

**Bureau of Mines Bulletin 586:  
Historical Summary of Mine  
Disasters in the United States  
Volume - 1 - Coal Mines  
1810-1958**

**January 24, 1884; Crested Butte Mine, Crested  
Butte, Colo.; 59 Killed**

*(From report of State inspector of coal mines, 1883-84,  
pp. 12-24)*

At about 8 o'clock, shortly after the fireboss finished examining the mine and reported to the miners that their working places were free from gas with exception of No. 18 room, No. 2 level, a violent explosion traversed the mine from that room to the surface. The fireboss had warned the miner that the brattice leading to the room face was broken near the entry and gas had accumulated. While the fireboss was on the surface gathering materials to repair the brattice, the miner went into the room and nailed up the loose boards. The men were not removed from the return side, and the gas was moved out to the entry where it was ignited by the open lights. The explosion was carried by dust, and many of the men were caught in the flame and force. Of the men in the mine, 59 were killed and 12 escaped before being overcome by afterdamp. The damaged fan was repaired, and ventilation was gradually restored; but the mine was not cleared for several days.

## BURIED IN A MINE.

### Fifty-Seven Men Entombed in a Colorado Coal Shaft, With no Hope of Safe Egress.

The Entrance Closed by a Terrible Explosion—Fruitless Efforts to Rescue the  
Imprisoned Miners—Names of  
the Missing.

DENVER, Jan. 25.—The Times' Gunnison special says: A terrible explosion occurred at eight o'clock yesterday morning in the Colorado Coal and Iron Company's mine at Crested Buttes. So far only the most meager details have been received here, but the loss of life is supposed to be terrible. There were sixty-seven men in the mine at the time. Of these, eleven who were just entering were thrown back to the entrance by the force of the explosion and have been rescued. One of these is dead. All the others are badly injured. There are fifty-six men yet in the mine, and that cannot be reached. They are all supposed to be dead.

The explosion was of such force as to entirely wreck the engine house, which stood fully 100 feet from the entrance. It is supposed the explosion was caused by a leak in the air compressor. Crested Buttes people are doing all possible to rescue the miners. Two specials have gone up from there with doctors and others on board.

LATER.—The explosion at Crested Buttes coal mine yesterday morning was one of the most appalling that ever occurred in a coal mine in this country. Crested Buttes, near which the coal mine is located, is a coal mining town thirty miles north of Gunnison City, on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. The cause of the explosion is not definitely known, but is supposed to have occurred from fire-damp. The explosion occurred either in chamber No. 1 or No. 2 just half an hour after the day force of sixty-seven men had gone to work. There were ten men at work in the chamber. Four of these escaped unhurt except one man, John Angres, who was in the passageway just outside the chamber. He is badly burned, but will recover. Fifty-seven men were at work in chambers Nos. 1 and 2; these are all thought to have perished.

The explosion was of such force as to completely barricade the main entrance, and the appliances for supplying air, located near, were badly wrecked, and the roof of the tramway was blown off. The men at work on the anthracite were the night force of the C., C. & I. Company's mines. The citizens generally were working hard all day to rescue the men, although it is thought none can possibly escape alive. The town hall has been prepared for the reception of the dead. As soon as possible the fan was repaired and put to work pumping air into the mine, and the men set to work to remove the obstructions, so as to reach the chambers and get the bodies out to-night if possible.

The following are the names of fifty-five of the unfortunates, the other two being unobtainable; Henry Anderson, John Williams, M. T. Stewart, John Martin, Thomas Rogers, James O'Neil, Jacob Laux, John Anderson, James Walsh, Peter Baker, William Davidson, Richard James, David Hughes, P. McManus, W. T. King, John Creelman, John Helar, Thomas Williams, John Shune, Patrick Barrett, John McGregor, John Myers, F. W. Smith, G. B. McHelson, William Marony, Nick Probst, Thomas Laffey, John Prince, James Driscoll, James Coughlin, Henry Stewart, B. Heffron, L. P. Heffron, W. L. Jones, John Donnelly, Carl Rodenwald, Charles Sterling, Thomas Roberts, Jim McCourt, Fred Becht, Iber King, Joseph Weisenberg, H. Donegan, Joseph Kraust, James F. Stewart, Jr., William Neath, Morgan Neath, Thomas Glancey, John Rutherford, William McCowitt, A. M. Godfred, Dan McDonald, William Aubrey, Ben Jeffries and Thomas Stewart.

