

August 3, 1925; Dorrance Colliery, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; 10 Killed

(From State and company inspectors' reports and news accounts)

Two chambers were being driven to the dip, and an electric hoist on the gangway handled the mine cars to and from the faces. The chambers had been advanced 5-crosscut distances from the gangway, and 8 men worked at the faces of the 2 chambers and a crosscut. Haulage was through the second open crosscut from the faces, where a single door was installed. Air entered through the airway and returned through the haulage chamber.

Although methane was known to be liberated freely at the working faces and gas feeders could be heard, the ropeman blocked the door open while changing cars. Methane accumulated, and when the door again was closed the accumulated gas was pushed over one of the men at the face as he was lighting a cigarette with a match. The other men were at lunch on the gangway.

A total of 17 men were in the affected area, 2 of whom were killed outright. The other 15 men were burned but walked out unassisted. Eight of these men died within 10 days; the remaining 7 recovered.