

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF

EXPLOSION IN No. ²⁰₁ MINE, NEAR ELK GARDEN, WEST VIRGINIA.

April 24, 1911

ooo

The explosion occurred in the No. 20 Mine of the Davis Coal & Coke Company, near Elk Garden, W. Va., about 7:45 A. M., Monday morning, April 24, which resulted in the death of twenty-three men.

Notice of the explosion was received at the Pittsburgh station about 3 P. M. on the same date. Messrs. Paul, Jones, Ryan and Davis, with six helmets, one pulmotor, two oxygen tanks and recharging supplies, etc., left Pittsburgh over the B. & O. at 6 o'clock the same evening. The party arrived at Cumberland at 10:30 and had the rescue apparatus transferred to the Western Maryland Railway and left Cumberland shortly after 11 o'clock. The trip from Cumberland to Ott, which was the point on the railroad nearest to the mine, was made by special train, and the party arrived at its destination at 1:50 A. M., April 25.

The Scranton car with W. D. Roberts and Kellam on it arrived at the same point shortly after 6 O'clock of the same morning.

According to the testimony brought out at the inquest, the fan had been shut down for the preceding thirty-six hours at least.

On the day of the explosion the fan man arrived at the mine at 5:30 A. M., and had the fan started at 6:30 A. M. It was stated the Foreman had gone into the mine to make an examination, but it was uncertain whether the men waited outside until he returned.

The explosion occurred between 7:45 and 8:15 A. M., the exact time being uncertain. There were twenty-eight men in the mine at this time; five of these men were working in what is known as the Left Heading, from which rooms were driven to the outcrop, and these men had no difficulty in getting out safely through cutthroughs to the surface.

It took the next three days to recover the bodies, slow progress being made on account of the difficulty in restoring satisfactory ventilation.

A very hasty and incomplete investigation was made by a party under the supervision of the State Mine Inspector. This party decided that the explosion occurred at the face of the Dean air course, due to a blown out shot from an overcharge of powder; it was thought that this hole was charged with both Monobel and black powder.

It was impossible for the men from the Bureau of Mines to make a thorough examination on account of the fact that even as late as Friday blacklamp was found in one of the air courses and in the rooms nearby.

The mine at this time was temporarily in charge of an incompetent man, the greater part of those connected with the mine being present at the inquest.

In addition to the unsatisfactory conditions inside the mine, the arrangement at the fan house was very dangerous. The boiler was in the same building as the fan. Since the explosion occurred safety lamps had been cleaned and repaired in the boiler room and there was considerable grease and oil lying around on the floor. Conditions were very favorable

to an accidental fire starting in this boiler house, and if it had started great difficulty would have been encountered in putting it out, as no provision had been made for such an accident. Had such a fire started while the men were in the mine, the smoke and fumes would have been blown into the mine by the fan, inasmuch as it was a blowing fan. For this reason it was thought best to postpone a detailed investigation until the ventilation had been put in a more satisfactory condition.

The general condition of the mine was very unsatisfactory. The headings, from which most of the present output is obtained, have quite large accumulations of very dry dust scattered along the road. The entries are driven 21 feet wide, half of which is gobbed up, and great quantities of very fine black dust cover these gob piles.

The roads were sometimes sprinkled from barrel wagons, but the working places had never been sprinkled. In addition to this, gas was being made near the face of two of the entries, and one man testified at the inquest that he had lit gas less than two weeks ago in his room near the face of the Dean heading.

Considering all these conditions, the mine was certainly not in a safe condition, notwithstanding the fact that it was so reported by the District Mine Inspector on the 19th of April.

Respectfully submitted,

R. M. Jones

No Hope Held Out For Men Cut Off Far Under Ground in Davis Mine

Rescue Parties Penetrate Nearly a Mile But Are Still a Great Way from the Entombed Men. Cause of Explosion Not Determined

OBSTRUCTIONS IN MINE INTERFERE WITH RESCUERS

ELK GARDEN, W. V., April 24.—Twenty-three miners were entombed in Ott Mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal & Coke Company near here, as the result of an explosion that wrecked the mine today. There is not believed to be one chance in a thousand that any of the men are still alive. As tons of debris are blocking the way, it is not expected that most of the victims will be reached before tomorrow afternoon. One body has been recovered.

The cause of the explosion has not been determined. Whether the explosion was due to gas or dust will not be known until a complete investigation has been made. As soon as the accident occurred Superintendent Robert Grant organized rescue parties and entered the mine, after notifying officials of the mine at the headquarters of the company at Cumberland.

The rescue parties had not advanced far into the workings before they discovered the obstruction. It was then decided to effect an entrance nearer the probable point of the explosion by cutting through the wall of an adjoining mine owned by the same company.

Late this afternoon the rescuers had penetrated to the No. 20 mine at a point about four thousand feet from the outside entry. There still remained about the same distance to go before reaching the buried miners.

The Ott Mine No. 20, is almost directly under the town of Elk Garden, which is on a hill. The mouth of the mine is about half a mile from the town.

Those in the mine are:

John Pritchard, Arthur Pritchard, Tabor Runion, James Brown, John Wilson, Roy Wilson, Lester Wilson, William Pugh, Hawthorne Patton, Thos. Wilson, T. White, William Pearson, John White, William Shears, Harry Pannum, James Dempsey, L. O. Dempsey, Edward Hirshberger, Thos. Yost, Charlie Wilson, William Hetzel, William Busky and one unknown.

All but Busky are Americans.

Clearing The Mine.

That the disaster was not even more dreadful is due to the fact that digging the coal has been suspended temporarily and a reduced force was clearing the workings.