Many of these were married men and leave families, many living here. At this hour everything is in such confusion that it is impossible to give details. A special train left Gunnison City at two o'clock with surgeons and a large number of citizens to render all aid possible. The town of Crested Butte is in mourning. Crowds of women in a cluster about the entrance of the mine are praying, wringing their hands and crying piteously, presenting a scene most heart-rending.

It is said that at the time of the explosion there were ten kegs of black powder in chambers 1 and 2, where the men were working and where the explosion is supposed to have taken place. The mines have three miles of drifting, and so it is impossible to definitely locate the accident until rescuing parties can gain admittance. The mine has long been considered dangerous by those acquainted with it. While one of the best producing mines in the country, its operation has always been attended with more or less apprehension and real danger. "It is a fire damp mine," said Superintendent Cameron, now in Denver, "and seems constantly to generate the most deadly gases. They seem to generate in the coal or under it, and pour out of the seams in the walls of the tunnels and shafts; yet the mine is the most perfectly ventilated in the world. Air is forced in along the shaft by machinery. No less than fifty-six thousand cubic feet of fresh air is forced into the mine every minute. This is quite sufficient to fully supply the wants of miners and keep the air perfectly pure, unless some accident happens to cut off or interfere with the supply. This is a greater amount of fresh air than is furnished to any other mine in the country."

Superintendent Cameron added: "We send a mine viewer through every chamber each morning, before any of the men are allowed to go in. He must have returned in the morning before the workmen started in and everything must have been all right when he passed through the workings."

John McNeil, State Mine Inspector, left for the scene of the disaster last evening. He says he has no doubt that every man in the mine at the time of the explosion was instantly killed.

**Bismarck Weekly Tribune**  
**January 25, 1884**

**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**Terrible Mine Explosion.**

DENVER, Col., Jan. 24.—A terrible explosion occurred at Crested Butte, Gunnison county, at 7 o'clock this morning, in Crested Butte coal mine, in which from twenty-five to fifty miners are believed to have been killed. The explosion blockaded the entrance to the mine and the full extent of the disaster is at present unknown. The mine is owned and operated by the Colorado Coal and Iron company, of this city, and employs from eighty to ninety miners in the shaft. So far only the most meagre details have been received here, but the loss of life is supposed to be terrible. Sixty-seven men were in the mine at the time. Of these eleven, who were just entering, were thrown back to the entrance by the force of the explosion and have been rescued. One of these is dead and the others are badly injured. Fifty-six men are yet in the mines and cannot be reached. They are all supposed to be dead. The explosion was of such force as to entirely wreck the engine house which stood 100 feet from the entrance. It is supposed the explosion was caused by a leak in the air compressor. Crested Butte people are doing all possible to rescue the miners. Two specials have gone up from here with doctors and others on board.

**A LATER ACCOUNT.**

DENVER, Col., Jan. 24.—The explosion in the Crested Butte coal mine this morning was one of the most appalling that ever occurred in a coal mine in this country. Crested Butte, near which the mine is located, is a coal mining town, thirty miles north of Gunnison City, on the Denver & Rio Grande railroad. The cause of explosion is not definitely known, but it is supposed to have been from fire damp. The explosion occurred either in chamber one or two, just half an hour after the day force, sixty-seven men, had gone to work. There were ten men at work in chamber four. These escaped unhurt except one man, John Angus, who was in the passage-way, just outside the chamber. He is badly burned, but will recover. Fifty-seven men were at work in chambers one and two. These are all thought to have perished. The explosion was of such force as to completely barricade the main entrance, and the appliance for supplying air, located near, was badly wrecked, and the roof of the tramway was blown off. A large force of Colorado Coal and Iron company's miners and citizens generally are working hard all day to rescue the men, although it is thought that none can possibly escape alive. The town hall has been prepared for the reception of the dead as soon

