

August 22, Mike Boharnick, Slavonian, miner, Orenda mine, was fatally injured by mine cars. He was sitting on his box in the heading (which is a dip) when four cars broke loose from motor and ran back. The safety switch threw the cars off, but they ran to where he was and caught him. He died about five hours afterwards.

September 19, Pete Mabrina, Italian, miner, Eureka No. 34 mine, was killed by being struck by a mine car. He was running a load down his room and lost control of the car and it went out on the heading, where a motor was passing with a loaded trip. The car ran into the motor and was knocked around, and Mabrina was thrown under the loaded cars and killed instantly.

October 15, Peter Craski, Polish, loader, Eureka No. 36 mine, was squeezed between a car and the rib and fatally injured. He was pushing an empty mine car in his room. The motor that was standing above his switch started down the grade, and struck the end of the car he had hold of and knocked it around against the rib, and he was caught between the mine car and the coal.

Explosions of Gas and Suffocation by Gas

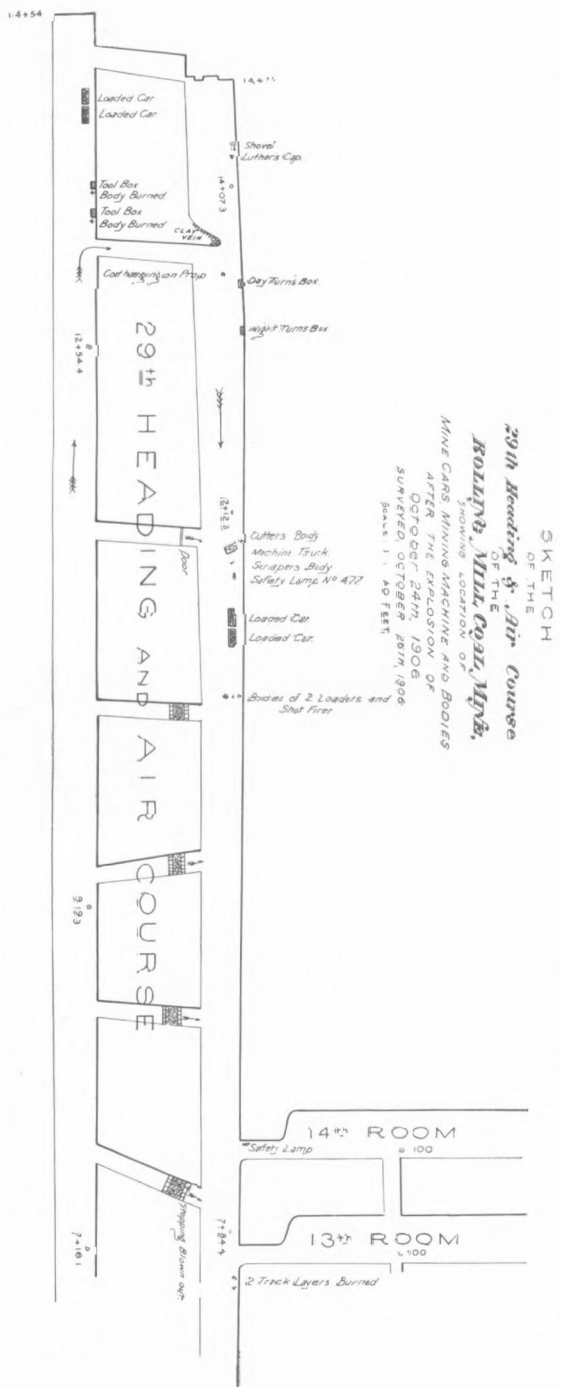
May 14, Steve Solony, Slavonian, laborer, was suffocated by gas at Franklin Slope. He worked in a rock heading where all the work was done with compressed air drills, and the face of the heading kept clear of foul air and smoke by letting the air escape from the pipes. An explosion occurred in the compressor cylinder of the oil that had collected there; and the gas resulting from the explosion came through the pipes and into the heading. Solony could have gone out with the other men, but as the gas made him sick he was obliged to remain in the heading. He sat down and was overcome by the gas.