THE OTT MINE DISASTER

Burial of Victims and Beginning of the Inquest.

(Special to The American.)

Cumberland, Md., April 27.—The funeral of the last of the victims of the Ott mine disaster at the Davis Coal and Coke Company's mine near Elk Garden, W. Va., took place this evening at 7 o'clock, when Thomas, the last of the men who met death in the mine explosion, was buried. Funerals have been in progress since yesterday afternoon. The four Wilsons were buried at the same time, and today the two Pugh brothers, Frank and John, were interred in the same grave. Relatives of the dead men from all over this section went to Elk Garden and Nethersville to attend the funerals, several of the victims having been buried in the cemetery at that point.

Coroner Rollman, who is conducting the inquest, adjourned that body today until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. So far nothing in the evidence has been brought forward to attach blame to the company in any manner.

STATE SENDS HELP

Officials Start for Elk Garden—First Serious Accident in Two Years.

Special Dispatch to the Intelligencer.

CHARLESTON, W. Va., April 24.

The mine explosion at Elk Garden of the Davis Coal & Coke Company was the first serious accident in a coal mine in West Virginia in more than two years. During this time but three lives have been lost by explosions, and little damage to property was done by either of them. The explosion in the Elk Garden mine, according to reports received at the mine department here, cost 23 lives.

John Laing, chief of the Department of Mines, left today for the

scene of the explosion. He will be joined by Deputy Inspectors Plaster, Martin and Shaw.

TEN KILLED IN BLAST FROM DUST OR GAS IN WEST VIRGINIA MINE

Victims at Elk Garden Are All Americans—Rescuers at Work in Shaft

[Associated Press Telegram]

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Ten miners are reported to have been killed in a gas or dust explosion in Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke company, about a mile from this place, at 11 o'clock this morning.

Supt. Robert Grant and several miners entered the shaft shortly after the explosion to rescue the mine workers, who are all Americans. The explosion wrecked the mine.

There were several miners at work, although the full day shift was not put to work this morning. As far as can be learned all the miners got out except the ten who are reported to be dead.

TEN BELIEVED KILLED IN A MINE EXPLOSION

Workmen Caught Underground by

Accident in Coal Workings Near

Elk Garden, W. Va.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Ten miners are believed to have been killed today in an explosion in Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, about a mile from this place. Superintendent Robert Grant and a number of miners entered the mine shortly after the accident to rescue the mine workers, who are all Americans. The explosion wrecked the mine.

23 Miners Entombed By Mine Blast; All Doomed

Explosion Wrecks Colliery Near Elk Garden, W. Va.; One Body Recovered; Little Hope for Victims.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners were entombed in Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal & Coke Company, near here, as the result of an explosion that wrecked the mine today. There is not believed to be one chance in a thousand that any will be taken out alive. As tons of debris are blocking the way, it is not expected that most of the victims will be reached before to-morrow afternoon. One body has been recovered. The cause of the explosion has not been determined.

All but one of the entombed men are Americans. That the disaster was not of greater magnitude is due to the fact that digging of coal had been suspended temporarily and a reduced force was cleaning the workings.

As soon as the accident occurred Superintendent Grant organized a rescue corps and entered the mine. Late this afternoon the rescuers had penetrated to the No. 20 mine at a point about 4,000 feet from the outside entry. There still remained about the same distance to go before reaching the buried miners.

The Ott mine No. 20 is almost directly

EXPLOSION IN A MINE KILLS 23.

All but One of the Victims of a West Virginia Accident Are Americans.

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners, all but one Americans, are dead in Ott mine 2 of the Davis Coal and Coke company, the result of an explosion today.

EXPLOSION ENTOMBS 23 IN A COAL MINE

Great Masses of Debris Block Tunnels at Elk Garden, W. Va., and Rescuers May Not Reach the Imprisoned Men for Days.

DEATH OF TRAPPED MINERS SEEMS ALMOST A CERTAINTY

Cause of Accident Is Unknown—Property Owned by the Davis Coal and Coke Company—Lay-Off Saves Many Lives.

Special Dispatch to The Inter Ocean.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners are entombed in Ott mine, No. 20, of the Davis Coal and Coke company here, the result of an explosion early today, and little chance is held out for the rescue of any of them alive because of the tons of debris that has thus far impeded the progress of rescuers. It cannot be learned yet whether the explosion was caused by dust or gas. Officials of the company say they have never known their mines to be gaseous.

As soon as the accident became known Superintendent Robert Grant organized a rescue corps of the mine, set off duty, and these attempted to enter the mine after notifying the officials of the coal company at Cumberland.

The rescue parties had not advanced far into the workings before they discovered it would take several days to dig through the heaps of roof coal and slate that had been loosened by the explosion. It then was decided to effect an entrance nearer the probable point of the explosion by cutting through the wall of an adjoining mine owned by the same company.

Find One Dead Man.

After penetrating about a mile down the main entry, the rescuers tonight found the body of a man not yet identified. He had been crushed beneath a fall of slate, as if the roof had crumbled as he was running out of the mine. The discovery of this body disheartened the rescuers, who are positive that none of the others can be alive.

Several yards beyond the passage was completely blocked by the collapse of the roof. Behind and under this fall it is believed the bodies of the miners lay. Gas is heavy in the main entry and in the workings not totally blocked by coal and slate, and rescuers have to work in short shifts. With the arrival of a government rescue car and crews in the morning it is expected to reach the

TEN MINERS REPORTED KILLED.