as possible. The fan was repaired and put to work pumping air into the mine and men were set to work to remove the obstructions so as to reach the chambers and get the bodies out to-night if possible. Many of the men were married and leave families, many living here. At this hour everything is in such confusion that it is impossible to give details. A special train left Gunnison City at 2 o'clock this afternoon with surgeons and a large number of citizens to render all the aid possible. The town of Crested Butte is in mourning; crowds of women cluster about the entrance to the mine praying and wringing their hands and crying piteously, presenting a scene most heart-rending. It is said that at the time of the explosion there were ten kegs of black powder in the chambers one and two, where the men were working and where the explosion is supposed to have taken place. The mine has three miles of drifting, and so it is impossible to locate the accident definitely until rescuing parties can gain admittance. The mine has long been considered dangerous by those who were acquainted with it. While it is one of the best producing mines in the country, its operation has always been attended with more or less apprehension or real danger. "It is a fire-damp mine," said Superintendent Cameron, now in Denver, "and seems constantly to generate the most deadly gases. They seem to generate in the coal or under it, and pour out of the seams in the walls of the tunnels and shafts. Yet the mine is the most perfectly ventilated in the world. The air is forced along the shaft by machinery; no less than 56,000 cubic feet of fresh air is forced into the mine every minute. This is quite sufficient to fully supply the want of the miners and keep the air perfectly pure unless some accident happens to cut off or interfere with the supply. This is a greater amount of fresh air than is furnished to any other mine in the country." Superintendent Cameron added: "We send the mine viewer through every chamber each morning before any of the men are allowed to go in. He must have returned this morning before the workmen started in and everything must have been all right when he passed through the workings." John McNeil, state mine inspector, left for the scene of the disaster this evening. He says he has no doubt that every man in the mine at the time of the explosion was instantly killed. At this hour, 10 o'clock, no bodies have been recovered.

**COFFINED IN A CARBON CAVE.**

**An Appalling Mine Disaster at  
 Crested Butte, Col.**

**FEARFUL EXPLOSION.**

**Sixty Men Buried Alive in a Colorado  
 Coal Mine.**

DENVER, Jan. 24.—A terrible explosion occurred at Crested Butte, Gunnison county, at seven this morning, in the Crested Butte coal mine, in which from twenty-five to fifty miners are believed to be killed. The explosion had blocked the entrance to the mine, and the full extent of the disaster at present is unknown. The mine is owned and operated by the Colorado Coal and Mining company, of this city. They employ from eighty to ninety men on the shaft. No details at present obtainable.

**A LATER ACCOUNT.**

DENVER, Jan. 24.—A *Times* Gunnison special says a terrible explosion occurred at 8 o'clock this morning in the Colorado Coal & Iron company's mine at Crested Butte. So far only the most meagre details have been received here, but the loss is supposed to be terrible. There were sixty-seven men in the mine at the time of the explosion. Of these seven, who were just entering, were thrown back to the entrance by the force of the explosion, and have been rescued. One of these men was dead and the others all badly injured. There are fifty-six men yet in the mine and cannot be reached. They are all

**SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.**

The explosion was of such force as to entirely wreck the engine house which stood fully 100 feet from the entrance. It is supposed the explosion was caused by a leak in the air compressor. The people of Crested Butte are doing all that is possible to rescue the miners. Two special trains from here on the Denver & Rio Grande railroad left this afternoon for Crested Butte, thirty miles distant, with physicians and a large body of citizens on board.

**THE DEATH ROLL INCREASES.**

DENVER, Jan. 24.—The explosion at Crested Butte coal mine this morning was one of the most appalling that ever occurred in a coal mine in this country. Crested Butte, near which the mine is located, is a coal mining town thirty miles north of Gunnison on the Denver & Rio Grande. The cause of the explosion is not definitely known, but it is supposed to be from fire damp. The explosion occurred either in chamber one or two, just half an hour after the day force of sixty-seven men had gone to work. There were ten men at work in the chamber four. These escaped unhurt, except John Angers, in the passage way outside of the chamber, who was badly burned, but will recover. Fifty-seven men were at work in chambers one and two and these are thought to have perished. The explosion was of such force as to completely

**BARRICADE THE MAIN ENTRANCE.**

The appliances for applying air located near are badly wrecked. The roof of the tramway was blown off. The force of the Colorado Coal & Iron company's mines and citizens generally, are working hard to rescue the men, although it is thought that none can possibly escape alive. The town hall has been prepared for the reception of the dead as soon as possible. The fan was repaired and put to work pumping air into the mine and men set to work to remove the obstructions, so as to reach the chambers and get the bodies out tonight, if possible. The following are the names of fifty-five of the unfortunates. The other two are unknown.

