

Wives Of Victims Keep Vigil In Mud And Snow Outside Mine

By GEORGE W. HACKETT
HAZARD, Ky. (AP) — Mud spattered miners huddled in groups on a mountainside Wednesday as the bodies of two victims of a cave-in were carried from a coal mine.

Two more men were killed in the accident. Their bodies had not been recovered.

Snow swirled down for a time, but melted as it hit the ground, making access of the mine more difficult for rescue workers. The

nearest usable road for automobiles is five miles away. Heavy duty equipment can come within half a mile of the mine.

Wives and loved ones of the victims stood among those waiting outside. As each relay of rescue workers came from the shaft, the crowd pressed in, each searching for some glimmer of hope.

But the drawn faces betrayed despair. "It's useless," said one miner. "There ain't anybody alive in there."

The four victims were among half a dozen men working in the shaft when the slate roof of the mine collapsed Tuesday, bringing with it the bowels of the mountain.

As rescue workers attempted to recover the bodies, rock and dirt still fell into parts of the mine.

The bodies of Sidney Bryant, about 25 and the father of one child, and Ben Sexton, whose wife is expecting her second child in two weeks, were found first.

Officials said the two were only a few steps from safety when crushed by a huge rock, some 300 feet wide.

Rescue workers said they uncovered part of the body of Josh Noble, about 27, but they were unable to remove debris that covered the rest of his body.

Still missing was Kenny Adams, about 48 and co-owner of the small truck mine. "It may take a day or it may take a month to get him out," one worker said.

A. C. Mullins and Bethel Hall were in another section of the mine when the rumbling started. "It was a roar like thunder — and then everything just caved in," Mullins said.

At times, the crowd outside the mine swelled to 300 or more. But only 35 persons were allowed inside the shaft — moving into the opening by donkey cart.

One of those outside was Dave Craft, who had waited nearly 36 hours while rescue operations went on. "My buddies are in there and I want to get them out," he insisted as officials urged him to go home and rest.

Now and then, a woman sobbed softly. But most stood stolidly, displaying a close knowledge of tragedy which often has struck in these isolated hills of Eastern Kentucky.

The accident occurred as the six miners were pulling fillers from the mine — removing coal shafts which were left after mining operations ceased.

The small mine—a operation where trucks were used to haul coal to nearby markets — is located at Pine Top in Knott County, about 20 miles east of Hazard. The collapse occurred about 1,000 feet down in the shaft.

One old timer, who has been in the business for 30 years, said:

"Things like this happen once in a while, but it ain't no worse than driving on the highway. These men love their jobs and you'll see them back diggin' coal in a few days."

Mrs. Blue 'Unaware' Of Work At Country Club

FRANKFORT, K. (AP)—Mrs. J. Murray Blue, wife of a state senator, said Wednesday she was "totally unaware" that state highway crews had worked on the Providence Country Club grounds.

Mrs. Blue, national Democratic committeewoman for Kentucky, issued a statement denying charges of two Webster County crewmen who were suspended pending further investigation.

Mrs. Blue said in a statement, "I have never authorized or asked the county foreman or the state highway crew to do any work on the Providence Country Club."

Highway Commissioner Henry Ward sustained the suspensions of W. G. Holt of Clay, and Claude Wallace of Providence, Tuesday

after hearing them make charges of widespread misuse of materials and equipment.

The district engineer suspended the two equipment operators Nov. 17 on grounds they created disturbances among crewmen.

Wallace testified at the hearing that Mrs. Blue instructed the county foreman, Bryant Chandler, to use state highway workers for hauling dirt to the golf course, drag trees from it and do other work there.

Chandler said crewmen did haul dirt to the course, but that the grounds were cleared only after a severe storm.

Mrs. Blue said she had checked on the matter with the club caretaker and chairman of the grounds committee, and added:

"They have stated they know nothing that has been done at the country club with the exception of dumping dirt, which was pulled from ditches on state right of way."

Mrs. Blue said she felt sure Ward would "find the facts as I have stated them" when he investigates further.

C. W. Fox Of Crittenden, Dies

MARION, Ky., Dec. 13—Collin Webster Fox, 67, died unexpectedly Tuesday night of a heart attack at his home, Fredonia Rt. 1. He was a retired fluor spar miner.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday at Marion Baptist Church with the Rev. S. R. Beaty and the Rev. J. C. Asbridge officiating. Burial will be in Mapleview Cemetery.

Survivors include the widow, Mrs. Edith Fox, two daughters, Mrs. Lois Hicks, Fairbanks, Alaska, and Mrs. Elizabeth Rushing, Columbus, Ohio; four sons, William Fox, Marion; Thomas Fox, Limestone, Maine; Douglas and Jimmy Fox, Fredonia Rt. 1; two sisters, Mrs. Kathryn Stephenson, Crayne, and Mrs. Bessie Russell, Detroit; two brothers, Dr. V. R. Fox, Manila, Ark. and Byron

Work At Spindletop Is Slated

FRANKFORT, K. (AP) — Beardsley Graham, new president of Spindletop Research, Inc., announced Wednesday construction will start immediately on the new