

**100 TO 115 MEN DEAD  
IN ALABAMA COLLIERY**

Nearly All of the Victims Negro  
Convicts, Who Were Serving  
Sentences.

**FORTY-FIVE ARE RESCUED.**

Black Damp Formed Immediately  
After an Explosion and Spread  
Throughout the Workings.

Battleton, Ala., April 8.—Of the 100 to 115 miners who are believed to have met death in the explosion at the Banner mines of the Pratt Consolidated Coal Company, near here early this morning, less than half a dozen bodies have been recovered when the work of rescue was temporarily suspended at midnight.

The deadly black damp, due to the destruction of the ventilating fans by the explosion, was a menace to all who attempted to enter the workings and it may be several days before all the dead have been recovered.

Late this afternoon all hope that the men remaining in the mine were alive was given up. At that time it was stated that the black damp had spread throughout the workings.

While no official statement has been made, it is believed the explosion was caused by safety powder ignited by a lamp and followed by dust. When the night crew left the mines, shortly before the explosion happened, Night Fire Boss Sparks reported the condition of the mine as good, and the day shift was sent to work. There were 10 men in all, only five of whom were free laborers. The others were convicts, mostly negroes, sent up from the surrounding counties to serve sentences from ten days to two years.

Immediately following the explosion, several of the convicts, with mining experience, discovered that black damp was forming. They at once spread the alarm to those who were not instantly killed by the blast and many started a race with death to the entrance.

**Forty-five Men Rescued.**

Forty-five of the miners either reached the outside in safety or got within halting distance in the shaft and were taken out by rescuers. Scores of volunteers were on hand, brought by the alarm spread through the valley, and many made heroic rushes into the mine to bring out the victims. This work proved effective until the deadly gases reached the main shaft into which the men were headed, and then it meant death for all who entered the workings.

State Mine Inspector James Hillhouse and Assistant Dickerson, together with several other experts and officials of the Pratt Company were rushed to the Banner mine as soon as news of the disaster reached Birmingham. Dr. Brown, in charge of the government rescue station at Birmingham, also rushed to the scene and assisted Mr. Hillhouse in directing the rescue work.

## 1911 Forty five miners rescued following Banner mine explosion

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