

TWENTY-ONE MEN KILLED IN MINE

One of Worst Horrors in History of the Pocahontas
Field—Explosion of Gas in a Mine
at Coaldale, W. Va.

WORK OF THE RESCUERS MEETS LITTLE SUCCESS

Up to Last Midnight Only One Body Had Been Recovered—
Gas and Smoke Not Yet All Out, Though Fans are Work-
ing Hard to Clear Shafts—Details of Disaster Difficult to
Get—A Complete List of the Dead.

One of the worst mine disasters in the history of the Pocahontas coal fields, occurred yesterday at Coaldale, Mercer county, W. Va., when twenty-one miners were killed in the Cooper mines.

News of the disaster reached Roanoke during the night, but full details of the accident are still lacking, owing to inadequate wire facilities at the scene of the explosion.

Coaldale is a mining town on the line of the Norfolk & Western railway, and is located about fifteen miles west of Bluefield.

Beyond the fact that there was an explosion of gas and that twenty-one men met their death, and that up to last midnight only one body had been recovered, little is known.

Immediately after the explosion, which was heard for a distance of several miles, rescuing parties were organized and set about to explore the wrecked mine and bring out the bodies. That these efforts met with little success is shown in a despatch received after midnight from Bluefield, and which follows:

"Bluefield, W. Va., Jan. 4.—Special.—Again the earth has trembled and that substance in which there is more energy and destruction to the atom than in dynamite to the pound, fire damp, or mine gas, let go its awful engines of disaster today, and in an instant twenty-one tolling miners had crossed from time to eternity.

"Never before in the history of this field has there been such a fearful disaster, save one, and of that the victims sleep in the cemetery at Pocahontas.

"Today about half an hour before noon while the Cooper mines at Coaldale were crowded with those who delve in the earth, there was a heavy rumbling, a mile and more, in the bowels of the mountain and through the miles of passages and air courses of that immense mine, the awful shock was felt and ere its detonations had died out Bank Boss Thomas Williams, himself some distance from the ex-

plosion staggered to his feet and feeling his way to a mine telephone called to those on the outside that there had been an explosion and asked for help. He was a long ways from the scene of greatest disaster and those on the surface had felt the earth as it trembled and a great dread fell upon the inhabitants, but from the main entrance of the mine, far in the mountain depths husband, father, brother and sweetheart at work had been buried under millions of tons of earth and stone that lay between the workings and the mountain's crown.

"The forest trembled and shook from the mighty force of the titanic concussion, a signal that death and destruction were wrought within.

"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 four o'clock one man was brought out. He was H. C. Conrad, and his body was literally torn to pieces. The clothing was hanging in shreds.

"Up to midnight no other bodies had been recovered.

"There was considerable smoke and gas in the entries and notwithstanding the fact the big fans were in good order and were working with full capacity the gas and smoke were not being driven out very rapidly.

The following are the dead and their bodies, with exception of Conrad lie 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 mine is owned and operated by the Cooper Brothers. The Coaldale plant is considered one of the best operations in the field. Ed. Cooper is on the ground supervising the work of rescue.