

Two Dead, 8 Trapped By Logan Mine Blast; Rescue Efforts Pushed

**BLAST IS DESCRIBED AS 'LOCAL
GAS EXPLOSION,' BY INSPECTOR**

Logan Disaster Confined To Small Area; Jury Will Be Impaneled To Determine Cause; Other Mine Explosions In State Are Recalled

Charleston, W. Va., Sept. 3. (AP)—The department of mines said tonight the explosion which killed two men and trapped eight others in the Macbeth mine of the Hutchinson Coal company near Logan was a "local gas explosion."

E. V. McVey, a special inspector, said the blast was confined to a small area. One hundred and ten other workers in the pit escaped serious injury.

McVey said:

"As far as we know now, something ignited a gas pocket."

"After the trapped men are rescued and the area cleared, a jury will be impaneled to determine the cause."

"The Macbeth mine employed two fire bosses and was listed as gassy, but all safety precautions have been observed by the company during operation."

"It looks like just an accident."

Records show the last major mine explosion in the state occurred in 1931 at the Whittman mine of the

Island Creek Coal company. Five men lost their lives.

The inspector said the decrease in the number of explosions in West Virginia mines was directly attributable to rock drilling and the rigid observance of all safety precautions.

The Macbeth mine produced 125,000 tons of coal during the first six months of this year. The 1935 tonnage was 122,000. The operation employs about 160 men.

The most serious disaster in the state's mining history and one that ranks near the top of the industry's list was the Monksville explosion in 1907. Three hundred and sixty-one miners were killed.

Other major disasters include:

1914—Jocoy explosion, 331 men killed.

1915—Benwood explosion, 119 killed.

1916—Layland explosion, 112 killed.

1927—Savertown explosion, 87.

LITTLE HOPE FOR ENTOMBED MINERS

**Disaster Strikes Hutchinson
Coal Company Mine**

TWO BODIES RETRIEVED

**Rescue Crews Dig Through
Debris; May Be Hours Be-
fore Men Are Reached**

Logan, W. Va., Sept. 3. (Thurs-
day) (AP)—H. N. Henderson, chief
mine inspector, said today officials had
shaken hope for eight men
trapped behind a fallen roof after
an explosion.

Henderson said the roof in the
wrecked section of the mine had
started falling and that it looks
now as if it will be late in the
afternoon before he reaches the
men.

Two bodies were recovered
shortly after the blast.

Logan, W. Va., Sept. 3.—(Thurs-
day) (AP)—Forty rescue workers,
counting two known dead in an ex-
ploded in the Macbeth mine of the
Hutchinson Coal company, trapped
through a choked airway early
today to reach eight others trapped
several hundred feet below the sur-
face.

Rescue workers said there was lit-
tle hope the eight men were alive.
One crew came out after getting
within 200 feet of the trapped men
and reported it would take at least
until morning to dig through a fallen
roof. Other crews immediately
took the task of boring through
debris.

Two bodies were taken out. They
were identified as those of Elmer
Walt, 31, and Andy Gardiner, 27.
Ab Lamber, 31, a miner and O.
J. Fawcett, a field engineer for
the company, were overcome by gas.
Rescue crews dig through debris
about 100 feet from the mouth of
the shaft. Fawcett had gone down
to make an inspection after the ex-
plosion.

Company officials said these men
still are in the mine:
Grover Saunders, 28.
William Reiter, 49.
Ed Addie, 50.
Ed Saunders, Negro, 46.
Gus McDaniel, Negro, 46.
Tom Tiller, 25.
Jesse McDaniel, Negro, 46.
Victor Cocorillo, 25.

120 In Mines

There were 120 men in the mine
at the time but officials said the
explosion apparently was of local na-
ture and confined to a small area.
Most of the men made their way
out quickly.

Members of the first rescue crew,
which came out at 7:07 p. m., re-
ported:

"Given with luck it will take until
morning to reach the men. The
roof has fallen and will have to be
cleared away."

Others said that the eight behind
the mass of debris probably were
dead unless they had managed to
block themselves off from gas fumes
quickly.

Doctors said both Elmer and Gos-
bell died of asphyxiation. Dr. R. H.
Vance of McConnell expressed the
opinion it would be a "miracle" if
any of the eight escaped.