Explosion of Dust or Gas in Colliery Near Elk Garden, West. Va.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Ten miners were reported to have been killed in a gas or dust explosion at eleven o'clock this morning in Ott Mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, about a mile from this place.

23 MINERS ENTOMBED.

Fears That None of Them May Be Rescued Alive.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners are entombed in Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal & Coke Company here, the result of an explosion early today, and little chance is held out for the rescue of any of them alive because of the tons of debris that has thus far impeded the progress of rescuers. It cannot be learned yet whether the explosion was caused by dust or gas. Officials of the company say they have never known their mines to be gaseous.

PITTSBURG, April 24.—Upon receipt of news of the disaster at the executive offices of Bureau of Mines here rescue car No. 1, stationed at Wheelbarre, was ordered to Elk Garden, and a crew was dispatched from here for relief work. From the executive offices went W. D. Roberts, first aid miner, and George T. Kellam, mine foreman; while from the Government testing station went L. M. Jones, assistant mining engineer; John T. Ryan and David D. Davis, first aid miners.

The relief car and crew will reach the scene before daylight in the morning.

VOL. XXIII. NO. 204

LAST BODY TAKEN FROM OTT MINE

Coroner's Inquest Will
Be Held This
Afternoon

CAUSE OF EXPLOSION

(Special to the New Dominion.)

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 26.—The last of the bodies of the twenty-three victims of the Ott mine disaster were taken from the pit this afternoon. They were the remains of John White.

Ott mine No. 20

April 27-1911

23 DEAD IN MINE DISASTER

**Fourteen Bodies Re-
covered at Elk Gar-
den, W. Va.**

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 23.—Fifteen bodies had been taken out of Otto mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal Company at 10 o'clock to-day, victims of the disastrous explosion yesterday.

Eight bodies are supposed to be in the mine, and the rescuers are trying to recover them. The bodies of 14 were found about one-half mile from the entrance. The bodies are badly mangled and identification will be difficult. This morning John Laing, Chief of the West Virginia Department of Mines, started an investigation into the cause of the accident.

A special train arrived this morning bringing Assistant Engineer L. W. Jones of the Government Bureau of Mines, stationed at Pittsburg, accompanied by First-Aid Men John T. Ryan and David D. Davis.

35 TURKEY RUN MINERS BARELY ESCAPE DEATH

The mine accident at Elk Garden, by which over a score of men are thought to have lost their lives, was nearly duplicated in the Turkey Run mine No. 2, near Natrona, yesterday, when 35 miners miraculously escaped death, when the roof of the mine caved in, completely blocking the entrance.

The force of men and four mules were in the mine at work when the roof of the mine gave way, falling between the place where the men were working and the entrance.

Running to the air shaft, while the big sections of the roof caved in at their heels, the 35 men hurried to safety through the shaft. A large force of men worked for hours, clearing the blocked entrance to the mine to rescue the mules.

23 MEN ENTOMBED IN EXPLOSION IN W. VIRGINIA MINE

Not Believed That a Single One
Will Escape Death; Tons of
Debris Block Rescuers

**ONE BODY RECOVERED;
CRUSHED UNDER STONE**

**Rescuing Parties Fighting
Their Way Underground to
Scene of Disaster.**

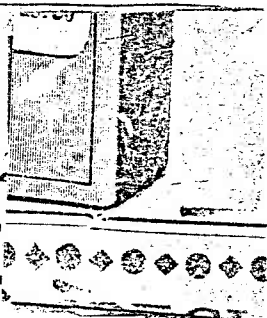
International News Service Special.
Elk Garden, W. Va., April 23.—Twenty-three miners were entombed in Ott mine, No. 20, of the Davis Coal and Coke Co., near here, as the result of an explosion that wrecked the mine at 11 o'clock this morning.

There is not believed to be one chance in a thousand that any one of the men is still alive. On account of tons of debris blocking the way of rescue parties it is not expected the victims of the accident will be reached until to-morrow afternoon. That the disaster was not more dreadful is due to the fact the coal digging had been suspended temporarily, and a reduced force were in the workings. Ordinarily when the mine is in full operation about 200 men are employed on the day shift, and the same number on the night.

Officials of the company say they have no reason to think there was gas in the mines, and whether the explosion was due to gas or dust, will not be known until a complete investigation has been made.

Late this afternoon one body was found about a mile from the entrance, crushed to death under a fall of stone. Late this afternoon the rescuers had penetrated to a point of about 400 feet from the entry. This is half the distance to the scene of the explosion.

EXPLOSION MINE



**One Body Taken Out--Roof
of Mine Caves in,
Hampering Work**

EXPERTS RUSH TO SCENE

(Special to the New Dominion.)
Elk Garden, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners employed in the Ott mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company at Elk Garden were entombed by an explosion of gas today. It is feared that all of the miners are dead, though the rescue work has been impeded greatly by the caving in of the roof of the mine. One dead body has been taken from the mine, and frantic efforts are being made to reach those who have been shut off by the debris.

The United States government's mine rescue car is being rushed here from Pittsburg, and will arrive in the morning.

Chief Mine Inspector Laing, of West Virginia, is enroute here to take personal charge of the efforts to reach the entombed men. Deputies Shay, Morton and Pirskey will assist in the work.

The explosion is the first of a serious nature in West Virginia in three years.

