

REPORT OF ROOF FALL ACCIDENT
HALCON COAL CORPORATION
MINE
NEAR WISE, VIRGINIA
June 5, 1929
By W. J. Fene.

A fall of roof slate occurring at about 8:00 a.m., June 5, 1929, in the Halcon Coal Corporation Mine near Wise, Virginia resulted in the death of five men, including two machine men, two loaders and one trackman.

The Halcon Mine is a small operation, employing 85 men and producing about 150 tons of coal a day. The mine is located about 1 1/2 miles south of Wise, Wise County, Virginia, on a branch of the Norton and Northern Railroad.

The mine is opened by a drift, in the "Little Norton" coal bed, which ranges from 28 to 48 inches in thickness. The coal bed is practically flat, except for local rolls. The room and pillar system of mining is employed and pillars are recovered on the retreat by the slabbing method.

One short-wall mining machine is employed for undercutting the coal and all haulage is by trolley locomotive.

The immediate roof over the coal is a hard slate, which in general makes a fair roof. The floor is a fire clay.

No systematic timbering method is employed, timbers being placed where they are thought to be needed. However, in rooms usually two lines of props are used.

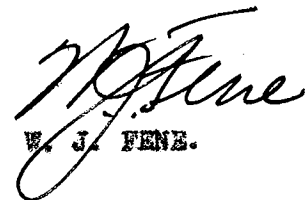
The Accident:

The accident occurred during the time the pillar between rooms 2 and 3 was being undercut. Two loaders and a trackman were waiting for the cut to be completed when the fall occurred. The undercut had about been completed when the roof broke along a slip parallel with the rib over the undercut and fell before the men could escape. The coal in this room is about 30 inches thick.

According to the mine foreman's statement, he was in the room about 30 minutes before the fall occurred and at that time the roof seemed to be in good condition and there was no evidence of the roof "taking weight." Two falls occurred; the first, the one that caught the men, was about 20' x 18' x $1\frac{1}{2}$ ', the second, about 50' x 18' x $1\frac{1}{2}$ ', occurred after the mine foreman returned to the room after being notified of the accident.

The timbering in the room at the time of the fall is shown on the attached sketch.

It is the writer's opinion that a safer method of recovering pillars in this mine could be employed and that in the room in which this accident occurred proper precautions and timbering methods were not used.


W. J. FENE.

Pittsburgh, Pa.,
July 12, 1929.

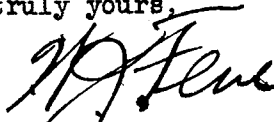
MEMORANDUM TO MR. FORBES:

Herewith is a short report of the roof fall accident occurring at the Halcon Coal Corporation Mine near Wise, Virginia, on June 5, 1929, in which five men were killed.

I visited this mine on June 14 in company with Mr. Graff and observed the conditions in the room in which the fall occurred. At the time of our visit the ventilation in this section of the mine was very poor due to a fall of roof in the aircourse. The flame safety lamp that I carried was extinguished, either for lack of oxygen or carbon dioxide, and I suffered a severe headache. Due to this condition we did not spend as much time in examination of the room as we would have otherwise.

The Halcon Coal Corporation Mine is a small operation and from my observation it would appear that the company's efforts were toward the production of coal without much regard for safety.

Very truly yours,



W. J. FENE,

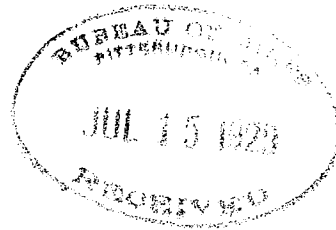
Associate Mining Engineer.

cc - D Harrington
E H Graff
J W Paul
File

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF MINES

WASHINGTON July 13, 1929.

Mr. J. J. Forbes,
U. S. Bureau of Mines,
Pittsburgh, Pa.




Dear Mr. Forbes:

We have not yet received a report from Mr. Fene concerning the fall of roof accident in Virginia where five men were killed.

I do not like the delay in forwarding this report. There have been a number of inquiries concerning this affair and this office has been absolutely in the dark as to what occurred. In my opinion it is inexcusable that there should be as much delay in the forwarding of reports of this description as we are now getting from a number of our field men.

