The Anaconda Standard
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SEEKING FOR THE CAUSE

A Rigid Examination Into the Anaconda Mine Disaster.

THE DEAD AND INJURED

Arrangements For the Funerals—No Replies From the Friends of Some—Agazza Pulled From His Hole.

BUTTE, May 16.—Hundreds of people all day long were standing around the Anaconda mine waiting for some word from the rescuers who were exerting their efforts to save the life of Frank Agazza, the Frenchman who was entombed alive in the disaster of Saturday. The work had been going on steadily, but necessarily very slowly, ever since it was learned that the man was still alive. Only about 20 inches of way had been opened in 24 hours, and the thought that the slightest wrong move or an accident would probably result in the imprisoned man being crushed, necessitated careful and very slow work. What the effect of his situation and his agony must have been upon Aggaza's mind can only slightly be imagined.

Early in the day the rescuers approached him near enough to hold a continued conversation with him and finally a small opening was made between the timbers in front of him and he could be plainly seen in his prison. He became quite cheerful, even speaking in a joking way about his position. He at that time said that he was resting easy, and that the space in which he was lying was about three by four feet, with a timber lying across his back but giving him room enough to change his position. However, he was necessarily very much cramped. His injuries, he said, were not severe, but he believed that his nose was broken and that he has a bruised shoulder and a wound on his head.

When the coroner's jury visited the mine to-day, George Lapp and Thomas Duheme climbed up within arm's length of Agazza and held a short conversation with him. He said he is a Frenchman and that he came from the Black Hills only a few weeks ago. His wife and three children are living about 25 miles from Cheyenne. He explained also to the jurors how he happened to be caught in the accident. He had just left his partner and was going to a lower floor when the rock fell. He started to run but had not gone far through the drift when the timber fell around him in such a manner as to shield him from the falling earth and rock. Mr. Lapp spoke encouragingly to Agazza and the latter replied as the party left him, "Oh, I'm all right."

The opening made through the fallen mass in the direction of Agazza is just large enough for one man to crawl through and therefore but one man at a time can work in it. Food and drink were easily pushed in during the day, and when the shift changed at 5:30 o'clock this afternoon he was informed that the men expected to have him out in two or three hours. Agazza said he did not know anything of any of the other men, but thought that a dead body was lying some distance back of him. The jury, after leaving the vicinity of the disaster, thoroughly inspected the entire mine.

Deputy Mining Inspector Oliver accompanied them and to a reporter gave his theory of the accident. "My theory of the cause of the accident," said he, "is that there were two large seams on each side of the ore body. These seams or cracks extended several feet and joined probably in some place where the earth was very soft. In my opinion a heavy blast would be sufficient to shake this ore body and loosen it up from the surrounding rock. The blasts going off together shook the ground, allowing it to fall. Some statements have been made that the floors, or parts of the mine from which the ore has been taken, were not filled with waste, as is usually done in most mines. The absurdity of this statement is shown by the fact that in the work of rescuing the imprisoned men work had to be prosecuted through the filling which fell from above. The men were working on the south side of the 800 level, about 600 feet from the station. The men were stoping on the fifth floor and the fourth floor was partly filled. The ore had not been all taken from this floor, consequently it could not be completely filled until this was done. The timbers used were 10x10, and this size was used in all the stopes and on all the levels of the mine. The system of doubling up is adhered to, that is each post or support has four other posts instead of one. In my opinion the timbering in this mine is as good as any system of timbering in the district. I understand that the men have always been instructed to leave no untimbered ground open, and as the enormous quantity of thirty thousand feet a day is used at the Anaconda alone, the magnitude of the timbered ground in the mine can be guessed at."

Efforts have been made to find the friends and relatives of the unfortunate men, and many have been heard from. John Smith, one of the dead, aged 34, comes from Kimball, South Dakota. His father, Owen Smith, has telegraphed to have the body forwarded to him.

William Clark, one of the dead, was 20 years old, a native of St. Austell, Cornwall, and lived with Richard Hancock at Walkerville. His relatives have not been heard from, and he will be buried to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock at Walkerville.

Seward Stewart lived at the Sturtgarter house on East Park street. No word has been received from his relatives, but the body will be held until Wednesday in hopes that they will be heard from.

