

## FIND SIX BODIES, EXPECT TO REACH THE OTHERS SOON

**Only 10 At Work When  
Blast Occurs, Mine  
Ordinarily Works 125**

**DANTE AND NORTON  
RESCUE TEAMS AID**

**Women, Children Gather  
At Schoolhouse Which  
Is Converted Into  
Morgue; 3 Die at Kenvir**

Special to the Herald Courier  
SPLASHDAM, Va., June 13.—Ten men were killed by an explosion in the number six mine of the Splashdam Coal Corporation here at 8:20 o'clock this morning and at eleven o'clock tonight six bodies had been recovered.

The bodies recovered and the survivors:

Oscar Dowdle, fire boss, wife and five children.

Elmer Nail, wife and three children.

Cecil Stump, wife.

Roy Garrett, wife and four children.

Clyde Matney, wife and two children.

N. E. Honaker, wife and five children.

The four missing men, whose bodies rescuers expect to reach within a few hours, are:

Drew Wallace, wife and six children.

Roy Sproles.

Dave Adams, wife.

Delford Willis, wife and four children.

All victims were white.

The explosion occurred shortly after the men went to work this morning, the blast apparently occurring approximately one mile from the mouth of the slope or drift mine. The mine ordinarily employs about 125 men and has been working on a three-day a week basis. Today was an off-day and the men who went to work this morning were doing clean-up, repair and emergency work.

Norton and Coeburn undertakers were preparing the bodies tonight for burial at a schoolhouse which was hastily converted into a morgue.

**200 Women, Children,  
At Temporary Morgue**

More than 200 women and children of the settlement gathered about the morgue tonight, bearing their grief stolidly while nearly every male in the vicinity helped with rescue work. The school house presented a tragic picture.

Rescue teams from Norton and Dante are assisting valuably in the relief work.

Rescue teams are clearing the debris as they penetrate the mine. The explosion did not do the material injury it was expected had been done, and the rescuers were making exceptional speed into the shaft. It was necessary to con-

(See Page Two, Col. Seven.)

## FIND SIX BODIES, EXPECT TO REACH THE OTHERS SOON

(Continued from page one.)

stantly give them fresh air because of the faulty gas.

Rescue work is in charge of A. G. Lucas, Virginia state mine inspector, D. E. Stanton, his assistant, and J. S. Davies of Norton station of the U. S. bureau of mines, are assisting him.

Cause of the explosion has not been ascertained, all efforts being concentrated on rescue work. An investigation of the cause will be made after all bodies have been recovered.

The ten victims were the only men who reported for work this morning.

The body of Oscar Dowdie, fire boss, whose duty is to inspect the mine before workmen enter, was the first discovered. It was 150 feet from the mine mouth, and George W. Walker, general manager of the Splashdam Coal Corp., said he was satisfied that Dowdie had completed his tour of inspection prior to the entrance of the workmen when the explosion occurred.

The bodies of Null and Stump were then discovered a thousand feet further on. Both bodies bore burns indicating that they were victims of the force of the explosion.

Later the bodies of Garrett, Matney and Honaker were discovered. All indications were that they had been overcome by "black damp," the deadly poison that follows a mine explosion.

The other bodies were believed at or near a locomotive further back in the mine.

### Flames Belch From

#### Mouth of Mine

Rain drenched foliage on the banks of the McClure river was scorched by flames which burst from the mouth of the mine. Five men in the adjoining and connecting mine number five did not feel the force of the explosion and knew nothing of it until informed.

The splashdam Coal Corporation, which is said to be owned by George C. Peery of the Virginia State Corporation Commission, George J. Walker, the general manager, and the estate of Barnes Gillespie, operates two mines here, called No. 5 and No. 6. The mines were opened in 1918.

Traces of gas have been frequently found in mine No. 6, but the situation has been completely handled during the entire operation by complete ventilation.

Six years ago there was a minor explosion in the same mine, but none was killed.

The mine has undergone regular inspection and less than 30 days ago it was pronounced in 'A-1' working condition.

Splashdam is in a remote section of Dickenson county and there are approximately 800 persons residing here. The settlement is 40 miles from Norton and approximately 35 miles from Clintwood, the county seat. There is a neighboring mine four miles away, the Splashdam Smokeless Fuel Corporation, which is operated by Scott Litton.

First news of the explosion went to the outside world this morning by a telephone call to C. B. Neel, of Norton, secretary of the Virginia Coal Operators' Association, at 8:30 o'clock, asking for rescue assistance. Mr. Neel, his son, Alex Neel, Paul MacDonald, inspector, and others, came here immediately.