

18 ENTOMBED MEN STILL IN MINE

Rescuers Work Rapidly
in Efforts to Reach
the Miners.

TRAPPED BY EXPLOSION

Fire From Gas is Now
Reported to be Un-
der Control.

Christopher, Ill., Nov. 30.—While frantic, wild-eyed women screamed for loved ones at the mouth of mine No. 11, old Old Ben Coal Corporation, rescue parties this morning worked feverishly to reach eighteen entombed men in the wrecked mine.

Trapped on the lower level of the mine by an explosion of gas which completely wrecked the main air shaft, eighteen workmen, including Frank Beamer, chief electrician, are believed to have perished. At 8 a. m. today the rescue parties had failed to reach the entombed men.

Supt. L. B. Putnam was unable to say what caused the explosion as there was no more gas than usual, and the men were not using powder as far as is known.

Fire Under Control.
Smoke and flames poured from the entrance to the shaft. At 8 a. m. today it was announced that rescue parties had the fire under control. None of the mine rescue men on the ground believe any of the eighteen men are alive. Seven hundred miners are employed by the company, but owing to the fact that the day was a holiday only a few men were in the shaft when the explosion occurred.

Rescuers early today were working frantically in their efforts to reach eighteen men imprisoned in the 600-foot level of the Old Ben Corporation's new north mine by a gas explosion. Before dawn the rescue squads had reached the 500-foot level and were confident they would come to the entombed miners before many hours.

Mine officials, however, expressed doubt that any of the imprisoned men will be found alive.

The state mine rescue car located at Benton arrived early today, bringing a staff of physicians and nurses. A score of physicians and surgeons from nearby towns rushed here in automobiles and are on hand to give all possible medical aid to the miners.

Explosion Wrecks Shaft.
The explosion wrecked both the main shaft and the air shaft of the mine. The heavy cage hurtled thru the top of the shaft house and wreckage was hurled 160 yards from the mouth of the pit by the force of the explosion. The cause of the explosion is as yet unexplained.

But for the fact that the explosion occurred on a holiday hundreds of men might have been trapped. Seven hundred men ordinarily are employed in the mine, but at the time of the explosion most of the men already were at home and only a small force of repairmen was at work.

Fire followed the explosion, but at 8 a. m. today said the flames were under control.

Rescuers found their work hampered by gas fumes, which came from the entrance to the mine shaft and many of the workers were overcome by gas and had to be attended by physicians. The rescuers were compelled to work in shifts as a result.

The scenes at the mouth of the mine were heart-rending. When the news of the disaster spread thru the village, wives and mothers of the entombed men rushed frantically to the mine, many of them carrying their babies in their arms.

A silent, tearful group of women and children are watching at the mouth of the mine and hoping against hope for word that the imprisoned miners are alive.