main opening by an extensive cave-in and were rescued through the bravery of the mine foreman, William Jones. Jones was lowered by a rope down an air shaft and after an **undisclosed period** located the men who were hoisted one by one to the surface. The men were: P. J. Munley, Edward Gilroy, Anthony Malia, Patrick Barrett, James Strong, John Walsh, Henry Dando, John McAndrew, and a unnamed Hungarian laborer. [Source document.](#)
- Feb Reliance Mine Lost Person, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
After wandering around the dark underground chambers of the Reliance mine for — **four days** —, Willie Majorisik, age 11 years, was rescued in an exhausted condition by a party of miners. The boy had been without food, drink, or light. Majorisik entered the mine with two companions by way of an old drift, but he got separated from them while stopping to light his lamp. He failed to get a light and wandered about seeking an exit until he dropped in exhaustion. [Source document.](#)
- Mar [Kansas and Texas No. 44 Mine Explosion](#), Huntington, Arkansas
Immediately after the explosion, Mine Superintendent Vail directed the work the work of looking for those unable to walk up the slope. One by one the more seriously injured were brought out and taken to their homes in hacks and wagons. How many of the men are burned internally the doctors could not say, as their efforts were employed solely in dressing their wounds.

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May Tamarack Mine Rescue, Houghton, Michigan

With a box containing 200 pounds of dynamite on fire ten feet away from him, John Thomas, a boy who runs a compressed air hoisting engine in the Tamarack Mine, stuck to his post and saved the lives of the men at work in the mine by his wonderful bravery. Ten seconds after Thomas had hoisted the men to the level the dynamite exploded, smashing the engine to pieces, and doing other damage, but the men and the boy, to whom they owe their lives, were in a place of safety. The miners working in the twenty-third level had put seven cases of dynamite in a box for future use. At noon a miner, accompanied by Thomas, went to the box, and found it on fire. Thomas went to his post, gave the alarm to the miners in the level below, and ran his engine until he had hoisted them out. He then fled. The alarm of fire caused great excitement, but no miners were injured in the rush to reach daylight from a depth of from 3,000 to 4,000 feet. [Source document.](#)

Jul Mammoth Gold Mine Cave-in, Phoenix, Arizona

James Stevens was trapped for **13 days and 10 hours** in the Mammoth mine near Phoenix, Arizona. He had no food for the entire time since he had eaten his lunch before the cave-in occurred. His water supply was gone in three days. According to the report, his 160-pound frame was reduced to no more than 90 pounds. His mind was clear although he admitted to thoughts of suicide towards the end of his wait. Rescuers waited until it was dark to bring him out, fearing the light of day might damage his eyes. [Source document.](#)

Sep [Williamson County Mine Explosion](#), Johnston City, Illinois

Fifteen wounded miners, two of whom later died, were rescued from the smoke and flames after an **undisclosed period**.

Oct Tallula Mine Explosion and Fire, Tallula, Illinois

Following the breakout of fire after an explosion in the Tallula coal mine, all the miners except for George Carr hastily left the mine. Carr was thought by some to be dead until there was a lull in the flames. That was when sheets soaked in water were lowered into the mine in which Carr wrapped himself. He was pulled to the surface badly burned but saved from a horrible death. [Source document.](#)

Oct [Von Storch Mine Fire](#), Scranton, Pennsylvania

Joseph Yomaski, one of the men entombed in the Von Storch Mine of the Delaware and Hudson Company, was rescued at 10 o'clock Saturday night. The bodies of the other men were afterwards found and brought to the surface. In an interview, the Pole explained that when his companions began to suffer their death agonies, he at once urged them to follow him, but they refused. He escaped to an old airway where he knew of a hand fan, over which he placed a

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box, and in that inserted his head. He then kept the fan going for **ten hours** and kept himself alive until rescued.

Nov Central Mine Fire, Houghton, Michigan

After fire broke out in the Central mine and the miners ascended to the surface, it was discovered the three men were still in the mine. A relief party descended into the mine and by almost superhuman efforts rescued the imprisoned men, who were well exhausted. The mine openings were all been sealed airtight, and the fire would be suffocated. [Source document.](#)

Dec Sunny Side Mine Cave-in, Evansville, Indiana

For **three hours**, William Donnelly, a laborer in the Sunny Side coal mine lay bruised and bleeding under a mass of broken slate. For three hours he struggled and called for help. At last, when his strength was nearly gone and his mind almost bereft of reason help came and he was released from his awful trap. Shortly after 8 o'clock he entered one of the unoccupied galleries of the mine for the purpose of replacing temporary props with permanent props. The first prop Donnelly came to support an immense ledge of slate. Instead of putting the permanent prop in place before knocking out the temporary support Donnelly laid the former aside and knocked out the support with his hands. No sooner was it removed than the ledge of slate it had supported fell and crushed him to the floor of the mine. He fell in such a way as to pinion his arms thus preventing the only hope of escape that he might otherwise have had. Could he have had the use of his arms he might have thrown off enough of the slate to have extricated himself. As it was, he lay perfectly helpless. Donnelly called loudly for help, but his fellow workmen were too far away to hear his voice. When the men did not respond to his cries, he knew he would be compelled to lay in his torturing bed until the miners left at noon when they would pass within a short distance of him. For three hours poor Donnelly lay in this condition, his body racked with pain and his mind tortured with the thought that before the miners passed, he might lose consciousness and be unable to call for help when it was within reach. It was the longest three hours of his life. More than once, he gave up all hope of ever seeing the mouth of the mine again. Finally, he heard the men coming and returning hope lent power to his voice. His call for help was heard this time and strong and grimy hands soon unlocked the prison door. Donnelly was carried from the mine and medical aid summoned. The doctor who responded made a hasty examination of the injured man and had him removed to his home. Here a more careful examination was made disclosing the fact that Donnelly's entire left side from head to foot was badly bruised and cut. No bones were broken though it is feared he was injured internally. At 7 o'clock Donnelly was removed to St Mary's hospital. Late Saturday night he was reported to be resting easily. The miners who

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rescued Donnelly from under the mass of slate say it is a marvel he was not more seriously injured than he was. Source document. [Source document](#).

