

SMOTHERED TO DEATH

Five Men Drawn Into Air Shaft by Surging Culm

**While Gang of Men at Drifton Collery
Were Removing Old Wooden Stack,
Banks of Culm, Rock and Slate
Rushed Into Air Shaft and Five
Out of Eight Men Met Instant
Death—Bodies Recovered.**

Drifton was the scene of a most distressing accident last evening, when five men were smothered to death and three others very narrowly escaped a similar fate.

The unfortunate men were John and Thomas Planudo, Joseph Camerono, Nargideo DeAngelo and Michael Sabo. All lived in Drifton or vicinity and were employed as laborers by the Lehigh Valley Coal Co. about the Coxe mines.

Sabo leaves a wife and four children. The others were also married and have families, which are still living in their native country, Italy.

Outside Forman Manus Carlin, with a gang of men, went to the Drifton collery during yesterday afternoon for the purpose of pulling down a wooden stack that was doing service over an air shaft extending to the top vein, which is near the surface at that point. The stack was about forty feet high and was surrounded by vast quantities of culm, rock and slate.

The men worked with a will for the purpose of completing the task before 6 o'clock so that they could return to their homes. Ropes were fastened to the stock and the men started to pull. The framework of the stack had become badly rotted and the affair easily toppled over.

With the falling of the stack there was a sudden rush of the banks of culm, rock and slate into the open air shaft and five of the men were sucked into the opening with the rushing material and buried many feet in the shaft.

Foreman Carlin and two other men, Donato Zap and Wassil Gresh, had a very narrow escape from a like fate and only by strenuous efforts saved themselves from being drawn into the surging culm.

News of the accident spread like wild fire and in a few minutes the place was surrounded by men, women

and children from the entire surrounding community to the number of several hundred and great excitement prevailed.

Gangs of rescuers were set to work and by hard efforts managed to recover all of the bodies shortly after 8 p. m. None of them were crushed or mangled and plainly showed that they had been smothered by the culm.

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