

Man Gets Lost In Coal Mine

By the State Staff

HENRYETTA — A mission to retrieve stolen loot from an abandoned coal mine near Dewar ended in a 9½-hour rescue effort Sunday morning for a Tulsa County prisoner and a man who went in to rescue him.

Johnny Miller, retired miner, was escorted from the old McDonald No. 6 coal mine just after 3 a.m. Sunday after he had been lost inside the mine 9½ hours.

He went in to look for Jackie Madewell, 21-year-old Henryetta man held in Tulsa on a hot check charge. Madewell went into the mine to bring out loot taken in Henryetta and Tulsa burglaries that he said he knew was hidden there.

Wayburn Cotton, Tulsa police detective, said he was "about ready to mail in my badge" when Madewell didn't come out of the mine.

Cotton feared Madewell had been killed by poisonous gas encountered in the mine earlier Saturday when Madewell first went in with two miners. Madewell started his second journey into the mine at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, equipped with a mask and tank of oxygen.

When he hadn't returned to the mine entrance by 6 p.m., Miller was sent in to find him. When neither came out, Cotton and Art Lee, Tulsa County deputy sheriff, feared both had fallen victims of the gas.

While a rescue team from McAlester was on its way to the mine, two other Henryetta mining veterans, Buck Perry and Champ King, went in.

"Finally, we put out our fire outside the mine and sat real quiet. Soon Madewell came out with his light turned off. I didn't know whether to kiss him or kill him," Cotton said.

Madewell was reared in the area of the mine and said he played in it when he was 11.

The prisoner, in trouble with police since he was a pre-teen and a former inmate at both the Helena State Training School and the Granite reformatory, was prompted by an offered \$500 reward to take officers to the mine in search for the loot.