— 1896 —

- Apr Hope Mine Asphyxiation, Basin, Montana
A party of rescuers succeeded in descending to the 100-foot level of the Hope mine at Basin, Montana. The body of Albert Boulware, who went down the day before and was overcome with gas and unable to climb the ladder to the top and was left for dead. He was still alive, in spite of the fact that he had been in the mine over **fourteen hours**. [Source document](#).
- May Ashland Mine Cave-in, Ironwood, Michigan
Eight miners became trapped by a cave-in in the Ashland mine at Ironwood, Michigan. At the time of the initial fall, no great amount of ground had fallen and communication with the imprisoned men was still possible. The men were all unharmed and in a safe place, and it was said that with the aid of a rope they could be rescued. Before additional help arrived, another huge piece of ground fell, and it was impossible to reach the men. After an **undisclosed period**, all eight men were rescued. [Source document](#).
- Aug Clark City Mine Fire, Kankakee, Illinois
In a fire in the Clark City mine, 300 men were in the shaft when the fire broke out, but all but forty escaped easily. Of the forty, fifteen were nearly suffocated, but all would recover. [Source document](#).
- Aug Coleraine Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Peter Liko was trapped for **14 hours** following a cave-in at the Coleraine Colliery near Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Rescuers had to dig a trench fourteen feet through rock to get beneath him and not disturb overhanging boulders. Although no bones were broken, he was taken to the hospital, being unable to move a muscle of his body. [Source document](#).
- Dec Baltimore No. 2 Mine Explosion, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania
A terrific explosion of gas occurred in Baltimore shaft No. 2 of the Delaware and Hudson Coal company. Over twenty miners were imprisoned, but at a late hour fourteen had been rescued alive following an **undisclosed period**. One of the rescuers who was first to discover the bodies says the men were huddled closely together. They had apparently abandoned all hope of rescue and were resolved to die together. The supposition is that the men, when they realized their danger,

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made their way to the highest point on the plane. The smoke found its way to them, however, and they were all but suffocated when found. [Source document.](#)

— 1895 —

- Jan Richardson Colliery Cave-in, Pottsville, Pennsylvania
Charles Dietzel was rescued after being trapped for **40 hours** in the Richardson Colliery near Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Another miner, August Brenner, who was trapped with Dietzel was evidently crushed to death by the fall of coal. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Pewabic Mine Cave-in, Pewabic, Michigan
The entombed miners at the Pewabic mine who had been buried for **56 hours** were all rescued alive. None were injured by the fall of ground, but all suffered greatly from thirst and hunger as no drinking could be obtained and they had nothing to eat. Thousands of people were at the mouth of the shaft when the imprisoned men were hoisted to the surface. When the men heard the crash of timbers, they managed to escape to a dry drift on the first level, and after the fall had ceased started to dig their way out. They had drifted twenty feet when the rescuing party burst through from their side and were about exhausted when reached. The drifting by the entombed made their rescue several hours-earlier than had been expected. [Source document.](#)
- Sep Hillside Company Mine Lost Person, Avoca, Pennsylvania
William Sanderson, aged 14 years, had been working three days in the Slope of the Hillside Company's mine at Avoca, when he was sent in the mine to notify the men that there would be no more work for the day. In trying to make his way to where the men were, he entered one of the former workings and lost his way. He traveled all night and was found the next morning by a searching party after an **undisclosed period**. His clothes were all torn in his attempt to climb out. The searching party was headed by superintendent Thomas H. Evans, who worked energetically all night and prevented work in the mine until the boy was found. [Source document.](#)
- Dec [Dorrance Mine Explosion](#), Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Five men, all severely burned, were brought to the surface at 8:00 p.m. following an explosion which occurred sometime in the late afternoon in the Dorrance mine. Among the men rescued were Robert Blanchard, William Miller, George Lafly, Joseph Murphy, and Michael Moss who later died. When Blanchard was found he was being slowly roasted to death. His partner, Miller, whose arms were

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broken, could render him no assistance. These two men were not expected to live.

Dec Cumnock Mine Explosion, Cumnock, North Carolina

After pumping fresh air into the shafts following the Cumnock mine explosion, several miners were prevailed upon to venture down and investigate. They found and brought out 24 men from shafts Nos. 2 and 3. Five or six of them were badly wounded and some of them would probably die; others were slightly wounded.

Dec Rich Hill No. 15 Mine Explosion, Rich Hill, Missouri

Dick Tones, the last of the three men entombed in the No. 15 mine by an explosion, was found alive and rescued after he had been buried for **thirty-one hours**. He was half a mile from the mouth of the mine, and unconscious when brought to the surface. Source document.

— 1894 —

Feb Boston Run Colliery Inundation, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania

Five miners were rescued — **14 hours** — after an inundation trapped them in the Brooks Run Colliery at Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. The accident was caused by the breaking through of a huge body of water that had accumulated in a mine breach on the surface. The gangway was engulfed, but the men succeeded in getting to a place of safety where they sat perched in the darkness while the rescuing party cut an opening through 50 feet of solid coal through which they finally crawled to liberty. Source document.

May Highland No. 2 Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Rescuers needed to dig through a wall of rock 6-feet thick to free Theobald Wackley from the brutal conditions of his imprisonment. Mr. Wackley was released after being trapped for **18 hours** following a cave-in in the Highland No. 2 mine near Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Overwhelmed by a mass of fallen coal, Wackley spent the entire time waiting to be rescued in a kneeling position. Despite his helpless condition, Wackley cheered the rescuers on in their work. Source document.

Aug Gilberton Colliery Explosion, Ashland, Pennsylvania

Eleven miners, plus another number whose names could not be learned, were brought to the surface following a methane explosion in the Gilberton Colliery at Ashland. A roof fall occurred where pillar robbing was being performed which pushed the gas more than 1,000 yards to the gangway where it was ignited by

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naked lamps. One miner was killed outright, and another died while being carried to his home.

