

SMALL HOPE OF SAVING MINERS

FRANTIC BUT FUTILE EFFORTS
TO RESCUE MEN AT ECCLES
CONTINUE.

DEATH TOLL WILL REACH 210

Governor Hatfield and Other State
Officials on Scene—Investigation
of Disaster Begun by Chief
Inspector Henry.

Eccles, W. Va., April 29.—Practically all hope that any of the 186 men entombed in explosion in Mine No. 5 of the New River Collieries Co. was abandoned at 9 a. m. The efforts at rescue were continued, but with little promise of entrance through the gas-filled and dust-choked shaft before late this afternoon.

It was stated today that the death toll will reach 210, making the disaster one of the worst in West Virginia's history. Three men are still unaccounted for in Mine No. 6. Twelve bodies have been taken from the No. 5 shaft and sixty men rescued alive, a full score of them horribly burned.

With Governor Hatfield and other state officers on the scene today, an investigation was all ready to proceed. Chief Mine Inspector Henry was expected to begin the examination of witnesses this afternoon.

Due to Dust Explosion.

Eccles, W. Va., April 29.—General Manager H. C. Bayles of the New River Collieries company announced that the 190 miners entombed in mine No. 5, wrecked by an explosion, are dead. Mr. Bayles said the disaster was due to a dust explosion.

Working to Subdue Flames.

The mine is burning fiercely. Government, state and volunteer rescuers are working desperately to subdue the flames.

No. 5 mine apparently is completely shut off from the surface and rescuers hold out little hope of reaching the large number of men entombed there in time.

The explosion occurred in mine No. 5. The two shafts of this mine were demolished. It is believed the explosion traveled through this mine into No. 6. One shaft of the latter mine was wrecked, but the other remains intact and was the salvation of at least fifty-nine of the workmen.

Cause of Explosion Unknown.

The cause of the explosion has not been ascertained, and perhaps will never be known. The New River company operates six mines at Eccles. Nos. 6 and 5 connect. At 2:30 in the afternoon there was a slight explosion in No. 6, followed by another slightly greater shock in No. 5 ten minutes later, and shortly after the valley shook with the third blast in No. 6. The timbers over the main shaft, the ventilators and the cages were shot to the sky and deposited far up the hillside.

The Virginian railway suspended traffic and rushed a rescue crew of the Pawama Coal & Coke company at Matoaka, several miles away, with a number of physicians and nurses.

The superintendent also called for help from Beckley, another point on the Virginia railroad, but the Matoaka crew, in charge of the federal mine-rescue car, were the first to arrive. The crew set to work manfully, but were greatly hampered in their work by the flames and the half-crazed women and children who crowded the entrances and endangered their lives near the flame-belching fissures. The rescuers cleared No. 6 mine and then started to reach No. 5 through the connecting walls of No. 6. The work is progressing slowly.

The complete list of the dead could not be obtained at this time. They are composed of Americans, white men, negroes, Slavs, Hungarians and Italians.

Owned by Guggenheim Interests.

The exploded mines were opened about five years ago by the present owners, the Guggenheim Interests. This is their first accident since they started operation.