

# Most Harrowing Disaster in the History of Indiana County. Nineteen Bod- ies Recovered at 4:30 A. M. Today. Three More Are Still in the Mine

## INVESTIGATION IMMEDIATELY

At least 25 men, four of whom were Americans, were instantly killed in the most harrowing mine accident in the history of Indiana County, which occurred in Mine No 2 of the Jefferson & Clearfield Coal & Iron Company, at Ernest, yesterday afternoon at 3:20 o'clock.

Three others are supposed to be yet in the mine and the rescuers are working to find the bodies. Five miners were rescued alive, four of whom are in the hospital and the fifth at his home in Ernest. The patients in the hospital, all of whom were badly burned about the face, hands and body and who are suffering from shock are: James McGuire, a member of the mine rescue teams, W. R. Nord, Mike Carol and Tony Wilk.

### COMPANY HAS A NEW FEATURE

Indiana Man Interested  
in Association that Will  
Endeavor to Eradicate  
Mine Disasters in this  
State.

### OF INTEREST NOW.

When the Workmen's Compensation Law of Pennsylvania was passed one of the largest liability insurance companies in the United States recognizing the necessity of furnishing to the coal operators and their employees protection that would be adequate and certain beyond question, entered into an organization known as the Associated Companies for the purpose of jointly carrying the Workmen's Compensation Insurance on coal mining operations. This organization, with total assets of over \$20,000,000 furnishes a complete security to both operators and miners that cannot possibly be secured elsewhere.

One of the best men of the Associated Companies was to organize a department of inspection and safety, believing that the welfare of the employees required higher standards of safety and a more rigid system of inspection than that the state mining laws provided. To take charge of this work a director of the Department of Inspection and Safety, the Associated Companies, secured the services of H. M. Wilson, a man of national reputation in mining circles who had been in the United States Government service for a great many years and who, at that time had for several years presided, had been director of the Federal Bureau of Mines.

Under Mr. Wilson's supervision, after many careful investigations of conditions and reports of state and national mine safety officials had been given critical and careful study. This is a most interesting parallel heading with approximately 100 separate and distinct conditions met in connection with mining operations. A force of over thirty inspectors is

- THE KNOWN DEAD.**
- Norris Allan, aged 39, not a man, Indiana, Pa., leaves wife William Ball, aged 45, mine foreman, Ernest, married.
  - Carl Strandquist, aged 30, fire boss, Ernest, married.
  - George Banton, Jr., aged 25, motorman, Ernest, single.
  - George Assick, aged 30, spranger, Ernest, married.
  - Arthur Rossi, aged 39, Ernest, single.
  - Frank Gasaneri, aged 38, Ernest, married.
  - Joe Salwani, aged 28, Ernest, single.
  - George Guerio, aged 26, Ernest, single.
  - George Warino, aged 27, Ernest, single.
  - Jim Fatwino, aged 30, Ernest, married.
  - John Vasil, aged 30, Ernest, married.
  - Mike Truse, aged 30, Ernest, married.
  - Tony ———, aged about 30, unidentified.
  - Warino, aged 20, Ernest, single.

The time of the tragedy has been determined from a watch found hanging from a pocket in the clothes of one of the dead men. The watch was smashed and the hands pointed to 3:20.

Thomas Lawlor, of Indiana, had charge of the rescue teams, connected with the Lacarne and Graton operations and they were assisted by Drs. C. Paul Reed, of Homer City, and F. F. Moore, of Lacarne Mines. All the available physicians and three nurses from the Indiana Hospital were rushed to Ernest following receipt of the word of the explosion. Officials of the Jefferson & Clearfield Coal & Iron Company and of the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway Company were rushed to the scene on a special train from Pottsville, arriving at Ernest shortly before 8 o'clock. Superintendent F. M. Pfeifferman, of Indiana, was early on the scene and assisted in the direction of the mine rescues.

The explosion occurred about one mile from the main entrance of the mine, where, as near as can be learned 24 men were working. The miners were changing shifts at the time of the accident and the officials are yet unable to give any concrete estimate as to how many men were in the mine. A number of the men had just arrived at the entrance when the explosion occurred.

Ben O'Hara, one of the employees, was just reaching the mouth of the mine when he felt the force of the explosion on his back. While on his way to the entrance of the mine he had passed George Banton, Jr., one of the dead men, he started back. He succeeded in dragging two men to safety and had started back after Banton, but was unable to reach him. Banton's body was brought to the surface shortly before nine o'clock.

# 1916 Miners rescued from the Ernest mine in Indiana PA



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