Yours truly,


D: HARRINGTON,
Chief Engineer,
Safety Division.



July 15, 1929

Mr. D. Harrington,
U. S. Bureau of Mines,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Harrington:

Replying to your letter of July 13 in which you called attention to failure of this office to send copy of Mr. Fene's short report on Fall of Roof accident in Virginia, in which five men were killed.

Fene wrote this short report in longhand and it has lain in this office for the reason that we have been short of help. Mr. Larsen, as you know, was away on leave and on returning to this office he was off on sick leave for a few days. I only have two girls in the office, one of whom was employed a short while ago, and both of them were swamped. I hope that there will be no further delay in forwarding reports of this nature to you.

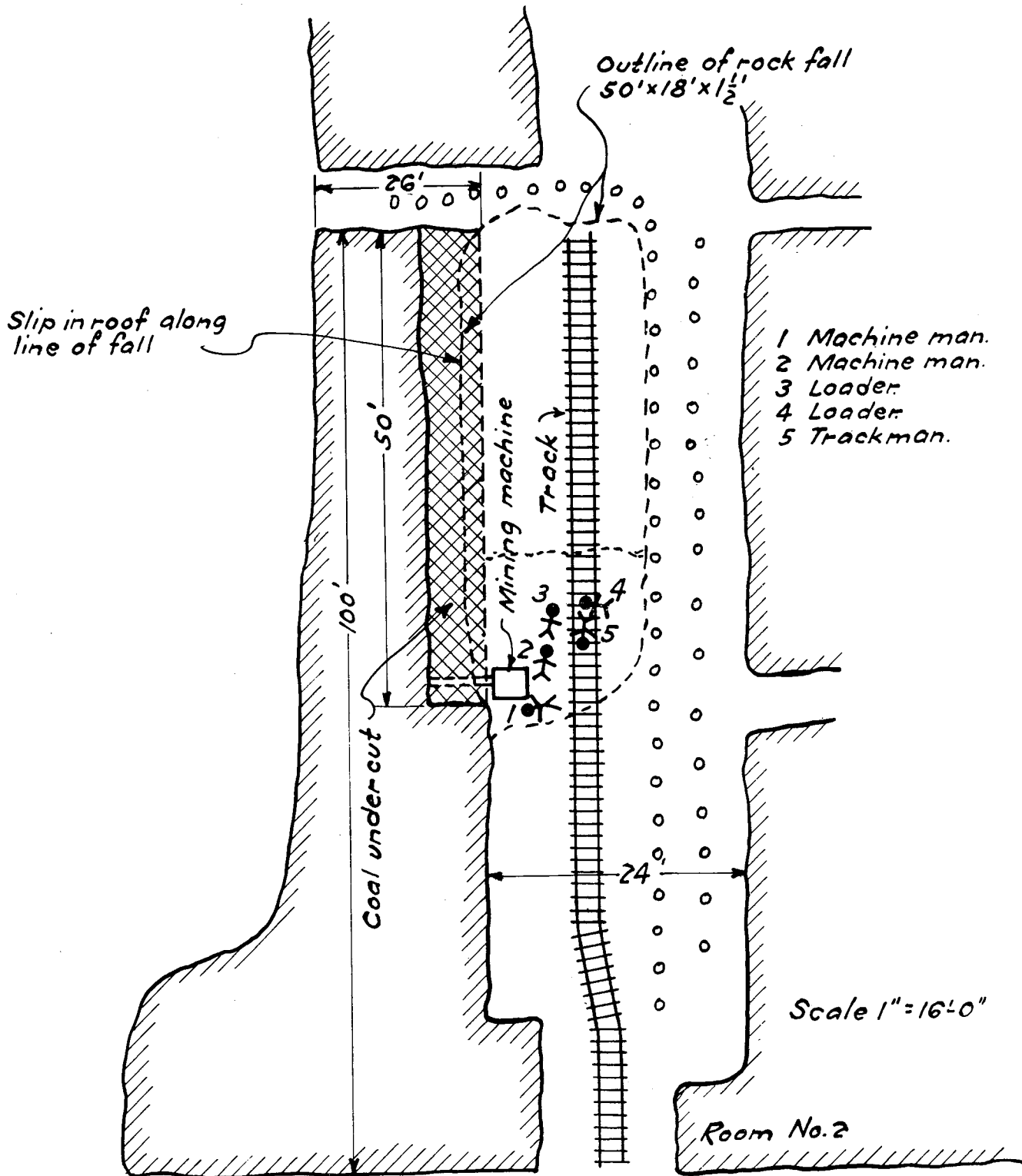
I find that this report was typed and forwarded you July 12. Perhaps you have received copy of this by now. To make sure I am attaching herewith the original copy which Fene had addressed to me. If there is anything further that is needed in connection with this report, please advise.

