

FORTY-ONE ARE DEAD.

Only One of the Miners Who Entered the Shaft Thursday Morning Escapes—How the Explosion was Caused.

GRAFTON, W. Va., Jan. 23.—Forty-two men were in the gang that went to work yesterday morning in the ill-fated Orrel mine at Newberg. It is now known that of that number 41 are dead. The man who escaped is John Miller; he came up five minutes before the accident.

The cause of the awful calamity is attributed to the removal by Albert McWilliams of a bulkhead across one of the ventilating galleries, which turned the fresh air from its proper course and permitted the accumulation of fire-damp. This was fired by a naked lamp, and the explosion followed.

When the explosion occurred the cages were at the bottom of the shaft and the tremendous energy resulting from the combustion crushed them and the heavy timber lining of the shaft into a confused mass. This demolition of the cages obliged the rescuers to resort to the iron coal buckets as a means of reaching the level of the drifts, and as they will hold but three men, the work of removing the obstructions proceeds very slowly.

THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION.

Some of the men have, however, forced their way through into the mine and penetrated about 300 feet along the main heading. They report that one cross heading 80 feet long, which had been filled up solid with slate, mud and refuse, was blown entirely open, the enormous mass of debris being scattered for several hundred feet along the galleries,

The first bodies were reached at 5 o'clock this evening. At 6 o'clock this evening, four bodies had been discovered and removed to the bottom of the shaft, but they will not be brought up to the surface until morning. They are so blackened and disfigured as to be unrecognizable.

Every hour since the disaster, scenes of the most agonizing character have been enacted in the homes of the villagers that were poor, but happy, yesterday, but are now desolate. At first it was hoped that the men who were in the mine might have escaped instant death and they could be rescued before they died of starvation. While there was reason to believe this, the wives, mothers and other relations of the unfortunates retained their feelings to some extent. This morning, however, when word was passed from mouth to mouth in whispers that there was no hope that any of the miners were still living, a wail of anguish resounded through the whole village, and when 36 hours ago laughter was heard, the only sounds now are moans.

THE VILLAGE IN MOURNING.

Twenty-two of the victims were married men, and of that number 16 had families living in Newberg. Of the unmarried men and boys nearly all had relatives among the 500 persons that makes up the population of the village.