

TWENTY-ONE MINERS KILLED IN EXPLOSION.

A Fearful Disaster at Coaldale,
West Virginia.

ACCIDENT AT THE COOPER MINE

Thus Far but One of the Victims Has
Been Removed From the Ruins.
The Dead.

Roanoke, Va., Jan. 4.—A special to The Times from Bluefield, W. Va., says: Twenty-one miners were killed in an explosion of mine gas in the shaft of the Cooper Mine company at Coaldale, W. Va., at noon today. Up to midnight only one body had been recovered. Immediately following the explosion, which was heard for several miles, rescue parties set to work to explore the wrecked shaft.

Coaldale is a mining town situated in Mercer county on the line of the Norfolk and Western railway and is 15 miles west of Bluefield.

But once before in the history of the Pocahontas coal field has there been such a fearful disaster as that in the Coaldale Coal company's shaft today. The victims of that other disaster sleep in the cemetery at Pocahontas.

Today at noon while the mines were crowded with men there was a sudden and heavy rumbling a mile and more in the depths of the mountain and through the miles of passages and airshafts of that immense mine the shock was felt. Before the detonations had died out, Bank Boss Thomas Williams, who was a long ways from the explosion, staggered to his feet, and feeling his way to a mine telephone, called to those on the outside that there had been a terrific explosion of mine gas and asked for help.

Gathering about the entrance, hastening crowds urged by cool heads and anxious hearts hurried to prepare for the rescue of the missing ones and an exploration of the wrecked workings. At 4 o'clock one man was brought out. He was H. C. Conrad, and his body was literally torn to pieces. His clothing was hanging in shreds.

Up to a late hour tonight no other bodies had been recovered. There was considerable smoke and gas in the entries and notwithstanding the fact that the big fans were in good order and were working with full capacity, the gas and smoke were not being driven out very fast.

The following are the dead and their bodies are with the exception of Conrad, still buried in the mine: J. W. Larne, W. Larne, Jim Sluss, Laraz Aladar, Hungarian, Anthony Bruce, Pole; H. C. Conrad, Silas White, John Patterson, Gus Harris, W. T. Sullivan, William Price, William Ward, Walter Gwinn, Siph Gray, Sterling Williams, Albert Barnum, Nathan Hairston, William Curry, Silas Harris, June Kelly, Lee Price.

The Coaldale operation is owned and operated by the Cooper Brothers, who are also owners of the Mill Creek and McDowell Coal and Coke companies. The Coaldale plant is considered one of the best operations in the field. Ed Cooper is on the ground supervising the work of rescue.