

'It was half a miracle'

Trapped miner rescued

BAUXITE, Ark. (AP) — Sidney P. Hale, 57, of Little Rock, one of the two men trapped in a bauxite mine cave-in here, said after surviving 13 hours in sandy water up to his chest that he his only fear was that rescuers would give up too soon.

A fellow miner reassured Hale in his hospital bed Tuesday night that the 13 other men in his crew would not have given up. Hale then repeated softly, "That 'aboy, that 'aboy."

Hale said he prayed that the water would stop short of his head "and it did."

"It was half a miracle," another miner said, referring to the rescue.

Hale and James R. Grooms, 55, of Bryant, who remained missing Tuesday night, were caught in what miners call a "sand run."

Sand and water sometimes dribble out of the walls or roof of the tunnels of Mars Hill mine here. When that happens, timbers are placed tightly against the small sand run and

dirt is piled against it to keep it firmly in place.

But the flow that caught Hale and Grooms was a "blowout," rushing sand, water and rock down the 8-foot-high tunnel like a flash flood.

"I knew what was happening," Hale said. "It was flying toward me."

Hale said he was sitting in the driver's seat of a 20-foot long tram, a device taller than a man that scoops up bauxite ore. Grooms ran toward him, yelling, "Hold, it back! Hold it back!"

But Hale and his machine couldn't begin to hold it back. Grooms was swallowed up by the rushing sand. "I knew he was gone," Hale said.

The slush flowing toward Hale was pushing a "wind" in front of it and the wind knocked Hale off the seat, he said.

Hale, a 30-year employe of the Reynolds Mining Co., said everything occurred in a split-second. He said he jumped up quickly and ran toward the

only place he could — to the back of the tunnel, away from the shaft.

It proved to be the only place he could have gone and survived, Hale said.

Hale said the room or the cave was about 20 feet high as compared to eight feet in the tunnel. When the sandy water reached him, it raised him up to within four feet of the ceiling.

Since he wasn't injured, he said he treaded water in the semi-solid mess. Some air was trapped between the sand and the top of the cave. But Hale's oxygen mask was back on the tram, some 16 feet below him in the shaft.

Hale said he almost "froze" to death in the chilly slush. He said he kept moving his arms to maintain some body heat.

"I prayed awhile last night," he said. "I never panicked."

He said that although he didn't think he was dying, he was resigned to leaving his life in the "hands of the good Lord."

Hope Star, June 5, 1974

There's little hope for trapped miner

— Rescue crews continue digging —

BAUKITE, Ark. (AP) — Recovery crews from Reynolds Mining Co. tried unsuccessfully Wednesday night to remove an 8,000-pound landslide from the mud and sand in an effort to locate a miner missing since a cave-in at a baukite mine here Monday night.

A spokesman for Reynolds said there was little hope that rescue workers would find James Grooms, 35, of Bryant, Ark. He and Sidney Hale, 56, of Little Rock were trapped in a 100-foot shaft at the Mars Hill baukite mine. Hale was rescued Tuesday after being given up for dead.

A Reynolds spokesman said that workers found Grooms' hard hat this morning, next to the tram. The spokesman said the hat was buried in mud about head-high. Workers also found a cord from Grooms' light near the hat.

Efforts to remove the tram were abandoned and recovery crews reported to the slow process of digging by hand.

The spokesman said officials are almost certain they are looking in the right area.

Grooms and Hale were working near the tram, a machine used to remove bauxite from the mine, when the sand and mud caved in on them, Parker said.

Ken Parker, a company public relations man, said it is possible that Grooms could be buried in the mud near the tram, or the force of the sliding mud could have pushed him farther back.

Grooms and Hale were working near the tram, a machine used to remove bauxite from the mine, when the sand and mud caved in on them, Parker said.

He said the recovery crews tried to pull the tram out by attaching a line from it to another tram. He said the crews now would try to use two trams to hoist the third one out. The recovery operation for the tram is a slow process because the tram is embedded in what Parker called "a thick mass."

"It'll be a miracle if he (Grooms) comes out alive," said Virgil Tamm, Grooms' brother-in-law. "We've got to always hope for a miracle."