Sep Northwest Colliery Cave-in, Carbondale, Pennsylvania

The four miners who were entombed in the Northwest Colliery of Simpson & Watkins, near Carbondale, were rescued — **57 hours** — after having been buried alive. The rescued men were Thomas Mitchell, John J. Fanning, Andrew Clopposky and George Barney. Their experience was one of the most remarkable in the history of the coal regions. As the rescuer's pick made a hole through the wall the men inside cried, "Give us some water, for the love of God! We are dying!" The rescuers had everything ready to aid the men and passed in a little weak tea and whisky, cautioning them to drink moderately, fearing ill effects after their long abstinence. After wetting their parched throats with the liquid, for they could not swallow at first, the men begged for food, but this was refused them, and the rescuers continued to break through until the hole had been sufficiently enlarged to enable one of them to crawl through and into the little chamber where the entombed men were lying. Considering that they had been without food or water and with impure air for nearly sixty hours, the men were in good condition and, after being fed and resting at the bottom of the shaft for some time, they regained considerable strength and were able to talk. Source document.

Dec Olyphant Mine Fire, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Fourteen miners were rescued after spending the entire night in the Olyphant mine of the Lackawanna Coal Company. The rescued miners included William Evans, foreman; Frank Benni, engineer; Patrick Brennan, Charles Williams, Frank McCable, and nine Hungarian laborers. Source document.

Dec Stevens Colliery Fire, West Pittston, Pennsylvania

The Stevens Colliery operated by Jenkins & Company in West Pittston was the scene of considerable excitement at a late hour on the night of December 15. Shortly after 11 o'clock the engineer, Thomas Lloyd, discovered that the engine house was on fire. He tried to extinguish the flames with a few buckets of water but was unsuccessful. The structure was very dry, and the fire made rapid headway. Lloyd was alone in the building at the time, and he remembered, that there were forty-six men in the mine. Without losing any time he ran to the telephone and gave the alarm in the mine. The foot man at the bottom of the shaft told the miners to throw down their tools and get on the cage as quickly as possible. By this time the flames had surrounded the engineer on all sides. He patiently awaited the signal to hoist the men to the surface. At last he got the signal and brought up the cage with lightning speed. Eighteen men were aboard. The carriage was then returned to the mine for the second load of human freight.

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On this trip ten men were brought up. The side of the building now collapsed, and the burning timber fell all around the brave engineer, who still held the lever. At last the remaining men got on the cage, and in a few minutes, all were brought to the surface safely. The engineer fainted from the excitement and exhaustion but was quickly rescued by the members of the local Fire Department, who had now reached the scene. He was badly burned about the face and hands but would recover. The fire caused damage to property amounting to about \$3,000. [Source document.](#)

Dec New Castle Mine Fire, Coal Creek, Washington

A fire broke in the Oregon Improvement Company's New Castle coal mine at Coal Creek, and the creek was turned into the mine to extinguish the flames. Amid wild confusion Superintendent Anderson telephoned below, telling the 125 men in the mine how to escape, and remained at the telephone until fire drove him away. By this time the 125 men had come out, but more remained, and five men, Will Hann, Andy Reynolds, John Erickson, Andy Stewart, and John Morgan, went down the air shaft to warn them, though the slope was burning within 100 feet. The fans were kept going though they fanned the flames and enormously increased the loss, and men worked heroically to keep the flames from them, for a moment's stoppage would have meant death. The last man was brought out and the roll was called. [Source document.](#)

— 1893 —

May Unnamed Anthracite Mine Lost Person, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania

James Hogan, a driver boy, got lost in a big mine at Nanticoke. He walked four miles through the long galleries. **Several times he fell to the ground** from exhaustion, **and was immediately attacked by rats**, which congregate in large numbers in the mines. With great difficulty he fought them off. He was rescued early in the morning after an **undisclosed period**.

Note: Sad to see that not much has changed in more than 125 years reporting the activities of underground mining. There's no mention of this incident in Pennsylvania's 1893 Annual Report. Could the reason be because this was such a common occurrence? They did see fit to include the narrative of a miner injured when he was kicked by a mule after poking the beast in the ribs with a small stick. **Oh, the humanity!** [Source document.](#) [Related news from the period.](#)

Nov Pittsburg and Lake Angeline Mine Cave-in, Ishpeming, Michigan

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A large fall of ground occurred at the Pittsburg and Lake Angeline mine imprisoning three miners. Two were rescued uninjured, shortly after the fall, but the other man, John Rowe, remained buried and was dead. [Source document.](#)

- Dec Crystal Ridge Mine Fire, Hazleton, Pennsylvania
Four miners who were imprisoned by the fire in the Crystal Ridge mine were found by the rescuing party and taken out safely through an adjoining mine. [Source document.](#)

— 1892 —

- Jan Young Coal Mines Hoisting Accident, Chatilam, Illinois
Six miners were seriously injured and rescued after an **undisclosed period** in the Young coal mines at Chatilam, Illinois when the hoist engine became unmanageable and precipitated the cage in which the men were standing to the bottom of the shaft, 240 feet below. One miner, Bert Wiggins, was killed in the incident. [Source document.](#)
- Mar Unnamed Anthracite Mine Roof Fall Fatality, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
On March 10, when John Traynor, a fire boss in an unnamed Schuylkill County, failed to return from the mine, his wife pleaded with miners to go in and search for him. A party was organized, and 12 miners made a thorough search without finding any trace of him. When the news was broken to the wife, she became strangely calm and after a few days she disappeared. Search throughout the village failed to locate her and it was thought that her mind became unbalanced and that she wandered off into the mountains. Her fate remained a mystery until March 14 when a party of surveyors were in the mine. Off in the distance they heard a soft voice singing. When they approached, they realized it was the missing Mrs. Traynor, sitting there in the dark with her dead husband's head in her lap, swaying and singing a love song to him. They gently lifted her up and she screamed a cry and fainted. Both she and her husband were taken to their home. [Source document.](#)
- Jul Lost Miner Found at Gaylor Shaft, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Terence O'Brien, age 70, was rescued from the Gaylor shaft at Plymouth, Pennsylvania. O'Brien, a foreman, had been lost in the mine and without food for **52 hours**. His light had gone out and he wandered off in an old heading. It was speculated that he might become insane from his experience. [Source document.](#)

