

December 6, 1930; Lamb Mine, Madrid, N. Mex.; 5 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by G. M. Kintz and E. A. Anundsen)

An explosion in the 6th left entry at 10:35 a.m. resulted in death to 5 men, serious injury to 2 others, and slight injury to 5 more. The remainder of the 81 men escaped uninjured. Explosive accumulations of methane had been found for some days between crossbars near the faces of the 5th, 6th, and 7th left entries, and it accumulated rapidly when ventilation was interrupted.

Construction of an overcast required cutting and splicing a feedline carrying power for electric equipment in the area. Blowers used to ventilate working faces were cut off, and gas accumulated and was pushed back over the blowers when power was restored.

The foreman tested and found gas at the blower in 6th left and told the electrician with him to pull the switch. As the switch was thrown off, it arced and ignited the gas. The explosion was increased by coal dust but was checked by rock-dust barriers and by some rock dust applied to the entries so that the flame did not travel out of 6th left.

Rescue crews were organized on the surface, and the injured men were removed. Ventilation was restored up to the last crosscut, and an apparatus crew explored the faces and removed the bodies.