

October 27, 1930; Wheatley No. 4 Mine, McAlester, Okla.; 30 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by C. A. Herbert)

About 9:30 p.m. the underground night shift of 30 men was all killed by an explosion. One, a trip rider, was killed at the mouth of the slope as he was loading material into a car. Almost every stopping in the mine was blown out, as was much of the timbering, resulting in heavy falls of rock, except along the slope.

Rescue crews and equipment arrived during the night, and temporary stoppings of brattice cloth were put in to restore ventilation into the section where the night shift had been working. The work was done without the use of apparatus except for the recovery of the last 3 bodies in the 15th west, removed by a crew at 4:00 p.m. October 30.

Explosive gas had accumulated in the face of a crosscut and aircourse after the line curtain was removed while coal was loaded out. A mining machine cut into the crosscut from the other side, and the gas was carried over the controller and ignited.

The explosion was propagated by coal dust over the entire mine. Rock dusting was so limited in extent that the effect was negligible. Ventilation was inadequate and carelessly maintained. Figure 81 gives details of the explosion.

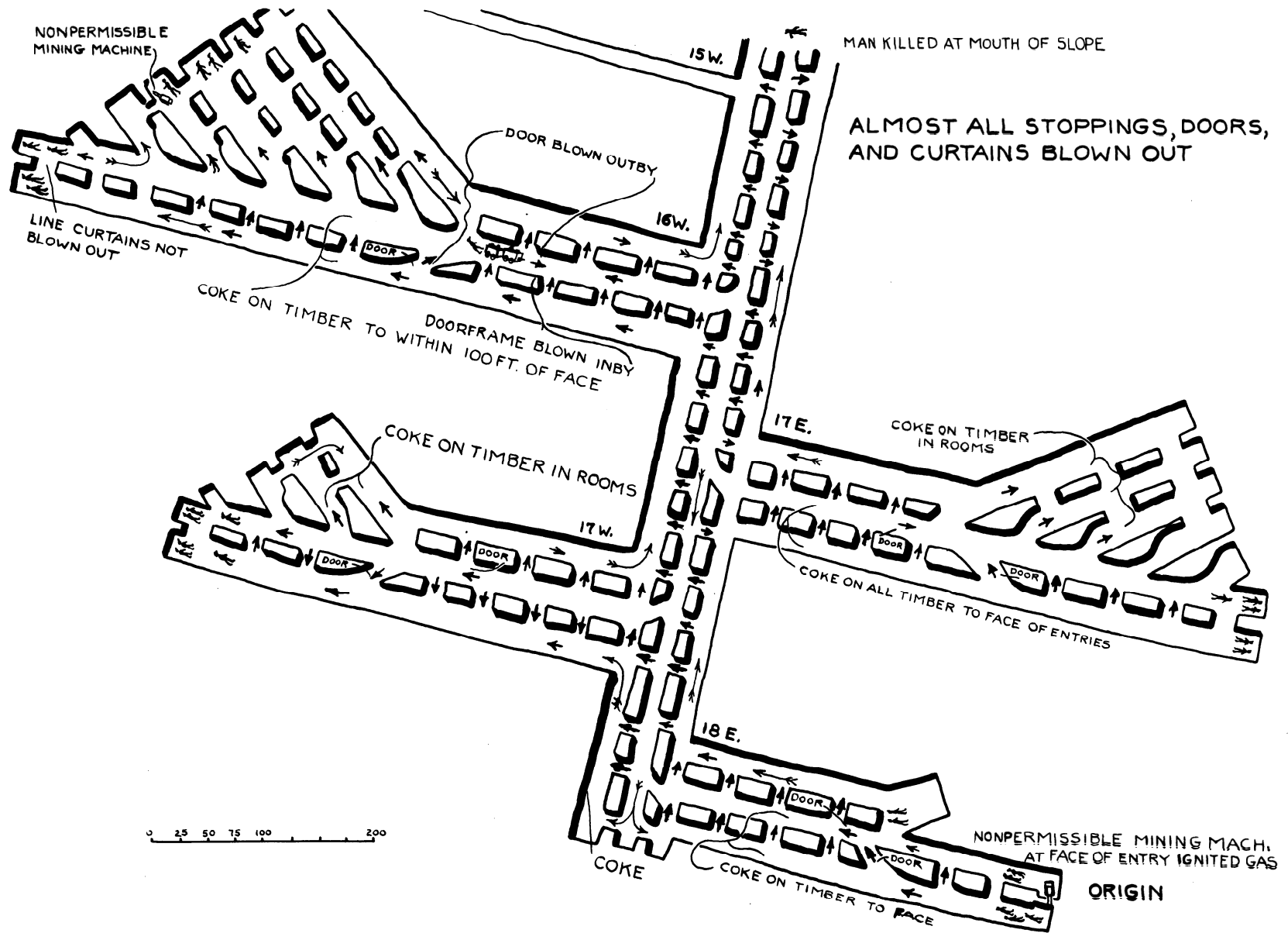


FIGURE 81.—Map of explosion area, Wheatley No. 4 mine, McAlester, Okla., October 27, 1930.