

12 Men Killed In W. Virginia Mine Blast

Tragedy Follows Coal Dust Explosion

KAYFORD, W. Va.—(AP)—An explosion flared through a new coal mine early yesterday, killing 12 men. Two of them were a father-and-son team.

Forty rescue workers reached them after struggling through gas, fallen rock and debris blocking the passageways of United Mine No. 1 of the Truax-Traer Coal Co.

They found seven bodies by late afternoon, some under heaps of slate and big chunks from the mine

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roof. Just before nightfall they located the other five three-quarters of a mile back in the mountain.

The bodies, wrapped in blankets, were carried past sorrowing relatives who had huddled all day in the intermittent drizzle.

The first nine out had been burned, indicating they had been killed outright by the explosion, apparently caused by the ignition of coal dust.

Two of the last three bodies brought out were those of Orville Postalwait and his son Bee of nearby United. They worked together as a two-man team. Bee had a handkerchief clutched to his face when rescuers came upon his body.

The rescue work was slow. Gas was so foul spectators were shooed away from a big exhaust fan pumping it out. The rescue crews had to build barriers of planks and burlap sacks to seal off the gas in side passages.



—Acme Telephoto

Waiting for Good or Bad News

Wives of men trapped inside a mine in Charleston, W. Va., wait for word from inside as rescue teams worked in vain to save 12 men. (See story on Page 1.)