

Blairsville Youth Rescued From Mine

BLAIRSVILLE — Sixteen-year-old John Wayne Rager of Brenizer, Blairsville R. D. 3, narrowly escaped serious injury or death early Wednesday evening as his curiosity got the best of him, trapping him in a 35-foot-deep abandoned ventilation shaft at Brenizer mine until Blairsville firemen rescued him.

Rager, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Rager, entered the air shaft sometime after 7 p. m. through an opening where a heavy steel door had been pried loose. Once inside the room at the top of the concrete shaft, Rager tied a rope to a handrail and started to descend into the opening.

As he reached a point about halfway down the shaft, he was unable to hold to the rope and started to slide as his hands were burned by friction. He dropped the remainder of the way, falling 'seat - first' as he described it, into rotten lumber at the base of the shaft.

He could not reach the rope, and probably could not have held it due to the brush burns. See Blairsville—Page 4; Col. 3

Hospitalized By WW I Shrapnel

RURAL VALLEY — A 47-year-old World War I wound recently hospitalized a Kit-tanning R.D. 5 man.

James Young, a member of the Shannock Valley American Legion Post, was struck in the nose by a piece of shrapnel in the battle of Muse Ar-gonne.

Young was awarded the Purple Heart and recovered from the wound without removal of the shrapnel.

The wound gave the World

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on his hands. He remained in the shaft, located about 300 feet from Route 217, approximately 200 feet from the NAMCO Screw and Machine Co. plant.

One thing favored his rescue. The youth had told a friend, Tom Fink, that he would be going to the air shaft. Fink discovered the trapped youth and raced to the NAMCO plant where a call was placed to the Blairsville Fire department rescue squad.

Firemen summoned at 8:20 p. m. first thought of reaching the youth by entering through a mine tunnel about 200 yards from the shaft, but finally settled on using a 35-foot extension ladder in effecting the rescue.

Their work was made difficult by cramped quarters in the room, but the ladder finally was placed in the opening.

Leonard Kelly descended the ladder and tied a rope to the youth, now huddled in a blanket for warmth. The two ascended the ladder and Rager was taken to Dr. Samuel Cohen in Blairsville for treatment at 9 p. m. He reportedly suffered some shock and was treated for this and returned home.

The youth told his father: "That's enough of that. I won't be doing any more exploring down there. (the shaft)"

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