Yours very truly,

J. J. FORBES
Supervising Engineer
Instruction Section

CC-Files





ROOF FALL ACCIDENT.

HALCON COAL CORPORATION MINE - NEAR WISE, VIRGINIA.

JUNE 5, 1929

VILLAGERS PRAY AS THEY FLEE IN PANIC FROM RAIN OF LAVA

Abandon Homes to Fury of Vesuvius Increasing its Violence POMPEII IS RECALLED Natives in Fear of Similar Catastrophe DWELLINGS ARE LOST Consumed as Fiery Stream Engulfs Them

NAPLES, Italy, June 6 (AP).—Explosive activity in the eruptive cone of Mount Vesuvius increased today with tremendous barrages of rocks and ashes bombarding the walls of the great crater.

An official bulletin from the Vesuvius observatory said that while further danger probably would be avoided, the life of volcanos is so mysterious that one cannot judge the outcome from the appearances of the moment.

Villagers around the southern and eastern base of the volcano were panic-stricken as they deserted their homes, the rains of Pompeii destroyed 19 centuries before, always mute testimony of what Vesuvius could do.

Trudging behind their two-wheeled carts which carried their worldly possessions, they prayed they might be delivered from "the wrath of Vesuvius," and sang hymns of trust and faith in Providence.

The erstwhile busy little village of Terzigno appeared to be becoming encircled with a belt of lava from a flow which first started toward Campitello, but then changed its course and entered the village itself.

The lava oozed around the dwellings, smoldering from windows and then the walls bulged like the skin of a baked potato. As the walls crumpled, the houses disappeared in the river of fiery liquid rock.

Because of the danger from flying rocks, authorities, as much as possible, secured the houses from approaching the mountain. The pillars of smoke from the cone have cast a pall over the entire area, giving it the appearance of a dire prophetic twilight.

HIGHWAY ROBBERY IS REPORTED BY VICTIM Vandalia Man Says He Was "Taken for a Ride"

A. J. Cain, of Vandalia, was taken for a ride" from the Chesapeake and Ohio passenger station on the South Side Wednesday afternoon by two strangers in an automobile reported to city and state police.

HOOVER IS REGARDED BY TIBETANS AS GOD

ROME, June 6 (AP).—President Hoover is regarded as a god of Tibetans, tribes, Professor Nicholas Roerich, artist, who lives in New York, said today on his return to civilization from his "mystic" travels in India, Tibet and Mongolia.

Hoover's work seems to have penetrated by word of mouth into Tibet, where he is looked upon as a supernatural and beneficent being.

Roerich said the name "Hoover" was distorted by the Tibetans into "Koo-ver," which is their name for the god of happiness. He found an old picture of Hoover, taken many years ago, enshrined in a Tibetan house.

Hony Ford is also considered a semi-divinity, Roerich declared. "The Tibetans seemed to me to be an European race rather than Asiatic," he said.

DIAMONDS STOLEN IN JEWELRY STORE Loot at Ramze Establishment is Estimated at \$1,800; Rings are Missing

Ramze's Jewelry store at Kanawha and Summers streets was robbed of about \$1,800 worth of diamonds Wednesday afternoon, according to a report to police.

ACTRESS JUMPS 12 STORIES TO DEATH Telephone Hotel Switchboard Operator Purpose

CHICAGO, June 6 (AP).—Miss Barbara Cole, 28, show girl, jumped 12 stories from the top of the Metropolitan hotel last night, giving as her reason only this notation on the flight of her diary: "I love Ed Page, 1209 Astor street."

