

CHERRY MINE TO BE OPENED

Removal of Bodies of 200 Victims to Be Made This Week.

Cherry, Ill., Jan. 31.—Nearly every woman in Cherry is drawing her heart-strings tight to undergo the ordeal of exhumation of bodies that is expected this week, following the promised unsealing, today or Tuesday of the St. Paul mine. More than 200 coal miners have lain entombed there since Nov. 13, when fire caused the death of some 350 men.

No attempt will be made until tomorrow to reach the bodies of the men entombed. It had been planned to unseal the mine today, but the non-arrival of experts with oxygen helmets who will enter the mine as soon as it is opened caused the postponement of the work.

As it is not certain that the fire in the mine is extinguished, nothing definite toward the recovery of the bodies will be planned until the experts have explored the shaft.

Fan to Start Again.

If conditions prove propitious, the fan will be started to suck in fresh air. Any smoldering fire will have to be extinguished and 2,000,000 gallons of water pumped from the third level.

It is thought that about 40 bodies are floating on this water in the bottom of the mine. Upward of 200 other corpses are said to be huddled in the second level.

The condition of the bodies is causing as much concern as are the engineering problems attendant on the uncapping of the mine and the cleaning of the debris from the subterranean passages. It has been suggested that much of the grewsomeness of the situation could be avoided by destroying the bodies in the mine galleries with chemicals.

Widows Oppose Plan.

This proposal, unofficially made, has met with bitter opposition from the widows, mothers and children of the dead miners. They insist that they be allowed to look once more on the form of a beloved relative, to give that body a Christian burial and to recover some personal token of the decedent, such as a watch or a ring, if possible.

With grief so long drawn out, the women of Cherry are stoically awaiting the last ordeal. Tentative arrangements are already in progress for funerals and burials. Men have been engaged to dig a row of graves nearly a quarter of a mile long.

W. W. Taylor, manager of the St. Paul Mine company, does not offer much hope that the mine will be emptied of its dead before the end of the week, as much preliminary work must be performed. It is even possible that the fire might break out afresh and force the resealing of the mine for another long period. Tests made last week for fire and gases, however, indicated that the work of clearing the mine could go forward.