John Nordstrom has a sister at Beawawe, Nevada, and she has sent for the body.

Dan Shehan, whose body has not yet been recovered, has a sister, Mrs. O'Neil, living in Dublin gulch. Her husband was killed in the mine about a year ago. Shehan had been at work in the mine only four days.

Quinn Leary was an old timer in the Anaconda. He has a brother living in the gulch.

William Hyland, another of the old timers, has a cousin, John Hyland, working in the machine shops and is the only relative known here.

Tim C. Murphy had been at work in the mine only one month. His brother, Con Murphy, is a sawyer at the Anaconda.

Jerry M. Harrington has been employed in the mine for years, but his relatives have not yet been found.

The above named nine are believed to be the list of the dead, the last five being the ones whose bodies are yet in the mine this evening, together with Agazza. John Davis and John D. Sullivan, who were at first mentioned among the missing, have turned up all right, but the latter had a narrow escape from being caught by the falling rock.

THE FACTS OF THE CASE.

Testimony That The Mine Is as Perfectly Timbered as Possible.

BUTTE, May 16.—An inquest on the bodies of the four men who have so far been taken out of the Anaconda mine was held to-day before Acting Coroner Muldoon and a jury composed of Thomas Duheme, George L. Lapp, Fred Reber, Eugene Sullivan, John McCormick and Pat Conlon.

Dr. E. J. Leonard, the county physician, was the first witness examined and testified as follows: "I visited the four men yesterday, and found that the body of Stewart had some light bruises, and that he was struck in the face by some flat surface and the skull crushed. The injury to his head was sufficient to cause instant death. The body of William Clark shows signs on the chest and head which indicate that death resulted from asphyxia. John Smith has slight bruises about the body and his skull was crushed from both sides, causing instant death. The body of Nordstrum was in a similar condition, with the skull crushed from both sides, and death was instantaneous."

Dr. G. E. Blackburn substantiated Dr. Leonard's testimony. After hearing this evidence the jury visited the scene of the disaster in a body. The inquest was continued at 2:30 o'clock this afternoon.

Jacob Oliver was the first witness examined. He said: "I am deputy inspector of mines for the state of Montana. I was notified of an accident at the Anaconda mine last Saturday. In company with Superintendent Kane I went to the scene of the accident on the 800-foot level. I found all the timbers in the first two floors in good condition, not being crushed in the least. I proceeded to the third floor, where the men were catching up the back of the cave. They were doing all in their power to secure the ground. I found that the timbers on this floor that were left, in the same condition as those on the second floor. I then went east and proceeded to the third floor on the east side; there I found the timbers knocked out of their places about four inches, but they were in good condition, not being crushed. I have followed practical mining for the last 12 years. I also found that the first two floors were filled with waste and a part of the third and fourth."

"In your opinion was the accident due to the carelessness of those in charge of the mine?"

"I don't think so. I think it was purely accidental."

"How long before this accident occurred did you inspect the mine?"

"I was through that part of the mine about two months ago and found everything all right."

"How does the timbering in the Anaconda mine compare with other mines of the district?"

"It is the most expensive and the best system of timbering known on the Pacific coast."

"The third floor was filled up under the cars with waste dirt."

Mike Holland was next sworn and said: "I am a miner and work on the 800-foot level of the Anaconda mine. We went to work at 12:30 o'clock on Saturday and were timbering on the fourth floor on the fourth chute east, right under where the cave occurred. We were using some spikes and happened to run out of them and I went up on the fifth floor to get some. As I was coming back I heard the men in the stope on the fifth floor hollo 'fire.' I told them to call down to my partner and tell him to come up. He came up and we all went east from where they were blasting and toward the foot wall, close to a raise. It seemed they turned on some compressed air to blow out the smoke after they had blasted. They thought the smoke was out, and the men, I don't know how many, got up and went toward their work. We stayed there a little longer, as we were working right under where they had blasted, and we thought that the smoke might stay there longer. A minute or two after the men left, and just as we had got up and started back to our work, we heard a crash. I couldn't say exactly how far we were away from it, but probably about four or five feet. We were thrown back against the foot wall and stayed there until it was all over. We got a light and tried to go down a little space along the foot wall east, but couldn't do it, and came up through the 700 level. We went right down the shaft and went to work to help get the men out. I couldn't say how many men went back to work. They were all strangers to me."