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- Oct Indian Ridge Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
After being imprisoned for — **26 hours** — by a fall of coal at Indian Ridge Colliery of the Philadelphia and Reading Company, Stiney Klemovich was released from his perilous position. The man was confined, as it were, in a living tomb. He was forced by the falling coal into an almost recumbent position in a cavity 3 feet high by 5 feet long. On reaching the main part of the mine he was so delirious with joy at his escape that he kissed and hugged his deliverers. He was given stimulants and in half an hour was able to walk to his home. During his imprisonment he directed the movements of his rescuers with his voice. [Source document.](#)
- Nov Hazledell Colliery Cave-in, Centralia, Pennsylvania
A cave-in occurred at the Hazledell Colliery at Centralia, operated by L. A. Riley & Company, where eight men were imprisoned in the mine for some hours, and two others were quickly taken out very badly injured. This colliery was situated about two miles from Ashland. The two men first rescued were Ira Rothermel and his son William from Mount Carmel. The cave-in was caused by the robbing of a pillar, or column, of coal that was left standing to support the roof. The work of rescue was under the direction of Superintendent Edward Williams. Those who were entombed included John Ketman, Jr., Robert Stahler, John Ryan, Allen Hoffman, Henry Martin, Frank Ryan, Thomas McDonald, and a Polander, name unknown. After his rescue, Ira Rothermel died from his injuries. He had a broken leg and was injured internally. [Source document.](#)

— 1891 —

- Feb [Spring Mountain No. 1 Inundation](#), Jeanesville, Pennsylvania
13 miners died in Jeanesville, Pennsylvania after they were trapped by water in the Spring Mountain No. 1 Mine operated by J. C. Hayden and Company on February 4, 1891. Four others were rescued **19 days** later. They were John Tomaskusky, Joe Mautchwitch, Bosso Franko, and John Berno.
- Feb [Susquehanna Colliery Inundation](#), Grand Tunnel, Pennsylvania
Following the firing of a blast, water rushed into the Susquehanna Colliery at Grand Tunnel, Pennsylvania trapping Michael Schilling, William Cragel, and John Riner. Freedom from the flooded mine came for the trio when rescuers found them after **115 hours**. They had to wait out the 4¾ days perched on a piece of timber 3 inches wide. When found, the men were almost completely exhausted and would require care to bring them through.

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- Feb Grand River Mine Explosion, Denver, Colorado
- What almost proved to be another Mammoth mine disaster occurred on February 2nd in the Grand River coal and coke mines. Just at 6 o'clock as the day shift, composed of seventy-five miners, were about to leave the mine a terrific explosion occurred, and immediately black smoke came pouring out the side of the mountain. Many women and children rushed toward the entrance of the mine, only to be driven back by clouds of smoke. Above the roar of escaping gases, the pitiable cries of the imprisoned miners could be plainly heard by their wives and children. Soon the seventy-five miners were brought to the surface, some of them more dead than alive, and none of them any too soon, as the flames immediately reached the shaft and came up with such force that it drove everybody away. Explosions had followed every few hours. At 2 o'clock the next morning the excitement was so great that it was impossible to tell if anyone failed to get out. It was thought several have perished. Had the explosion occurred when the miners were at work not one would have escaped. This mine had been on fire several times before in the previous ten years, caused by miners' lamps igniting the gas, which had always troubled them. Source document.

— 1890 —

- Jan Nottingham Mine Explosion and Fire, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
- Following a terrible explosion in the Nottingham mine in Plymouth, Pennsylvania, five miners were caught between an ensuing fire and cave-in and trapped for an **undisclosed period**. About a half hour after the fire broke out two brave rescuers were lowered into the mine to ascertain the circumstances. When they reached the fire, they heard the cries of the trapped miners. Now with a sense of urgency, the rescuers put their hands in front of their faces and rushed through the fire and began dragging the imprisoned men out one by one uninjured. Source document.
- Feb Nottingham Colliery Explosion, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
- Fire Boss George Dunstan was the only man who could tell anything about the accident. According to Dunstan, he was going from the sixth lift to the fifth. When he got out in the passageway between the two lifts, he struck a body of gas. His light ignited and he was thrown violently to the ground. He managed to crawl to the gangway where he was rescued after an **undisclosed period**.
- May Jersey No. 8 Cave-in and Explosion, Ashley, Pennsylvania
- Three badly injured miners: Anthony Froyne; fire boss John Allen; and Robert W. Roberts were rescued from the Jersey No. 8 mine of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company following a cave-in and explosion. Their entrapment ranged from **9 to 14 hours**. Sadly, all three men died from their extensive injuries after their

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rescue. Ironically, it was asserted that John Allen's lamp caused the explosion. Had he not done so, all could have been rescued alive, as there was a current of air going through the chamber where the men had taken refuge, after the cave-in had taken place.

Aug Hollenback Colliery Rescue and Recovery, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania

There was great damage caused by a record-breaking cyclone that descended upon Wilkesbarre and vicinity. Included in the devastation was the lengthy entrapment of 27 miners working in the Hillman vein. The mammoth Hollenback breaker was a complete wreck, the roof being blown off and the windows all blown in. The structure was completely disjointed and would have to be entirely rebuilt. The front of the engine house was also blown in. The fans were stopped while twenty-seven men were at work in the Hillman vein, but, luckily, they were able to start them right away, and although the hoisting machinery was damaged the work of conveying the men to the top was accomplished without accident. It was a very narrow escape. Four men standing on beams were able to guide the rope of the drum, and it took — **several hours** — to hoist them from the Hillman to the Baltimore vein. They were then able to walk up to the surface in safety. [Source document.](#)

— 1889 —

Mar Black Diamond Colliery Cave-in, Shamokin, Pennsylvania

At one point given up for dead, five of the six miners trapped for an **undisclosed period** by a cave-in at the Black Diamond colliery at Shamokin, Pennsylvania were rescued alive and well and the sixth would be recovered and brought to the surface. Earlier on the day of the rescue, the trapped men heard a voice shouting: "Are all safe?" The imprisoned miners answered back: "Five are here; one is covered." [Source document.](#)

The sixth miner, Peter Nearshalsky, was rescued on March 16, after — **50 hours** — of imprisonment. [Source document.](#)

Aug Allegheny Mine Inundation, Frostburg, Maryland

Forty miners were driven back and became trapped in the Allegheny mine following a break in of water from the adjacent abandoned Aetna mine. After an **undisclosed period**, they were rescued thanks to the bravery of Hugh Meen and William Stevens. Several animals were in the mine and probably perished. [Source document.](#)

