

explosion occurred. He was not seen after that. It is probable that his body was recovered when some of the debris was cleared up. He had relieved the underground manager who went out of the pit.

A trapper boy was sitting at his door, but noticing a flash of flame coming in that direction, he dodged under his seat and placed both hands before his face. His hands and the tips of his ears were burned and the door was knocked down. If he had remained on his seat he would have been killed or very badly injured. Another boy heard the explosion and rushed off to the place where he knew his brother was at work and succeeded in carrying him out, badly injured.

His heroism was one of the chief topics of conversation. There were plenty of volunteers to search for all bodies. Men who came to the pit as spectators divested themselves of their coats, and unhesitatingly went to the rescue of their fellow-workmen.

FIRE DAMP AGAIN.

Another terrible disaster was added to the long list of mine horrors which have occurred during the past year, at 7 o'clock on the morning of May 1, 1891, when four men were instantly killed at the **Ocean coal mines, owned by Wilson, Black & Sherdon**, two miles northeast of Clarksburg, W.Va., by an explosion of gas.

The report of the terrible explosion was heard for many miles in all directions and brought thousands of people to the scene.

Seven men had descended into the mine and forty more were at the pit-mouth ready to enter when, like a clap of thunder, the deafening report was

heard. It shook the ground like an earthquake and belched water and a cloud of smoke from the two entrances, which are located a thousand feet apart. None of the men on the surface had the slightest hope of ever seeing any of the seven men alive again, but a rescuing party was immediately formed, and men brave enough to enter the mine, notwithstanding that it was filled with smoke and fire, volunteered their services. Down they went into the suffocating cavern, penetrating the mine to a remote chamber, where three of the seven who had entered were found alive. They were at a point far from the room in which the deadly gas was ignited. There was so much smoke in the mine that the rescuers, as well as the three survivors, were almost exhausted when they reached the surface.

The rescuers also succeeded in finding one of the bodies which was burnt to a crisp, but the other three could not be reached. All hope of reaching the three remaining bodies had to be abandoned, as the fire was spreading rapidly through the mine and burning furiously. The scenes about the pit-mouth were most heartrending. The wives and relatives of the victims of the disaster were running about wringing their hands and crying hysterically. Thousands of people from the surrounding country commenced pouring in to investigate the cause of the terrifying report which they had heard. The company operating the mine were severely criticised for alleged neglect to thoroughly inspect the mines and provide proper ventilation, and many threats were made. The operators claim that the accident was one which it was impossible to have foreseen or prevented.

It is doubtful if the mines will ever be operated again. Had the explosion occurred ten minutes later the men would all have been in the mine and the result would have been appalling.

COLLAPSE OF A MINE.

One of the strangest accidents in mining annals and the sensational escape and rescue of a number of miners occurred at Hickory Ridge, Sept. 26th, 1891. For eight hours the men were imprisoned in an old chamber, not knowing what second they would be crushed to death. There were four Americans and a dozen Hungarians and Italians.

When they entered the mine at 7 o'clock in the morning, the inside foreman directed the men to rob pillars, considered the most dangerous of inside work. A pillar divides one breast or chamber from another, and after all the coal is taken from the chamber, then the pillar is removed in order to secure more coal. A chain pillar divides the levels. At the ridge the men were working on the first level, while 100 feet of rock and coal lay between it and the second lift, which had been well worked out. De Long and his comrades were compelled to work cautiously, as the pitch was 90 degrees. There were few men in the gangway anywhere near the men.

An hour after the first pick had been sunk into the coal the miners experienced a tingling sensation, as though a bunch of needles had been thrust into the souls of their feet. They grew dizzy and were momentarily paralyzed with astonishment and fear. The bottom of the gangway was cracking in hundreds of places, while through the fissures issued a