MINE DISASTER AT ELK GARDEN

**Fifteen Bodies, Out of 23 Who
Were Entombed, Taken from
Mine Near Cumberland.**

Fifteen bodies had been recovered from the Ott mines of the Davis Coke and Coal Company, at Elk Garden, W. Va. The explosion and fire of Monday are believed to have resulted in the death of 23 miners. The mangled bodies were found about half a mile from the shaft entrance, under tons of coal that blocked the gallery level at that point. Their condition will make identification difficult, except in cases where metal mine checks are found in the clothes of the dead workmen. The eight men who are missing are believed to be beyond the slate fall in the gallery, and the rescue parties are working desperately to penetrate the debris. No hope is held out that the men will be found alive and it is practically certain that the chamber filled with poisonous gases immediately following the explosion. The mine is more than one and one-half miles long and the heading runs back nearly to the village of Elk Garden.

The mine disaster in West Virginia brought nearer home by the fact that practically all of the victims are American. Generally it is the foreign element that suffers most severely in such calamities.

GET 15 BODIES FROM MINE

**Eight More Thought to Remain in
Wrecked Colliery.**

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 25.—Fifteen bodies had been taken out of the Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal Company at 10 o'clock today, victims of the disastrous explosion yesterday. Eight more bodies are supposed to be in the mine and the rescuers are trying to recover them.

The bodies of fourteen recovered were found about one-half mile from the entrance. One body was recovered last night. The bodies are charred and badly mangled and identification will be difficult.

This morning John Laing, chief of the West Virginia Department of Mines started an investigation of the cause of the accident. A special train arrived this morning bringing Assistant Engineer L. W. Jones, of the Government Bureau of Mines Station at Pittsburgh, accompanied by first-aid men John T. Ryan and David D. Davis.

DEATH LIST

**As Result of Accident in
Mine in West Virginia
Numbers 23.**

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 25.—Fifteen bodies had been taken out of the Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal company at 10 o'clock today, victims of the disastrous explosion yesterday. Eight other dead bodies are supposed to be in the mine which the rescuers are trying to recover. The bodies of fourteen, recovered were found about one-half mile from the entrance.

One body was recovered last night. The bodies are charred and badly mangled and identification will be difficult. This morning John Laing, chief of the West Virginia department of mines, started an investigation of the cause of the accident, which is unknown. A special train arrived this morning bringing Assistant Engineer L. W. Jones of the government bureau of mines station at Pittsburgh, accompanied by first aidmen John T. Ryan and David D. Davis.

THE ELK GARDEN EXPLOSION

Eternal watchfulness is the price of safety in mines. The disaster at Elk Garden which this morning's columns relate is the third explosion from gas or dust which has occurred in this state since January, 1909. During that time in the neighborhood of 140,000,000 tons of coal have been mined and the death rate from explosions has been reduced to the lowest point in the state's history. The two explosions which occurred in the Fairmont field a few months ago one of which cost three lives, were accidents pure and simple and due to permeation of gas from adjoining gas wells through the earth for a distance of over a half mile. The 1910 report of the mine department of the Ott mine is not available because it has not yet been issued, but the report for 1909 shows that there was considerable room for improvement.

DUST

Or Gas Explodes

**And Twenty-Two Coal
Miners Are Entombed**

**In the Davis Drift at
Elk Garden, W. Va.**

**Chiefs Believe That Every
Man Has Perished.**

**Much Debris and Fumes
Hamper Rescue.**

**All But One of the Vic-
tims Were Americans.**

**Nearly Every Family in Ham-
let Has Relatives Among
the Missing—One
Body Recovered.**

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE ENQUIRER.

Cumberland, Md., April 24.—Twenty-two men were entombed by an explosion in Ott Mine No. 20, at Elk Garden, W. Va., on the Western Maryland Railway, about 40 miles south of Cumberland, this morning, and all are believed to have perished.

The entombed men:

John Fritchard.	William Pearson,
Arthur Fritchard.	John White,
Tamor Runion.	Wilburn Shears,
James Brown.	Harry Trennum,
John R. Wilson.	James Dempsey,

23 MINERS ENTOMBED AT ELK GARDEN, W. VA.

Men Caught Two Miles Under Ground
With No Chance of Escape.

RESCUERS RUSHED TO SCENE

ELK GARDEN DISASTER.

Special to The Guernsey Times.

The Dead.

In striking contrast to the usual mine explosion, the victims in this case, with one exception, are Americans.

They are:

JOHN PRICHARD,
ARTHUR PRITCHARD,
TAMOUR RUNION,
JAMES BROWN,
JOHN R. WILSON,
ROY WILSON,
LESTER WILSON,
WILLIAM PUGH,
HAWTHORNE PATTON,
THOMAS PATTON,
THOMAS WILSON,
GEET WHITE,
WILLIAM PEARSON,
JOHN WHITE,
WILLIAM SHEARS,
HARRY TANNUM,
JAMES DEMPSEY,
L. O. DEMPSEY,
EDWARD HERSBERGER,
THOMAS YOST,
CHARLES WILSON,
WILLIAM HETZEL,
WILLIAM BUSKY,
UNIDENTIFIED MAN.
Buskey is the only alien.

in the day shift, and about the same number at night. A temporary suspension of work, however, required fewer men in the mines, else the casualty might have been greater.

RESCUE CAR TO THE SCENE.

Upon receipt of news of the disaster at the executive offices of the bureau of mines at Pittsburgh, rescue car No. 1, stationed at Wilkes-Barre, was ordered to Elk Garden and a crew was dispatched for relief work. From the executive office went W. D. Roberts, first aid miner, and George T. Kellman, mine foreman; while from the government testing station went L. M. Jones, assistant mining engineer, John T. Ryan and David D. Davis, first aid miners. The relief car and crew will reach the scene before daylight in the morning.

One Body Found.