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Oct Brisbin Colliery Cave-in, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Herman Frager had a thrilling experience in a mine, having been imprisoned for — **fifteen hours** — in the narrow chamber where he had been working at the Brisbin Colliery. The day earlier, several hundred tons of coal fell from the roof across the track leading to the chamber, cutting off all possible means of escape. Frager was horrified to find himself shut in by the great black mass, and as the squeeze continued his prison kept growing smaller every moment until he expected it would crush the life out of him. A gang of twelve men arrived promptly at the scene and began cutting through the thick coal pillar that separated them from Frager's narrow prison. There was but frail hope of his being alive. His rescuers worked bravely at the risk of their own lives to save his. The fall occurred at 9 o'clock in the morning, and it was after midnight when Frager was taken from the narrow prison. Although badly bruised and faint from inhalation of foul gases and coal dust, he wept with joy when he was rescued. [Source document](#).

— 1888 —

Oct Winthrop Mine Cave-in, Ashpeming, Michigan

Joseph McGrath was rescued from a cave-in at the Winthrop mine near Ashpeming, Michigan following an **undisclosed period**. The escape was said to be almost miraculous, as the mass which fell on him weighed many tons. Luckily the timbers so fell as to allow him enough air to keep him alive. [Source document](#).

Nov [Shaft No. 2 Explosion](#), Frontenac, Kansas

At 5:30 p.m. on November 9, an explosion occurred in the [Frontenac Shaft No. 2](#) of the Cherokee and Pittsburg Coal Company. At 4 a.m. (**10½ hours**), five had been rescued, and at 1 p.m. (**19½ hours**), four more were brought out alive.

— 1887 —

Jul Grand Junction Mine Inundation, Des Moines, Iowa

After an imprisonment of **110 hours** in the Grand Junction mine, Charley Saunders was released and rescued. The mine was flooded by the nearby caving of an old shaft. The rising water had compressed the air which sustained him in the small chamber he occupied. After his rescue, he complained of hunger, but otherwise he was quite well. [Source document](#).

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— 1886 —

Aug Fair Lawn Colliery Explosion, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Following the explosion, a crew of men making repairs were sent to the east gangway where groans had been heard. There they found 3 men still alive. After an **undisclosed period**, the first man to be brought to the surface was John Nofin. He was badly burned about the face and arms. John Kerrigan was alive when found and talked the strongest of all, but he died before being brought to the surface. The last was John Connor. He had two large scalp wounds and a bad cut on the knee and another on the arm. His face and hands were badly bruised.

Mar Uniondale Mine Explosion, Dunbar, Pennsylvania

After an **undisclosed period**, a rescue party led by Columbus Shay of the Mahoning works, and James Henderson of the Calvin mine managed to get past the flames and smoke to the injured miners. They were lying in every direction buried under masses of debris. Several of them were horribly burned. Their sufferings were terrible. Twelve of them were found almost in a dying condition and two others were dead -- mangled almost into an unrecognizable mass. The names of those killed are John Williams and Joseph Cope.

— 1885 —

Aug Pardee & Co. No. 3 Colliery Cave-in, Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Intense excitement was created at the No. 3 Colliery, operated by Pardee & Co., near Hazleton. Word was sent to the Superintendent that two miners, Bernard McMonagal, and William Butler, were entombed in the mine by a massive fall of rock and coal, which had carried with it many props, shutting off all communication between the imprisoned men and the other miners in the slope. In a short time the news of the accident had spread, and soon nearly 400 men, women, and children had gathered about the mouth of the shaft anxiously awaiting news from below. A rescuing party was organized, and 100 men set to work, and in about **two hours** had succeeded in removing 30 tons or more of debris, when the voices of the entombed men could be heard. **An hour later** they were reached and were brought to the surface in an exhausted condition, having been rescued just in time to save their lives. Source document.

Oct Plymouth No. 2 Mine Explosion, Plymouth, Pennsylvania

As soon as possible after the explosion, a rescuing party was organized and the injured men were brought out of the mine, all terribly burned but, with one exception, still living. The first man brought out by the relief party was Thomas Howard. He was cut in the back and terribly burned about the head and face. The

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others were brought up in the following order: Joseph Thomas; David Grimes; John Woods; Frank Spinnett; Edward T. Jones; John Lavinsky; Thomas Collins; Anthony Spinneta; John Zalinsky; Thomas McDermott; Frank Sanfraux; John Kerst; Sandy Lova; John Copley. All these were found lying near the foot of the shaft in the main gangway. None of them was able to stand up, and one or two were unconscious.

Dec Nanticoke No. 1 Mine Inundation, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania

Of the dead, many were fathers and sons of families throughout Nanticoke. One family lost three sons in the disaster, with the fourth being rescued "with difficulty," according to the Wilkes-Barre Record.

Twenty-nine men and boys were rescued through the air shaft by means of ropes, which were lowered and fastened about their bodies, and one at a time they were drawn to the surface. The disaster is now believed to have been caused by the caving in of a large swamp covering several acres, upon which culm was being dumped, the accumulating weight of which is supposed to have forced the bottom out. Source document.

— 1884 —

Apr Abandoned Mine Fall of Person Rescue, Leadville, Colorado

Richard Swan, a mining speculator of Leadville, Colorado, was rescued from a horrible fate, being found in the bottom of a deserted mine shaft, into which he had fallen **six days** before, and which had been his living tomb. His rescue was by the merest accident. James Barry and Charles A. Dean, two miners, while on their way to work heard the groans of someone in distress. Ropes and mining timbers were procured, and Barry was let down the shaft. On reaching the bottom and striking a match he found a man lying face downward just in the entrance of a drift leading from the shaft. The man was unconscious, and his face unmistakably depicted the agonies of death by starvation. The unfortunate man was raised to the surface and carried to the city, where, after restoratives had been applied, he recovered consciousness. From the fall he suffered a sprained ankle and a bruised arm but was not otherwise hurt. Source document.