SUIT IS BROUGHT Ousted University Instructors Want Salaries

CONGRESS' RECESS PLANS THREATENED

Serious Controversies in Both Houses May Delay Vacation AMENDMENTS VOTED "Alien Exclusion" Placed in Census-Reapportionment Measure

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—The House today was confronted with the most difficult controversial situation it has encountered since the special session began, while the senate had three on its hands.

Until two of the four are disposed of—the house controversy over reapportionment of its membership and the administration's demand for the issue over the export duty plan of farm relief—all talk of a summer vacation for congress is likely to be of an extremely tentative nature.

TURKISH PRINCE IS ASKING \$50,000,000 Son of Late Sultan Also Names Turkish National Oil Development Company

BUDAPEST, June 6 (AP).—Prince Abdul Kadir, son of the late sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid, is suing the British government and the Turkish National Oil Development company of Mosul for approximately \$50,000,000.

TENNESSEAN MAY SUCCEED DR. WORK Mentioned for National Republican Chairman

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—The name of Claudius H. Houston, of Tennessee, figured prominently today in the political speculation centered upon President Hoover's choice of national chairman for the Republican national committee.

DARROW AND WILSON DEBATE PROHIBITION Joint Discussion of Issue is Held in Washington

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—In the presence of an audience which gave vent to its feelings by hissing, boisterous heckling, jeering and cheering, Clarence Darrow, noted attorney, and Dr. Charles True Wilson, secretary of the Methodist board of temperance, prohibition and moral reforms, have today debated in Washington what they think about prohibition.

MILLION GIVEN New York University Recipient of Contribution

GANGSTERS EXECUTE CHICAGO WATCHMAN

CHICAGO, June 6 (AP).—Patrick Maloney was "put on the spot" today as a victim either of racketeers or revenge.

Maloney and Frank Disc, watchman at the H. and R. Machine shops, were taking a short rest when two men with pistols appeared. Disc was held captive by one while the other took Maloney into an office and shot him four times through the back.

SIR ESMÉ HOWARD DRIES UP EMBASSY British Ambassador Decides to Stop Importation of Liquors ACTION IS VOLUNTARY Secretary of State Stimson Has Been Informed of New Policy

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—Sir Esme Howard, British ambassador, has informed Secretary Stimson of his contemplated action not to import into the United States any more liquors under diplomatic privileges.

OTHERS ARE SILENT WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—Little likelihood that the diplomatic corps here would follow the action of Sir Esme Howard, British ambassador and dean of the diplomatic corps in informing members of his staff that he would not approve liquor applications in the future, was seen here today.

PRESIDENT HOOVER TO VISIT OHIO RIVER Will Attend Opening of Great Lock System

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—President Hoover will attend the celebration marking the completion and opening of the great lock system on the Ohio river extending from Pittsburg to Cairo and forming a part of the inland waterway system.

FIVE COAL LOADERS CRUSHED TO DEATH Slate Fall Occurs in Halcon Mine in Virginia

NEW YORK, June 6 (AP).—A gift of \$1,000,000 to the New York University was announced yesterday by the university.

HER EYESIGHT INJURED HARTSDALE, N. Y., June 6 (AP).—The sight of Evangeline Booth, commander of the Salvation army in America, has been slightly affected through injuries she suffered in an automobile accident two weeks ago, it was announced today.

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Comment Retained The ambassador's action would be of a purely personal nature. He added that he informed the ambassador the matter was one of diplomatic immunity and privilege and the American government did not desire in any way to narrow or infringe the importation rights.

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WILLMOT ALSO IS SENTENCED TO HANG FOR BOWEN SLAYING

Jury Deliberates 51 Minutes in Reaching Verdict of First Degree TO DIE WITH PARTNER No Recommendation of Mercy Made by Jurors After Considering Case



Walter E. Willmot must also hang for the murder of Frank Bowen. Deliberating 51 minutes, a jury in the intermediate court Wednesday afternoon at 2:12 o'clock returned a verdict of murder in the first degree without recommendation and Judge Henry K. Black sentenced Willmot to hang with his partner, Millard F. Morrison, on September 13, between the hours of 3 a. m. to 9 p. m.

THE EXECUTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE at the state penitentiary. Willmot, hearing the verdict of the jury read, dropped his head and looked at the floor. He was immediately led out of the courtroom to the county jail by Sheriff D. Stephenson after sentence was pronounced.

