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FIVE SMOTHERED IN MINE FIRE

WORKERS IN BOSTON COLLIERY KILLED TRYING TO ESCAPE — RESCUERS SAVE THREE

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., May 12. — Five lives were lost in the Boston mine of the Delaware & Hudson company at Larksville by suffocation.

The names of the dead are:

George Feeder, aged twenty years, driver.

John Melodicki, aged seventeen, a door boy.

Jacob Kenulis, aged thirty-nine, a miner, single.

Charles Kerzynski, aged twenty-five, laborer, married.

William Mannie, laborer, twenty-five years old, single.

Fire started in a section of the mine where a number of men namely were employed, but it was gotten under control without much difficulty. Eleven men were at work in that section.

After mainlight the odor of smoke was detected and the alarm was given. All the employes in the inside workings made their way from the Rose vein to the main gangway, but the smoke had become so dense that nearly all were overcome.

Several rescue parties at the risk of their own lives then entered the workings and succeeded in taking out John Morrissey, Patrick Lloyd and John Bendiras. When brought to the surface they were quickly revived. The rescuers returning to the mine was stumbled over bodies of the dead. The latter were brought out as soon as possible. Several of the rescuers were overcome by the smoke and one of them was prostrated. He was rescued by a fourth rescuing party.

So far as the investigation has gone on to the cause of the fire, it is said that a workman left a naked light in the shaft, which fired the timbers. The blaze worked its way down the shaft timbers, sending the smoke into the various chambers. The men were trapped in one of the inner gangways. The flames and smoke drove them forward, and all avenues of escape were cut off.

John A. Jones, the foreman of the colliery, was the first to enter the workings from the surface. He at once called for rescuers. John Morrissey, who was first to discover the fire, outlined a plan to his companions as to how they could all be saved. Morrissey and one of his fellow workmen went to the rescue of Feeder and Melodicki, but the walls of dense smoke drove them back and they had to give up the task. Morrissey and his companions then made a dash for the main air course, only to have their way cut off with a heavy brattice work.

Summoning all their strength, they hurled themselves against the brattice and broke it down. Then they made their way quickly to the foot of the shaft and were hoisted to the surface where they received medical attention.

The rescuers, with the use of dynamite, blocked the air current, and in this way entrance was gained into the chambers where it was known the fire mixed, men were at work. The bodies of Feeder and Melodicki were found together. They had started to work their way to the foot of the shaft, but were overcome by the dense smoke. An hour later the bodies of the other three victims were found a hundred yards from the chamber where they had been working.

The fire continues to rage in the mine, but the company officials state they expect to have it under control in a short time.

A strike was inaugurated at the colliery on Tuesday and only a small number of men were at work. Had the full force been engaged the loss of life would have been much greater.

1911 Rescuers save three from the Boston Colliery fire

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usmra_rob
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