Dec McLean County Mine Cave-in, McLean County, Illinois

Peter Johnson, a miner employed in the shaft of the McLean County Coal Company, was rescued from a cave-in following a difficult and **undisclosed period**. Johnson was at work when the earth overhead gave way and fell upon him, knocking him down and burying him in earth and rock between two and three feet deep. Luckily, other persons were working nearby and at once set to work to

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extricate him, and he was reached just in time to save his life, for had he remained buried a few moments longer he would have been smothered. When they found him, a heavy rock lay on his head, and it took three men to lift it off, and it was all that they could do to lift it. Once Johnson was released and taken home, the examining physician found a large cut on the forehead as well as numerous cuts and bruises all over his body. The doctor said that he was very severely hurt but did not think that his injuries would prove fatal. Source document.

— 1883 —

- Jan Hokendaqua Iron Mine Cave-in, Allentown, Pennsylvania
A cave-in occurred at the ore mine of Jonas Metzger, operated by the Hokendaqua Iron Company, by which Elias Huntsberger was killed outright. John Billiard, a man named Semmel, and William Metzger were also working in the shaft at the time. Billiard and Semmel made their escape, but Metzger was caught by the falling earth and timber and held fast. The company sent a large force of men to aid, and after an **undisclosed period**, Metzger was rescued, but slightly injured. Source document.
- Feb Unnamed Lead Mine Cave-in, Bingham, Utah
Buried by a cave-in for **48 hours**, Edward Griffin was rescued from an unnamed lead mine at Bingham, Utah. The rescuers drifted sixty feet to free him. He was not injured. Source document.
- Mar Stanton Colliery Asphyxiations, Mahanoy Plane, Pennsylvania
At Miller, Hach & Co.'s Stanton Colliery at Mahanoy Plane, a large force of miners and several driver boys were at work in the east gangway when a loud humming noise, such as always precedes the approach of black damp, was heard. This was immediately followed by a strong current of air, which blew out all the miners' lights, leaving them in total darkness, and before they could realize their position, they were overcome with the deadly damp. A driver boy and door boy were less seriously affected. The brave little fellows crawled through the darkness to where their mule was standing. Taking hold of his harness, they urged him in the direction of the foot of the slope, when the mule succumbed to the black damp and fell over and on top of the little driver, Patrick Moore, pinning him to the spot. Moore cried for his companion to come to his aid, which he did, but before Moore was released from under the mule, he too fell a victim to the damp. Meantime, the wind forced its way into the gangway, while the damp rushed toward the mouth of the slope with terrible force, and upon reaching the surface threw the cages off the track, tearing some of the boards off the shed covering the mouth of the pit. This gave the alarm to the men on top, and immediately a rescuing party

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descended the slope. The bodies of the two boys and the mule were the first found. A short distance further on the bodies of nine miners were found lying in the east gangway, which was still heavily charged with the black damp. The 11 victims were soon brought to the surface more dead than alive. Many of them had to be buried in clay for a short time and then removed to their homes. None of them were dead at this point, but their condition was serious. The timely arrival of the rescuing party prevented a terrible disaster, and their escape was considered almost miraculous. The rush of damp was caused by the falling in of an old breast, which forced the black damp into the gangway. Source document.

— 1882 —

- Jun Alta Mine Asphyxiations, Virginia City, Nevada
Six men penetrated the Alta drift with refreshments for seven imprisoned miners. The rescuers wore ice helmets to enable them to pass the belt of 300 feet of foul air between the entrance and the end of the drift. The seven men were found in comparatively good condition. They had turned water from the drift into their ice-water keg when empty, twisted the end of the compressed air pipe into a barrel of water, and, standing around it, breathed the air thus cooled as it arose through the water. After an **undisclosed period**, all were removed from the drift, the whistles along the lode signaling the event. The bodies of Richard Bennett and Dennis Callahan, the brave fellows who perished in the attempt to rescue the miners by means of a boat, were recovered. Source document.
- Oct Lehigh Valley No. 3 Colliery Cave-in, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania
After **15 hours** of confinement due to a cave-in, four miners were rescued from the Lehigh Valley Coal Company's No. 3 colliery. The men rescued were Robert Hanna, Peter James, Henry Schuetze, and Timothy Reynolds. All were expected to recover. Source document.

— 1881 —

- Mar Almy No. 2 Mine Explosion, Almy, Wyoming
After an **undisclosed period** following the Almy No. 2 mine explosion, two of the white miners were brought out in a crippled condition, and 15 Chinamen were rescued through the ventilating shaft, all of whom were injured.

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— 1880 —

- May Ludington No. 2 Mine Cave-in, Norway, Michigan
Sixteen miners were caught in a cave-in in the Ludington No. 2 iron mine of the Lumberman Mining Company. An alarm was immediately given and miners from other parts of the mine set actively to work releasing the imprisoned men. The half-suffocated cries could be heard growing fainter and fainter. After an **undisclosed period**, entrance was made and thirteen of the entombed were rescued uninjured. The remaining three were taken out dead. [Source document.](#)

— 1879 —

- Apr Sugar Notch No. 10 Colliery Cave-in, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania
Seven miners were rescued after being trapped by a cave-in for **5 days and 15 hours** in the Sugar Notch No. 10 Colliery near Wilkesbarre. The men sustained themselves on mine water and the cooked flesh of a mule they killed that was trapped with them. They cooked the meat in the lids of their cans held over three lamps. The men were in good shape when they reached the surface and except for 2 that lived 2 miles away, the other five men walked to their homes. The mine was operated by the Lehigh & Wilkesbarre Coal Company. [Source document.](#)

— 1878 —

- Aug Abandoned South Utah Mine Fall of Person, Cedar Hill, Nevada
There was a good deal of excitement in town when it was announced that a man had been discovered in the bottom of a winze in an old tunnel on Cedar Hill, where he had been for **more than 3 days**. The discovery was made by two men who were out on the Geiger Grade for a walk. Arriving at an old tunnel called the South Utah they concluded to enter and take a look at the formation of the rock through which it had been cut. They had proceeded for some distance along the tunnel when they were startled at hearing in advance what appeared to be faint human moans. Calling out to know if anybody was below, there came a feeble cry of "Help, help." They then asked his name, and the answer came back, "Patrick Maguire." After help arrived, he was lifted to the surface and with little delay the poor fellow was taken to the County Hospital. Upon examination Dr. Kirby found that Maguire's left thigh was broken in three places, and the right in two places. The man was terribly injured, but Kirby thought he would be able to save his legs and his life. His many cuts and bruises were severe but not dangerous. [Source document.](#)