After penetrating about a mile down the main entry, the rescuers Monday night found the body of a man, not yet identified. It had been crushed beneath a fall of slate, as though the roof had crumbled as he was running out of the mine. The discovery of this body disheartened rescuers, who are positive that none of the others can be alive.

FIFTEEN BODIES HAVE BEEN RECOVERED FROM DAVIS COMPANY MINE

REMAINS OF VICTIMS BLACK-
ENED AND CHARRED BEYOND
RECOGNITION.

GOVERNMENT RESCUE CAR
AT SCENE OF THE HORROR

Special to The Post-Chronicle.

Elk Garden, April 25.—At 11 o'clock this morning, 15 bodies had been recovered from the Ott mine of the Davis Coal & Coke company at Chaffee, near here, where an explosion and fire yesterday is believed to have resulted in the death of 23 miners. The bodies, blackened, charred and mangled, were found on a ledge half a mile from the shaft entrance under tons of coal which blocked the gallery level at that point. The condition of the bodies will make identification very difficult except in cases where the metal mine checks are found in the clothes of the victims.

The remaining eight missing bodies are believed to be buried beneath a fall of slate in the gallery, and rescue parties are working desperately to penetrate through the debris. No hope is held out, however, that any of the men will be found alive. It is practically certain that the chamber filled with smoke and poisonous gasses immediately after the explosion.

Four state mine inspectors arrived at the mine at midnight and at once took charge of the rescue work. A government mine rescue car arrived here early this morning with Chief Engineer Jones and two helmet men aboard.

All night crowds of men and weeping women and children surrounded the shaft. The crowd had not thinned down until early this morning, and it was not until then that the mine officials ventured to bring the bodies to the surface. The bodies were placed in plain pine coffins and were hurried to the morgue.

Special to The Times

Elk Garden, W. Va., April 25—

Twenty-three miners are believed to be dead in Ott mine, No. 20, of the Davis Coal & Coke Company here, the result of an explosion early Monday, and little chance is held out for the rescue of any of them alive because of the tons of debris that has thus far impeded the progress of the rescuers. It cannot be learned yet whether the explosion was caused by

VICTIMS ARE OUT OF MINE

Heat in the Galleries at Elk Garden
So Intense That Clothes
Are Burned.

Officials of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, at Elk Garden, W. Va., said yesterday morning that the last of the bodies of the 23 victims of the explosion of Monday morning had been located. The last three bodies were found yesterday morning and removed from the mine.

The heat in the mine was so intense that the clothes of the miners were burned off some of the men. The ears of a mule killed in the disaster, broke off close to the head as if they were pasteboard.

General Manager Ott, after whom the mine was named, yesterday morning gave out the statement fixing the blame for the disaster on John Pugh, one of the miners, who with his son, William, was killed.

An overcharge of powder considered safe, was the cause of the accident. According to Manager Ott, it was John Pugh who set off the charge.

22 AMERICANS BELIEVED DEAD IN MINE

Explosion Wrecks the Ott
Workings of Davis Coal
and Coke Company.

RESCUERS BLOCKED

Temporary Shutdown Prevents
400 Being Caught at Elk
Garden, W. Va.

FEDERAL RESCUE CAR IS SENT

[SPECIAL TELEGRAM TO GAZETTE TIMES.]

ELK GARDEN, W. VA., April 24.—Twenty-three miners are entombed in Ott mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, near here, as the result of an explosion that wrecked the mine at 11 o'clock this forenoon. There is not believed to be one chance in a thousand that any one of the men is still alive. The cause of the explosion has not been determined.

Those in the mine are:

John Pritchard.	William Pearson.
Arthur Pritchard.	John White.
Tamor Runion.	William Shears.
James Brown.	Harry Tannum.
John R. Wilson.	James Dempsey.
Roy Wilson.	L. O. Dempsey.
Lester Wilson.	Edward Hershberger.
William Pugh.	Thomas Yost.
Hawthorne Patton.	Charles Wilson.
Thomas Wilson.	William Hetzel.
Geet White.	Unknown Man.
William Busky.	

Miners Are Americans.

All but Busky are Americans. That the disaster was not even more dreadful is due to the fact that coal-digging had been suspended temporarily and a reduced force was cleaning the workings. Ordinarily, when the mine is in full operation, about 200 men are employed on the day shift and the same number on the night shift.

Officials of the company say they have no reason to think there was gas in the mine. Whether the explosion was due to

TWENTY-THREE ENTOMBED UNDER DEBRIS IN MINE

Explosion of Dust or
Gas Causes Disaster
in West Virginia

SMALL CHANCE OF GETTING OUT ALIVE

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners are entombed in Ott Mine No. 20, of the Davis Coal and Coke Company here as the result of an explosion today, and little chance is held out for the rescue of any of them alive because of the tons of debris that have thus far impeded the progress of rescuers.

In striking contrast to the usual mine explosions, the victims in this case, with one exception, are Americans. They are:

John Pritchard	Arthur Pritchard
Tamor Runion	James Brown
John R. Wilson	Roy Wilson
Lester Wilson	L. O. Dempsey
William Pugh	Hawthorne Patton
Thomas Wilson	Geo. White
William Parson	John White
William Shears	Harry Tannum
James Dempsey	Edward Hershberger
Thomas Yost	Charles Wilson
William Hetzel	William Busky

One unidentified man.

Busky is the only alien.

Cause Not Yet Known

It has not been learned yet whether the explosion was caused by dust or gas. Officials of the company say they have never known their mines to be gaseous.

