

FORTY MINERS ARE ENTOMBED BY EXPLOSION

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BAMA SHAFT ARE FOUND ALIVE
BY THE RESCUERS.

SEAL MOUTH TO STOP FIRE.

Mine in Operation Two Years and Was
Considered Model of Its Kind
in South.

RESCUERS HURRIED TO SCENE.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., April 21.—Not one of the forty-one men imprisoned Friday night in Mulga mine of the Birmingham iron and coal company is alive. This was word brought to the surface this morning to the waiting and weeping families of the victims when, unconscious from the deadly gases of the shaft, superintendent Johns of the mine and a man named Bonds, an unknown who risked his life for those already perished, were drawn up to fresh air. The condition of the rescuers told the story long before the men had been revived. The watchers knew that if the rescuers, helmeted and protected, had so narrowly escaped death, there was no hope for the workers who without a second's warning, had been entombed by an explosion of gas.

When Johns and Bonds, after heroic treatment, finally regained consciousness, they confirmed the gravest anticipations of the people who for hours had waited at the mouth of the shaft to hear a word of their loved ones.

"Dead—all dead," was the statement of the superintendent as he began to recover from the effects of the poisonous gases. Before they had lost consciousness the rescuers had reached the first gallery. Even near the shaft they saw things that made them know that only a miracle could save the men entombed. Little hope was expressed this morning that any of the men would be rescued.

When it was learned that it was impossible to gain entrance to the mine through the shaft because the edges were sprung in the passage, the entrance was sealed to prevent, if possible, the spread of fire.

Try to Enter Shaft.

Shortly after midnight the hospital car of the Tennessee company was rushed to the scene, equipped with helmets and all other necessary paraphernalia for entering a gaseous mine. Hospital ambulances also were sent from Ensley and Birmingham to the scene, which is about twelve miles northwest of Birmingham.

When the first crew of rescuers reached the bottom of the shaft this morning the corpses of two miners were found. The rescuers upon returning to the surface expressed the opinion that all the imprisoned men were dead.

The only list of names of the miners at work at the time of the explosion was held by the foreman of the gang at work, who is among the entombed. It is believed, however, there are about fifteen white men and twenty to twenty-five negroes.

The mine has been in operation about two years and was considered a model of its kind. The shaft is 350 feet deep and the fact that flames shot from the mouth of the shaft to a height of 100 feet leads to the belief that the explosion occurred near the bottom of the main shaft, cutting off any means of escape for the miners.

Around the entrance to the mine in the early morning hours, in addition to the families of the entombed men, hundreds from the surrounding mining districts swelled the crowds until it was with great difficulty that the work of rescue could be carried on.

An attempt was first made to enter shaft No. 1, but this was found impracticable and it was sought to drive a way through from shaft No. 2, which is about 300 feet from the first opening. After penetrating a short distance, it was found that this shaft also was wrecked by the force of the explosion in No. 1. Nothing could be heard from the entombed men.

Rescue Crew to Scene.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 21.—The United States geological survey has ordered its mine rescue crew from the Knoxville (Tenn.) station to the Mulga mine. Equipped with the oxygen helmets which enabled the rescuers to penetrate the shafts at the Cherry Hill disaster hours before any human being unequipped with them could have listed, the government experts ought to be at the Mulga mine sometime today.