

MINERS ENTOMBED BY BIG EXPLOSION

Fears Felt for Lives of
Workmen.

RESCUERS WORK DESPERATELY

Accident at Cokedale, Near
Trinidad, Is Unexplained.

TWO SHOT-FIRERS ESCAPE

Timbers Are Thrown 200 Feet by
Force of Blast, but No Serious
Falls of Rock Follow—Gov-
ernment Men Summoned.

TRINIDAD, Colo., Feb. 9.—Fifteen miners are entombed and may be dead, as the result of an explosion in the Cokedale mine of the Carbon Coal & Coke Company, eight miles west of Trinidad, tonight. Seventeen men were in the mine at the time of the explosion, but two shot-firers escaped from the mine after the explosion.

The force of the explosion, which was distinctly felt at Trinidad, seems to have been greatest in the main stope. Timbers were blown 200 feet from the mouth of the stope, but the explosion seems to have been attended by no serious falls of rock.

Fanhouse Wrecked.

The explosion wrecked the fanhouse, but the fan was undamaged and still working, although the air has been "short-circuited" by the blowing out of brattices and doors.

A party of 20 rescuers are working desperately to reach the more remote parts of the mine where the 15 men are supposed to have been working. The rescue work is under direction of F. P. Bayless, general superintendent, and E. A. Sutton, assistant superintendent, who led the first party to the wrecked workings.

Rescue Party Pushes On.

The rescue party has penetrated 2000 feet along the main stope. At that distance black damp was encountered and helmet men are now making their way through the poisonous gas, bratticing the entries as they pass.

Trained rescue men are being rushed to Cokedale from all over the district. The Government mine-rescue car, in charge of J. F. Bertha, which was at Berwind, has been summoned and the rescue car of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company is on the way to the wrecked mine.

Mine Has Five Exits.

There are five exits from the Cokedale mine and none but the main stope was injured. It is hoped that some of the men in the mine may make their way from one of these exits. The two shot-firers who escaped were working near the surface.

The miners on the surface are thoroughly organized and the majority are engaged in carrying supplies to the rescue party.

The cause of the explosion is unknown, but it seems most improbable that it could have been an explosion of dust. Precautions against the accumulation of dust were most strictly enforced at Cokedale.

Dust Is Hard-Fought.

The mine was furnished with water pipes throughout and men were employed constantly in sprinkling and removing dust.

The Cokedale mine has been operated for four years and the camp was known as the model coal camp of America.

The property is owned by the American Smelting & Refining Company and supplies the Guggenheim smelters. It is said that more money has been expended in equipping the mine with safety appliances and modern equipment than any coal mine in America.