The rescue parties had not advanced far into the workings before they discovered it would take several days to dig through the heaps of roof coal and slate that had been loosened by the explosion. It then was decided to effect an entrance nearer the probable point of the explosion by cutting through the wall of an adjoining mine owned by the same company. Late this afternoon the rescuers penetrated to the No. 20 mine at a point about 4000 feet from the outside entry. There still remained about the same distance to go before reaching the buried miners.

Right Under Town

The Ott Mine No. 20 is almost directly under the town of Elk Garden, which is on a hill. The mouth of the mine is about half a mile from the town.

The mine usually employs 200 men on the day shift and about the same number at night. A temporary suspension of work, however, required fewer men in the mine, and the casualty might have been greater.

TWENTY BODIES RESCUED FROM THE OTT MINE

The Remains of Three Other Dead Miners Are Now Being Sought.

WORK FULL OF PERIL

Because of the Presence of Noxious Gases in the Mine—Three of the Rescuers Had a Close Call Yesterday—Cause of the Explosion Ascribed to An "Overshot"

It is now certain that all of the twenty-three miners entombed by the explosion in the Ott mine of the Davis Coal & Coke Company Monday, near Elk Garden, Va., have perished.

The bodies of thirteen men were recovered yesterday morning. They were:

John Pritchard, married, hair and moustache burned off, body burned, asphyxiated.

Arthur Pritchard, single, head burned and squeezed, death from fractured skull and asphyxiation.

William Pearson, married, death from fractured skull.

John F. White, Sr., widower, death from lacerated thorax.

William Hetzel, married, death from carbon monoxide.

James Brown, married, death from asphyxiation.

Hawthorne Patton, single, death caused by shock.

Leo Dempsey, single, suffocated.

James Dempsey, married, slightly burned, death from inhaling heat.

Harry Trannum, married, death from inhaling heat.

Charles Wilson, single, death from inhaling heat.

Edward Hersanberger, married, death from inhaling heat, slightly burned.

Thomas Wilson, face lacerated and head fractured, death from inhaling heat.

The body of Wilbur Shears, who died from asphyxiation, was taken out Monday night.

Since noon yesterday the progress has been slow and but one body had been recovered until after night, when five more were recovered. The rescuing party could not go into the mine until

TWENTY-THREE MEN ENTOMBED IN MINE

All Victims of Explosion in Maryland Believed to Have Perished.

ONE BODY IS RECOVERED

Rescuers Cutting Through Wall of Coal Impeded by Heavy Gases.

WORKMEN HIGH GRADE

Buried Employes Americans Coming from Good Southern Families.

SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE GLOBE-DEMOCRAT.

CUMBERLAND, MD., April 24.—Twenty-three men were entombed by an explosion in mine No. 20, at Ott, near Elk Garden, on the Western Maryland Railway, about forty miles south of Cumberland, this morning, and all are believed to have perished. One body was recovered late to-day. About half of the men were married and have families.

While the rescuers are working at great risk, there being two large parties under the direction of Robert Grant, the superintendent of the mine, all hope is abandoned of reaching the men alive. The smoke in the mine is stifling and this greatly impedes the progress of the workers. Many headings were filled by falls of coal and the way to the place the men were working is entirely closed.

Supt. Grant took his men through another slope and into a heading near the sealed rooms. Work is in progress making a cross-cut through the wall of coal toward the entombed men. The gas or vapor still lingers heavily in the mine and work is possible only at short intervals. The strain on the rescuers is terrific.

Unidentified Body Found.

After penetrating about a mile down the main entry the rescuers found the body of a man, not yet identified. It had been crushed beneath a fall of slate as he was running out of the mine. The discovery of this body disheartened the rescuers.

Several yards beyond the passage was completely blocked by the collapse of the roof. Behind and under this fall it is believed the bodies of the miners lay.

Harco wrought in the mine would indicate that the explosion was terrific. For a square mile or more the slate and coal was split and rocks were splintered, letting the roof fall in large sections. The

TWENTY BODIES ARE BROUGHT OUT OF MINE

Rescuers at Elk Garden Mine
Overcome by Deadly
Gas. 8-81

[Special Telegram to The Dispatch.]

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 25.—Since noon today six additional bodies were taken from the Ott mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, where an explosion yesterday entombed 23 men. This makes a total of 20 blackened and charred bodies that have been brought to the surface. At 8:30 o'clock tonight five more bodies are in sight, but on account of the large accumulation of gas in the wrecked mine the rescuing party is able to work an hour at a time only and the work of getting the bodies is slow. As the rescuers go farther back into the mine large accumulations of gas are met. At 5 o'clock this evening, J. W. Paul of the United States Bureau of Mines, who is in charge of the work, and his assistants, Willis and May, were overcome by gas and had to be carried to the surface. They were revived by physicians who were at the mine mouth after considerable difficulty. Mr. Paul was wearing one of the new oxygen helmets and he was not so far gone as Willis and May, who were working without protection.

Explosion Entombs 23 Miners

Little Hope for Men Buried
in Mine Near Elk Gar-
den, W. Va.

MANGLED CORPSE FOUND

Tons of Slate and Debris Bar
the Way of Rescuing
Party.

[Special Telegram to The Dispatch.]

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 24.—Twenty-three miners are entombed in Ott Mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, near here, as the result of an explosion that wrecked the mine, at 11 o'clock this forenoon. There is not believed to be one chance in a thousand that any one of the men is still alive. The cause of the explosion has not been determined.

