

SHOCK ROCKS EARTH

And 25 or 30 More Breadwinners Perish in Depths of Coal Mine.

TOO FAMILIAR TALE TOLD AGAIN

Mine No. 25 of Davis Coal & Coke Company at Thomas, W. Va., Rent by Explosion of Gas—Twenty-five to Fifty Unfortunates Caught.

Elkins, W. Va., Feb. 5.—Twenty-five or 30 miners are supposed to be dead as the result of an explosion in mine No. 25 of the Davis Coal & Coke Co., at Thomas. The dead are mostly foreigners. Five bodies have been taken out.

During the day another tragedy was enacted, when, in the face of great danger, a party of officials headed by General Superintendent Lee Ott and including Superintendent Boyd of the Henry mine, Mine Boss J. R. Jones, and Coke Superintendent McDowell entered the mine a few hours after the explosion, and were driven out by a breaking fan, with one of their number dead and another on the verge of death.

They had proceeded as far as the third heading with Mine Boss Jones in advance of the others, Boyd, Jack Jennings, Arthur Stewart and McDowell following close upon his heels.

Without warning they were deprived of air, the motor which furnished the power to run the fan, burning out. Jones was seen to fall, overcome by afterdamp. Stewart, Boyd, Jenkins and Wood rushed to his rescue. They, too, were overcome and Boyd, Wood and Stewart were dragged out into the open air half dead. Jones had breathed his last when carried to the surface. Boyd revived after three physicians had worked over him for three hours.

Eight bodies only, including that of Jones, one of the second party, have been removed from the mine, six of whom are foreigners whose names cannot be learned, and the other an American, Jesse Allen.

Through the accident to the fan motor officials have been crippled in their efforts to penetrate to that part of the mine where the explosion occurred. They cannot say just how many are in the mine at this time but estimate the number at between 25 and 30. There is no possibility that they are alive. According to General Superintendent Ott's theory the explosion was caused by a half shot of dynamite igniting an accumulation of gas.

The mere fact that the explosion came at a time between the night and day shifts saved hundreds of lives. Half a hundred miners were making ready to enter the mine when they were thrown into confusion by a shock that threw some of them to the earth. Mine brackets and earth were hurled through the opening. As soon as practicable a rescue party rushed into the mine.