

SIXTEEN DEAD

Awful Disaster in a California Mine.

ONLY THREE ESCAPED

The Others Crushed by Falling Earth and Rock.

AN EXCITING RACE FOR LIFE

Heartrending Scenes at the Mouth of the Shaft—Meager Particulars.

SAN ANDREAS, Cal., Dec. 24.—A correspondent who went to the scene of the mining disaster at Angel camp, has returned here and reports the following particulars: The accident occurred in the Utica mine. The main shaft, which is 400 feet deep, caved in from the 300-foot level, carrying all the stones, timber and earth in its way. The amount of earth giving away was a solid mass of soil and rock and timbers forty-five feet wide and sixty-five feet long.

Nineteen miners were at work in the 400-foot level putting in timbers. Without a moment's warning the vast mass of timbers and rock, with the rapidity of lightning, suddenly fell, crushing the miners below. Three men only of the number who were working near the mouth of the drift had warning. Hearing some stones fall they became frightened and ran for their lives. The last one of the number was struck by falling rock and severely cut on the head.

The remaining miners, sixteen in all, were pinioned by the falling mass of debris, and could not escape.

Immediately word was sent to the top that a cave had occurred, and men were sent down the shaft to render all the assistance possible. When these reached the scene it was found that there was no possible hope for those who were at work. All were undoubtedly crushed to death.

It was but a few moments until the news of the appalling accident was sent over to town, and friends and relatives gathered at the mouth of the shaft, eager to hear news from loved ones below. Willing hands were soon at work, trying to hear some word from those who were in the shaft. From time to time, as news from below was brought up to the surface, the scene was heartrending in the extreme. Three of the unfortunates were married.

ALL WORK SUSPENDED.

SAN ANDREAS, Cal., Dec. 24.—There is no hope of rescuing the sixteen miners who were buried by the cave-in at the Utica mine Sunday. Working parties have found two dead bodies, but will not be able to reach them until tomorrow, and it is feared that they will not be able to reach some of the other victims for several weeks. It is believed that all of the sixteen men were crushed to death.

ANOTHER CAVED IN.

This afternoon the surface of the mine at Angels Camp, in which the disaster occurred Sunday, has caved down to a depth of forty feet, and the cave extends along the vein from the north shaft to the south shaft, at a width of thirty feet. This makes it necessary to stop all the work of recovering the bodies.

TWO BODIES RECOVERED.

SAN ANDREAS, Dec. 24.—Information reached here this afternoon that the surface of the mine in which the disaster occurred Sunday has caved down to a depth of forty feet and the cave extends along the vein from the north shaft to the south shaft, at the width of thirty feet. This makes it necessary to stop all work of recovering the bodies. There is little doubt that the hoists have been drawn into the cave.

ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 24.—To-day Messrs. Hayward and Hobart, owners of the Utica mine, have received a brief letter from Superintendent Lane, giving an account of the sad disaster. Lane throws a little light on the affair. He says that the mine was considered unsafe on account of the spongy condition of the earth above the 330 foot level, and that he had given an order that the usual timbering precautions be taken. George Williams, the boss timberman, an old and very reliable man, went down to the 330-foot level on Sunday afternoon to retimber a portion of the mine in and about the slopes on that level, when suddenly and without a moment's warning the crash came.

The area involved in the cave-in is at present unknown, but must be large.

Hayward and Hobarth have a good record as mine operators. Hayward has been running on a large scale for forty years, and Hobarth has been closely identified with mines for thirty years. Together, they have had thousands of men in their employ. The accident in this mine is the first large one they have experienced.