THE JURY DELIBERATED on the case for 38 minutes before the noon hour, then returned for lunch and again took up deliberation at 2 o'clock. Twelve minutes later the balliff was notified that a verdict had been reached. Judge Black again warned the spectators not to make any displays and the courtroom remained quiet as the verdict was read and sentence imposed.

MEMBERS OF THE WILLMOT JURY were: H. B. Searler, John Meley, L. W. Gable, C. R. Young, Clyde Caven- dore, Dave Webster, Lewis Burdette, Milton Slater, L. D. Staats, Sam Reed, John Rader and Floyd Bog- gess.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER sentence was passed on Willmot, his brother-in-law, James Wicks, speaking for himself and Clarence Willmot, the defendant's brother, voluntarily requested the court to suspend the following statement to the public:

WE HOLD NO MALICE toward the people of this section and wish to express our sincere thanks for the good will and friendship they have extended to us. We are leaving immediately to go back to our home in England.

THE CASE WENT TO THE JURY at 11:52 o'clock in the morning at the conclusion of Attorney A. M. Belcher's argument. The jury deliberated for exactly 23 minutes before they returned to the court room to be dismissed for lunch to reconvene at 2 o'clock to resume consideration of the evidence.

PRESIDENT ASKS ACTION

Requests Congress to Name Committee to Study Proposed Transfer of Dry Enforcement to Justice Department

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—President Hoover today recommended to congress the appointment of a joint select committee to study matters pertaining to the transfer of the prohibition unit from the treasury to the justice department; and other subjects in connection with the administration of the bureaus having to do with dry law enforcement.

HE INFORMED CONGRESS in his second message to the special session he would appoint a committee from the department to cooperate with the congressional committee and the national commission on law observance, and enforcement also would cooperate through their studies of the departmental organization.

THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL committee would be expected to formulate recommendations for the consideration of congress at the regular session in December and at which he desires enactment of the necessary legislation to place the major responsibility for prohibition enforcement in the justice department.

ACCUSED ARRESTED AFTER BEING FREED Mingo Man Held on New Warrant Following Quashing of Indictment

WILLIAMSON, June 6 (AP).—A motion to quash the indictment charging N. E. McHaffa, young railroad man, with murder in the slaying of his wife was sustained today by Circuit Court Judge J. C. Hendon but McHaffa was immediately arrested on a new warrant and placed under \$10,000 bond to await action of the next grand jury.

THE MOTION TO QUASH was made by Late B. Chaffin, counsel for the defendant, who contended there were grand jurors. James D. Orr, counsel for the state in the McHaffa case, was successful in a previous effort to have the indictment quashed.

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Weather forecast: Warm and clear Thursday, with the temperature above the danger mark. It was warm Wednesday, with a high temperature of 82 degrees.

TOBACCO MERGER IN PROSPECT NEW YORK, June 6 (AP).—Negotiations are under way for a tobacco merger involving Union Tobacco, United Cigar Stores, Tobacco Products and other companies, through the formation of a new corporation to be known as Tobacco & Drug, Inc.

HER EYESIGHT INJURED HARTSDALE, N. Y., June 6 (AP).—The sight of Evangeline Booth, commander of the Salvation army in America, has been slightly affected through injuries she suffered in an automobile accident two weeks ago, it was announced today.

COUNT IS HELD Arrested by Under-Cover Prohibition Agents NEW YORK, June 6 (AP).—Count De Polignac, said to be of the old French nobility, was arrested by under-cover prohibition agents today and charged with being the European agent of an international rum ring.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS Department Stores Pages Cash & Robinson 1 Lewis Brown 1 L. J. Morrison Dept. Store 2 Ladies' Ready-To-Wear 3 Woodmen's 3 Virginia 3

MELLON ASSISTANT WILL GIVE UP POST WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP).—Designation of Earl B. Scheuermann as assistant secretary of the treasury in charge of public buildings has been submitted to Secretary Mellon, it was announced at the treasury today.

SIGN PACT FRIDAY PARIS, June 6 (AP).—The pact on reparations will be signed at 5 o'clock tomorrow afternoon, (11 a. m. E. S. T.) at the George V hotel. (Continued On Page Five)