

SCENES AT ILL-FATED MINE—Solemn rescue workers and companions of the six men who perished beneath tons of coal and rock at the Clinchfield Coal Company's No. 2 mine at Dante, Va., late yesterday are shown above as they continued to mill around the scene of the disaster late last night. In first picture, W. M. Demkowicz, who was at work in another part of the tunnel when the fatal "bump" occurred, is shown inspecting a dented, crushed safety helmet worn by one of the victims. The second picture shows grim-faced M. I. Duncan, of the Federal Bureau of Mines, looking over dinner pails which the men never opened. Federal Mine Inspector Harold Doctorman (third photo) picks up a folding stretcher before he goes into the disaster area. Alex Honto (last picture) brings out an engine from the main tunnel after hearing that six of his co-workers have met death in another part of the mine.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

6 DIE IN DANTE MINE DISASTER

Clipped By:

 truemorris1993

 Dec 29, 2023

Coal Town Stunned By Men Buried Tragic Death Of Men Under Coal By 'Bump'

By Cal Cowan
Dante, Va.—This Russell County town was tragic-stricken today. It was stunned with the horror of the worst mine disaster in these parts in many years.

The calamity that snuffed out six lives last night in the Clinchfield Coal Company's No. 2 mine was starkly etched across the faces of men and women who live and work in this community.

As a mark of respect to the dead, more than a thousand miners, employed in the Clinchfield firm's chain of mines in this district, will remain idle today, and probably the entire week end.

Many day-shift workers straggled to the mines this morning. They had been unaware of the tragedy of a few hours earlier. All were hurried to learn of the untimely fate of their fellow workers. They stood for a moment in silent speculation, and then retraced their steps over the mountain paths to their homes.

Others stood around in little groups, in front of the Clinchfield Coal Company's offices here, on the steps leading to the post office; on verandas—with discussion centering on the tragic topic.

No Work Today
"No, there won't be any work

today." It was murmured lack and forth, as the miners and townspeople paid homage to the men who dig into the bowels of the earth—to those six claimed by eternal darkness.

"This is by far the worst thing that has happened here," Ora Phillips, a motorman at No. 2 mine, stated emphatically. "I can't work today. I wouldn't feel right."

Phillips, unrelated to Troy Phillips, one of the victims, has been with the Clinchfield Company since 1911. He knows the terror that can engulf man in the pitch-dark undergrounds. Twice he was seriously injured—in fact narrowly escaped death—in the deep tunnels leading to the coal seams under the Appalachian Mountain range.

It was in 1927 and again in 1941 that Phillips was laid low in mine accidents, spending long months in the hospital, before he recuperated from his injuries. He has always returned to the black undergrounds despite his harrowing experiences.

Phillips was among the rescue squads that worked frantically for about four hours before the bodies of the six miners were brought to the surface.

He knew all the victims, and this (See Tragedy, Page 7)

Rescue Squads Work Four Hours Before Recovering Bodies

By Cal Cowan
Staff Correspondent
Dante, Va.—Six men were crushed to death late Thursday night deep underground in the nearby No. 2 mine of the Clinchfield Coal Company.

The tragedy was brought on by a "bump," which buried the miners under tons of coal, shortly before 9 p.m. It took four hours before rescue squads succeeded in releasing the broken bodies and bring them to the surface of the mine.

The dead:
Arnold S. Vickers, 45, of Dante; Oakley Creger, 39, of Trammell; Harold G. Parks, 23, of Dante; James Darrell Rasmick, 20; Troy J. Phillips, 27; Uris Thase Arttrip, 42, Dante, Route

The six victims were working together in corridor 19-L, about four miles underground when the coal upheaval claimed their lives. Six other miners were also working a few hundred yards away and the concussion of the "bump" knocked them off their feet. Only two of the men, Maxwell Powers and Woodrow Phillips, required first aid for cuts and bruises.

Among the men who survived was Joe Rasmick, foreman of the 12-man unit working in the 19-L section. His son, James Darrell Rasmick, and brother-in-law, Troy Phillips, both were killed in the disaster.

