

DROWNED IN A MINE

ELEVEN HUMAN LIVES PERISH AT THE LYTLE COLLIERY.

ONLY ONE RESCUED ALIVE

The Scene of This Appalling Calamity at Primrose, Near Minersville.

SOMEBODY'S BLUNDERED

The Water Suddenly Bursts Through a Breast and Floods the Mine—Rescuers Nobly Go to Work.

One of the most appalling accidents which has ever fallen upon this community occurred at the colliery of the Lytle Coal Company at 4.30 last evening. Eleven human lives were instantly hurried before their Maker by a sudden flooding of the mine, caused by water bursting through the face of a breast in the Primrose level. The water had been imprisoned in an old working and completely inundated the Lytle works.

Twelve men were imprisoned by the mad rush of water and only one of this number escaped alive. He reached an elevated point and was rescued at 11 o'clock. His name is William Bell, of Jonestown.

WHO THE VICTIMS ARE.

The following is a correct list of the dead:

- THOMAS BUGGY, Black Heath.
- JAMES DOLBIN, Forestville.
- JOHN H. ZERBEY, Llewellyn.
- The other eight men are all Italians and are:
- ALBERT SEBELLA.
- FRANK VIOLETTA.
- NATHAN PERREA.
- PETER OLIVETTI.
- PETER MAKETTO.
- JOE FRYTA.
- VINCENT VECURO.
- DOMINICK UGILLIA.

All the unfortunate men are unmarried, excepting Zerzey, who leaves a wife and several children.

Buggy is about 20 years old and is a son of the late Patrick Buggy. It was his first day to work at the colliery. Dolbin is a son of John Dolbin, a Forestville merchant and was about 21 years old.

The Italians were boarders at No. 2 shanty, a rude structure which stands in a row of squatty houses erected at a point about 150 yards north of the slope opening.

CROWDS FLOCK TO THE MINE.

Hundreds of people flocked to the scene of the horrible catastrophe as soon as the news reached the neighboring villages. This number was soon augmented by several thousand people from more distant places, Minersville being represented by about one-fourth of her population. Two thousand people, it is estimated, crowded around the ill-fated mine, many women being among the number. Darkness soon settled upon the scene and men and women rudely jostled each other in their eagerness to learn all about the unfortunate men. The colliery is located in a narrow valley, the hills on either side being thickly wooded with oaks and pines. The surface is very uneven and is thickly studded with huge boulders. Deep gullies disfigure the valley while the mountain streams have furrowed the hillsides with immense openings. Piles of culm and other refuse of the mine cover several acres of the surface and add to the rough contour of the country. Imagine two thousand people, gazing through pitchy darkness, in this wild, unbroken nook of the forest and you can form some idea of the scene that was enacted at these embryo coal works. Boreheaded women and children with tear stained faces, men and boys with countenances pale and not a whisper from any of them, as they waited tidings at the mouth of the pit, made up a picture at once weird and ghastly. The flicker of the miner's lamp as he hurried hither and thither, three phantom shadows and intensified the gloom.

RESCUERS AT WORK.

The water filled all the workings and even crept to a point seventy yards up the slope. It soon commenced to recede and at 6 o'clock it was lowering at the rate of four feet per hour.

There are two slopes, known as No. 1 and 2, driven to the Primrose vein; at a depth of 150 yards. A number of the men who were in the mine when the water burst in upon them, ran to these slopes and climbed to a point of safety, but not a minute too soon. The angry flood seemed to leap from its bondage in the old mine with fierce demoniacal glee, sweeping everything before it and filling all the chambers in an incredibly short period. It was accompanied by a roar that smote the ear of every body in the mine and the fearful concussion it produced, buried timbers and wagons in every direction.

Bell, Buggy and Zerzey were unable to reach the slope and dashed up an air way, Bell reached a "saddle" but his companions were caught on the bosom of the torrent and engulfed. The "saddle" or "flat" gave Bell a safe refuge, but left him in total darkness. The waters churned and eddied a few feet from him and seemed to hunger for his life. Death stared him in the face and the stillness of his narrow prison house was only broken by the death-dealing flood which lapped the sides of the mine like hungry givers glazing over their prey. He remained in this narrow crevice until rescued at 10.30 o'clock.

