

only Correspondence in files

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF MINES

MINE EXPLOSION

File No. D-1010

Mine No 2 Yukon Location Yukon, W. Va.

Company Yukon-Pocahontas Coal Mailing address _____

Date March 28, 1924 Time of day 7:25 a.m. _____ p.m. Mine working or idle _____

Total employment _____ Underground _____ Shifts worked _____ Daily production (tons) _____

Number men killed 24 Injured 2 In mine 140

Number men escaped unassisted _____ Rescued _____ Barricaded _____

Type (gas or dust) Gas Ignition source Open Light Rock-dusted _____

Was breathing apparatus used _____ Gas masks _____ Self-rescuers _____

Time required to reach explosion area _____

Classification (gassy or nongassy) _____ Methane exhausted (24 hours) _____

Number of main fans _____ Quantity air per minute _____

Ventilation (continuous or split) _____ Face (line brattice or fans) _____

Mine openings _____ Principal _____

Coalbed _____ Thickness _____ Volatile ratio _____ Roof _____ Floor _____

Mining system _____ Pillars extracted _____

Room support: Main entries _____ Intermediate _____ Section _____

Transportation: Main _____ Intermediate _____ Section _____

Electricity (voltage ac or dc) _____ Face _____ Portable lights _____

Principal mining machinery (continuous miners, conventional, etc.) _____

Was machinery permissible type _____ Was it permissible _____

Blasting and explosives: Coal _____ Grading or special use _____

Cause of explosion _____

Did explosion result in fire or were fires found _____

Point of origin _____

Area affected _____

Was Bureau report made 2 Author(s) Not in files - only correspondence

If no Bureau report, what and by whom _____

Remarks _____

By The Associated Press
WELCH, W. Va., March 28, 1924
Thirteen bodies have been recovered and 13 others are believed dead in an explosion in the No. 2 mine of the Yukon-Pocahontas Coal Company at Yukon, McDowell county, this morning.

There were 26 men in the mine when the explosion occurred and no hope was held for any of them, it was said. There is no telephone at Yukon, and communication over the mountains is difficult and reports meager. No explanation of the cause of the explosion had been given in word received here.

A rescue car of the United States bureau of mines, now stationed at Neyours, W. Va., near Bluefield, will be ordered to proceed immediately to Yukon, scene of an explosion today, J. J. Borquin, chief of the rescue department announced at headquarters here. The car is so close to Yukon, Borquin said, that the crew may have taken it out without awaiting orders from Pittsburgh. The car, he said, is fully equipped and manned by the regulation crew of expert rescue men.

Reports received in Pittsburgh this afternoon were that 25 or 30 men were in the Yukon mine at the time of the explosion. Normally 30 men are employed on the day shift. Twenty-five caskets were ordered by mine officials.

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.
BLUEFIELD, W. Va., March 28, 1924
Twenty-six lives were snuffed out in an explosion at 7:27 a. m. today in the No. 2 mine of the Yukon-Pocahontas Coal Company at Yukon, McDowell county, according to a statement tonight by J. A. Demchock, ventilation engineer of the coal company, who arrived here tonight from the ill-fated mine.

Demchock was in No. 1 mine at the time of the explosion. Six of the 32 men in No. 2 mine escaped death and were rescued by fellow-workmen from No. 1 mine. All men in No. 2 mine went in on the first and second trips.

Twenty-four miners, including the motor crew, had composed the first trip and eight on the second trip.

Laid on Three Miners.

There was only a difference of about 15 minutes between trips and those workmen of the first trip were either at work or nearing their destination at the time of the explosion, according to Demchock. The motor on second trip was wrecked about 4,000 feet from the main entrance of No. 2 mine. All but three members of this trip remained to help place the motor on the rails. It is believed by those who were in the mines at the time of the explosion that the explosion was caused by the three men on the second trip who had left the derailed motor and started to walk to their work.

Officials and mine inspectors, accord-

ing to Demchock, were satisfied the explosion was caused by head lamps worn by the three miners who had evidently decided to take a short cut through some old workings and had encountered a pocket of gas. The bodies of the three miners were found some several hundred feet back in the old workings, two of them being together and the third about 200 feet away.

Inspected Week Ago; No Gas.

The mines had been inspected last Thursday night and there was no presence of gas at that time, inspectors' report showed.

Of the 125 men in No. 1 mine but few really knew what had taken place in No. 2. Several near the entry leading from No. 1 to No. 2 were knocked from their feet by the force of the explosion and several received injuries.

A foreigner, one of the few men to escape death in No. 2, minus his coat and hat and bleeding about the head and face, ran through the entry between the two mines. He was unable to tell what had taken place.

Less than an hour after the explosion rescue teams from nearby mining camps were on the scene.

The last of the bodies was removed from the mine tonight. Some of the bodies were badly burned and mutilated. A similar explosion occurred in the mine in 1919, in which 18 persons were killed.

8-1010

125 LIVES SAVED IN MINE BLAST BY SUPERINTENDENT

New Foreman Rushes Into Adjoining Workings and Warns Men.

BLUEFIELD, W. Va., March 29.—The presence of mind of T. J. Dawson, who three weeks ago became Superintendent of the Yukon-Pocahontas Coal Company, at Yukon, W. Va., to-day is credited with the saving of the lives of 125 miners in No. 1 mine yesterday when an explosion claimed the lives of 26 men in No. 2 mine. Only six of the men in No. 2 mine escaped.

When the blast came, Superintendent Dawson was near the entry leading between the two mines. Realizing what had happened, he rushed into No. 1 to warn the men there. Some of these workers were injured when they were knocked down by the force of the explosion.

All the bodies of the victims were recovered last night from the mine, which was the scene of a similar disaster in 1919, when eighteen lives were snuffed out.

Rescue work was at first done by volunteer teams from nearby mines and later was in charge of the crew from the United States Bureau of Mines rescue car from Nemours.

Officials of the company and mine inspectors who have been in the mine since the blast, believe the explosion was caused by the head lamps of three miners, who took a short cut through an abandoned working to their places of work.

DP

YUKON BLAST UNOFFICIALLY LAID
TO OPEN LAMP IN GAS POCKET

The explosion at No. 2 mine of the Yukon-Pocahontas Coal Co., on March 28, which took a toll of 24 lives, was caused by the flame from a miner's lamp when a gas pocket was encountered, according to an unofficial opinion following a preliminary inspection by R.M.Lambie, chief of the State Department of Mines. More complete investigation seems to indicate that when the second trip was wrecked those who remained behind to help replace the motor on the track escaped and that those who went forward met death when they encountered the gas pocket.