

Explosion of Dynamite at the Maple Hill No. 2 Shaft of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company

On January 30, Morgan Jones, John Mackey, Adam Savige, John Ullhaw and Joseph Junas, machinists, were killed in Maple Hill No. 2 shaft. The top-man says that they all came up and fired a blast, making the sump. Then they went down again to fire another round, leaving the laborers on top. Adam Savige soon returned to the surface again saying that he wanted four sticks of dynamite and two exploders, which he received from the top man. He took them with him and went down again. He held them in his hand. The exploders were fastened in the dynamite ready to be used before he left the top of the shaft. The top-man said that the bucket had just about reached the bottom when there was a signal given to the engineer to hoist men. When the bucket was up about 275 feet from the bottom there was an explosion, and when it landed there was no one in it. The hose which was in the bucket was partly hanging out of it and was torn. There was also in the bucket one monkey-wrench, one manifold, one 18 inch steel point, all of which were broken except the 18 inch point. In making a personal examination I found six rivets blown out of the bucket and the bottom bulged out. I also found pieces of oil cloth clothes on the timber about 275 feet from the bottom. On examining the bottom of the shaft I found that a round of shots had been fired in the sump. There were also five holes in the hitch in the northwest corner which were charged and two holes charged in the northeast corner hitch, and six sticks of dynamite on a loose rock connected by wire ready to be fired with the battery. In my opinion the dynamite and exploders that Adam Savige went for, had not been used, but were in the bucket with the men ascending the shaft. The supposition is that one of the tools found in the bucket fell on the exploder, which was fastened to the dynamite in the bottom of the bucket, causing the explosion. Five men were found dead at the bottom of the shaft.

CONDITION OF COLLIERIES AND IMPROVEMENTS

PHILADELPHIA AND READING COAL AND IRON COMPANY

Maple Hill Colliery

This is one of the largest coal producing collieries operated by this company.

The new shaft, No. 2, has been sunk to a depth of 850 feet. The approximate distance when completed will be 1,050 feet, reaching the Buck Mountain vein.

A new fan twenty-one feet in diameter has been constructed of