Inside Foreman William E. Adams, without a moment's delay, commenced the work of rescue. It was impossible to reach the men through the slopeway and he at once descended an air-shaft to explore the watery mine. Adams securely tied a stout rope around his body and was lowered into the dark abyss by willing hands. The shaft is 80 feet deep and communicates at the bottom with the Primrose gangway, through a narrow air-way. He penetrated this airway for about thirty feet and heard a voice crying for help. He answered it and got a reply. He then ascended the shaft and with eight others went back into the mine and commenced the work of driving a "heading" to the "saddle," the only spot where any human being could have survived the besom of death that took off the other victims. A bucket was attached to the rope and materials were thus supplied to the little band of rescuers who strained every nerve and muscle to reach the imprisoned man. They had to cut a way through the coal for a distance of 30 feet. At frequent intervals piteous cries could be heard coming from the man, who was the rescuers to hasten the work. As the work advanced the men distinctly recognized the voice of Bell. He constantly cried "help," and each time was answered by a cheering reply from the rescuers. The blasting could be plainly heard on the surface by the immense throngs who stood all around the mouth of the shaft. Whenever one of the rescuers would ascend to the top, hundreds pressed around him begging him for news. When it was at last evident that only Bell was alive, the horror of the awful calamity became fully understood for the first time.

It was 10 o'clock when an opening was effected to the air course through which Bell escaped to a place of safety. It was impossible to reach him as the water still held him a prisoner. An opening was then made over the top of the roof timbers and it was about 11 o'clock, when poor Bell, almost crazed with fright, was taken out. His voice was hoarse as he thanked his deliverers and his face was overcast with the pallor of death. He could not have survived the terrible ordeal much longer. His rescue would have seemed as if it was planned, and that he reached the surface that he was suffering a slight mental derangement. He was assisted to his home at Jonestown and nobly was allowed to question him. He is about 28 years old and resides with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Bell.

Bell told his rescuers that he became separated from his companions when the flood rushed upon them and never saw them afterwards. His story removes all vestige of hope for the rescue of the men alive.

THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT.

Breast No. 4 in the Primrose gangway had been worked up the pitch a distance of 40 yards. It was through the face of this breast that the water suddenly rushed like a mad avalanche. Thomas R. Jones, of Minersville, and Geo. Adams, of Jonestown, left the breast at 2 o'clock that afternoon on account of its wet condition. The presence of water was first noted about a week ago and the men worked away unconscious that they were all the time nearing a vast body of water. It is now believed that the water which caused so much death and havoc, was imprisoned in the Little Diamond gangway, belonging to the old McDaniel workings, which were abandoned many years ago.

The mine officials knew that this gangway was waterlogged, but never for a moment realized that it was in such dangerous proximity to the breasts which were driven towards it.

Someday has again blundered at the awful sacrifice of human life, and the horrors of the Leansville catastrophe are repeated.

A slope was being sunk to this gangway for the purpose of removing the water. An opening was to be made in a day or two and small holes were being driven with a view of obtaining the distance of the water from the face of the slope.

DROWNED LIKE RATS.

A slope 80 feet deep extends from the Primrose gangway to the lower levels. Two tunnels were being driven by the eight unfortunate Italians under Contractor Albert Sebella. One tunnel had penetrated to a distance of 65 yards, and the other to a distance of 25 yards. The foreigners were at work in this lowest department of the mine when the flood tore down upon them. They perished in this underground trap created by their own hands, like rats. For there was no escape for them only by stemming the torrent that thundered down the short slope. A number of mules also perished.

When the rescuers went to work pipes were connected with an air compressor, for the purpose of supplying air to the hardy delvers. It was afterwards found that this was not needed and the work was stopped.

THEY NARROWLY ESCAPED.

Foreman Adams and young Dolbin were going to the face of the West Primrose when the water burst into the gangway. Dolbin was in advance of Adams and failed to reach the slope in time. Adams gave the alarm when he realized the cause of the high wind and no doubt saved the lives of the others who escaped up the slopes. John Hargis, Albert Bell, Edward Gavin, Thomas Davis, "Novie," and William Waters barely escaped with their lives. One man reached the bell rope and gave the signal to hoist, but before the engineer could start the machinery the car was engulfed by the water. The strain was so great upon the rope, that it broke at the device and the man hung to the end of the rope and was hoisted to the top. Adams in escaping ran a 100 yards before he reached the slope.

A MINERS' JOURNAL reporter reached the scene of the accident at 7.30 and remained there until about 11 o'clock. When he left the crowd had not grown any smaller and the greatest excitement prevailed.