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Sep Fairlawn and Pine Brook Mine Inundations, Scranton, Pennsylvania

During a fierce rainstorm, flooding the streams causing considerable havoc along their banks. An obstruction in Pine Brook, a small stream flowing through the Seventh Ward, caused it to flood the flats near the mouth of Fairlawn Colliery, and rise nearly 20 feet above the usual level. The embankment dividing the brook from the colliery was swept away, and the imprisoned volume of water poured in a wild torrent down the slope into the mine, where about 50 men and boys were at work. The rush of the water cut a great gap in the surrounding embankment and carried with it lumber and debris of all kinds. The miners were panic-stricken by the appearance of the sweeping torrent, which threatened them with death, and they rushed about in terror. At last they ascertained that an opening led to the adjacent Pine Brook Mine, of the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company, and so they made their way in that direction through the rising water. They found the Pine Brook mine also flooding but reached a mule-way that led out by means of a narrow slope, and so came to the surface in safety. A still more exciting scene was going on in the chambers of the Pine Brook Mine, which, being lower than the Fairlawn, invited the rush of the flood. The men were working at the lowest point, and about 400 feet from the foot of the shaft, when the current came upon them with a roar that struck dismay to every heart and made stout men who had met many a danger before cry like children. The railroad was raised to the surface of the water. **One brave miner named John B. Davis sought to save an old man and two boys, and nobly aided them up the incline that the torrent ran down.** At last one of the boys, a mule-driver, named Frank Fasold, was swept from his grasp, and carried off in the darkness. He perished. Davis nobly endeavored to save him but in vain. He clung to his other charges, however, and brought them out safely, all escaping through the mule-way. A number of narrow escapes were recorded, but Fasold's was the only life lost. Several families living near the scene narrowly escaped the dangers of the flood, which entered their dwellings, and some were rescued in boats. The banks of the stream were lined with dead goats, hogs, and other animals. The storm also did considerable damage to a number of roads and bridges in that neighborhood. Source document.

Nov Sullivan Mine Explosion, Sullivan, Indiana

As a result of an explosion in the Sullivan mine, ten men were killed by the shock or soon died of suffocation. There were at the time 27 miners at work, of whom 15 were in the lower vein. Seven of these were saved after a lapse of over an hour, but how they managed to survive in the dense fumes and damp was a mystery. The 12 men on the upper vein were badly stunned but unhurt. Joseph Handford, Tom Irwin, and Jack Smith distinguished themselves for their bravery in periling their lives to save the living and the recovery of the dead. The last named especially won the commendation of the whole community.

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— 1877 —

- May Wadesville Colliery Mine Fire, Wadesville, Pennsylvania
Men working in other parts of the mine knew that something terrible had happened and rushed to learn the fate of their comrades. They found seven miners so terribly burned and bruised that one of them died in a short time. James Libby was brought out alive but died in a few hours. He was fearfully burned.

— 1875 —

- Feb Osage Mining Company Fire, Osage City, Kansas
Thirty men and three boys were at work in the mine at the time as flames shot out of the shaft high into the air. Two hours after the fire started, the first of the trapped miners appeared at the surface. Anxious hands were stretched out, and as the man was drawn to the surface he fainted. Coming up one after the other, some with strength to hold on and others unconscious. **4½ hours** after the start of the fire, every man was saved, and the town was wild with rejoicing. Later in the evening, all the men were doing well. Source document.
- Apr Cayuga Mine Roof Fall, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Frederick Woosnam, a laborer, was crushed to the ground by the fall of roof at Cayuga shaft, and nothing but the timely assistance of the miners saved him from death. He was badly jammed about the head and body, besides sustaining a compound fracture of his left leg. The injured man was placed under the charge of a doctor. Source document.
- Nov Chauncey and Grand Tunnel Mines Cave-in, Plymouth, Pennsylvania
Excellent mining knowledge or just lucky. You be the judge. A letter received on November 29, 1875, from Wilkesbarre, Pa., stated that the most extensive and serious mining casualty ever known in the Wyoming Valley, occurred at the Chauncey and Grand Tunnel mines, about two and a half miles south of Plymouth. About two weeks prior, Mr. Roberts, one of the proprietors of the Chauncey mine, noticed that the roof of the opening was working in a most extraordinary manner and was convinced that the mine was doomed to certain calamity. Upon seeing this, he gave orders for the men to leave the mine as soon as possible and remove as much of the company's property as could be taken out on the spur of the moment. The miners, totaling 125 remaining, taking with them the implements of their calling, and two hours later the mine caved in. The effects were truly terrific. Huge boulders were thrown out of the mouth of the tunnel by compressed air, as if they had been pebbles, and the shock of the crash was like an earthquake. Source document.

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— 1873 —

- Jun Henry Clay Colliery Explosion, Shamokin, Pennsylvania
An accident occurred at the Henry Clay Colliery which was caused by the explosion of a keg of powder which communicated the fire to the stope in which were about two hundred miners. 122 of the miners were rescued. Twenty were supposed to be still in the mine. At the time of the accident the inside foreman was exploring some of the works, when he set fire to the gas, causing the explosion. [Source document.](#)

— 1871 —

- Mar E. Bast and Company Breaker Boiler Explosion, Ashland, Pennsylvania
Following the boiler explosion at the E. Bast and Company Breaker, Mark Daniels was buried in the scalding, burning debris. Through the almost superhuman efforts of six men, he was rescued from the terrible position in which he was suffering the most excruciating torture and slowly burning to death. Sadly, he died a few hours later, after suffering such agonies as beggar description.
- May West Pittston Colliery Fire, West Pittston, Pennsylvania
The anticipation was palpable as rescuers worked through the night and into the next day. At 12:30 a.m. (**10 hours later**) they brought Andrew Morgan to the surface in an unconscious state. Learning that more miners had barricaded, they sent out for more men and tools. Up to **22 hours** after the fire was first discovered, around twenty more miners, not more than alive were brought out. Only one or two recovered enough to give an account of themselves. It is not known how many of those rescued survived.
- Nov Nevada Gulch Mine Cave-in, Deer Lodge, Montana
Peter Coffey came in from Nevada Gulch for Dr. Mitchell and gave account of one of the most remarkable mining accidents we have heard of. It appeared that on Nevada Creek lived, remote from any other person, William Cleghorn, a miner of intelligence and industrious habits. The mail-carrier, on the previous Friday or Saturday, in going by, left his papers at the cabin and wished to borrow a mule from him, but seeing no one about, went on his route. On returning on Thursday he found the cabin still tenantless, and the papers remaining where he had placed them. This unusual occurrence aroused his suspicions and remembering he had seen tracks in the snow leading from the cabin on his last trip, he searched for and found them, and could find no returning track. He followed them to a drift in a bar, found that there had been a cave, and that Cleghorn was caught by it. Summoning help, the miners succeeded in reaching and rescuing the unfortunate