The elder Rasmick joined hastily-assembled rescue squads, as he came upon the bodies of his son and brother-in-law. He was taken home in a state of nervous collapse.

Word of the mine disaster quickly spread throughout the entire district. By midnight, hundreds had gathered at the entrance of the mine, including the wives, sisters and brothers, parents and children of those trapped under the tons of displaced coal.

As rescue efforts continued into the night, hope slowly waned among the waiting throngs. And then came the stretchers, bearing the lifeless forms of the miners.

A mine official, who took part in the rescue operations, said that the bodies were found almost in a heap under the tons of coal. Their loading cars and "cutting" equipment also was wrecked by the force of the "bump," which hurled the machinery hundreds of feet down the tunnel.

The six victims had entered the mine at 6 p. m. Thursday, when they started their shift. The "bump" came shortly before they were to take a recess of a few minutes.

After the bodies were removed, even clearance of the wreckage and debris inside corridor 19-L was suspended until a complete examination was made by mine inspectors.

Harold Doctorman, of Norton, district federal mine inspector, arrived on the scene early this morning and made preparations for entering No. 2 mine.

He stated that the periodic inspection of the Clinchfield coal mining operations had been carried out last week, and that recommendations had been made to the mine owners for a series of timber installation within the No. 2 shaft.

Doctorman said that a "bump" not necessarily occasioned by negligence in providing sufficient

(See Bump, Page 7)

Jews' Defense Crumples In Fight For Holy City

Within the Old City in Jerusalem—The end of a four-day-old battle for old walled Jerusalem seemed to be in sight today.

Arabs claimed last night that their forces controlled 80 per cent of the old city, seized by their forces or abandoned by the Jews.

The Jewish Hagannah and Irgun Zvai Leumi had been driven back to a thin defense line along the west side of the Jewish quarter.

Midway of that line, they were holed up for a last stand in the Beit Yasov or Hurva (Ruin) Synagogue, on a spot where Jews have worshipped for 700 years and two earlier temples have been destroyed.

The Jews withdrew into that Synagogue yesterday with Arab capture of the Tiferet Israel Synagogue, Jerusalem's tallest structure, to the east.

King Abdullah's Trans-Jordan Arab Legion was at their backs, threatening to block escape. The Legion had most of the Armenian quarter, west of the Jewish section. It was reported unofficially in firm control of Zion Gate just below that quarter in the southernmost of Jerusalem's 400-year-old walls.

Legionnaires on the gate traded automatic weapon fire yesterday with Jews in a school on Mount Zion a few score yards away.

(A delayed dispatch from Carter L. Davidson of the Associated Press in the Jewish area of Jerusalem said that when 100 young Jews

(See Jewish, Page 7)

End To Lengthy Meat Strike Seen After Workers Vote

Chicago—An end of the 67-day-old nationwide meat strike at most of the major packing plants appeared imminent today.

The CIO United Packinghouse Workers' union strike director predicted that the rank and file vote on proposals to end the long work stoppage—on company terms—will favor immediate return to all plants except Wilson and Company.

Locals across the country last night voted by secret ballot on the settlement proposals to end the strike, which has been marked by violence at several livestock centers. Results were expected to be announced today at the union's national headquarters here.

Herbert March, directing the strike of some 100,000 CIO workers who quit their jobs March 16 after a dispute over wages, said the union had recommended strikers to vote against returning to work at Wilson, one of the major packers. He predicted the vote would be close for returning to work at plants operated by three other major packers, Swift, Cudahy and Armour.

The strikers voted on the acceptance of a nine-cent hourly wage increase, retroactive to the March 16 strike call; retention of all seniority rights; and arbitration with the company on possible discharge of workers accused of unlawful acts during the prolonged work stoppage.

'Uncle Billy' O'Brien Suffers Heart Attack

"Uncle Billy" O'Brien, an employee of the Kingsport Improvement Company since 1918, has been admitted to Holston Valley Community Hospital as a result of a heart seizure which occurred on Wednesday, company officials reported Friday.

He was stricken while on a visit to the Armstrong Construction Company office here. Hospital personnel reported Friday that he "rested well" during the night and that his condition is "unchanged."