Another miner called it "half a miracle" when Hale was rescued after surviving 13 hours in sandy water up to his chest.

Hale, who was hospitalized in good condition, said his only fear was that rescuers would give up on him. "I proved foolish," he said. "I never picked."

Hale and Grooms were caught in what miners call a "sand run," similar to a mud slide. The flow that caught the two was a "slowdown"—rushing sand, water and rock down the 800-foot tunnel like a flash flood.

Hale said he was sitting in the driver's seat of a tram when Grooms ran toward him, yelling, "Hold it back! Stop it! The sand run!"

But Hale said he and the miner couldn't begin to hold it back. Grooms was swallowed up by the rushing sand. "I knew he was gone," Hale said.

Hale said he jumped up quickly and ran to the back of the tunnel away from the shaft. It proved to be the only place he could have gone and survived, Hale said.

He said the room or the cave was about 20 feet high as compared to eight feet in the tunnel. When the sandy water reached him, it raised him up to within four feet of the ceiling.

Since he wasn't injured, he said he treaded water in the semi-solid mass. Some air was trapped between the sand and the top of the cave, Hale said, however, that he almost "died to death" before he was rescued from the chilly slush.

Creampie, or libel?

SEATTLE, Wash. (AP) — Faced with a choice between a libel suit or surrendering a reporter to be hit with a pie, the University of Washington Daily opted for pie.

It came with a title photograph of Diane Chesep, a 1970 graduate, as she received a debating award. It was reprinted in the Daily's April 11 issue to illustrate John Shell's column poking fun at heavy contests.

Mrs. Chesep, a high school teacher in Snohomish, Wash., said through her attorney and former debate partner, Arthur D. McGarry, that the article was libelous, slanderous and made her the subject of ridicule among her students.

She threatened a \$1,000 libel suit unless the Daily agreed to turn over the person responsible to be hit with a custard pie.

"My first idea was to dump a bunch of Kool-Aid on his desk, but I was afraid he'd sue me," she said.

The Daily consulted with college lawyers who said her case looked pretty solid. So on Wednesday afternoon, McGarry and Mrs. Chesep held a brief ceremony outside the Communications Building.

Shell stood in a bathing suit, red-tinted flippers and a T-shirt emblazoned with the words "Daily Libel Team."

Mrs. Chesep, switching from custard to chocolate cream at the last minute, piled on a massive helping of whipped cream and let fly.

"If this makes her feel better, it's cool," said Shell, a sophomore from Walla Walla, Wash.

"I've had clients who have gotten more money out of a settlement but not more satisfaction," McGarry said. "If any all libel suits could be so easily settled."

Two charged with robbery

MAGNOLIA, Ark. (AP) — Two persons were charged with armed robbery Wednesday following the robbery of the Taylor branch of the 1st National Bank of Magnolia, a spokesman for the Magnolia Police Department said.

However, the identities of two were not released.

Police said Sheriff Gordon Hunter of Columbia County and two deputies went to Dallas, Tex., Wednesday night to try to apprehend a third suspect wanted in connection with the robbery.

The police spokesman said the suspect, who allegedly escaped on foot with the \$17,000 taken in the robbery, bought a bus ticket to California. The bus stopped at Dallas at 10 p.m. Wednesday.

Sheriff Wade Tatum of Lafayette County said he heard about the robbery on his police radio and then spotted a car fitting the description of the getaway vehicle.

He gave chase and apprehended a male and a female suspect near Stamps. Taylor is in Columbia County, in the southwest corner of the state.

west of Lafayette County. Mrs. Anita Souter, owner of a service station across the street from the bank, said she called police after the trio used the restrooms at her station, then walked into the bank.

Local police arrived just as the robbers left the bank.

Jury report confirmed

WASHINGTON (AP) — Presidential lawyer James D. St. Clair today confirmed published reports that a federal grand jury voted earlier this year to name President Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Watergate cover-up.

St. Clair told newsmen he was informed of the grand jury's action three or four weeks ago by special prosecutor Leon Jaworski.

Asked what the President's reaction was, St. Clair said, "his view, of course, is that they just don't have all the evidence ... I think he felt it was quite inappropriate ... He was confident that the facts would

Sidney cave-in 3

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