

IN A PLIGHT.

**MIRACULOUS ESCAPE OF NINE MIN-
ER'S AT ARCHBALD.**

**Cut Off From Freedom by an Extensive
Cave-in—Rescued by a Brave
Foreman.**

Nine miners had a thrilling experience and narrow escape from death yesterday in the Pierce Coal company's mines in Archbald. They were cut off from the main opening by an extensive cave-in and were rescued through the bravery of the mine foreman, William Jones. The Scranton Tribune says:

Jones was lowered by a rope down an air shaft and located the men who were hoisted one by one to the surface. They had undergone a period of fear and suffering which the bravest of men do not care to experience twice.

The men were at work in an upper vein that was recently opened. Below them were other veins, one beneath the other and each long since mined out and abandoned. Many of the supporting pillars had been removed.

With a deafening crash fell a long stretch of the gangway floor between the men and the opening. Down it went with a reverberating roar into the vein below; down further to the next vein.

Amid blinding dust and a choking atmosphere the nine sturdy fellows dropped their tools. One furtive look toward the cave showed that escape in that direction was absolutely impossible. With exclamations of horror they sprang away from the scene and without lights, which had been extinguished by the concussion, plunged into the darkness toward the recesses of the mine.

1897 Nine miners rescued at Pierce Coal Co mine



Clipped By:

usmra_rob

Mon, Jan 23, 2023

FOUND A PLACE OF SAFETY.

Their stumbling and blind passage was accompanied by the ominous, angry rumblings which followed the cave. Finally was reached a point that from the nature of the surroundings told the most experienced in the party was a secure haven. The men were: P. J. Munley, Edward Gilroy, Anthony Malia, Patrick Barrett, James Strong, John Walsh, Henry Dando, John McAndrew, and a Hungarian laborer whose name could not be learned by a Tribune reporter last night.

Crouching and fearing that a horrible death would soon reach them, they waited, awed by the awfulness and power of the continued rumbling, cracking and squeezing of the coal from whence they came and which had extended around their position to the farther workings. They prayed—all of them. They realized to the fullest the dangers they were in and at intervals some one would in desperation grope forward a few rods and then stumble back again, warned by an occasional thumping fall of rock and coal. The cooler heads finally prevailed on their more frightened fellows that the only course was to wait. Maybe, help would come in a few hours; maybe it would come—too late.

Meanwhile, there was in progress on the surface, many feet above the imprisoned wretches, preparations that meant their rescue. The crash and roar of the hundreds of tons of falling rock and coal had been the signal to those above that they must act and act quickly.

William Jones, the foreman who made the rescue, called all the available employes about him. An investigation soon showed that the men could not be reached via the main opening. Descent was possible, but only by an old shaft now used for ventilation purposes that the rescue would have to be attempted. Even then there seemed the certainty that the old mine story would be repeated—days of slow, tedious search and finally abandonment, despair of widows and children and the vision of mangled flesh and crumbling bones.

1897 Nine miners rescued at Pierce Coal Co mine



Clipped By:

usmra_rob

Mon, Jan 23, 2023

LONG ROPE SECURED.

A long rope was procured and a loop made at its end, into which Jones seated himself and was lowered to a point near the cave. Repeated calls and "hellos" were finally answered. The men had after four hours of nervous, desperate waiting, heard a voice and began a pitiful groping toward the sound.

Their trials were not ended, for several hundred yards they had to crawl over the falls. They had no lights. On hands and knees they crept over jagged rocks, slate and coal and amid an occasional crash that bore destruction to any head it met. Finally with clothing torn and with hands and bodies cut, bruised or bleeding, all had reached Jones.

One by one they were hoisted up to daylight an safety. In constant danger, Jones waited, and was the last to appear. Until late tonight his sacrifice and nerve have been no little part of the talk of the rescue.

Among the men, not one of them possessed a face that, when washed of its grime and dust, was not ashen pale, and some of them wept for joy at their deliverance. There were tears, too, from several distracted wives and children. They all speak in the highest terms of the conduct of the mine foreman.

IN ONLY A FEW HOURS.

Gilroy and Munley had gone into the mine only an hour before the fall. Gilroy was about to begin work in a new chamber, and took Munley in to see it. They were both considerably unnerved after their experience.

The mine of the Pierce company is one of the oldest in this vicinity. The

1897 Nine miners rescued at Pierce Coal Co mine



Clipped By:

usmra_rob

Mon, Jan 23, 2023

drift, in which the fall occurred, was but recently opened. The fall occurring in the abandoned workings under, it will make the work of removing the coal from the upper vein exceedingly difficult and it may be altogether impossible to mine it.

1897 Nine miners rescued at Pierce Coal Co mine



Clipped By:

usmra_rob
Mon, Jan 23, 2023