



## 1925 West Kentucky No 9 explosion

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Sat, Jun 8, 2024

By The Associated Press

Sturgis, Ky., June 8. — Five bodies, three of them unidentified, had been found in the workings of the explosion-wrecked mine No. 9 of the West Kentucky Coal Mining company at 9 o'clock tonight. All of the known victims were negroes. Twelve men remained in the mine and all are believed dead.

Gas that had gathered in large quantities in coal pockets caused the explosion. Entries number 3 and 4 were scared and burned by the blast. Timber and debris cluttered up scattered sections of both entries.

Another rescue crew of picked men was being organized tonight to reenter the mine with planks to assist in the search for other victims. Mud in some places was found a foot and a half deep and seriously hampered speedy work. With the planks, miners hope to cover blast territory faster.

The bodies of George Richardson and William Thomas were the first ones found. Rescue workers laid them to one side of the workings and pushed onward into workings still more distant from the shaft. Several hours later they found the bodies of three more negroes, all so badly scorched that identification was impossible.

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**Bodies Left In Mine**  
The five bodies were left in the mine while the search continued for the other twelve men still unaccounted for. No hope remained that any of them would be found alive.

Shortly after darkness settled over the little valley, all the rescue workers, numbering about sixty men, returned to the surface. Ten of them were ill from the effects of gas and received medical attention. Their condition is not serious, it was stated.

Fans which were supplying fresh air for the workers were reversed as soon as all of the men were taken to the surface. Experienced miners explained that this action might aid in drawing poison gas out of the workings.

Meanwhile other crews of miners were being recruited. Mine rescue teams came from Earlington, Madisonville, Dekoven, Evansville, Henderson and Clay. Picked men constituted the shift which entered the ground tonight to renew the search for the men still unaccounted for.

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### Barbed Wire Strung

Sheriff Clements of Union county and his deputies strung a barbed wire fence about the mouth of the shaft, forming a protected enclosure with a radius of 100 feet. A large crowd had assembled during the afternoon and in the evening the number of visitors increased even more. The hills surrounding mine number 9 were dotted with automobiles.

No trace of fire was found in either entry number 3 or number 4, both of which received the brunt of the blast. The explosion scorched the walls and its victims but there apparently was no fire. The blast extended along entry number 2 for about half a mile. From number 3 it crept into number 4.

All day long Tom Christian, mine superintendent, and Neel McCann, inside boss, directed the efforts of workers who volunteered their services. McCann is a veteran of an explosion which eight years ago wrecked one of the West Kentucky company's mine and cost sixty two lives. His face still is disfigured from injuries sustained in the other explosion.

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