

October 4, 1926; Rockwood Mine, Rockwood, Tenn.; 27 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by F. E. Cash)

The explosion occurred about 9: 20 on Monday morning in a region where the coal was about 80 feet thick and worked unsystematically.

There were 244 men underground, 23 of them in the Rogers section; all 23 were killed, 6 by violence, 5 by flames and violence, and 12 by flame. Four others died from afterdamp in nearby entries. One man overcome by gases was found by two survivors from another entry and was taken with them on their retreat to their working face.

They short-circuited the air and waited over 4 hours until rescuers restored ventilation to their place. Another man affected by gas was also rescued.

The explosion was confined to the Rogers section, because the connecting entries were in rock. Recovery work was slow due to inability to ventilate the affected area, and gas masks and breathing apparatus were used extensively. Recovery was completed October 17.

The booster fan supplying air circulation to the section was under repair on Sunday. Monday morning 2 or 3 places were "marked out" because of methane. Slow movement of this gas to the return brought it in contact with the open lights. Dust was ignited in the section. Closed lights, improved ventilation and inspection, rock dusting, and many other changes were recommended