**THE SUPPOSED DEAD.**

- Henry Anderson.
- John Williams.
- M. T. Stewart.
- Jno. Maston.
- Thos. Rogers.
- Jas. O'Neil.
- Jacob Laux.
- John Anderson.
- James Walsh.
- Peter Baker.
- Wm. Davidson.
- Richard James.
- David Hughes.
- P. McManus.
- W. T. King.
- Jno. Crocman.
- Jno. Palar.
- Thos. Williams.
- Jno. Shune.
- Patrick Donnell.
- John McGregor.
- John Myers.
- F. W. Smith.
- G. B. McHaleom.
- William Maloney.
- Nick Roberts.
- Thomas Taffey.
- John Prince.
- James Driscoll.
- James Coughlin.
- Henry Stewart.
- B. Heffron.
- L. P. Heffron.
- W. L. Jones.
- John Donnelly.
- Carl Badenwald.
- Charles Sterling.
- Thomas Roberts.
- Jim McCourt.
- Fred Becht.
- Ider King.
- Joseph Weisenberg.
- H. Donegan.
- James Kraus.
- James F. Stewart, jr.
- William Neath.
- Morgan Neath.
- Thomas Glancey.
- John Rutherford.
- William McCowel.
- William Gaitrey.
- Dan McDonald.
- William Aubrey.
- Ben Jeffrey.
- Thomas Stewart.

Many of these are married and leave families, many living here. At this hour everything is in such confusion that it is impossible to give details. A

**Daily State Journal**  
**Lincoln, Nebraska**  
**Friday, January 25, 1884**  
**Continued . .**

special train left Gunnison City this afternoon with surgeons and a large number of citizens to render all the aid possible.

**THE TOWN IN MOURNING.**

The town of Crested Butte is in mourning. Crowds of women cluster about the entrance to the mine praying, wringing their hands, crying piteously and presenting a scene most heartrending. It is said at the time of the explosion there were ten kegs of blasting powder in chambers one and two, where the men were working, and where the explosion is supposed to have taken place. The mine has three miles of drifting, so it is impossible to definitely locate the accident until the rescuing parties can gain admittance to the mine. The mine has long been

**CONSIDERED DANGEROUS**

by those acquainted with it. While it was one of the best producing mines in the country, its operation has always been attended with more or less apprehension and real danger. "It is a fire damp mine," said Superintendent Cameron, now in Denver, "and seems constantly to generate the most deadly gases. They seem to generate in the coal or under it, and pour out of the seams in the walls of the tunnels and shafts. Yet the mine is the most perfectly ventilated in the world. Air is forced in down the shaft by machinery. No less than 56,000 cubic feet of fresh air are forced into the mine every minute. This is quite sufficient to fully supply the wants of the miners and keep the air perfectly pure unless

**SOME ACCIDENT HAPPENS**

to cut off or interfere with the supply. This is a greater amount of fresh air than is furnished in any other mine in the country." Superintendent Cameron added: "We send a mine viewer through every chamber every morning before any men are allowed to go in. He must have returned this morning before the workmen started in. Everything must have been all right when he passed through the workings."

Geo. McNeil, state mine inspector, left for the scene this morning. He says he has no doubt every man in the mine at the time of the explosion was instantly killed. At this hour 10 p. m., no bodies have been recovered.

**ONE BODY RECOVERED.**

DENVER, Jan. 25, 1:30 a. m.—A *Tribune* Crested Butte special, just received, says the exploring party has almost reached chamber number two, and has discovered one dead body. The skull was broken and the whole body terribly bruised and blackened. The gas was so bad in the mine, and the passage ways so blockaded that progress is very slow. Everything possible is being done to reach the bodies as speedily as possible. All hope of finding any buried miners alive has long since been abandoned. Threats were made this evening against Superintendent Robinson and mine boss Gibson, principally against the latter, and serious trouble is feared. Robinson is at the mine superintending the work of searching for the bodies. No special fears are entertained for his safety, but a strong guard has been placed about the residence of Gibson to prevent violence. The threats do not come from the men engaged in the mine, but some

**WHO HAVE BEEN DISCHARGED**

take this opportunity to make trouble. The scene at the mine is a most pitiful one. The wives and children of the buried men still hover around the entrance of the mine and their lamentations add to the distressing scene.

## COAL MINE CALAMITY.

Explosion in a Coal Mine at Crested Butte, Gunnison County, Colorado.

Fifty-Six Miners Imprisoned, None of Whom Can Escape Certain Death.

Crowds of Women at the Entrance, Wringing Their Hands and Crying Piteously.

