

HORRORS OF DARR MINE EXPLOSION

Scene at Pit Mouth of Penn-
sylvania Mine a Ter-
rible One.

ACME OF HUMAN SUFFERING

Women Wait in Anguish to Re-
ceive Charred Remains
of Dead.

POLICEMEN ARE BRUTAL

By George R. Pulford.

Staff Special to The Omaha Daily News.
Jacobs Creek, Pa., Dec. 23.—Pray
God that your footsteps may never,
so long as you live, lead you to the
pit mouth of an exploded mine.

Duty brought me to the Darr mine
here, where death in the twinkle of
an eye tore the lives from 200 poor
fellows as they toiled in the bowels
of the earth. And I do pray God that
duty may never again call me into
the scenes of which I was a shudder-
ing part in this little colliery ham-
let of Pennsylvania.

Death we all have with us from
the cradle to the grave, but death
as I saw it here had added to its
terrors a frightful grewsomeness, a
crushing nightmare of grief on grief,
and a repulsive atmosphere of indif-
ference to the sorrowing ones that told
you plainly of the cheapness in which
human life is held where men go below
the surface to labor.

I need not describe the awful ef-
fect of the explosion on those bodies.
The news dispatches have told how
these 200 men were torn limb from

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(Continued from Page One.)

limb, their flesh lacerated and blackened and charred.

Only those who have been through such a catastrophe can begin to appreciate the gigantic, irresistible force generated by the explosion of gas or dust in the narrow confines of a mine.

First there is the tiny spark which in a bewilderingly short time is an explosion. The gas lying close to the roof of the tunnel breaks into a flame. It is blue, but almost instantly turns white, like the flame that leaps from ovens of giant steel mills.

It rushes along the leads, sweeping everything in its path with the fury which only it possesses. In the wake of the constantly increasing tongue of fire sweeps the vacuum known as black death and firedamp.

Occasionally a man is left alive by the flame in its lightning like passage. But he never escapes the crushing power of the vacuum, which rends him and crushes his heart until it bursts.

But, as we stand close to the pit mouth, we see coming up the black slope a dark, waving mass. They are bringing out a body. Back of us, behind the police lines, are the women, heaven help them! The rescuers, the police guards, the mine officials, take no notice of them—the women whose love and hope are buried in the depths beneath their feet.

I glance back at that line of faces, lighted fitfully by the torches imbedded into the hillside. No writer can depict the grief, the anguish, the frenzy, the hopelessness, the dread that stared out at him from faces and eyes that were fixed on that yawning, black pit mouth.

Walls of the Women.

Slowly the dark, moving mass from down the mine comes into view. Three men are carrying their inert

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burden. Then from back of those police ropes rises wails and shrieks, and cries of despair. It is so weird, so full of the agony of excruciating human suffering that men hardened to the horrors of the mines looked at one another with frightened eyes.

A woman, crying aloud, stood against the rope. She asked no other privilege than to shed tears for him who had kissed her that morning.

"Here, what the hell are you bawling about?" demanded a tin-badged policeman.

"For my man," she sobbed in her grief.

"Well, get to hell out of here. Go home and do your blubbering," he growled.

Like a fury she sprang at him. Her language of the eloquence of superlative profanity. She was a tigress, and it required several men to drag her away from the brutal policeman.

"And she is one of the most modest, refined women in this locality," said Father Carroll, the miners' friend. "She does not know what she is saying," he added, as sympathizing friends led the half-crazed woman away from the pit mouth.

Another woman refused to leave. "I will stay till my man is brought out," she asserted. "You won't bury him in the manure heap, like they did the men of Naomia mine." She screamed when the guards forced her to leave.

The reference to the Naomia mine

was occasioned by the finding of a miner's body in the refuse back of the stable, where it is claimed he had been thrown by a mine boss to save the cost of his burial. At any rate, it was in that horrible place his aged wife found him.

WINTER TURNED INTO SUMMER.

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