

18 MEN ARE TRAPPED BY MINE BLAST

53 In The Mine At The Time of the
Explosion Of The Kingston-Po-
c ahontas Number 5 Mine
Escape Injury. Rescuers
Are On Job.

Kingston, W. Va.,
Jan. 26. (AP)—The
bodies of three of the
eighteen miners trapped
by an explosion in the
Kingston mine of the
Kingston-Pocahontas
Coal Company were lo-
cated today by rescue
workers about eight
hundred feet from the
surface. One of the
bodies was that seen by
one of the survivors
while fleeing to safety
and the other two were
found near by, burned al-
most beyond recogni-
tion. Rescue work went
forward slowly from
two entries of the mine,
because the fan was
wrecked by the force of
the explosion, which also
damaged other build-
ings near the mine
mouth and rocked the
countryside for a mile a-
round. Repairs were be-
ing rushed to the fan but
meantime the rescue
workers advanced cauti-
ously into the wrecked
workings, carrying oxy-
gen helmets on their
backs.

1929 Kingston No 5 Mine explosion NEWS

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usmra_rob
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Kingston, W. Va., Jan. 26. (AP)—A terrific explosion in the Number 5 mine of the Kingston-Pocahontas Coal Company early today was believed to have trapped eighteen men, one of whom was reported by survivors to have met death. Fifty-three of those in the mine at the time of the blast escaped through another entry on the opposite side of the mountain. After hasty conferences with mine officials, preliminary to starting rescue work, chief R. M. Lambie of the state mining department announced that eighteen men were unaccounted for but that the others of the 71 men who composed the night crew had made their way to safety. One of the survivors reported that while making his way out, he came across a body in a passage way which he recognized as Blaine Parker, another survivor said he saw a huddled bundle which might have been another body but that he did not stop to investigate.

The blast which was heard within a radius of a mile came from the pit mouth with such force that it knocked over one small building and damaged others. No one was injured on the surface. The survivors reported that the underground passages were badly wrecked. The rescue crews tackled the wrecked mine from two openings, one on each side of the mountain, two miles apart. One of them, the main entry, was near Kingston and the other was along Coal River. A fire which Lambie described as minor developed on the Kingston side following the blast, but it was reached and extinguished shortly after daybreak. Meantime rescue crews had entered the Coal river side and started the laborious and dangerous task of exploring the gas choked workings. Lambie organized a crew of runners to maintain contact with those in charge of the rescue work at the two entries.

The usual scene of anxious women and terror stricken children at the mine mouth were lacking at Kingston, because of the topography of the country. The mine pierces the mountainside and is reached after a difficult climb up a steep grade of a quarter of a mile. The missing men were at work along the main haulage way when the blast occurred. Those who escaped were distributed about other sections of the mine. In small groups they worked their way to the Coal river entry, after the blast had ripped through the workings. Two or three quick blasts of air, the survivors said warned them that an explosion had occurred in another section and they started for the nearest entry, along the Coal river. Familiar to all of them. By twos and threes they made their escape and walked over the mountain in the darkness to report themselves, safe at the Kingston entry. Lambie was assisted in the rescue work by several district inspectors and rescue teams from nearby mines.

The U. S. Bureau of mines rescue car was ordered to the scene from Welch and mine rescue equipment came from the New River mine. In keeping with procedure of mine rescue work Lambie listed among the missing the man whose body was reported seen until crews reach that section of the mine.

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