

INTEREST CENTERS IN CORONER'S INQUEST

(Special to The Herald from a staff correspondent.)

Scofield, May 2.—Interest now centers in the coroner's inquest. Things are in such shape that it was impossible to hold it today, in spite of the intention of the authorities to do so. County Attorney Hoffman is here from Price and was in consultation with the company officers during the day, but a postponement of the inquest was imperative on account of the chaotic condition of affairs.

The burning question is as to the company's responsibility. Will the jury blame the company under what evidence there is at hand? It is notable that the employees of the ill-fated mine have the highest respect for their employers. There has never been any friction between them and Superintendent Sharp has the reputation of being very considerate of the welfare of his men. These facts will have an important bearing on the case, it is thought, for as the matter stands a great majority of the people here are loth to blame the company. The men who work underground know that the mine was not in a dangerous condition. At least, they thought it was not.

State Mine Inspector Thomas is said to take the same view of the cause of the disaster as do a majority of the men, namely, that an explosion of giant powder caused a flame large enough to ignite the coal dust. A terrific explosion followed, killing several, and the after-damp of this explosion made victims of the army of miners.

1900 Winter Quarters mine explosion
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"That an explosion of gas or dust should occur in that mine," said he, "is a hard thing to believe. It never was considered dangerous. It was cold and so wet in places that the men could not work. The explosion was a most extraordinary thing under the circumstances, and we will have to study to ascertain the cause. It is terrible to think of. I cannot imagine what caused it."

H. N. WHITNEY.

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