The scene of the explosion was
about two miles from the Macbeth
shaft. W. J. Meyers, general super-
intendent of the company, and re-
scue teams from three adjacent
mines into the working and stayed
below to direct operations.

W. P. Rhinaker, chief of the state
department of mines, and P. D. Mc-
Murry, safety director, came from
Charleston to assist in the work.

Gas pocket.

Officials reported a natural gas
pocket apparently was ignited by a
spark from a mine motor and caused
the blast.

A crowd of 2,000, among them
relatives of the men still below,
grouched around the shaft eight
miles from Logan while the tedious
work of clearing away debris went
on. Many of them, after hearing the
report of the first crew out, sat
themselves for a long time of
waiting before the fate of the en-
tombed men is known.

Rubble was piled high all along
the roadway and after reaching
the spot 200 feet from where
the miners were caught, workers
said the mass of slate and coal be-
came impassable.

Victor Cocorillo, one of the men
still in the mine, had planned to en-
ter Marshall college in Huntington
this fall, a friend said.

There have been two other explo-
sions in the Macbeth mine, both of
them before the Hutchinson company
took it over.

The first was more than 13 years
ago but it happened on a Monday
when no men were in the mine.
There were no casualties but the
blast wrecked the mine and destroyed
the tipple.

Three men lost their lives.
The second was ten years ago and
killed one.

Crowd Get Blacker

As the night wore on the crowd
around the tipple became larger and
newcomers found themselves forced
to stand far back of the opening.
One of those at the tipple drew mur-
murs of sympathy from the crowd.
She was Mrs. Bill Reiter, whose
husband was behind the fallen roof
and whose brother, Elmer Walt,
was brought out dead.

Homer, Ralph, 30, and Walter
Spry, 31, had close escapes when the
blast roared through the working
section. They had been fighting with
the entry No. 12, scene of the explo-
sion, 30 minutes before it happened.
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AIRLINER CRASH BLAMED ON PILOT

**Air Commerce Bureau Places
Responsibility On Dead
Aviator; Company Officials
To File Exceptions To Report**

Washington, Sept. 3. (AP)—A pilot
who died with 11 others was blamed
by the air commerce bureau today
for the crash of a transcontinental
and western airliner near Union-
town, Pa., April 1.

Officials of the company in New
York announced they would file ex-
ceptions to the bureau's report with-
in a week, but did not specify their
nature.

In a nine-page report, made public
by Secretary Rogers, the bureau said
the "probable cause" of the accident
was "poor judgment" on the part of
Pilot Otto Ferguson of Kansas City, Mo., "for flying by visual ground ob-
servation methods after having de-
scended through the clouds and over-
cast in mountainous terrain at a
point unknown to him."

The plane, en route from Camden, N. J., to Pittsburgh, Pa., crashed
into Chestnut ridge in the Alleghen-
ies. Only two of the 14 persons
aboard survived. They were Mrs.
Meyer C. Hienstein of Newark, N. J.,
passenger, and the hostess, Miss
Mollie Granger of Dravosburg, Pa.
Miss Granger who dragged two per-
sons from the flaming wreckage,
then trudged four miles over a wild
mountain trail to get aid and tell
of the tragedy.

Signed by Eugene L. Vidal, di-
rector of air commerce, the report
said "contributory causes" to the
accident included failure of the pilot
to "identify accurately" his position
with respect to the Pittsburgh air-
port before descending.

It also criticized his failure to fol-
low the radio range courses "when
it first became necessary for him to
revert to instrument flying." In this,
the report said, regulations of both
the transport company and the com-
merce department were violated.

At the time of the crash TWA of-
ficials said in a statement that there
were indications the radio direction-
al beam was not functioning prop-
erly. In its report today, the bureau
included testimony from crew pilots
in the air at the same time which
was designed to show the beam was
operating properly.

"An analysis of the evidence ob-
tained by the bureau of air com-
merce, both at the scene of the ac-
cident and at public hearings held
at Uniontown and Pittsburgh,
makes it apparent," the report con-
tinued, "that the pilot following a
compass course out of Camden for
Pittsburgh, continued this compass
course after it became necessary for
him to revert to instrument flying in
the vicinity of Harrisburg."

Asserting the evidence indicated
there was "no malfunctioning" of the
aircraft, engine or equipment, the
report added there was nothing to
show that prevailing weather condi-
tions had affected the plane's flight
and that there was sufficient fuel
aboard for more than two hours' flying.

