

COAL FATAL

March 18, 19, 1905: Rush Run & Red Ash Mines, Red Ash, West Virginia; 24 Killed

(From State Inspector's report, 1905, pp. 265-266)

These * * * * are in the Fire Creek seam, * * * * from 3 1/2 to 7 feet in thickness, * * * * Explosive gas has been generated * * * ever since they were opened; * * * in addition, mining has been done by machinery which created more fine dust than * * * in mines where picks are employed * * * On March 6, 1900, 46 lives were lost in the Red Ash mine. At that date these two mines were separated; * * * since then they have been connected * * * On March 18, 1905, 5 hours after the mine had ceased operation for the day, an explosion occurred in the Rush Run mine by which 8 men lost their lives; the explosion extended into Red Ash mine, where 5 more men lost their lives. * * * To rescue these men, 11 men entered the Rush Run * * * and * * * were lost in a second explosion * * * The first explosion resulted from a blasting or from loose explosives on the track run over by a car, causing a widespread dust explosion. The second occurred when gas accumulated by derangement of the ventilation was ignited by open lights of the rescue party. * * * These mines were regularly inspected and found apparently safe under all ordinary conditions. Every requirement of the Mining Laws was being observed. * * * There are hundreds of our miners and bosses * * * who cannot be induced to believe that explosions * * can be brought about by dust. * * * Any method by which this danger could be demonstrated on a small scale at a public exhibition among our mining people, would undoubtedly be * * most effective education. * * *

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