

## 2 MEN KILLED BY BLACK DAMP IN COAL HOLE

Norman Umlauf, 27, Ashland,  
and Andrew Wolfgang, 43,  
Lavelle, Are Victims

WOLFGANG DIES WHILE  
AIDING IN RESCUE WORK

A bootleg miner and a fireboss who aided in attempts to rescue him lost their lives late yesterday afternoon in an unproved mine shaft on the mountainside southwest of Ashland. A third man narrowly escaped a similar fate.

The victims:

Norman Umlauf, 27, Ashland, who was overcome by black damp while descending the shaft and sustained a possible skull fracture when his limp body plunged to the bottom.

Andrew Wolfgang, 43, Lavelle, fireboss at Putts colliery and a member of the Ashland State Hospital Board of Trustees, who was asphyxiated shortly after he had recovered Umlauf's body.

### Revive One Man

Earl Starr, of Ashland, a W.P.A. employe who worked at the hole after his regular hours on a project, was overcome by the deadly fumes, but was revived and today was reported to be feeling no ill effects.

While awaiting the arrival of Starr and Charles Kent, the latter also a W.P.A. worker, Umlauf went down the shaft to fire a shot and then returned to the surface. By that time Starr had reached the top of the shaft and both men decided to prepare to load coal.

Umlauf had descended the shaft only about fifteen feet when he was overcome and fell to the bottom. Starr, who saw Umlauf fall, immediately went to seek aid and met Kent walking toward the hole.

Attempting to make the rescue themselves, Kent tied a rope around Starr's body and started lowering him with the windlass used at the top of the shaft to hoist coal. Starr had only been down about fifteen feet from the top when he was overcome, and Kent hoisted him to the surface and succeeded in reviving him.

### Summon Help

Other bootleg miners were then summoned and a call was sent to the Putts colliery for a rescue and first aid crew. The superintendent of the colliery responded by sending Arthur Dillman, a foreman, and Wolfgang, experienced in rescue work.

Using an oxygen mask to escape the gas, Wolfgang descended the

(Continued on Page Four)

# 1940 Andrew Wolfgang dies in rescue effort



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[Continued from First Page]

shaft and fastened the rope around Umlauf's body. After the body was hoisted to the surface, rescue crews dropped the rope to Wolfgang, who tied it around himself and started the ascent.

Rescuers had pulled Wolfgang up to within fifteen or twenty feet of the mouth of the shaft when they felt the rope becoming tight. Upon investigation, they discovered that the rope was tangled in a ladder and it required ten minutes before it was possible to free Wolfgang. Finally, when they hoisted Wolfgang to the surface he was dead.

It is believed that the mask slipped off Wolfgang's face while he was being hoisted up the shaft.

Their deaths boosted the bootleg mine toll in the county up to 22.

Born in Lavelle, Wolfgang was a son of the late Felix and Marie (Welker) Wolfgang. He was a member of the Evangelical Church and the P. O. S. of A.

Surviving are his widow, the former Ethel Krah; two sons, two daughters, seven sisters and one brother.

The funeral will be held Monday.

Umlauf is survived by his widow, the former Carrie Starr; one son, one daughter and two brothers.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

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