Those in the mine are: John Pritchard, Arthur Pritchard, Tamor Runion, James Brown, John R. Wilson, Roy Wilson, Lester Wilson, William Pugh, Hawthorne Patton, Thomas Wilson, Geet White, William Pearson, John White, William Shears, Harry Tannum, James Dempsey, L. O. Dempsey, Edward Hershberger, Thomas Yost, Charles Wilson, William Hetzel, William Busky and one unknown man.

All but Busky are Americans. That the disaster was not even more dreadful is due to the fact that coal digging had been suspended temporarily and a reduced force was cleaning the workings. Ordinarily, when the mine is in full operation about 200 men are employed on the day shift and the same number on the night shift.

Either Gas or Dust.

Officials of the company say they have no reason to think there was gas in the mine, and whether the explosion was due to gas or dust will not be known until a complete investigation has been made.

As soon as the accident occurred Superintendent Robert Grant organized a rescue corps and entered the mine, after notifying the officials of the company at the head offices in Cumberland, Md. Only two trains run daily from Cumberland to Elk Garden and none of the company

THE OTT MINE DISASTER

Verdict of the Coroner's Jury at Elk Garden, W. Va.

[Special to The American.]

Cumberland, Md., April 28.—That the twenty-three men came to their deaths by blown-out shot fired by James Pritchard or his son Arthur," was the verdict rendered at 7:30 o'clock this evening at Elk Garden, W. Va., by the jury of inquest sitting in the Ott Mine disaster.

It was at Ott Mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, on Monday last that an explosion of gas, at 8:30 o'clock in the morning, partly wrecked the mine and caused the death of every man that was in the mine at the time. As the mine was not working full there were but 23 men in it, cleaning up. At the inquest, conducted before Coroner Rollman, by the mine inspection authorities of West Virginia, there was no evidence to show that the company had been negligent or was to blame in any manner.

OVERCHARGE

Used by John Pugh, One of the Dead Miners, Caused Explosion.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 26.—The last three bodies of the twenty-three victims of an explosion in the Ott coal mine were found today. General Manager Lee Ott of the company stated that the conditions indicated that John Pugh, one of the miners killed, used an overcharged explosive and is to blame for the accident.

ANOTHER W. VA. MINE HORROR

23 Men Killed

An explosion in Ott Mine No. 20 belonging to the Davis Coal & Coke Co., almost beneath the town of Elk Garden, Mineral Co., W. Va., entombed 23 men last Monday morning, April 24. All lost their lives. Up to yesterday 15 of the bodies had been taken out. The roof of the mine fell in as a result of the explosion. All the dead miners were Americans except one.

Elk Garden 17 Is Laid at the Door of Miner Who Lost His Life.

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 26.—John Pugh, one of the miners killed in the recent explosion in the Ott Mine No. 20, was blamed with causing the disaster in a statement issued by General Manager Lee Ott of the Davis Coal & Coke company, today. He said from conditions found where the bodies of Pugh and his son were discovered that Pugh evidently used an over-charge of an explosive, intended to overcome an excessive resistance, which was weakened by a "slip." When the blast took place the explosion spread, igniting gas, which caused the disaster. The last three bodies of the 23 victims were found today.

The funerals of a number of the victims was held today, and Elk Garden has practically recovered from the shock occasioned by the awful disaster.

BLAME FOR ELK GARDEN MINE EXPLOSION PLACED

ELK GARDEN, Pa., April 28.—That the death of twenty-three men was caused by a blown out shot fired by James Pritchard or his son Arthur, was the finding of the coroner's jury to-night, at the inquest into Monday's explosion in Ott mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company. Both Pritchard and his son were among the victims. Coroner Rollman, who conducted the inquest, stated that no evidence was presented that would indicate negligence on the part of the company.

BURIED

Many Funerals of Victims of the Elk Garden Disaster Were Held Thursday. 93

[SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER.]

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 27.—

This was a day of funerals at Elk Garden. Nearly all of the bodies of the victims of the Ott mine disaster were buried in the Nethkenville cemetery. The bodies of the two Pughs were deposited in the same grave. The body of James Brown was brought to West-ernport, and will be interred in St. Peter's Catholic cemetery, after requiem mass. The bodies of James and Leo Dempsey were taken to Horton, Md., their old home. The body of William Person, aged thirty-three years, was brought to the home of his sister, Mrs. William Rieber, Lonaconing, Md.. George Hershberger, of Cumberland, and Mrs. William Condry, of Eckert, attended the funeral of their brother, Edward Hershberger, one of the victims, today at Elk Garden.

There is nearly as much mourning in the George's creek region as at Elk Garden on account of nearly half of the victims having come from that section.

Coroner Rollman, who is conducting the inquest, adjourned that body until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. It is stated that it will take nearly all day tomorrow to finish the testimony.

The state mining officials inspected the mine for evidence today. So far, nothing in the evidence has been brought forward to attach blame to the Davis Coal and Coke Company, owners of the mine.

BODIES OF THE LAST TRIO OUT OF OTT MINE

State Mine Inspector Laing and Deputies on the Scene to Make Complete Investigation.

[SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER.]

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 25.—The last three bodies in the ill fated Ott mine at Elk Garden were recovered at two o'clock this afternoon. They were Frank Pugh, John White, Jr., and Thomas Yost.

The coroner's inquest will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock when John Laing, state mine inspector of West Virginia, and Inspectors James Martin, Seventh district, Earl Henry, Fifth district, and W. B. Plaster, Fourth district will testify.

The state inspectors will visit the mine tomorrow morning with the view of finding the cause of the disaster.

Today, the stench from the bodies of two dead mules made it impossible to make an inspection in a complete way. These were removed tonight.