### MINE HORROR.

Explosion in a Colorado Coal Mine Causes the Death of Fifty-Seven Men.

DENVER, January 24.—A terrible explosion occurred at Crested Butte, Gunnison county, at 7 o'clock this morning in Crested Butte coal mine, in which from twenty-five to fifty miners are believed to be killed. The explosion blockaded the entrance to the mine. The full extent of the disaster is at present unknown. The mine is owned and operated by the Colorado Coal and Iron company. They employ eighty to ninety miners in the shaft.

A later dispatch says sixty-seven men were in the mine at the time. Of these eleven who were just entering were thrown back to the entrance, by the force of the explosion and have been rescued. One of these is dead and all the others badly injured. There are fifty-six men yet in the mine and they can't be reached. They are all supposed to be dead.

The explosion was of such force as to entirely wreck the engine house, which stood fully one hundred feet from the entrance. It is supposed the explosion was caused by a leak in the air compressor.

The town of Crested Butte is in mourning. Crowds of women cluster about the entrance to the mine, praying and wringing their hands and crying piteously, presenting a scene the most heartrending. It is said at the time of the explosion there were ten kegs of powder in the chambers, one or two where the men were working and where the explosion is supposed to have taken place. The mine has long been considered dangerous by those acquainted with it. While it is one of the best producing mines in the country, its operation has always been attended with more or less apprehension and real danger. "It is a fire-damp mine," said Superintendent Cameron, who is now in Denver, "and seems constantly to generate the most deadly gases. Yet the mine is the most perfectly ventilated in the world."

The citizens generally have been working hard all day to rescue the men, although it is thought none can possibly escape alive. The town hall has been prepared for the reception of the dead. As soon as possible the fan was repaired and put to work pumping air into the mine and men set to work to remove the obstructions so as to reach the chambers and get the bodies out to-night if possible.

## A COAL-MINING HORROR

### MORE THAN FIFTY MEN KILLED BY AN EXPLOSION.

A CATASTROPHE IN COLORADO CAUSED BY  
FIRE-DAMP—TERRIBLE SCENES AT THE  
PIT.

GUNNISON, Col., Jan. 24.—At 8 o'clock this morning a terrible explosion occurred at Crested Butte, in this county, in the coal mine of the Colorado Coal and Iron Company. The explosion was one of the most appalling in its consequences that ever occurred in a coal mine in this country. Crested Butte, near which the mine is situated, is a coal-mining town 50 miles north of Gunnison City, on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. The cause of the explosion is not definitely known, but is supposed to have been from fire damp. It occurred in either chamber 1 or 2, just half an hour after the day force of 67 men had gone to work. Ten men were at work in the chamber. Four of these escaped unhurt, except one man, John Angus, who was in the passageway just outside the chamber. He is badly burned, but will recover. Fifty-seven men were at work in chambers one and two. These are all thought to have perished. The explosion was of such force as to completely barricade the main entrance. The appliances for supplying air were badly wrecked and, the roof of the tramway was blown off. The men at work on the anthracite mesa, the night force of the Colorado Coal and Iron Company's mines, and the citizens generally have been working hard all day to rescue the men, although it is thought that none of them can possibly escape alive. The Town Hall has been prepared for the reception of the dead.

As soon as possible the fan was repaired and put to work pumping air into the mine and men were set to work to remove the obstructions so as to reach the chambers and get the bodies out to-night if possible. The following are the names of 55 of the unfortunates, the other two were unobtainable: Henry Anderson, John Williams, M. T. Stewart, John Martin, Thomas Rogers, James O'Neil, Jacob Lanx, John Anderson, James Walsh, Peter Baker, William Davidson, Richard James, David Hughes, P. McManus, W. T. King, John Creelman, John Hular, Thomas Williams, John Thano, Patrick Barrett, John McGregor, John Myers, F. W. Smith, G. B. McHalsion, William Maroney, Nick Probst, Thomas Laffoy, John Prince, James Driscoll, James Coughlin, Henry Stewart, B. Heffron, L. P. Heffron, W. L. Jones, John Donnelly, Carl Rodenwald, Charles Sterling, Thomas Roberts, Jim McCourt, Fred Becht, Iber King, Joseph Welsenberg, H. Donegan, Joseph Kranst, James F. Stewart, Jr.; William Neath, Morgan Neath, Thomas Glancey, John Rutherford, William McCowitt, A. M. Godfred, Dan McDonald, William Aubrey, Ben Jeffries, and Thomas Stewart.

