

Mine Rescue Work Slowed

**All Hope Abandoned;
One Body Recovered**

St. Meinrad, Ind., Dec. 17 (Spl.)—Search for three of four men buried in Christmas Mine, south of here, was abandoned today until Sunday as all hope of finding the men alive vanished.

The body of one of the entombed men, William Huff, 34 years old, of near Tell City, was recovered early today as cracks in the soggy ground began to widen and threaten lives of rescuers.

Slipping and sliding of the ground into which the slope-type mine is driven was attributed to four consecutive days of heavy rain which terminated only today.

Federal Mine Inspectors James A. McCune and J. P. Sheridan, Vincennes, who halted rescue attempts, said the ground over the mine should be dry and solid by Sunday if the weather remains clear.

STATE POLICE and other rescue workers at the scene of the pre-holiday tragedy said it looked as though the "entire hill is slipping." The movement of earth sent slabs of shale hailing down in recurring cave-ins in the shaft.

Miners whose bodies remained about a half-mile inside the mine, 200 feet underground, were Jacob Harpenau, 40, Tell City, one of three brother-owners of the shaft; Thomas McCallister, 44, Troy, and Robert Kellems, 57, Grandview.

When rescue attempts ceased, relatives of the doomed trio and other workers left the mine and returned to their homes. The property was silent and deserted after a frantic 25 hours of searching.

Last rites already had been administered for the victims, Father Raphael Hirsch from St. Meinrad's Abbey entering the dangerous shaft to provide ministrations.

ESCAPE OF FOUR other men, one a brother of Mr. Harpenau, still was termed a miracle. They were standing a scant 25 feet away when the cave-in began. The brother, Sylvester Harpenau, a few minutes earlier had told the victims to leave the mine because of earth rumblings.

A 19-year-old son of one of the victims, Carl Kellems, also had been working in the mine, alongside his father, a few minutes before the ironically-named Christmas Mine swallowed up the men. He escaped because his father sent him out to refill a carbide lamp.