Fifth-Graders Trip To Texas

ving for their brother to land.

Hamilton went on:

"They said they took turns flying and didn't have any trouble. They said it bounced a little when they landed in a farm field. But when they tried to taxi they hit soft dirt and the undercarriage buckled.

"Then they took the farmer's saddle horse and rode next town, they turned the horse loose and walked on in. The sheriff got them."

Bodard said he thought the Peterson boy did most of the flying.

"I don't know what to believe. I can't say I'm proud of Jimmy. . . I've got to think this one out," he said.

But Hamilton admitted a certain admiration.

"They'd read all about it in gang books and comic magazines," he repeated, wonderingly.

"They knew just what to do."

Bump

(Continued From Page 1)

strengthening to the interior, where coal is being dislodged and moved out in loading cars.

Unexpected Elements

A mine company spokesman termed the mishap as "very regrettable."

"The bump was entirely unforeseen," he asserted. "The tunnels reach miles under the mountains, and while we make allowances for certain pressures in the rock and earth formations where the coal seam is located, there are sudden elements that come unexpectedly."

It was also reported that a minor "bump" occurred in the 19-L section earlier Thursday when the day shift was on duty. The miners working adjacent, however, were only slightly jarred as the coal flew out.

Funerals Announced

The bodies of Vickers, Parks and Cregar were removed to the Huff-Cook Funeral Home at St. Paul.

Vickers is survived by his widow, Dell Vickers; four children, Erma, Phyllis, Douglas and Robert; three brothers, Russell of Dante; George of Castlewood and Warren of Radford, Va.

Funeral services will be held Monday at 2 p. m. at one of Dante's churches, with burial to follow at Temple Hill Cemetery near Castlewood.

Parks is survived by a son, Billy; his mother; and the following brothers and sisters, Bramble Parks, St. Paul; Orland, Lee and Clifford Parks, Mrs. James L. Watson, Mrs. Roy Bartee and Miss Claudette Parks, all of Castlewood. Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

Cregar is survived by two sons, Gene and Charles Edward; a brother, Woodrow, Prestonsburg, Ky.; and a sister, Mrs. Fontaine Banks, Hardy, Ky. Funeral arrangements will be completed later.

Phillips and the younger Rasnick, who were related to each other, were removed to the Clintwood Funeral Home at Clintwood. Rasnick is survived by his father, Joe Rasnick; his mother Hattie Phillips Rasnick, of Trammell; and two brothers and three sisters.

Phillips is survived by his parents, F. N. and Rosie Smith Phillips, of Nora. Funeral services for both Phillips and Rasnick are scheduled to be held Sunday, with burial in the Leck, Va., cemetery. Phillips served four years in the U. S. Army in the Pacific war theater, while Rasnick had been discharged recently after serving 24 months in military service.

The sixth victim of the mine disaster, Uris Artrip, is resting at the Estes Funeral Home at Coeburn. Funeral services will be held at 11 a. m. Sunday at Martin Chapel at Wakenva, Va., with Rev. Jack Kiser of Stranton, Va., officiating. A interment will be in the family cemetery at Dungannon.

Artrip leaves his widow, Mrs. Lillie Grizzle Artrip; and four chil-

Drug Store Fire Does No Damage

Firemen answered a call shortly before noon Friday at Cole Drug Store, where fumes in a duct above a cooking stove in the rear of the store had caught fire.

Fire Chief C. M. Kenner said a cook had opened the door of the oven and that grease fumes burst into flame. The cook closed the door, but the fire continued to burn in the duct, out of sight.

dren, Freda, Patty, Kenneth and Joseph. Brothers and sisters include Mrs. Elsie Roop, Mount Hope, W. Va., Mrs. J. Carleton, Andover, Va., Mrs. J. Haraway, Dante; and Kyle, and Clifton Artrip, Cleveland, Va.

TAYLOR

Gate City, Va.

TODAY and SATURDAY
Phone 2164



and
FREDDIE STEWART
in

'Smart Politics'

SERIAL - COMEDY