Many of these are married men and leave families. A number of the families reside here. At present everything is in such confusion that it is impossible to give details. A special train left Gunnison City at 2 o'clock this afternoon with surgeons and a large number of citizens to render all the aid possible.

The town of Crested Butte is in mourning. Crowds of women cluster about the entrance to the mine wringing their hands and crying piteously, presenting a most heart-rending scene. It is said that at the time of the explosion there were 10 kegs of black powder in chambers 1 and 2, where the men were working, and where the explosion is supposed to have taken place. The mine has three miles of drifting; consequently it is impossible to definitely locate the accident, at least until rescuing parties can gain admittance. The mine has long been considered dangerous by those acquainted with it. While one of the best producing mines in the country, its operation has always been attended with more or less apprehension and real danger.

"It is a fire-damp mine," said Superintendent Cameron, who is now in Denver; "and seems to constantly generate the most deadly gases. They seem to generate in the coal or under it, and pour out of the seams in the walls of the tunnels and shafts. Yet the mine is one of the most perfectly ventilated in the world. The air is forced in along a shaft by machinery, and no less than 60,000 cubic feet of fresh air is forced into the mine every minute.

This is quite sufficient to fully supply the wants of the miners and keep the air perfectly pure, unless some accident happens to cut off or interfere with the supply. This is a greater amount of fresh air than is furnished to any other mine in the country." Superintendent Cameron added: "We send a mine viewer through every chamber each morning before any of the men are allowed to go in, and he must have returned this morning before the workmen started in, and everything must have been all right when he passed through the workings."

John McNeil, State Mine Inspector, left for the scene of the disaster this evening. He said he had no doubt that every man in the mine at the time of the explosion was instantly killed.

At 10 o'clock to-night no bodies have been recovered.

*The Daily Miner*  
*Butte, Montana*  
*Sunday Morning, January 27, 1884*

**Coal Mine Explosion.**

DENVER, Jan. 26.—Twenty-seven more bodies were recovered to-day from the Crested Butte mine, making fifty-seven in all. But two remain. Those recovered to-day were found in chamber No. 2 and in the passageways in the immediate vicinity. Many had arms and legs broken, skulls crushed in and clothing burned, in many cases drops off in rags when the bodies are removed. Hair is burned from heads and skin is burned off the face and other exposed portions of the body, leaving an utterly unrecognizable mass of raw and bleeding flesh. The appearance of these bodies is horrible beyond description and it is not likely that any of them can be recognized. Many of the faces have coal dust ground into them until they are black as coal itself. To-day the company began the erection of a large frame dwelling where bodies will be placed and where funeral services will be held. Crowds are coming on every train and on snow shoes from all the surrounding camps. The Colorado Coal & Iron company, besides the erection of the building spoken of, will bear all the funeral expenses and make ample provision for the needy families of the deceased. It is thought the other two bodies will be taken out by Monday night.

The inquest began at noon to-day. The coroner's jury was summoned by Coroner N. S. Snyder, and after viewing the thirty-four bodies already brought out, adjourned. Since that time the hearing of evidence has been going on in the Parlor

of the Elk Mountain House, and will be continued to-night and to-morrow. The witnesses examined so far have been Dr. Cockrell of Gunnison, Dr. Gorham of Crested Butte, Dr. Corwin, Chief Surgeon of the C. C. & I. Co.; Colonel Cameron, Coal Superintendent; James K. Robinson, Superintendent of Mine; Luke Richardson, and Engineer Robert Gibson.

Cameron testified as to the ventilation of the mine, which, he claimed, was from five to six times what was required by law.

Superintendent Robinson explained the working of the mines, and said he had given positive orders that no miner should go into the mine without having received a report from the fire boss, so as to know positively there was no danger from gas, and when gas was found safety lamps were always insisted on.

Richardson, the fire boss, testified that on the morning of the accident he had found two boards broken from the brattice in room 18, and considerable gas in the head of the drift, and had given orders to the man who was to work in there positive orders not to enter until he returned and repaired the brattice. He came out to get tools, and before he got back the explosion took place. Witnesses who heard these orders given will testify to-morrow.

