

FATE OF 110 MEN ENTOMBED BELOW YET UNDETERMINED

**Rescue Crews Brave Deadly
Gas in Coal Workings at
Mather, Pa.**

INQUIRY IS BEGUN

**Boss and 15 Men Who Built
Barrier Against Fumes
Found Dead**

Mather, Pa., May 20—(P)—With rescue crews striving to reach the bodies of miners still entombed in the Mather mine, where an explosion late Saturday brought known deaths to 36 workers and uncertain fate to some 110 others, residents of this village prepared to forego sleep a second night.

No bodies had been brought from the workings since shortly before 9 o'clock and mine rescue experts had definitely given up hope for those workers still trapped behind piles of slate and coal. Families of the Mather employees as yet unaccounted for, displayed no trace of the anxiety which must be theirs, but kept dry eyed vigil.

It was impossible to determine the exact number of men in the mine when the blast came. The day men were about to leave the workings, and the night men were inside, prepared to take up their task. Unofficial figures said 160 miners were under ground at the time. Of that number 110 were listed as missing, 36 known dead and five in a Waynesburg hospital in critical condition. Nine escaped.

The recovered dead were taken to the mine machine shop where undertakers from all parts of the mining field were on duty. Here the bodies, some burned and mangled, were prepared for burial and removed to re-

MAN AND WOMAN HELD IN HOLD-UP OF CHAIN STORES

**Local Persons Charged With
Implication in Columbia and
Pottsville Thefts**

The arrest of a man and woman thought to be implicated in chain store holdups in Columbia and Pottsville, for which three men are already accused, was announced at the local police station last night.

The two arrested over the weekend are William Ketter, 31, and Mrs. Edith Miller, 22, both of 51 Howard avenue. They are held in the West Reading barracks of the State police and will be questioned today.

Ketter, arrested about a year ago for robbing a coal office safe in this city and for which his wife is now serving a term in the state institution for women at Munsey, was arrested Saturday and Mrs. Miller late Saturday night.

Coroner's Jury Opens Probe Into Explosion

Mather, Pa., May 20—(P)—The first step in official inquiry into the Mather mine explosion was taken tonight with the selection of a coroner's jury which viewed the bodies of the victims as they lay in an improvised morgue. State mine inspectors were here and the state's inquiry was expected to get under way at once also. First reports were that the inquiries would be held only after all the bodies had been taken from the mine.

Members of the coroner's jury are: W. E. Bailey, foreman; W. K. Reed, Morgan Henderson, O. S. Wood, Rolford Durnan, and Dr. Roy Easterday.

creation hall for identification.

15 Crews In Rescue Work

Fifteen rescue crews, masked against poisonous gases, fought through the debris strewn passageways. Their progress was slow, for they were forced to build air locks at intervals, to flood the exploded sections of the mine with pure air. Working in shifts, the rescuers today had progressed to a point near where the terrific explosion occurred. Behind this point it was believed most of the missing men would be found. And, as one veteran rescuer put it "the chances of getting them out alive are slim."

The explosion was attributed by some to gas.

As the work of recovering the dead and searching for the missing went on relatives who had remained at the mine shaft mouth all night during a heavy rainfall, continued their vigil, hoping their men folks would be saved. They were quiet and calm, for the most part.

Ray Of Hope Blasted

One ray of hope given last night was blasted today when two rescuers brought out the body of Tom Callaghan, assistant mine boss. Callaghan, working near an air shaft when the blast occurred, gathered 15 other workers, made way to an offset in the mine wall and put up a brattice. He telephoned to the surface, using the mine telephone. He said they were safe and getting some good air, but urged rescuers to "hurry." In the main entry, some 3,000 feet back, rescuers came upon the bodies of Callaghan and his men. Apparently the deadly gases had seeped through the brattice, and they made a futile break for the outside, being overcome as they struggled toward the air shaft that had been their hope for life.

Seek Men Still Alive

Rescuers said recovery of bodies was not their mission, because so long as there was hope for any of the entombed, they would pass any other bodies located and continue efforts to reach any who are alive.

Fifteen rescue teams, led by United States Bureau of Mines experts from the Pittsburgh station and state mine inspectors, have been at work in the mine since last night. Most of the crews were from this region, representing companies at Mt. Pleasant, Lelansing, Crescent, Crucible, Charter, Vestaburg, Orient, Buffington and Nemacolin. Some teams were from West Virginia.

The rescuers were being fed by Salvation Army lassies and Red Cross workers from the company store and a Pennsylvania railroad diner, sent in with the rescue car from Nant-Y-Glo. Food was scarce, because of the great

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FATE OF 110 IS STILL DOUBTFUL

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demand on the small stocks available at Mather. Supplies were being rushed in from nearby towns. Doctors and nurses were on hand from all parts of the district.

Practically all victims of the blast were English speaking miners, many of whom had worked at Mather since the mine was opened ten years ago. The mine is an open-shop operation, and had been working steadily. All coal mined is shipped to the owning company for use in its Cleveland works.

Cleveland officials of the company arrived during the day and made arrangements to care for the families of victims.

Greene county authorities were on hand but made no effort to investigate the blast. They said investigation must await completion of the rescue work.

Eight bodies were brought to the open late today. The faces and hands were burned, but other parts of the bodies and the clothing were untouched by flames, indicating the men died from deadly gases.