

BUILDINGS ARE HURLED DOWN MOUNTAINSIDE

Colorado Snowslide
Sweeps Path Fourth
of Mile Wide

MANCOS, Colo., Feb. 18. —(P)—Sixteen miles of snow-drifted mountains faced a rescue party which planned its departure today for the Hesperus gold mine, where an avalanche roared off a mountain top Sunday, killing six persons and injuring two others.

Striking with such terrific impact that it catapulted a woman through the roof of the cooks' shack, the mass of snow and rock carried the remains of half a dozen buildings 450 feet into a small canyon.

It tore loose from the summit, 1,000 feet above the mine, and swept a path three-quarters mile wide as, gaining speed, it roared down the slope.

The scene was above timberline, at an altitude of 11,000 feet, where for the past week a raging blizzard has piled up snow unceasingly.

The dead: Parley Jensen, Roy Guier, Clint Noble and Charles Roessler, all of Mancos; Earl Wyman of Denver and Mrs. Janie Rees, of nearby Cortez, Colo. Their ages were not learned.

The injured: Neil Ansguard, 20, of Golden, Colo., and Alvin Fink, 20, of Mancos. Word brought here by Ben Hartley, one of 12 whom the avalanche missed, said they would recover. They were bruised and possibly suffered broken ribs.

Hartley, worn by the perilous trip from the mine, reported the tragedy late yesterday to Sheriff Jess Robinson of Montezuma county. He made his way on skis, one of which was splintered, which had been worn by one of the victims at the time of the slide. They were the only available pair in camp.

"I was in the mill when the slide struck," Hartley related.

"I heard the roar when the avalanche broke loose above us. Then I saw part of the mill opposite me ripped off and swept into the canyon.

"Some of the bunkhouses, part of the cook's shack, the store house, the tool shed and other outside buildings had been practically sheared off at their foundations and crushed into the canyon. The other boys who escaped were yelling that some of the fellows were underneath the pile, and we went to work digging into the mess.

"We got out Ansguard and Fink and found Mrs. Rees, but she died."

Hartley left the isolated camp at daybreak for Mancos in weather he said "wasn't cold, probably a few degrees above zero." It was downhill most of the 16 miles, he said, but every time he hit loose snow and overhanging drifts he would careen down the hillside.

"Had food enough for a day," he said, "but I didn't stop to eat except when I had to fix the strap on my bad ski."

Sufficient shelter and food remained at the mine, Hartley said, so that the people still in camp would not suffer. The carpenter saved some tools and was making new skis and toboggans while the others were attempting to uncover the bodies.

The mine is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Colorado, in the rugged La Plata mountains. (Turn to Page 7, Col. 6)

AVALANCHE KILLS SIX

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ta's area. Nearby are the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National park.

The Hesperus, operated by the Hesperus company, is on a claim staked out and first worked by James Doyle, veteran of the famous Cripple Creek district, according to Robert S. Palmer, secretary of the state metal mining commission.

Its superintendent, Frank C. Bowman of Denver, placed his estimate of the loss of equipment and buildings at \$25,000.

Hesperus Mine Buried By A Gigantic Slide Sunday

Tons of Snow Swept Mine Buildings From Rugged Slopes of La Plata Mountains, Killing Six; Rescue Party of 40 Fights Blizzard to Reach Survivors; News of Tragedy Reached Outside World Last Night When Survivor Got to Cortez

Brother Of Local Man Is Slide Victim

Another tragedy of the mountains, a snow slide which Sunday night carried away the mine buildings and boarding house of the Hesperus Mining company high up in the La Platas near Mancos, claimed among its six victims Charles Roessler, a brother to J. W. Roessler, local contractor residing at 757 Hill avenue. News of the death of his brother reached Mr. Roessler last night about 7 o'clock, word of the disaster having been delayed many hours while one of the survivors made his way over 16 miles of treacherous mountain snow. Today's Associated Press reports carry details of the tragedy, one of the worst to strike the mining camps of Western Colorado for years past.

Charles Roessler was 59 years of age, and had been a resident of the San Juan district for the past 38 years. For many years of that time he was engaged in the mercantile business. Since last August he had been employed at the plant of the Hesperus Mining company, where he met his death together with five others.

Mr. Roessler was unmarried and survived by two sisters, Mrs. Payquin, residing at Durango, and Mrs. Wagner, residing at Mancos, and four brothers, John, Frank and Albert, of Mancos, and J. W. Roessler of this city. J. W. Roessler was employed 35 years ago at the same mine at which his brother met his death.

The Hesperus mine is situated above 11,000 feet (timber line), and the snow came down from probably a thousand feet higher up on the mountain, lodging in the canon some 450 feet below the mine. The slide is reported to have been three quarters of a mile in width.

Mancos, Colo., Feb. 18. (AP)—Forty men on snowshoes and skis fought snow drifts five feet or more deep and a new blizzard today as they struggled to reach the injured and recover the dead at the Hesperus gold mine, where buildings were virtually swept away by a snow avalanche.

The rescue plans were speeded in the face of conflicting reports as to whether any supplies remained at the mine after the sheet of ice and snow three-quarters of a mile wide roared down from the mountain top. It tore nearly all the buildings from the side of the mountain, killed six mine employes and injured two.

Ten ton tractors and a snow plow opened the road for nine miles toward the two-mile-high mine in the heart of the La Plata mountains, center of a rich gold and silver territory.

