

# Four Entombed Miners Taken From the Babcock Mine; Sealed Behind Rock and Fallen Timbers Face Death

There is a re enactment of the scene at the Longacre-Chapman mine at Neck City of last year, at the Babcock mine four and one half miles northwest of Joplin at 7:10 this morning when the four entombed men walked from their underground imprisonment of 56 hours. At three o'clock this morning the rescue party heard the shouts of the entombed men, and realized that the long hours of incessant toil, to save the lives of their fellow men were about over. The rescuers were happy to head the voices of the men and in a few minutes could talk to them thru the remaining few feet of dirt, rock, pillars and debris which they were working like mad to remove.

The entombed men were urging their rescuers to hurry, declaring that they were starving. It was just 3 o'clock this morning when they first talked to the men. It was 7:10 when the men were rescued, shook hands with their rescuers and were hoisted to the top, and walked out, baring their heads in silent thanks for the light of day once more. Two of the men Morgan Woods and W. E. Bowers' first quick glance was for their wives, whom they knew would be there. They hadn't a second to wait, until the arms of the women were about the necks of their rescued husbands, laughing and crying at the same time in sheer joy over the restoration. Morgan Wood had only been married one month.

However, the men were not weakened by their long confinement. Running water, thru the bottoms of the drift in which they were entomped had kept them supplied with water, but they had had nothing to eat. They declined ambulance or hospital service, all saying that they were anxious to go home.

One of the men drove away with a friend in an automobile. The others all walked to their homes, which was not far from the mine. Dr. Craig of Joplin was on the scene to render first aid, but his services were not needed.

The rescue work was done under the direction of Deputy State Mine Inspector Joe Myers of Joplin, and the miners who knew the ground where the miners had been entombed. Mr. Myers stayed at the mine thruout the entire time after being notified of the accident. Miners from thruout the entire district hastened to offer their services free of charge. Mine operators and business men gave liberally in donations, while the women entered a hastily contrived cook "shack" and served hot meals to the rescue crews throughout the day and night, the women taking their part of the work in relays, just as did the miners of the rescue party.

The rescued men, all of whom are young fellows, did not recount much of their experience in the ground, they were too hungry they said. They were given food and strong coffee, by the women serving at the mine. Asked if they thought they would be rescued or that they would meet another fate, one of the men replied, "Well, we hoped to be rescued, but we didn't know how long it would take for them to get to us, and we didn't know whether they thought we were dead, and therefore not rushing the work. But we sure wanted to be rescued and we hoped and prayed that we would be, but we all realized that we had a good chance to starve to death there, like rats in a trap."

L However, like true miners of this district, they laughed and joked over their experiences for a few minutes with the other boys and it was hard to tell which was the happier, the rescued men or those who had helped to rescue them.

Y The young men, two of them shovelers, and two of them face men, are not coring for a repetition of the experience.

a From the hour of the accident, it was problematical whether there was a fresh air reaching the entombed miners, should they still be living. A few hours after the accident, a drill was set to work pounding away in the hopes of providing fresh air, a drill was set to work pounding away in the hopes the time the men were rescued, the drill had reached a depth of 100 feet back from either of the shafts. The chamber to which these 4 men escaped was ten feet wide and a little over 100 feet long, therefore the men had plenty of room.

7 Acting under the orders of Mine Inspector Joe Myers, the pumps were kept running at full blast, and thus the water in the mine was kept down, so there was no danger of drowning.

Y While their experience was terrible, the four men did not suffer as did the four men entombed at Neck City a year ago last June, when they were entombed and forced to lie on narrow ledges of rock on either side of the drift, oftentimes, with water up to their necks, and in hourly danger of drowning, until the pumps of a nearby mine started up, and thus the water was lowered a few feet. And thus these men lived entombed 118 hours, and were past the hunger stage when the rescuers reached them.

However the four boys entombed at the Babcock were in danger from the water at that mine, had not the pumps been kept running constantly to prevent the rise of water in this mine.

The work of the rescue party was made easier by this fact, and the cave-in was not so serious as the one at Neck City, where the rescuers had to battle with slush and mud which had poured in the broken wall from an abandoned and filled mine.

But that the four men were rescued without suffering more than the pangs of several hours of hunger is a most remarkable thing. Had the rescuers not been able to reach them in such good time, it is a question how long they could have survived on just water and fresh air, of which they had a bountiful supply.

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