

JURY INSPECTS MINE CARRIAGE AT TRIPP SHAFT

**First Step in Diamond Disaster
Inquest Is Probe Into the
"Rotten Cage" Claim.**

The broken mine carriage at the Tripp shaft of the Diamond colliery, through the bottom of which thirteen men fell 300 feet to death Wednesday morning, is being inspected this afternoon by the coroner's jury summoned by Senator-elect W. M. Lynch, the county coroner. The jury will also go into the mine to inspect the shaft timbering and the rock sump, 550 feet down, for signs of the explosion of dynamite that the company officials say caused the disaster. The inspection is being made primarily to probe into claims alleged to have been advanced by mine workers that the carriage was rotten and that its flooring fell out as the men were being lowered into the mine.

The visit to the mine was decided upon last night when the jurors were called to

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the court house to begin the probe. It was suggested by District Attorney George W. Maxey, who was on hand to represent the commonwealth in the event of anything of a criminal nature developing in the inquest. The jurors were ordered to be on hand at 2 o'clock this afternoon to make the trip to the mine. Pending the inspection it was decided not begin the taking of the testimony of witnesses until next Tuesday night at 8 o'clock.

Who Jurors Are.

The jurors in the case are: Thomas Soulsby, miner for the Delaware and Hudson company; Fred Thomas, miner for the Scranton Coal company; William Jones, miner for the Pennsylvania Coal company; Harry Birbeck, former miner for the Delaware and Hudson company; W. O. Jenkins, former city assessor, and Fred Pierce, retired. All of the jurors are from this city.

The biggest crowd that ever attended a coroner's inquest in this city turned out last night for the first session of the probe into the disaster. Coroner W. M. Lynch had his jury of six men on hand. There was a big array of officials and bosses of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western company; a score of lawyers, more than a hundred miners, friends of the dead men, two experts from the government bureau of mines in Washington, a representative of the Austro-Hungary consulate in Wilkes-Barre, and a delegation of officials of the Mine Workers' union.

The friends of the dead men, the Austrian consular representative, the union officials and others are contending that the accident happened because the carriage was rotten. The company officials declare that a box of dynamite dropped by one of the victims caused an explosion that tore the floor out of the carriage. The coroner is holding the inquest to clear up the mystery surrounding the circumstances.

Ludwig Garscia, the consular secretary, has a mass of statements taken from witnesses, to present to the jury. He is appearing in the case for the survivors of John Pazley, or Paslai, an Austrian subject, and the man said by the company officials to have dropped the dynamite. One of the statements the secretary has is that of Martin Bolinsky, the sole survivor, who clung to a thin iron brace, while his companions were falling to death.

Story of Survivor.

Bolinsky declares there was no explosion, the consulate man says. The survivor goes farther, according to the statement he made to Mr. Garscia and declares that "that carriage was rotten and some of the men at the colliery knew it."

"If the carriage was not rotten why did the company men saw off the ends of the broken posts," the secretary said, "and what have they done with the wood thus sawed off? There was no explosion on that carriage. Maybe some dynamite might have exploded at the bot-

tom of the shaft, but if there was an explosion on the carriage, Bolinsky would have been hurt or killed. And none of the dead men were hurt about the feet as they would be if an explosion of dynamite wrecked the carriage."

Mr. Garscia was an officer in the engineer corps of Austria-Hungary for ten years, and has made a deep study of explosives, he said.

Col. R. A. Phillips, general manager; C. E. Tobey, general superintendent; Walter Reese, district superintendent, and other officials of the coal company say they are satisfied that an explosion of dynamite dropped by one of the men caused an explosion that tore out the carriage floor and dropped the thirteen to death. Mr. Reese emphatically denied to newspapermen that the carriage floor was rotten. He said the carriage only the day previous was carrying four tons of coal and car weight, and if that weight did not break it, the weight of fourteen men would not do so.

The federal mining bureau inspectors at the inquest were: J. W. Williams and R. M. Clark, of Washington, D. C. Daniel Davis, foreman of the mine rescue car at Edwardsville was also present. The federal men are to make an investigation of their own. Mine Inspector S. J. Phillips, who requested the coroner to call the inquest, is to accompany the jury to the mine today and will assist the coroner all through the sessions.

Officials Present.

When the jurors took their seats in the jury box the court room was filled with mining company officials, mine inspectors, attorneys, members of the United Mine Workers and others. Seated at one of the tables were Col. R. A. Phillips, general manager of the D. L. & W. Coal company, and C. E. Tobey, general superintendent for the same company. Close at hand were District Superintendent Walter Reese, Assistant District Superintendent Harry Harris, Assistant District Superintendent Davis Lloyd, of District No. 2, and Assistant Superintendent William Watkins. Foreman Sydney Baker, of the Tripp shaft, Foreman John H. Powell, of the Diamond shaft; Headman James Gallagher and Joseph Merrett and Engineer Frank Gilroy, who handled the engine when the accident occurred were inside the bar enclosure.

At another table was District President John T. Dempsey, of the United Mine Workers and Board Members Yannis, Fowler and Steve Reap, attorney Roger Devers, of Wilkes-Barre, representing the United Mine Workers, as chief of their legal department was at the same table. District Attorney Maxey was also in consultation with other lawyers and seated about were Attorneys M. J. Martin, M. A. McGinley, F. M. Walsh, James Bell, William Fitzgerald, Daniel Reese and J. H. Oliver, the latter two representing the D. L. & W. Coal company in whose mine the accident occurred. The other attorneys represented different families of the deceased, and Mr. Maxey the commonwealth in the event that there was anything of a criminal nature revealed in the inquest.