When room number eight was reached to-day, no bodies were found in it, but in front of it, as if blown out by the concussion, one body was found, and, although unrecognizable was supposed to be the man, a Swede, who was forbidden to enter. The coffins ordered from Denver have not arrived and no date is yet fixed for the funerals. Cameron testified the mine had a Murphy fan which forced fifty-thousand cubic feet of air per minute. Richardson said the mine was very much troubled with gas, but was considered safe when the brattices were in order. Robinson said all old mines are considered unsafe but this mine was the worst he ever saw for gas.



*Davenport Daily Gazette*  
Sunday, January 27, 1884

**ACCIDENTS.**

**The Crested Butte Disaster.**

DENVER, Col., Jan. 26.—Since the arrival of the State Mine Inspector, no one has been allowed to enter the mine, except those employed in searching for the bodies. Little Tommy Lyle, whose lifeless body was one of the first found, was employed as a trapper, or doer tender. He had his whistle in his hand and was evidently just raising it to his lips when the explosion occurred. His step-father, Henry Stewart, was also among the dead. His mother, Mrs. Stewart, is left childless and a widow, and is almost crazed with grief. Another sad case is that of Mrs. Neath, a widow, who loses her two boys. A majority of the men were unmarried; probably not more than twenty are married. Henry Stewart leaves a wife, James Walsh a wife and one child, Barney Coffeen a wife, David Thomas a wife, Dan McDonald a wife and three children, John Rutherford a wife, and a child born only a few days ago. Rutherford's half-brother, Roger, was among the killed. Workmen will explore chamber No. 2. But few women have been present to-day and these were merely sight-seers. At the entrance of the mine are placed large rolls of canvas, in which the bodies will be wrapped as they are taken out. Right thinking men hold the officers of the mine blameless for the disaster, and anticipate no serious trouble with the Molly Maguire elements. The thirty-four bodies discovered have now all been brought out and placed in the blacksmith shop where they will remain until the others are found, when they will be brought to town and placed in the city hall. The inquest will begin to-morrow. Fifty-nine coffins, or-

dered by the company, are on the way from Denver. There is a large crowd yet at the mine, but no signs of disturbance are to be seen. Gibson's house is strongly guarded and men are patrolling the streets. Inspector McNeil is still in the mine. Last night there were many drunken men on the streets but the excitement appears to have entirely subsided.

Twenty-three more burned bodies were to-day received from the Crested Butte mine, making fifty-seven in all. But two remain. Those recovered to day were found in chamber No. 2, and in the passageway and vicinity. Many have arms and legs broken, skulls crushed in, and clothing burned in many cases, that drops off when the body is moved. The hair is burned from the heads and all the skin is burned off, and other exposed portions of the body, leaving utterly an unrecognizable mass of raw and bleeding flesh. The appearance of these bodies is horrible beyond description, and it is not likely that any of them can be recognized. Many of the faces have coal dust ground into them until they are black as the coal itself. To-day the company began the erection of a larger frame building where the bodies will be placed and where the funeral services will be held. Crowds are coming on every train and on snow shoes from the surrounding camps. Besides the erection of this building spoken of the company will bear the funeral expenses and make ample provision for the families of the deceased. It is thought that the other bodies will be got out of the mine by midnight.

THE INQUEST.

The inquest began at noon to-day. After interviewing the thirty-four bodies already brought out, the jury adjourned. Since that time the hearing of evidence has been going on, and will be continued to-night and to-morrow. The witnesses examined so far have been Dr. Cockrell, of Gunnison, Dr. Gorham, of Crested Butte, Dr. Corwin, Chief Surgeon of the Colorado Coal and Iron Company, Col. Cameron, the company's coal Superintendent, James K. Robinson, Superintendent of the mine, Fire Boss Luke Richardson, and Engineer Robert Gibson. Cameron testified as to the condition of the mine. Supt. Robinson explained the workings of the mine, and said that he had given positive orders that no miner should go into the mine without having received a report from the boss so as to know that there was no danger from gas, and when the gas was found safety lamps were always insisted. Richardson, the fire boss, testified that on the morning of the explosion there had been two boards broken from the brattice in room No 18, in the second entry and there was considerable gas in head of the drift. He came out to get some tools and before he got back the explosion took place. The witnesses who heard the orders will testify to-morrow. When room No. 18 was reached to-day nobody was found in it. The coffins ordered from Denver have not yet arrived, and no date is fixed for the funeral.

Cameron testified that the mine had a Murphy fan, which forced fifty thousand cubic feet of air a minute. Richardson said the mine was much troubled with gas escapes.

