

## **February 18, 1915; New Home No. 2 Mine, Rich Hill, Mo.; 5 Killed**

*{From Bureau of Mines report, by Daniel Harrington}*

The No. 2 shaft, 287 feet deep, was connected to the old No. 1 mine, in which a fire was sealed off in 1914. In January 1915 the fire broke out again, and it was necessary to seal the escape shaft at the surface. To comply with the State law the mine crew had to be reduced to five men on each shift. These men formed an association and leased the mine.

Contrary to law, the miners fired their own shots just before the end of the shift. The mine was dusty and gassy. Black powder was used, and all coal was shot off the solid. Open lights were used.

The 5 men on the midnight shift had lit 10 holes in 6 working places and were coming out about 6:30 a.m. when the explosion overtook them. The day-shift men were lowered into the mine at 6:40 a.m. and noting the fumes and dust they sent a man to bring safety lamps from the engine house and followed the intake air to the inside. The bodies were found at the fringe of the explosion area, about 150 feet in by a door behind which was pure air. They were recovered without the use of breathing apparatus. Overloaded and blown-out shots had ignited the dust, but the explosion died out on the entries because the dust from the fire-clay floor was intermixed with the coal dust there.