The first party of men was led by Ben Hartley, one of twelve mine employes who escaped because they happened to be a few feet outside the borders of the wide trough the avalanche cut through the dazzling white snow. The slide occurred Sunday, but word of it did not reach here until Hartley made his way on broken skis the 16 miles to Mancos, arriving last night.

The new blizzard struck the mountain range just a short time before the rescue parties set out at the end of the path cleared by the snow plows. Visibility was limited to only a few feet, but temperatures were not severe, being slightly above zero.

Striking with such terrific impact that it catapulted a woman through the roof of the cook's shack, the big mass of snow and rock carried the broken remains of half a dozen buildings 450 feet into a canon.

It tore loose from a mountain summit, 1,000 feet above the mine, and swept a path three-quarters of a mile wide as, gaining speed, it thundered down the slope.

The mine was above timberline, at an altitude of 11,000 feet, where for the past week a raging blizzard has piled up snow unceasingly in the precipitous La Plata range.

The dead were: Pfrley Jensen, Roy Guler, Clint Noble and Charles Roessler, all of Mancos; Earl Wyman of Denver, and Mrs. Janie Rees, of Cortez, Colo.

The injured: Neil Ansguard, 20,

of Golden, Colo., a nephew of John A. Pratt, of Golden, one of the mine owners, and Alvin Fink, 20, of Mancos.

Word of the timber line tragedy brought here by Ben Hartley, one of 12 whom the avalanche missed, said the injured would recover. They were bruised and possibly suffered broken ribs.

PERILOUS TRIP

Hartley, worn out by a perilous trip down the mountain reported the tragedy late yesterday to Sheriff Jess Robinson of Montezuma county.

He made his way on damaged skis which had been worn by one of the victims at the time of the slide Sunday afternoon. They were the only available pair in camp.

"I was in the mill when the slide struck," Hartley related.

"Although I heard the roar when the avalanche broke loose above us, I didn't have time to realize what was happening until I saw part of the mill opposite me ripped off and swept into the canon.

"Some of the bunkhouses, part of the cook's shack, the store house, the tool shed and other outside buildings had been practically sheared off at their foundations and crushed into the canon. The other boys who escaped were yelling that some of the fellows were under neath the pile, and we went to work digging into the mess.

WOMAN DIES

"We got out Ansguard and Fink and found Mrs. Rees, but she died."

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"I had food enough for a day," he said, "but I didn't stop to eat except when I had to fix the strap on my bad ski.

"When I left camp a strong wind and heavy snow made the travelling difficult and fog was so thick I couldn't see more than 30 or 40 feet. I came into sunshine in a couple of hours, and didn't have to travel 'blind' any more, but the going was tough enough that I don't think I could have gone another mile."

Indications were that the res-
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ATE, ED FUTURE"

Politicians Center Interest On TVA Despite O'Connor-Coughlin Row

By LEONARD E. SHUBERT
(Associated Press Staff Writer)
Washington, Feb. 18. (AP)—A battle of books for and against new deal policy and the threatened physical encounter between Charles E. Coughlin and Rep. John J. O'Connor occupied politicians today, but they gave most attention to the supreme court's TVA decision.

Late News FLASHES

Denver, Feb. 18. (AP)—Gov. Ed C. Johnson had a quick and sharp reply today to purported plans of Denver city officials to challenge use of state sales tax receipts for meeting class B appropriations. City officials said they contemplated a court test of the validity of such expenditures because the

SNOWSLIDE WIPES OUT MINE CAMP

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cue party under Sheriff Robinson's direction to retrace Hartley's trail would encounter even more difficult conditions particularly on the last half of the trip. An uphill journey faced the crew, and blizzard conditions apparently were continuing.

SUFFICIENT FOOD

Sufficient shelter and food remained at the camp, Hartley said, so that the people still there would not suffer. The carpenter saved some tools and started to make new skis and toboggans while the others were attempting to uncover the bodies.

"The blizzard which roared around the mountains up there for the last six days, started by sending down snow which was more like little balls of ice," Hartley said.

"As the snow settled on that, I guess it got too heavy and those little balls of snow acted just like roller bearings for the whole avalanche."

The mine is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Colorado, in the rugged LaPlata mountains areas which late in 1933 was the mecca of prospectors hearing reports of \$1 a pound ore. Nearby are the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde national park and Southern Ute reservation.

It was the only mine in Colorado's newest gold field working throughout the winter.

Scarcely had word of the disaster reached the outside when state officials instituted plans for aiding the search.

From Denver, John T. Joyce, state metal mining commissioner, ordered Inspector Ben Naughton of Silverton, a mountain community in the southwestern region, to lend all possible assistance. Naughton was blocked in at Silverton by snow-clogged roads which delayed his start several hours.

The state's coal mining inspector, Thomas Allen, also offered his department's cooperation through Thomas Owen of Durango, a special investigator. Owen operated a coal mine near Durango.

Joyce said the "dry" snowslide which hit the camp is one of the worst hazards to winter mining in the steep southwest Colorado mountain country.

Such slides, he said, are caused by light, flaky snow falling to great depths on the slopes, creating such weight that sections of the pile break off and slither rapidly down the mountains.

Other mines in the district include the Red Arrow and May Day, both heavy producers.

The Hesperus, now operated by the Hesperus company, is on a claim staked out and first worked by James Doyle, veteran of the Cripple Creek district, according to Robert S. Palmer, secretary of the State Metal Mining association.

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