

SWEPT TO DEATH BY SNOW SLIDES.

Four Avalanches on Smug-
gler Mountain in Colorado
Kill Miners and Would-
Be Rescuers.

FOURTEEN IN DEAD LIST.

Score or More Missing and Dozens
Are Injured—More Danger
for Those Trying to
Recover Bodies.

DIE IN EFFORT TO SAVE.

Telluride, Colo., Feb. 28.—Fourteen dead, as many injured, and a score or more missing is the result, so far as known, of a series of snowslides which occurred today in the immediate vicinity of the Liberty Bell mine on Smuggler Mountain, three and a half miles north of Telluride. The roads between here and the Liberty Bell are almost impassable, and details are hard to obtain.

Four Distinct Slides.

It seems no less than four distinct slides occurred, each one claiming two or more victims. Several bodies have been recovered, but quite a number of the known dead are still buried under the tons of snow, rocks, and timbers by which they were carried down.

The first slide occurred at 7:30 o'clock this morning and carried away the boarding and bunk houses and the tramhouse of the mine.

Two hundred and fifty men are regularly employed in the mines and mills of the Liberty Bell mine, but a large number of men from the night shifts were in Telluride and were prevented from returning to the mine by the storm which was raging. The day shift had just gone to work, leaving but comparatively few underground workmen at the bunkhouse.

Buildings Are Swept Away.

The slide came without warning. The three large buildings were carried down the steep mountain side a distance of 2,000 feet and ground to splinters, not a board being left intact. The snow and débris piled in the bottom of the cañon twenty-five feet deep.

Those who escaped the slide at once began the work of rescuing their less fortunate companions. A dozen or more were taken out alive, some of them badly injured, however.

Rescuers Caught by Slide.

Shortly after noon, while the work of digging out bodies was going on, the second slide came down almost in the track of the first. The mountainside is steep and the descent of the snow mass was so swift that twenty-four of the rescuers were caught, two being killed. They were Harry A. Chase and L. D. Stanley, and their bodies have not been recovered. The others were more or less injured.

There were thirty men from this place at work with the surviving miners, and their families here, in ignorance of their fate, are wild with alarm.

Hard to Get Details.

Although the scene of the disaster is scarcely two miles from this town information is difficult to obtain on account of the precipitous character of the roads and the vast amount of snow.

Nearly all the buildings of the Liberty Bell mine were carried down by the slide, all the books which show the number and names of the men employed being lost, so that the death list can hardly be known for many days.

Nearly every American employed at the mines is missing and the Finns and Italians are too terror-stricken to give any details.

One wing of the avalanche shot 1,700 feet across the cañon, piling up wreckage on the opposite mountains.

Three Die in Third Slide.

A third slide came down at 3 o'clock, about one mile below the Liberty Bell mines, and Gus von Fintel, John Powell, and Paul Dalpra, who were on their way to the scene, were swept away.

Shortly afterward the fourth slide caught a party going from this place, killing two.

Watch Slides from Town.

Crowds in this town gathered on top of the houses and, with the aid of glasses, watched the work of rescue, and saw the second and third slides overwhelm the rescuers.

Miners could be seen dragging bodies out of the snow, and strange processions struggled down the desperate trail, carrying bodies to the morgue here.

The mine is a mile higher than Telluride, almost overhanging the town.

Mine Is Large One.

The Liberty Bell mine is one of the largest mines in the district. It is owned by Kansas City people, the name of the company being the Liberty Bell Gold Mining and Milling company. Mr. Winslow of San Miguel County is the manager. The Liberty Bell is located about a mile and three-quarters north of Telluride, and has an altitude of about 12,000 feet at the mouth of the tunnel. More than 200 men are employed in the mine, and both day and night shifts are worked.

The buildings of the mine occupied a bench on the mountain side, and were erected in a location that was supposed to be protected from snowslides by a ridge which it was thought would divert the course of any avalanche that might be started. The vast accumulation of snow within the last two weeks, however, gave the slide today such a volume that nothing could stay its progress until it reached the bottom of the cañon.

In six months the death loss by mine accidents in this vicinity has aggregated 292.

Other Avalanches Expected.

The present storm is the worst since 1895, and slides are expected any minute at Ophir and other places.