

Man In Mine Rescued After Falling 40 Feet

By WAYNE NICHOLAS
Of Our Gastonia Bureau

KINGS MOUNTAIN — An 18-year-old man rappelling down the side of a deserted gold mine shaft Wednesday lost his grip on his rope and fell 40 feet to the bottom of the pit.

Kings Mountain Rescue Squad members spent an hour checking over Edward Allender, then tied him into a wire basket stretcher and hauled him 60 feet to the top of the mine shaft.

Allender was taken to Kings Mountain Hospital, complaining of hip and leg injuries. The hospital refused to release his condition Wednesday night.

Allender's rappelling companion, Thomas Wayne Blanton, 16, said he and Allender decided to see if they could find any gold in the abandoned shaft about 4 p.m. Wednesday. He said Allender had descended about 20 feet when he lost his grip.

"He yelled when he first hit, 'Go get some help!'" Blanton said.

Blanton ran about a quarter mile through the woods to find a

phone.

The two friends, both of Kings Mountain, had rappelled and explored caves in Kings Mountain and nearby Crowders Mountain for the last three years without incident.

Rescue squad Sgt. Russell Falls said, however, that Allender had suffered similar injuries once when he fell from a tree and that he had admitted hesitating to climb down the shaft.

Falls said that as Allender lay at the bottom of the shaft, he fretted about being unemployed and unable to pay the hospital bill.

"You don't have a job — *but you do* — and that's to help us get you out of here," Falls said he told him.

When he was out of the shaft, Allender asked for a cigarette.

The accident occurred in a thickly wooded area, dotted by five abandoned gold mine shafts near the N.C.-S.C. border.

The shaft in which Allender fell varies from 10 to 15 feet across the top and is lined with moss and fern. Several large trees grow around its edge.

1983 Edward Allender rescued from gold mine



Clipped By:

usmra_rob

Fri, Oct 8, 2021