

RESCUED!

Two Men Who Were Shut Up in a Tunnel Under Lake Erie.

Rescued After Five Days of Darkness, Starvation and Suffering.

Monday last, two men, Adam Kent and Joseph Englon, who were working on the new water works tunnel under lake Erie, that is to furnish Cleveland with water, and who were cut off from communication with the world the Wednesday before, by the bursting of the crib at the outer end of the tunnel, were rescued from their living tomb.

The crib was burned before daylight Wednesday morning when all hands were asleep. A number of men were burned to death or drowned. A crew was in the tunnel below. By the bursting of the crib the pumping machinery was stopped and the first notice those in the tunnel had of any thing wrong was the rising of the water and the stream of gas.

As soon as the fire was put out, an effort was made to rescue those in the tunnel. Diving parties went down from the crib and a number of those below were brought up in safety, but a number could not be found, and some had perished. Two of the diving party died from the effects of the gas, but their bodies were brought up.

All who were not found after a diligent search were supposed to have perished. But on Monday morning following, while a force of workmen were repairing the crib and machinery, the superintendent of the work at the crib heard a faint rapping on one of the pipes that ran down into the tunnel. Going to the pipe he listened closely and again heard the faint signal. He immediately gave a responsive signal on the pipe, to the great surprise and wonder of those about him, none of whom had heard the rapping below, and could hardly believe him.

But there were no ropes or other appliances for going below, and no hoist near, and they had to wait until they could signal a passing tug, when word was sent to the life saving station and appliances brought out. When those arrived the superintendent descended into the tunnel and found two men who were alive, but very weak, a short distance from the tunnel.

Going back to the top of the shaft, superintendent VanHusen called for volunteers to go down with him and rescue the two men found alive, and one man stepped forward. These two descended, and carried the two imprisoned men through the water to the shaft where they were drawn up in a feeble and emaciated condition, unable to talk, and they were hurried ashore to a hospital.

The men learned from the accumulation of gas and the increase of the water in the tunnel, that something had happened, and gradually made their way to the shaft. They were nearly starved and were becoming intoxicated from the effects of the gas and water and did not know how many days they had been in the tunnel when rescued. They remained in the hospital for several hours before they could converse, but are now out of danger.

The men in all lost their lives by the accident.

1901 Lake Erie tunnel rescue



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