

**Bureau of Mines Bulletin 616:  
Historical Documentation of  
Major Coal Mine Disasters in  
The United States  
Not Classified As  
Explosions of Gas or Dust,  
1846-1962**

**February 19, 1847; Spencer Mine (Anthracite),  
Pottsville, Pa.; 7 Killed**

*(From letter of State mine inspector, 1950, to the  
Federal Bureau of Mines)*

From the best information I can gather, the Spencer Coal Co. had a breaker and mine about 1 mile north of Minersville. The slope was driven on the Peach Mountain vein for a distance of 360 feet. Two levels were worked off this slope; on the first, the west gangway was advanced 4,000 feet; on the second, the east gangway was advanced 1,500 feet and the west, 1,950 feet. A tunnel was driven to the Tracey vein, and gangways were driven off this tunnel. A second opening was shown on the Peach Mountain vein. The extent of this development in 1847 is uncertain.

All coal seams in this area are gaseous. Open lights were used and black powder and squibs were used for blasting. It is thought that the ventilation arrangements were poor and that tests for gas were made with open lights, resulting in a local explosion.

At the time of this disaster, there were no laws to provide for the health and safety of persons employed in the Anthracite industry.