The rescue of Bell stimulated hope in a number that Buggy and Zerzey would be found alive and this had the effect of holding the crowd.

Mine Inspector Gay arrived at the mine about 9 o'clock. He first heard of the accident when he read the MINERS' JOURNAL bulletin. The heading through which the rescuers found Bell was driven in an easterly direction.

A double action 21-inch cylinder pump mounted on a truck, was lowered into No. 1 slope at 10 o'clock. It has a capacity of pumping one million gallons every twenty-four hours.

The mother and sister of young Dolbin stood near the shaft entrance and wept piteously. Each man who came to the surface seemed to have orders to keep his lips sealed for they positively refused to be interviewed. This exasperated the crowd somewhat.

Archibald Dunlap at 10 o'clock descended the shaft to learn the fate of Dolbin, his brother-in-law. He returned to the surface in a short time and the crowd for the first time heard the real condition of affairs.

The Lytle colliery is located at Primrose, about a mile west of Minersville. It is a new plant and has not yet erected a breaker. The mine is controlled by a Scranton syndicate with John K. and James P. Hsieh at the head. The former is the general manager.

Cornet R. C. Guldin was at the mine and issued orders that none of the bodies were to be removed without his permission.

The work of removing the water will be prosecuted with the greatest vigor. The main body of water will empty through the Primrose water level and the principal work will be in pumping the water from the 80-foot slope. The water in the McDaniel workings, on the west of the Primrose gangway, was tapped several weeks ago and a pillar 100 feet thick holds it back.

THE NOYES-ROCKWELL CASE.

Congressman Cobb Presents the Ballots in the House.

WASHINGTON, April 20.—The House today resumed the consideration of the Noyes-Rockwell contested election case. Mr. Wheeler, of Alabama, gave his adherence to the cause of the contestee and criticised the report of the majority of the Committee on Elections. In his opinion no case had ever been presented for the action of the House when so little ground the minority.

Mr. Cobb, of Alabama, who with Mr. Gillespie, of Pennsylvania, presented the minority report in favor of the sitting member, then took the floor in support of Rockwell. In his speech Mr. Cobb produced the original Doyle ballots, and was immediately questioned by Mr. O'Farrell as to where he had obtained them. Mr. Cobb replied that he did not know and he did not care. These were the originals and were open to the inspection of members. Mr. Wagner, of New York, then spoke in favor of Rockwell.

The House pending further discussion adjourned.

Yesterday's Ball Games.

At Philadelphia..... 1 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 3
Philadelphia..... 0 0 5 0 0 0 0 0 6
At Baltimore..... 6 2 0 2 1 0 4
New York..... 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 3
The game was postponed to New York 9 to 0, Baltimore refusing to abide by a decision of the referee.
Other games postponed, mining.

At Philadelphia:
The University of Pennsylvania team today defeated Lafayette, by the following score:
Pennsylvania..... 0 0 1 2 1 0 1 0 11
Lafayette..... 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 5

Reformed Home Mission Board.

LANCASTER, April 20.—A today's session of the bi-synoptic Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church, and was voted to the Mission at Boonville, Virginia, and Kansas City. A loan was voted to the church in Northeast Baltimore. It was decided that inasmuch as English was the language of the country all German missiaries of the Board be instructed to conduct part of the services in the English language. A resolution was adopted transferring all the missions to the General Board on the conditions already agreed upon.

An Examiner Named.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 20.—Judge Metzger to-day appointed Hon. W. W. Hart examiner in the case of W. H. Armet against the P. & E. combine. The plea of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company and the dentures of the P. & E. Coal and Iron Company and the Lehigh Valley Coal Company were also referred to him. The examiner was directed to proceed in the usual course of equity practice, and to pass upon all the questions raised by the bill.

Awarded \$25,000.

NEW YORK, April 20.—The jury brought in a verdict to-night in the breach of promise case of \$25,000 awarded to Miss Georgia Wallers against her faithless lover, Louis Schultz, the inventor whose wealth is estimated at \$250,000. The court gave her an extra allowance of \$1,000.

Typhoid Fever Closes a School.

PHILADELPHIA, April 20.—A special from Chester says: The Pennsylvania Military Academy, a private school at that place, has been closed, owing to the prevalence of typhoid fever.

Eight Settlers Killed.

KANSAS CITY, April 20.—News from Oklahoma City says a settler from Cheyenne and Arapaho country reports having seen the soldiers fire on a party of settlers, killing eight of them.