

Explosion at Pratt Mines.

The Age-Herald gives the following account of the explosion in the mine at Pratt Mines last Friday.

At 10:30 o'clock yesterday morning there was a gas explosion at Pratt Mines.

When you say a mine is on fire it strikes terror into the average man, but among the old miners there is not so much of a stir as one would imagine.

On arrival at Pratt Mines about 7:30 o'clock Assistant Superintendent J. G. Moore was found and interviewed. He was just eating a lunch and had been through a big afternoon's work.

"The explosion occurred about 10:30 o'clock at shaft No. 1, in Rock slope. This shaft is about 325 feet deep, and from the front of the shaft down the slope to where the explosion took place measures about 4000 feet. About 50 feet from the main entry there is an old room in which gas was discovered and planked up."

"I hastened to the shaft on learning of the explosion and in company with Mine Engineer Erskine Ramsey, A. J. Riey, assistant engineer, J. C. Lovey, an employe, and two life convicts, John Gray and Thomas Tillman, went down to rescue the men."

"We got to where the men were very soon, but the after damp and gas were so heavy that we were forced to retreat without being able to get the men out. I was overcome and was quite unconscious before they got me to the fresh air. After recovering I returned, but was not able to reach them. We went to work repairing the brattices that had been knocked down, in order to put the air in circulation through the mine."

In talking with Assistant General Manager G. B. McCormick, he said: "As best we can find out at the point where the bodies were found, which was at a cross heading of the main shaft, there was an old abandoned room. That is, it was abandoned and planked up on Wednesday and 'gas and fire' marked on it, the usual danger sign. It seems one of the men, who, no one knows, knocked off a plank and the gas came out and was ignited."

"After the explosion, the deadly afterdamp played its part, and this it was that caused their deaths."

THE DEAD BROUGHT OUT.

Seeing Mr. Moore again later he said that the bodies had just been brought out. The rescuers were also out and revived.

It was discovered that there were six negroes and five whites among the dead. All were convicts except one, Mr. Thomas Moore, a white free laborer.

The whites were: Thomas Moore, Ed Couley, W. D. Mayfield, A. M. Hayes and J. G. Davis.

The negroes were: Phil page, Bob Clayton, Thomas Hare, Joe Hall, Thomas Hamilton and Charles H. Robinson.

They were placed in the hospital No. 1. Governor Jones was notified that the above persons had been killed.

There was a rumor in circulation yesterday afternoon that one W. D. Mayfield, who had just been sent there for life imprisonment caused the explosion. It was said that he went up to this place with a lamp in his hand causing the gas to ignite.

There were fourteen others who had been partially choked. They were soon revived. There were of those who were rescued not less than six who were placed in the hospital where their small bruises and burns might be remedied.

Said Mr. McCormick, "It is not known who did the work and it has been impossible to find out."

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