


U. S. to Probe Tunnel Deaths



GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION OF REPORTED DEATHS OF 175 workers on the Hawk's Nest power tunnel project at Gauley Bridge, W. Va. (shown above), has been asked by Rep. Marcantonio of N. Y. The tunnel workers are said to have been victims of incurable silicosis caused by inhaling silica dust. Two hundred others, including Henry Keffer (inset), are reported doomed by disease.

FRAZER PENSION

\$837.91 A MONTH

Retired Chief Justice

Made Only One \$169.66 Payment

Harrisburg, Jan. 15. (AP)—The State Employees' Retirement Board has approved a life pension of \$837.91 a month for Robert S. Frazer, Pittsburgh, who retired last week as Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. He made one monthly contribution of \$169.66 to the retirement fund.

A member of the Pennsylvania judiciary more than 40 years, Judge Frazer, past 80 years, served a 21-year term on the high tribunal. As Chief Justice since 1920, he received the highest salary offered by the Commonwealth, \$20,000 a year, \$2000 more than the Governor's salary.

The jurist could have accepted a pension under the judges' retirement law amounting to half his annual salary, or \$833.33 a month. He chose instead to join the State Employees' Retirement System last month, contributing \$169.66 for December. In so doing he followed the precedent set by former Chief Justice Robert von Moszisker, Philadelphia, who was allowed a slightly smaller pension after his retirement in 1920 a month after he joined the retirement system.

Five former judges of county common pleas courts were among the 32 former State employees granted pensions for life at the monthly meeting of the Retirement Board Monday. Among them were: William T. Darr, Brookville, \$150.53 a month; Davis W. Henderson, Uniontown, \$175.02 a month; William A. McConnel, Beaver, \$185.83 a month.

3 Youths Sentenced

in Wetzel Death

Allentown, Jan. 15. (AP)—Three Allentown youths were sentenced to from 5 to 10 years imprisonment Tuesday on charges of robbery growing out of the death of Chas. E. Wetzel, Philadelphia advertising executive.

The defendants were Roderick Miller, who was found guilty by a jury today, Daniel Kemmerer and Michael Cioeci, both of whom pleaded guilty to charges of robbery at

UNDERTAKER DENIES

SILICOSIS DEATHS

Tunnel Workers in

W. Va. Listed as Victims of Pneumonia

Summersville, W. Va., Jan. 15.—An undertaker pointed to 33 graves marked by wooden slabs on the side of a bleak hill today and vigorously denied the declaration of a Congressman that some who died at Hawk's Nest during construction of a \$10,000,000 hydroelectric plant were "dumped into a cornfield."

H. C. White, the undertaker, asserted the death certificates all showed causes other than silicosis, a lung disease which Representative Vito Marcantonio (R., N. Y.), said killed 476 of the workers in a tunnel drilled as part of the plant.

White stood in the little graveyard on his father's farm and pointed toward the nearest cornfield, a few hundred feet away, but out of sight over the crest of the hill.

"There was no other place to bury them," he said.

Rinehart and Dennis, the contractors who dug the tunnel, paid me for the funerals, and the cost covered burial clothes as well as graves.

"Some of the bodies we kept for a long time. Nobody knew who their survivors were. No one ever claimed a single one of the bodies."

Three Women Victims

He declared that of the 33 graves, three were those of women.

"One of the women was killed in a fight with knives, another one was killed when a tree fell on her shack. I don't recall how the other one died."

"But none of the death certificates gives silicosis as the cause. Pneumonia is the reason given on most certificates."

In Washington today the House of Representatives projected an investigation of working conditions in the tunnel, Marcantonio having asked that a board of inquiry be created. The New Yorker asserted 1500 men are suffering silicosis—caused by inhaling powdered silica sand—and that 163 bodies were "dumped into a cornfield and their only gravestones are cornstalks waving in the wind."