

4 Men, Truck 'Atomized' In Cadiz Mine Explosion

A liquid oxygen explosion which practically "vaporized" a truck and four men at the Hanna Coal Co. strip mine near Cadiz yesterday afternoon is being investigated today by explosive experts from the Federal and State Bureau of Mines and by union and company officials.

Four men and a crew foreman, Andy Jacobs, 30, of Cadiz were preparing to lower a charge of the liquid oxygen into a hole for blast-

ing when the blasting charge exploded, along with a supply of the explosive on the ground and a complete truckload standing nearby.

After the blast, workers could find practically no wreckage of the 5-ton truck and almost nothing of the bodies of the four men.

Only bits of metal, any one of which could have been slipped into a man's pocket, is all that remained of the truck. A shoe was

the largest piece of the men's clothing discovered, and the bodies of the victims were so blown to bits or burned that practically nothing of them was recovered.

10 Children Fatherless

Jacobs had walked away from the hole where the men were working and was uninjured by the explosion. The blast left 10 children fatherless.

The four men killed in the blast were:

William Stephens, 28, of RD 1, Cadiz, married and the father of four children.

Harry Deaton, 49, of RD 1, Cadiz, married and the father of four children.

Clarence "Bud" Hawthorne, 34, of Jewett, north of Cadiz, married and with two children.

Richard Deloma, 24, of Bloomington, Jefferson County, single.

Of the four, Hawthorne and Deaton had been long-time employees of the mining firm, while Stephens and Deloma had been working there for only a year.

50 Visitors Near Blast

James Hyslop, president of the Hanna Coal Co. in a statement issued this morning, said that there were about 50 visitors viewing the large "Mountaineer" shovel used to uncover coal in the large strip mine. Ten of the visitors were near the top of the shovel, about 300 feet from the blast, where they were watching the crew operate.

The blast broke many windows in the big shovel and a number of the visitors were scratched from flying debris from the truck, including shattered glass. Other damage to the shovel was only minor and will not put it out of operation.

The men were working at the

New Proposal Drafted For Route 21 By-pass

Plans are shaping up for a Route 21 by-pass for Dover if means of financing the city's share of the cost — 25 per cent of right of way and five per cent of construction — can be found. The cost would probably be more than \$50,000.

The plan in brief would entail a connection with the present Route 21 at the Schneider's Crossing road, cross the B & O railroad tracks at grade and run between the railroad and Sugar Creek through Dover, cross Route 39 (Sugar Creek Road) and W. Third St. at grade and necessitate a new bridge over the creek to connect with Route 211 which connects with the present Route 21 west of the new W. High Ave., New Philadelphia bridge.

The by-pass would be consider-

ed temporary but would fit into over-all general plans for further improving Route 21 through the Strasburg - Dover - New Philadelphia area, which are still in the future.

The plan is far from the proposals submitted by the Alden E. Stilson and Associates survey which called for an 11-mile system of expressways around Dover and New Philadelphia, bringing Route 8 down Front St. in Dover and across the old furnace flats to a Route 21-Route 8 interchange, and calling for a number of crossing separations and bridges in the two towns.

The Stilson report was made at the request of the Dover and New Philadelphia city councils and the county commissioners and total cost was estimated at nearly \$13,000,000, a figure far beyond the amount the state highway is willing to spend on the project at this time.

The proposed plan now under consideration would probably not cost more than \$2,000,000, would afford both Dover and New Philadelphia relief from through Route 21 traffic and would not interfere

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top of a ledge about 95 feet above where the remainder of the visitors were standing.

Still dazed last night, Jacobs, who was less than 100 feet from the blast, said, "All I saw was the mushroom. It was too sudden. All I know is that I was thrown clear and my head was protected under a rock.

"I was down in a small dip when the explosion occurred and that is evidently what saved me. I had just walked away from the truck to check people entering the pit when the explosion came.

"I was just lucky, I guess, being as close as I was and not getting it."

Other near witnesses included Mr. Hyslop, president of the company, and a group of about 50 members of the National Purchasing Association in Pennsylvania who were touring the site.

Used 12 Years

Liquid oxygen has been used at the mine, about seven miles southeast of Cadiz, for over 12 years without an accident. The last fatal accident at the mine was in 1948 and there has never been a lost-time accident of any kind from the use of explosives since the mine was opened in the early 1940's.

Company Safety Director William J. Schuster conferred today with two explosive experts from Pittsburgh who visited the explosion site and were unable to determine the exact cause of the blast. Investigation will continue, Schuster said, to determine how the explosive can be used in a safer manner.

The oxygen is impregnated in carbon which is packed in 15 inch cylinders about nine inches around. The "oxygen-carbon" cylinders are then placed in the hole drilled for the blast and set off by an electrical charge. Normally the electrical equipment is not carried on the same truck with the explosives, but it is not known if it may have been in this case.

The oxygen explosion is much more easily controlled in the blasting than dynamite which gives a "shock" explosion and much more surface damage. The oxygen blast only loosens the earth for the big shovel to scoop away, exposing the coal.

Memorial funeral services for the four men have not yet been set.