PORTUGAL AGREES JOIN SPANISH NEUTRALITY

London, Sept. 3. (AP)—Portugal
agreed conditionally to join Europe's
Spanish neutrality committee to-
night, while diplomats seeking to
curtail reported horrors of the Span-
ish civil war announced they had
Austria in contact with both the
Madrid government and rebel head-
quarters.

(The Argentine ambassador to
Spain tonight said diplomats at Ber-
lin, France, were seeking a truce
in the Spanish civil war as the only
means of preventing "a world war.")

The cheering news from Portugal
arrived just as the British cabinet
started a four hour session to iron
out the multitude of problems arising
from the Spanish conflict—with
the danger of involving other na-
tions.

Participation by Germany was re-
garded as the only remaining devel-
opment necessary to permit the
committee to begin its work this
week.

The cabinet instructed its charges
at Berlin to press for a German
response to the committee
invitation, accepted thus far by 11
European nations.

TIGHE QUILTS HIS STEEL UNION POST

**Announces His Retirement
And At Same Time Calls
Upon Workers To Support
Campaign For Unionization**

Pittsburgh, Sept. 3. (AP)—Michael
P. Tighe, 35-year-old president of
the nation's biggest steel union, an-
nounced his retirement today and
simultaneously called upon work-
ers to support a campaign to en-
list the men of the mills under one
union banner.

In a simply worded statement,
Tighe disclosed he would and his
27-year-old association with the
Amalgamated Association of Iron,
Steel and Tin Workers upon the ex-
piration of his term January 1.

His successor will be chosen by
members at the next convention of
the Amalgamated in December.

Tighe has supported the drive
headed by John L. Lewis to enlist
the steel workers in "one big union,"
but his activities in recent months
were hampered by ill health.

In an appeal to workers through
the publication, the Amalgamated
Journal, Tighe said labor
is confronted with some of the
most difficult and complex prob-
lems it ever faced.

"How to meet these problems in-
telligently and fearlessly is the
question of the hour," he said.

Urging unity and solidarity, Tighe
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TAX DECISION IN LOCAL CASE CITED

**29 Huntington Firms Seek To
Have Supreme Court Invalidate
City's Consumer's Sales
Tax Measure**

Charleston, W. Va., Sept. 3. (AP)—
The old Bluefield tax case, in which
it was held that a city could not
impose a consumer's sales tax, was
placed before the supreme court to-
day as a reason why Huntington's
existing sales levy should be de-
clared invalid.

The Anderson-Newcomb company
and its other firms urged the court
to throw out the tax which was re-
pealed in July after Mayor Martin
V. Chapman said it was necessary
for another year to permit the city
to carry on.

The circuit court circuit court
ruled against the one per cent tax
and certified the case to the ap-
pellate court for review.

Attorneys for the Anderson-New-
comb company recalled the tribunal
had ruled invalid Bluefield's sales
tax, and added:

"If the statute law does not give
the city of Huntington any greater
power to enact the ordinance in
question than it gave the city of
Bluefield to enact its illegal ordi-
nance."

Huntington city solicitors counter-
ed with the claim the city's charter
grants the power to levy the tax.

The Anderson-Newcomb lawyers
said:

"The city of Huntington charter
provisions are not substantially dif-
ferent from the charter in the Blue-
field case; the ordinances are the
same; and there is no express va-
thority granted the city to enact the
ordinance."

"The decision the levy, the city
solicitors said:

"The city is expressly granted the
power to provide revenue for the
city and appropriate the same to its
expense, and it is not an ex-
cessive grant of power to exact a
consumer sales tax, such power
is at least necessary or fairly im-
plied."

The city's charter grants the
general power of taxation; a grant
of the general power of taxation is
a grant of the state's entire power,
and if the state may exact a con-
sumers tax (Turn to Page Three)

LITTLE HOPE FOR ENTOMBED MINERS

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They had moved on to another section a considerable distance away. Estep said:

"The explosion was so strong it stopped a motor weighing ten tons and pulling a string of 17 loaded cars."

Most of the men who came out of the mine just after the explosion went back in quickly to help dig for their missing comrades. Company officials said some of the miners did not even come up the shaft but went on directly to the wrecked area and began helping the rescue teams.

Tom Tiller had been off duty two weeks because of an injury. It was his first day back at work. He was one of those trapped.