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miner and Mr. Coffey a few minutes later started for Deer Lodge, without ascertaining many facts, as Cleghorn wandered in his mind when he was saved, though he was conscious and rational when Coffey left. His head and chest were not caught in the earth, but his hip-joint was injured, if not dislocated, and his right leg crushed above the ankle. The drift was only a few feet below the surface, and he told them that on Sunday he could distinctly hear the miners walking and talking on the bar above, while he lay there crushed, famished for food and drink, in mortal pain, unable to attract their attention, and thus he lay for **five and a half days**. Mr. Cleghorn was a man of powerful build, weighing over 200 pounds, but it was said he was reduced to a skeleton when exhumed. Dr. Mitchell left immediately to attend him. He reported Cleghorn living and likely to recover. His hip was dislocated. Dr. Mitchell would amputate his right leg below the knee. [Source document.](#)

— 1870 —

- Oct Van Stork Coal Shaft Fire, Scranton, Pennsylvania
The "Van Stork Coal Shaft," the property of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, near Scranton, was destroyed by fire. Originating in the boiler house, the fire soon engulfed the main building. There were fourteen men at work in the mine below the shaft where the fire broke out. Eight of these escaped safely through the slope at the river, half a mile away. The six others were cut off and suffered considerably before water got down the shaft. They were finally rescued after an **undisclosed period**, however, nearly exhausted. [Source document.](#)

— 1869 —

- Apr KY-Yellow Jacket Gold Mine Fire, Gold Hill, Nevada
James Dunlevy was the sole survivor of nine miners on the level where the fire started. He felt himself suffocating and he lay down on the floor of the level and put an overcoat over his head. All his eight companions on the same level were imprisoned by the falling rocks. Their bodies were never recovered. It was hours after Dunlevy had been rescued in the cage before he regained consciousness. [Source document.](#)
- Aug Pine Ridge Mine Explosion and Fire, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania
30 miners were rescued from the burning Pine Ridge mine near Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania after an **undisclosed period**. An ignition of firedamp caused the fire. [Source document.](#)

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Sep Warrensburg Mine Fire, Carbon Hill, Missouri

The Warrensburg Coal Mine at Carbon Hill caught fire in the main shaft while fifteen men were in the mine. Seven of the men succeeded in getting out by clinging to the ropes of an ascending car, although they were badly burned; but the remainder were forced to remain in the mine until the fire was extinguished, when they were rescued in a more or less injured condition, the foreman, Mr. Halvey, probably fatally. [Source document.](#)

Dec [East Sugar Loaf Colliery Cave-in](#), Stockton, Pennsylvania

The East Sugar Loaf Colliery cave-in in Stockton, Pennsylvania claimed 10 lives on Dec. 18, 1869; only three bodies were ever recovered. The cave-in occurred at 5 a.m. when two houses were swallowed into the ground. A third home went into the subsidence and all, but one person got out. It was a young girl who was later rescued from a rooftop. One outcome of the Stockton Mine cave-in was that houses were not built so close to mines after the incident.

— 1865 —

Aug Hubbard Mine Inundation, Hubbard, Ohio

Four miners became trapped in the Hubbard mine in Trumbull County when a dam gave way at its opening allowing a large volume of water to enter. The four men, comprehending their situation, fled to the highest portion of the mine, about a half mile from the entrance. Their fellow workmen outside, supposing they would seek this point, commenced boring immediately over it, as near as they could judge, and after penetrating sixty-eight feet fortunately struck the pit in close proximity to two of the half-famished men. They were able to communicate with them and give them food by means of a tube. Of the other two no information could initially be obtained. Later, the water in the river had so fallen as to admit a small boat. They found two of the men speechless with exhaustion, and a few rods further they found the other two, and brought all safe to the open air. About, two thousand people were present, at the time. The men were resuscitated with difficulty but were later doing well. The four miners who were imprisoned were John Turrill, Thomas Bowen, Jacob Miller, and Thomas Miller. [Source document.](#)

— 1856 —

May Owens & Guthrie Coal Bank Cave-in, Blue Rock, Ohio

On April 25, 1856, about 12 o'clock p.m., the Coal Bank of Owens & Guthrie at Blue Rock, on the Muskingum River, was heard to give way. A large portion of the great hill came down with a tremendous crash. Four men were confined for —

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14½ days — in a Coal Bank at Blue Rock, including James Pearson, 32; James Getwood, 22; William Edgell, Jr., 20; and Edward Savage, 16. Thirteen miners succeeded in making their escape without receiving any injuries. Three others, Timothy Lyons, George Ross, and William T. Gheen, who were further in, came out after the rocks had commenced tumbling down, receiving slight injuries. Timothy Lyons, who was farther in than the others was caught by a rock falling upon his arm. He made several attempts to rescue himself and had nearly given up in despair of getting loose, when making one more desperate effort, he extricated himself and made his escape. Rescue came for the four trapped miners on May 10th at 1:00 a.m. None of those trapped was seriously harmed from their experience and all were expected to recover. [Source document 1.](#) [Source document 2.](#) [Source document 3.](#)

— 1846 —

Jan [Delaware-Hudson Mine Roof Fall](#), Carbondale, Pennsylvania
Following a massive roof fall in the Delaware-Hudson Mine, John Hosey clambered his way through the damaged mine and managed to get out after being confined in the mine for **48 hours**. He was not seriously injured, except that his hands were lacerated from working his way through the rocks and slate.