



# Correspondence

**Dated**

**12/1912 - 01/1913**

**Cardiff #1---- Mine**



# University of Pittsburgh

Grant Boulevard

SCHOOL OF MINES  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Jan. 13th, 1913.

Mr. Geo. S. Rice,  
Bureau of Mines,  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

My dear Mr. Rice:

Kindly note the enclosed letter from  
the Cardiff Coal Co.. Can you give us the desired information so  
that we may complete our records as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

*H B Meller*

**ANSWERED**

**JAN 15 1913**

**G. S. RICE**

January 15, 1913.

*Photostat*

Mr. H. B. Meller,  
School of Mines,  
University of Pittsburgh,  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Sir:-

In regard to your letter of January 13, relative to the Cardiff No. 1 mine, I was operating the Cardiff mine at the time of the explosion cited. I do not have my notes at hand giving the dates. The explosion was not a dust explosion, but was from spontaneous fire in temporarily abandoned workings. The mine made considerable gas in vicinity of where the fire occurred. There were a number of successive explosions. The fire occurred at a point where a fall in the thick upper seam had broken through a floor into a room in a lower seam, so that when it started it burned very fiercely due to the chimney effect.

The first explosion occurred about 5 days prior to the final explosion. The fire was discovered when the mine had been idle for a few days. It was then burning so strong that the superintendent decided it would have to be sealed off. While this was being done an explosion occurred. This explosion was not at all violent. When I reached the mine from my headquarters at Chicago, they were re-erecting the brattices. Everything appeared to be going on smoothly. It was suspected that the first men had set fire to the gas with open lamps, therefore no particular danger was anticipated when I returned to my headquarters. The work of bratticing was again nearly completed when another explosion occurred several days later, which I think may have been the date mentioned, March 15, killing to the best of my recollection, 5 out of the 6 men that were in the mine. This explosion was very violent. Exploration was made where the men had been working, but the place was completely covered by heavy falls. One man escaped, being in a recess near the shaft. I think that the explosion occurred in the early evening instead of 12 p.m. as indicated. When I reached the mine from Chicago, the next morning it was then making so much gas, and as there were several big fires started, the exploration parties having practically assured themselves that no one was alive, I withdrew the men from the mine with the expectation of sealing it if the State Inspector approved. Just as he was arriving about 9 o'clock the following morning I think, another very violent explosion occurred, which blew the buntons out of the air shaft. Covers were put over the shafts, but successive explosions blew them off, and one man was killed while looking down the shaft, making a total of 9 killed. The last explosion set fire to the hoisting shaft which burned furiously, allowing quicksand to run in, caving the ground around, and requiring sinking a new shaft.

H.B.Meller

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1/15/13

*Photostatic*

In regard to the other questions, the mine was not a dusty mine. The coal was naturally damp, and the dust was moist. As you will see from the above, the question of amount of ventilating current was too variable to reply to directly.

In view of my present investigations, I take the liberty of asking what your object is in gathering the data on explosions, whether it is for the information of the School of Mines, or for a personal paper which you are to publish. Also how completely you have been able to obtain information from the various operators.

I return herewith Mr. Pierce's letter and your form.

Yours very truly,

Chief Mining Engineer.

# University of Pittsburgh

Craig Boulevard

SCHOOL OF MINES  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Jan. 16th, 1913.

Mr. Geo. S. Rice,  
Chief Mining Engineer,  
U. S. Bureau of Mines, City.



My dear Mr. Rice:

I am in receipt of your letter of Jan. 15th in reply to mine of the 13th and wish to thank you very much for the information which you have so kindly given me. Professor E. N. Zern of the West Virginia University and I are endeavoring to secure this data on explosions which occurred between June 30th, 1902 and June 30th, 1912 in which five or more men were killed. The primary object in getting together this data is so that it may be used in our class-room work, as undoubtedly a great many valuable points will be made evident when the compilation is complete. It is our purpose to tabulate the data and we have promised blue print copies to a number of the men who furnished us the information.

We have had considerable difficulty in securing replies from some of the companies. In some cases, as in the Cardiff Mine No. 1, it has been necessary to write to several persons before we were able to locate one who knew anything about the explosion in question. We hope, however, that before very long we will have replies to nearly all of our inquiries, although as would be naturally expected, some of the information is somewhat vague.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. B. Mellett".

Professor of Mining  
Vice-Dean, School of Mines.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF MINES

January 20, , 1913.

To Chief Mining Engineer

From Assistant to the Director.

Subject: Mine explosion data now being  
collected by the University of Pitts-  
burgh.

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Remarks

Return herewith letter of Jan. 16  
from H. B. Miller, Professor of Mining  
University of Pittsburg, with the  
request that all correspondence rela-  
tive to the matter be forwarded to  
this office.

*W. M.*  
Assistant to the Director.

6-12 c

*Mr. Rice*  
*Notes by [unclear]*

DATA ON EXPLOSIONS

NAME AND LOCATION OF MINE: Cardiff Mine, Cardiff, Livingston Co., Ill.

OPERATING COMPANY: Cardiff Coal Co.

Date of Explosion, and Time; Mar. 15th, 1903; Sunday, 12 P.M.

Was the mine dusty or non-Dusty?

Method of Moistening Dust, if any?

Was the fan working force or exhaust? How much air was getting into the  
the mine at the time of the explosion?

What was the approximate number of men employed underground at the time  
of the explosion, and approximate percentage of foreign labor?