

CAMBRIA COAL

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glad news that the vast expanse of workings to the rear of Plane 13 had not felt the explosion and that no one in that section had been injured. These men were dirt-stained and tired, but they were unharmed, and quickly organized rescue teams to return to the dark depths of Plane 13, if necessary.

The workings of No. 3 mine extend about six miles, according to officials, and the extent of the disaster, if the blast had vented its demoralizing strength in that direction, can not be determined. As it was, workers came from the mine, in response to orders to vacate, not knowing there had been an explosion, and ignorant of the tragedy until they were informed of it by their families, or fellow-workers.

Troopers Patrol Scene

A detachment of six state troopers, in charge of Sergeant Dahlstrom, arrived from Ebensburg within an hour after the first alarm and quickly took charge of the situation. Troops were stretched about the entrance, and the crowd, which had swelled to more than a thousand persons, was pressed back, only miners, officials and rescue workers being permitted inside the barrier.

Calls for aid were sent to Johnstown and other nearby towns, and hospital ambulances and nurses were rushed to Ehrenfeld. Red Cross nurses set up emergency hospitals, doctors prepared to treat the injured and, in an incredibly short time, all signs of chaos had disappeared and the work of rescuing those believed in the interior of the mine was launched.

Shortly before 3 p. m. the first miners requiring medical treatment were brought to the hospital established in the main office. These two

LOCAL MAN FORMERLY
WORKED IN NO. 3 MINE

Frederick A. Patterson, 2411 Beale avenue, a few years ago was employed as a miner at No. 3, Ehrenfeld where the terrific explosion resulting in the death of four miners occurred yesterday and was personally acquainted with many men now working there, it was learned by The Tribune last night.

Two of the dead miners, Sheddlock and McConaighy were also known to Mr. Patterson.

Mr. Patterson was able to give a graphic illustration of the mine's layout and explained how the location of the four exits aided in the escape of the miners from the deadly gaseous fumes.

Lawrence Gibbons and Fred Yrunkes, had been working in the First Dip, and, like many others, were unaware of the explosion until they emerged into the main shaft.

Overcome by Gas

There they were assailed by the cloud of smoke and gas and, while fighting their way out, were overcome. They were not unconscious at any time, however, and after treatment and rest, were sent to their homes.

Miners continued to come from the three entrances not affected by the blast and the list of missing steadily decreased until only 10 men were unaccounted for. Four of these were found by rescue workers, overcome by smoke and gas, while the remaining six, four of whom were killed, were not located until shortly before the mine was declared clear at 6 p. m.

Miners who emerged in safety did not leave the scene but stayed to ascertain the fates of their buddies who were lost in the dust-choked workings. Rejoicing with their families over their own escape, they still were solicitous of others and dropped words of cheer to mournful groups whose loved ones were still missing.

Women Dominate Crowd

Women, dry-eyed but baring their fear-wracked hearts in their tense faces, dominated the crowd. Few of these stoical mine women broke down only a few tears were shed through the tragedy-haunted hours, but many an anxious heart lost a beat or two as men came from the mine bearing shrouded, silent burdens.

There were not many of these, but for every one, there was a hundred fearful souls in the quiet, tragedy-pervaded throng. It is all one big family in these mining towns where everybody knows everybody else, and there is not a household here tonight which, while happy in its own security does not feel the cold touch of the fate which swept four men to their death.

The men did not die in agony, that is certain. Their bodies, as they lay in the morgue of the C. O. Diamond undertaking establishment at South Fork tonight, were composed. They might have been asleep, had it not been for the mask of coal-dust which had been ground deep into their faces.

Two of the dead were suffocated, two of them were badly burned but, it is probable that these two were

dead before they felt the sting of flames. Only one body showed traces of pain and that man, his tongue puffed and tinged with foam, his head bleeding, had his fists clenched, his arms tensed, fighting for life to the last.

As the hours, fear-filled and tortuous, dragged along, the crowd increased until more than 5,000 persons were in the vicinity of the mine. Cars were parked for a distance of more than a mile.

So terrific was the force of the blast that telephone communications and electric light and power connections were severed. The phone wires were repaired within an hour or two, but the lights were not in working order until 8 p. m.

Cause Is Unknown.

The cause of the explosion has not been officially announced, pending an investigation by mine inspectors who took charge during the afternoon. T. D. Williams, Johnstown, is in charge of the group of four men, and it is expected that he will make a report either today or tomorrow.

Workers tell what is believed to be an authentic story, however, they asserting that the blast was caused by runaway coal trains on Plane 13. Two of these trains, one loaded and one empty, were passing on the double track when the rope by which the trains are hauled to the top of the plane broke, precipitating the trains down the slope.

Sparks Ignite Dust.

At the foot of the plane was a third train, operated by John Posko, which operates on the level, feeding the trains which run to and from the entrance. When the runaway cars piled up at the base of the plane, sparks from the motors operating the trains are believed to have ignited the dust aroused by their crashing descent and the resulting blast swept up the plane and toward the entrance, instantly killing the motemen of the three trains and the director, William Connelly, who was stationed at the foot of the plane.

Two other men, John Melvahl and John Holmes, one a hoister and the other a brakeman, were at the top of the incline at the time of the blast and escaped suffocation by barricading themselves in a nearby shanty. It was at first thought that these two men were dead, gas and dust preventing any rescue for hours.

Make Way to Safety.

They made their way to safety unaided, however, as soon as the dust had cleared away to some extent and soon after their escape, the bodies of the four who were killed were also taken from the mine.

Mine operations will be suspended indefinitely, according to C. L. Watkins, vice-president. It is not believed that the shaft is damaged to any extent, but no work will be permitted until the mine inspectors have concluded their investigation.

QUADRUPLE FUNERAL

Funeral arrangements for the dead have not been completed but are in charge of C. O. Diamond, South Fork. He indicated last night that all would be buried together, although this is a matter to be settled by relatives.

All the dead men were members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel church of Ehrenfeld.

This is the second explosion in the history of the local mines, of which there are two, No. 3 and No. 8, established in 1888. The first blast, which occurred about 20 years ago, it is said, was not as serious as today's disaster and took a toll of two lives.

Spent on Air, Claim

PITTSBURG, Mar. 30.—(AP)—Seeking an explanation of how it would be possible for miners to escape an explosion of such force that it wrecked buildings on the surface, United States bureau of mines experts here tonight said they believed the blast spent itself on the air coming out of mine, and that the miners were unharmed because they were in rooms off the main headings, through which the explosion swept.

Commenting on the terrific explosion at mine No. 3 at Ehrenfeld, experts pointed out that it was a two level drift, with an air intake system and an air outlet. The main sloping plane, leading from the mouth, they said, probably carried air out of the workings. The explosion, they explained must have occurred when a heavy current of air was passing. The blast rode this air current through the underground tunnels, passing with great speed to the outside where it wrecked buildings and mine materials.

Miners in closed rooms off outlet tunnels, felt the blast, the experts believed, but were saved because the explosion traveled so swiftly. They likened the explosion in a drift mine to the setting off of a cannon, any object in front of it bearing the brunt of the blast. Bureau records show that up to recently No. 3 mine was not rock dusted.

TO SAVE "TRENCH OF DEATH"

Efforts are being made to save the "Trench of Death," famous during the World war and familiar to later visitors to the battlefields. It is in the path of a proposed road from Chesapeake to Dixmore, and a campaign has been launched to have the road diverted and to preserve the tragic spot as a memorial of the war.