The Odd-Fellows took away the remains of Daniel McDonald, and Mrs. Neath has removed her two to s.

## THE CRESTED BUTTES DISASTER.

Work of Removing the Bodies  
Begun—Many Sad Cases—  
A Large Crowd at the  
Mines. But No Dis-  
turbance.

### The Mine Disaster.

DENVER, January 26.—Since the arrival of the State mine inspector, no one is allowed to enter the mine except those who are employed in searching for the bodies. Little Tommy Lyle's lifeless body was one of the first found. His stepfather, Hy Stewart, is also among the dead. His mother, Mrs. Stewart, is left childless and a widow, and is almost crazed with grief. Another sad case is that of Mrs. Neatly, a widow, who loses her two boys. A majority of the men are unmarried; probably not more than twenty are married. Hy Stewart leaves a wife; Henry Walsh a wife and one child; Barney Heffmon, a wife; David Thomas, a wife; Dan McDonald, a wife and three children; John Rutherford, a wife, and a child born only a few days ago. Rutherford's half-brother, Rogers, is among the killed. The thirty four bodies recovered will be brought out during the night, and the workmen will explore No. 2 chamber. But few women were present to day, and these are merely sight seers. Large rolls of canvas are placed near the mine in which the bodies will be wrapped as they are taken out.

As the night advances the excitement caused by the belligerent action of some of the disaffected miners grows less, right thinking men holding that the officers of the mine were blameless for the disaster, and no serious trouble with the Molly Maguire element is anticipated.

CRESTED BUTTE, 1 a. m.—The work of removing the bodies began an hour ago. Four other bodies have been discovered, and all that are being brought out are placed in the blacksmith shop where they will remain until the others are found when they will be brought to town and placed in the city hall. The inquest will begin to-morrow. Fifty nine bodies have been ordered by the company, and are now on the way from Denver. There is a large crowd yet at the mine, but no sign of disturbance to be seen. Gibson's house is strongly guarded to-night, and men are patrolling the streets. Inspector O'Neill is still in the mine.

*Galveston Daily*  
*January 28, 1884*

**THE MINE DISASTER.**

**Bodies Brought Out—Preparations for Their Burial.**

DENVER, Col., January 27.—Of the bodies discovered yesterday in chamber number two of the Crested Butte mine twenty-one were brought out at ten o'clock last night and placed in the blacksmith shop with others and an hour later the mine was closed for the night. Two bodies were brought out to-day. Two still remain in chamber one, but are covered up and it may be days before they are found. A number of the bodies are to be buried to-morrow and those remaining on Tuesday. All saloons were closed to-day and will remain so until after the funerals.

Two undertakers arrived to-day and are preparing the bodies for burial.

At the inquest to-day, Gavin Dickson testified that he went into the mine with Anderson, who was assigned to room 18. He had a naked lamp. Heard the fire boss tell him before entering that his room was unsafe, and not to go in without a safety lamp, or to wait until the fire boss returned and mended the broken brattice. Anderson went in after this conversation with the naked lamp. The ventilation where witness was working has been uniformly good. Witness thought mine boss Gibson was overcautious. Gibson had caught witness using an open light, when he ordered him to use the safety lamp, and had taken it away from him.

John Collinwood heard the fire boss tell Anderson he must not enter his room without a safety lamp. Anderson promised not to go until the fire boss returned again. Anderson and witness entered the mine together, and at the entrance of the entry of No. 2 Anderson got a light from witness. Anderson's light was an open one. Witness helped to recover the bodies from the second entry. At the entrance to room 18 they found a body, with the feet lying across the entrance, but could not recognize the body. The mine was properly ventilated where witness was working.

Charles F. Davis, fireman noticed that the fan, about five minutes before the explosion, was working all right.

David O. Hughes heard the fire-boss tell William Jones, who was working in entry No. 2 that there was gas in his place, and to be careful.

Thomas Harris, one of the two rockmen who were working in entry No. 2, right before the explosion, said the fire-boss was making his rounds. It was at about 3 a. m. He saw him in the second entry.

The inquest adjourned until to-morrow, and will not be concluded for several days yet.

The Masonic and Odd Fellows lodges of Gunnison will arrive to-morrow noon and joining with the lodges here will bury their dead comrades, of whom there are four—one Mason and three Odd Fellows, to-morrow afternoon.