

## Parrott Recovers From Mine Blast

### Investigation of Pulaski Explosion Will Be Made by Federal Officials

PARROTT, Va., Jan. 19. (AP)—This little mining village, located in the northern tip of Pulaski county, today was recovering from the shock of its first major mine disaster, an explosion late yesterday evening which snuffed out the lives of six men.

There was little to be seen in the town to indicate that a tragedy had occurred. Groups of men congregated here and there, conversing in low tones, were idle awaiting the arrival of federal and state mining inspectors late this afternoon from Norton.

In the homes of the victims, grief-stricken relatives were making plans for the funerals which will be held tomorrow afternoon and Thursday, final details pending word from persons living at a distance.

At the office of the Pulaski Anthracite Company, J. C. Parrott, president, and Joel Asberry, mine superintendent, with W. D. Akers, mine foreman, were studying blueprints of the mine and attempting to formulate a theory which would account for the disaster. No one connected with the company was able to advance a definite cause for the death-dealing blast which occurred about 5:30 p. m.

The Pulaski Anthracite Co. mine has been in operation since 1903. A large government contract has kept the mine operating five and six days a week during the past two years. The coal is of high quality.

Company officials were sorely grieved by the disaster, the first major accident in the mine in several years.

The six victims were working in the number 5 east entry, about 800 feet below the surface. Two of them, Foster C. Boyd, 29, and Ortie Boyd, 20, were from Radford.

Frank, Dewey and Harve Sifford live in and near Parrott. Frank, aged 47, was the father of Dewey, 19, and father-in-law of Harve, about 40.

Ernest Snead, the sixth victim, is survived by his wife and his mother.

Funeral services for the Siffords will be held at Parrott probably tomorrow afternoon.

Shock had forced Mrs. Frank Sifford to bed today. In discussing the mishap, she said that her husband recently had complained of the ventilation in the section of the mine in which he worked. According to Mrs. Sifford, he often experienced difficulty in breathing. Other persons employed in the mine corroborated her statement, among them being Graham Hop-

kins, who has been employed there for about six years. Hopkins worked yesterday in the room next to the scene of the explosion.

"The air was good at times and bad at times," he said. He said he had no occasion to go into No. 3 room, where the men died, "but the air has been seriously bad in that section of the mine for the last six months, ever since entry No. 5 east has been opened."

Hopkins said it appeared the air was choked off somewhere. He said he had heard two-thirds of the 20 men employed in the number five entry complain of the condition.

Mine Superintendent Asberry, when questioned concerning the statements, said no complaint had been received by officials. He said that D. H. Caldwell had inspected the mine for gas a few minutes before the night shift went to work at 3 o'clock and that no trace of gas had been discovered. H. A. Bruce searched the employees for matches, a daily routine as precaution against explosions and records in the office show each employee received approval on this score yesterday.

Damage to the mine was small and it is expected work will be resumed immediately after the inspection of officials is complete.

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