

7 Killed, 10 Seriously Hurt When Explosion Rocks Mine Near Pottsville; 2 Escape

**Blast in St. Clair Company's Workings Attributed to Gas—
"Black Damp" Hampers Rescuers—17 Children Made
Orphans—Mine Declared Safe Just Before 600 Men Be-
gin Day's Work—Some of Victims Horribly Burned**

POTTSVILLE, PA., April 27 (AP)—Seven men died today and ten were seriously burned in the Nation's second major mine disaster in less than a week.

An explosion shook the St. Clair Coal company's anthracite workings only a few days after nearly half a hundred died in a blast in a bituminous mine at Grundy, Va.

The explosion, attributed to gas, occurred in a slope four miles from this Eastern Pennsylvania hard coal center an hour after 600 men had begun the day's work.

Nineteen were working on the level, 500 feet or more underground, where the blast let go. Two were uninjured.

The day that began normally for families throughout the great mining regions ended in a night of mourning. Funeral crepe hung from the doors of six homes. One wreath on a single home signalled the ending of two lives—the Terris brothers, Michael and John, who came over from Port Carbon each day.

Brave Gas to Reach Dead
The other dead—all lifeless when rescuers toiled through "black damp," a death-dealing gas that often follows a mine explosion, to reach the scene—were:

Frank Montgomery, 30; Paul Sikra, 40; Wasi Holovak, 45; Luke Chuckran, 40, and Richard Barnes, 43.

Seventeen children, ranging from a baby less than a week old to those in their teens, were left fatherless and four wives became widows.

Holovak was the father of 13 children, Sikra one and Chuckran three. Barnes was married but childless. The others were unmarried.

Peter Homa, a motor operator, and Joseph Stepanoski, a miner, working at the entrance to the disaster slope, heard the explosion and gave the alarm.

Clothes Burned Off
It was four hours before the first victim—Montgomery—was brought down the single gauge railroad to the main shaft from the "release slope" where the rescuers entered the mine a mile away from the crowd of anxious relatives and friends.

Then the others were brought down—some dead, others with clothing burned off by flames that enveloped them after the explosion.

Mine Declared Safe
Harvey Harris, assistant superintendent, said Andrew Potts, the mine fire boss, had inspected the scene and had pronounced it safe for the men to enter—a regular routine job.

Homa said the noise was "terrible" when the explosion occurred.

Rescuers, assembled from their homes and other sections of the mines, went to work under the direction of mine bosses.

Hospitals in Pottsville were directed to prepare extra beds and call in their full staffs.

An emergency call was sent to the State Department of Mines for rescue equipment.

All available ambulances and undertakers' hearses for miles around quickly lined the highway at the mine entrance.

The engine house at the head of the shaft was cleared and converted into an emergency hospital. Several doctors accompanied the rescuers into the mine.

The injured were:
Andrew Potts, Nicholas Panko, Michael Tomko, Steven Truchan, Joseph Oscells, Nicholas Bucksar, Peter Zulick, Adam Hernotak, all of St. Clair; and Michael Schaeffer and John Greva of Pottsville.

Mission Society Convenes Today

**Annual Sessions Will Be Held
in Christ Reformed Church,
Bethlehem**

The annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical and Reformed church will be held today in Christ Ev-Reformed church, Bethlehem, with sessions morning and afternoon.

Mrs. Laura Heisler of Grace church, Easton, will open the conference with a devotional period. Mrs. A. S. Leiby of Pen Argyl will preside and the address of welcome will be given by Mrs. A. A. Welsh, wife of the pastor of the host church.

Mrs. Frederick Churchill of the First church, Easton, will conduct the election and installation of officers.

Dr. E. H. Zaugg, dean of North Japan college, Sendai, Japan, will be the guest speaker at the afternoon conference. Dr. Zaugg has lived in Sendai since 1906 and is residing at present in Ventnor, N. J., during a furlough.

Mrs. Frank W. Teske of St. Mark's church, Easton, will conduct the closing consecration service.

BANGOR

The Rev. Allen Z. Bodey, pastor of the First United Evangelical church for the past four years, has been returned to the local charge for another year. His return was requested by the congregation through its lay delegate, George I. Godshalk, at the 16th annual meeting of the East Pennsylvania Conference in Allentown.

At the closing session of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium's Allentown Conference at Farmersville Tuesday, the Rev. J. Frederick Stolte, Ph. D., pastor of Trinity church here, was nominated as a director on the board of the Lutheran Theological seminary at Mt. Airy to fill the unexpired term of the late Dr. John A. W. Haas, president of Muhlenberg college.

John Stiles, lay delegate of Trinity church to the Farmersville convention, was nominated as a delegate to the United Lutheran church convention from the Allentown Conference.

District Masons Meet

Sixty Masons, members of lodges in Bath, Nazareth, Stroudsburg, Pen Argyl and Bangor attended a district meeting in the rooms of Bangor