"How many floors were working at the time of the accident?" "Five."

"Through how many floors did the slide crash?" "To the best of my knowledge it crashed down to the fourth floor."

"Was this blast in the drift?" "I think it was in the stope."

"How long after the blast did the crash come?" "I couldn't exactly tell. It might have been 15 minutes, perhaps 20."

"Did they go back any quicker than usual after a shot was fired?" "I think not. It was about the usual time. I was never required to go into a drift until the smoke had cleared away."

"Do you think that the slide was caused by the fall of any timbers?" "I couldn't say. I considered the timbering as perfectly safe, and thought I was just as safe, there as I am sitting here. I have been a miner about 17 or 18 years."

"Had the drifts out of which ore had been taken been properly filled up with waste?" "Yes."

"When you heard the crash was there any warning?" "None whatever."

"Did the timbers show any effect of pressure?" "The timbers where we were seemed all right. If they had not, I would not have worked there."

"How long have you worked in the Anaconda mine?" "About six or seven years off and on."

"After blasting do you have to go back in a certain time, or use your own judgment?" "A man is at liberty to use his own judgment and go back in a reasonable length of time."

Dan Reilly testified: "I am a miner and have been a miner since I was a boy. I have been in practical mining for about 16 years. I was working in the Anaconda mine last Saturday. I went to work at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning, and was mining on the fifth floor of the 800-foot level. We drilled in the fore part of the shift and fired about 3 o'clock. When we fired my partner, Dan Sheehan, went down to get a drink of water and I fired the shot. After that I went over and turned on the air and went back east again and sat down. As near as I can judge, I stayed there between 10 and 15 minutes. My partner came up the manway and went right over into the face. He was tearing down some ground. I could hear him picking it, and about two minutes after he went in I saw the ground cave. It broke through the fifth floor right opposite where we were, and then seemed to swing east and west on the fourth floor. I think there were about two sets of timber left where we were. As soon as the crash was over, which only lasted about a minute, we got a light and went east on the floor, thinking that we could get down onto the fourth floor, but we couldn't do it. Then we came back and went up the raise under which we had been standing to the 700 level. We didn't think it was such a big fall until we came down to the 800 again. As soon as we got down we went to work to get out the men who had been caught."

"How far back were you from the face when the crash came?" "I should judge we were over 100 feet."

"Was there anything that gave you any warning?" "We didn't have a second's warning."

"In your opinion do you think that the accident could have been avoided in any way?" "I don't think it could."

"In your opinion was the accident caused through any fault of the management?" "No, not that I could see."

"How does the timbering of the Anaconda compare with that in other mines in which you have worked?" "I think the Anaconda mine is the best timbered on the hill."

"Were the different floors out of which ore had been taken properly filled with waste?" "Yes, it was filled with waste right under where the cave occurred."

"From the nature of the cave do you think that the timbering was at fault?" "The timbering was perfect, and no man could see any signs of any weight on it."

"In your judgment could any timbering have been put up that would have saved the lives of these men?" "I don't think so."

"How long have you worked in the Anaconda mine?" "Six days."

"Is it left to your own judgment to put in timbers when you think it is unsafe?" "Yes. I think the cave was about 16 posts wide, the entire width of the lead."

"In your opinion was this accident due to any negligence on the part of the men whose duty it is to see that the ground is properly secured?" "I don't think that anyone was to blame for the cave. I think the proper amount of caution was used."

"Did you ever hear of men complaining about timbering too close to the breast?" "Yes; there were two men killed who complained about the doubling-up timbers being so close that they couldn't work. I think their names were Jerry Harrington and Leary. They made the remark that they never saw the doubling-up timbers so close to the face in any of the mines in the hill as they were in the Anaconda."

"Were any men close to you at the time?" "Murphy and his partner came over to where I was when I fired the shots."

John O'Neill, foreman in the mine, was next sworn and said: "I went all over the mine every day, but I hadn't been at the scene of the accident that day. Paddy Kane, the superintendent, and I were there the day before and everything was all right then. It didn't show any weight on the timber."

"What were your instructions to the men in regard to timbering?" "Whenever there is room for a set we have it put in."

"How long have you worked for the Anaconda company?" "About five years."