October 24, Samson Louthier, English, shot firer; Adam Pawlofsky, Polish, cutter; Joseph Petrick, Austrian, scraper; Frank Gavlik, Polish, miner; Joseph Kamelsky, Polish, miner; Constant Fish, Polish, miner; Mike Sulayada, Austrian, miner, were killed by an **explosion of gas at the Rolling Mill mine**. None of the bodies showed evidence of having been burned enough to cause death, and it is therefore supposed the men were suffocated by the after damp.

Early on the morning of the 25th I went into the mine and made a careful examination of the location, but was not satisfied as to the cause of the explosion. I again went in on the 26th and 27th. In the meantime the Cambria Steel Company's mine surveyors had made a map of the location, showing all the essential features that would have any bearing upon the explosion.

I found that the fire boss on his second round, about nine o'clock in the morning, fired two coal shots in the face of the dog hole and a rock shot in the face of the heading. The coal in the heading had been undercut by the machine men, and the shot firer evidently arrived there shortly before the explosion and fired a shot about the middle of the heading and then a shot in the lower corner of the heading, knocking a hole through to the air course, or dog hole. It was evidently the latter shot that caused the firing of the gas.

The only way I can explain the accumulation of gas in the dog hole, is that the air course track was being repaired and the two loaded cars there could not be moved out. The men working in



the dog hole had evidently loaded their coal, and, having nothing to do, retired to their boxes to wait until the loaded cars were taken out and the empties received. The fire boss states that the empties were there when he fired the coal shots in the morning at nine o'clock, and this would give the loaders nothing to do but load these two cars. They were probably idle for two and a half or three hours. The place was making some gas, but with the men moving around it was stirred up and kept in good condition, but during the period that they were waiting for cars, there being no movement of the air, gas had undoubtedly collected in the dog hole from some crevice or pocket that was opened by the two shots that had been previously fired by the fire boss about 9 o'clock. It is only natural to suppose that the shot firer, coming into the air course and seeing men there ready to work, assumed it was safe to fire the shots in the main heading, and did so. The shot was not a blown out shot, but the flame in all probability communicated with the gas in the dog hole, thus causing the explosion.

On the morning of the explosion the fire boss in his first examination entered the air course very shortly after the night men had left. He found a little gas, which he reported, and stopped the men from driving the air course any further until the dog hole was through. He found no gas in the dog hole, but it must be remembered in this connection that the night men had been working there and had kept the air stirred up so that the little gas there was not in evidence. When the day force came on they went to work in the dog hole and the fire boss on his second round found no evidence of gas there, but the two coal shots he fired probably loosened a crevice or freed a pocket of gas, and for the short time that the men were there loading the coal the air was kept mixed up so that the gas was not evident. When they retired to their boxes for a period of, say two and a half or three hours, the gas probably collected in considerable quantities. On the afternoon of the explosion there was evidence of a little gas in the dog hole, but on the morning of the 27th, although there was a large hole through and the ventilation good, there was considerable gas at this place, more than was ever found there before, making it evident that there had been a feeder of gas freed. After the explosion the body of each man as well as each lamp, was examined. No matches or smokers' articles were found on the men or in their clothing. All the lamps were found locked and in good condition, so that it is impossible to attribute the cause of the explosion to any carelessness in this respect.

At the inquest held in the City Hall, Johnstown, the following verdict was rendered:

"We, the jurors, find that the disaster which occurred in the Rolling Mill mine October 24, was due to an unavoidable accident.

GEORGE E. HAMILTON,

THOMAS POTTS,

CHARLES H. WITT,

M. S. DUFFY,

WM. FITZIMMONS,

A. D. JONES,

Members of the Jury."