

Newspapers

52 MICHIGAN WORKERS DIE IN MUD TRAP

(Continued from page 1)

flood the lower leveds of the mine. Wilfred Will, 23, is the sole survivor of the 53 men below the surface at the time of the crash. Still shaken by the ordeal, he told his story to a weeping audience of mothers, wives and children gathered at the shaft last night.

Saw Friends Die

"I was working on the second level when the cave-in started," he said. "Just a little farther in from the shaft were Tom Kirby, Jr., Joe Mankee and John Santti. All were close friends of mine. Mankee had been my 'best man' at my wedding just two months ago tomorrow.

"First there was a low rumbling and a blast of air. I called to the other boys to run and I took the lead. I heard them start to follow but rock was beginning to fall down the shaft as I reached and started up the ladder. It was 800 feet to the surface and they tell me I was up less than 10 minutes after the men on the surface first heard the rumblings.

Races With Death

"Mud and water were right at my heels all the way up. When I reached the surface my boots were coated with it."

Cageman Andrew Malvazie and Ed Hallman and Albert Tippett were on the cage, ascending, when the cave-in occurred. According to their story they were only a few feet from the surface when they heard the rumbling and felt the rush of air coming past them up the shaft. Reaching the top they signalled to be lowered again and had only gone down about bo feet when they were met by a blast which they declared lifted the cage upward four feet.

It was this blast, in the opinion of Wills, which hurled his companions from the ladder and back into the debris which was closing in upon them.

The_Herald_Palladium_1926_11_04_8

Clipped By: usmra_rob May 15, 2025