"During that time did you ever hear anyone complain of lack of timber?" "No."

"Have you made an examination since the cave?" "Yes."

"Do you think anything could have been done to avoid it?" "If it had shown any signs of weight it could have been bulkheaded up."

"In your judgment was it due to any lack of care or mismanagement?" "No, sir, none whatever. As far as the stope had been worked it was filled up with waste."

"What floors had been filled up with waste?" "All of them up to the fifth, the one on which the men were working."

"How many men were working on the floor?" "I don't know just how many."

"Do the men ever miss filling up a floor in order to save expense?" "No. Every floor is filled up as soon as the ore is taken out."

"Is sufficient time allowed before men go back to work after a shot is fired?" "Yes. They are not expected to go back until the smoke is all out."

"Is it a rule of the company that men are allowed to use their own judgment in going back into a drift after a shot has been fired?" "Yes. They don't go back until the smoke is all out."

"What is your rule in regard to men who neglect timbering?" "They are discharged."

The inquest was then continued until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

It was nearly 9:30 o'clock to-night when word came up out of the mine that Agazza had been reached, and was being pulled out of his small prison. He was unable to move and it was hard work and difficult to get him through the long, narrow opening. He was carried tenderly to the cage and by the time he reached the surface a large crowd awaited him, half of them being women, and a cheer greeted him. Nearly everybody insisted on shaking hands with him, and some of the women gave expression of their feelings with tears. He was finally carried to the timekeeper's office, where his clothing was changed.

In conversation with a STANDARD reporter he said that he had sustained no broken bones, and aside from being very sore and lame, he thought he was all right. In reply to a question as to his feelings while confined in his narrow prision he said: "I was not afraid to die, and did not cry about it. If I had died I would just have been one more. The only thing I suffered for was water, and I thought once it was rather tough to die without a drink of water. I was not hungry and did not sleep since I have been buried."

He repeated that when he saw the earth began to crumble in the drift he started to run with the intention of jumping down a stope, but was caught before he could do so. He did not know, but thought there was a dead body of another miner about five feet above where he was lying. Agazza had received a slight cut on the head, and, while waiting to be rescued, had torn off the sleeve of his shirt and bound up his wound. Agazza is 29 years old and was born in Paris. He has been buried alive 54 hours, and when the reporter left him to-night he said jokingly: "Well, I have five shifts and a half coming to me." He has certainly all through his imprisonment and danger displayed nerve and courage such as is seldom seen. He says that during the first 12 hours of imprisonment he prepared to die, as he heard the rocks falling on top of him, and then he put in several hours of yelling. He was removed to the Sisters' hospital, where he will probably remain for several weeks before he will be able to be about again.

The other injured men at the hospital were this evening reported as getting along well. No new bodies were recovered from the mine to-day, and it will probably be a week before all are brought up. There is no longer any hope entertained for any of the five men now under ground.

ACCEPTING THE INVITATION.

The Miners' Union Appoints a Committee to Examine the Anaconda.

BUTTE, May 16.—The Miners' union held a special meeting to-night to take action on the invitation extended the union by Marcus Daly to appoint a committee to inspect the Anaconda mine. It was decided to accept the invitation and the following committee was selected: Joseph Thomas, president of the union, Hugh M. Blewett, Isaac Williams, Thomas Malone, Rod McDonald, William Hogan and John Nunes. The committee will visit the mine to-morrow morning and will make a thorough examination of the underground workings of the mine. The union wishes to express its thanks to Mr. Daly for the invitation, as it is a privilege but seldom extended.

The committee will visit the mine at 8 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Notice.

The Butte *Mining Journal* will be sold at administrator's sale Wednesday morning, May 18, at 10 o'clock, No. 53 West Park. The plant is complete, type, etc., sufficient to run a eight-column daily newspaper. Everything is first class and could not be duplicated for $10,000. Edward H. Cooney, administrator estate W. J. Penrose.

Only first-class stock in wines, liquors and cigars at McCormick & Hughes.

Fine diamond work done at T. H. Cameron's, 40 West Park street.

Whatley's Restaurant has removed 2 doors west of former location.

If you want your jewelry repaired go to Cameron, 40 West Park street.

A. O. U. W pins. "Leys," the jeweler.