The body of John White, Jr., one of the last three to be taken out, was practically torn to pieces.

Of the dead, seventeen had families and six were unmarried. The Davis coal and coke company, the owner of the mine, is doing all in its power to alleviate the distress in the families of the victims, some of whom are left destitute.

The funeral of four members of the Wilson family were held today. Tomorrow the other victims will be buried and the men who rescued their bodies from the mines were busy today digging the graves.

It is stated that the shot which resulted in the explosion was fired by Arthur Pritchard who was working with his father, John Pritchard.

ELEVENTH YEAR

OTT MINE GAVE UP OF ITS VICTIMS WILL BE THE INQUEST

Chief Mine Inspector and Deputies Will Investigate and Tell

WHAT CAUSED THE HORRIBLE DISASTER

Mine Official Places Blame on Miner — Four Wilsons Were Buried

ELK GARDEN, W. Va., April 26.—The ill-fated Ott mine of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, in which an explosion Monday snuffed out the lives of twenty-three miners, gave up the last of its dead today. The coroner's inquest to fix the blame for the disaster and to investigate its cause will be the next chapter to the tragedy.

At 1:30 o'clock this afternoon the bodies of Frank Pugh, John White, Jr., and Thomas Yost were brought to the surface. The body of White was practically torn to pieces.

The coroner's inquest will be held tomorrow. Among those who will testify are Chief Mine Inspector John Laing of Charleston and Inspectors James Martin of the Seventh, Earl Henry of the Fifth and W. B. Plaster, of the Fourth district.

The Chief Inspector and his deputies will enter the mine tomorrow morning with the view of discovering the cause of the disaster. They attempted to gain this information today but the stench from two mules killed in the explosion was so nauseating that they were forced to abandon the investigation. The bodies of the animals were removed late tonight and the mine is clear of the fumes.

The disaster was doubly unfortunate because all of the dead men were Americans and a large majority were married and had families. Of the twenty-three killed, seventeen were married and the heads of families while six were unmarried.

The Davis Coal & Coke Company, owner of the ill-fated plant, is doing all in its power to alleviate the distress in the families of the victims, some of

Mine Explosion At Elk Garden

Work of Rescue Proceeding With All Possible Haste—All Entombed Supposed to Be Dead.

Keyser, April 25.—Twenty-three men were entombed by an explosion in mine No. 20 of the Davis Coal and Coke Company, at Ott, near Elk Garden, on the Western Maryland railway, yesterday morning at 8:30 o'clock, and all are believed to have perished. The entombed men are: Leo Dempsey, Wm. Hetzel, Ed. Hershberger, Wm. Buski, Thomas Yost, Charles Wilson, Jas. Dempsey, Harry Traidum, Wilbur Shears, John White, Wm. Pearson, G. White, Thomas Wilson, Hawthorne Patton, Frank Pugh, Wm. Pugh, Jr., Lester Wilson, Ray Wilson, John R. Wilson, James Brown, Seymour Runion, Oscar Pritchard and John Pritchard.

All are Americans except Buski. The body of Shears was taken out early yesterday evening. It was easily identified.

About half the men are married with families. The rescuers worked at great risk. There were two large parties under the direction of Robert Grant, the superintendent of the mine. Practically all hope was abandoned at the start of reaching the men alive. The smoke in the mine was stifling and this greatly imbedded the progress of the workers. Many headings were filled by falls of coal and the way to the place where the men were working was entirely closed. Superintendent Grant took his men through another slope and into a heading near the sealed rooms. Work is in progress making a crosscut through the wall of coal toward the entombed men, nearly two miles back in the earth. The gas or vapor lingered heavily in the mine and work was possible only at short intervals and then the strain on the rescuers was terrific. There were, however, willing relays and by a constant force of fresh men rapid progress was made. Late in the afternoon the rescuers had penetrated the mine about 4,000 feet and it was estimated that at that time they still had that distance to go to reach the men. As the way progressed the work grew harder. There had been no sound from the inside. It was the general belief that the men, even if alive, could not be reached in time to save their lives.

It is not yet known whether the explosion came from dust or gas. It is uncommon for gas to gather in the mines of the upper Potomac region, which are a continuation of the mines of the George Creek region. The Ott mine is in the upper Potomac field near the headquarters of the river. It is a low vein mine, employing about one hundred men, but owing to the slump in the coal trade, only about one fourth of the regular force went to work yesterday morning and they were engaged in cleaning up the mine.

United Press reports ten men entombed, Ott Mine, Davis Coal & Coke Company, near Elk Garden, W. Va. Caused by explosion. All mine entrances closed.

President Bush' of the Western Maryland wants us to send ear there.

Mr. Rice

POSTAL TELEGRAPH-CABLE

H. M. Wilson

Engineer in Charge

Pittsburgh, Pa. April 24, 1911

Enzian, Government Rescue Car, Wilkesbarre, Penna.

Mine explosion Elk garden West Virginia. Ten men entombed.
Rush car with Roberts and Kellam via Harrisburg and Philadelphia
Heading to Shippensburg. Special engine will pick up there. You
remain Wilkesbarre. Jones or Rice will join car Elk garden with force
from here. Send coal sampling kit with car.

Wilson.

Phoned 3:25
G

POSTAL TELEGRAPH-CABLE

H. M. Wilson

Engineer in Charge

Pittsburgh, Pa. April 24, 1911.

President Bush, Western Maryland Railroad, Baltimore, Md.

Have wired rescue car and force proceed immediately from Wilkesbarre via Philadelphia Reading through Harrisburg to Shippensburg. If you can have special haul thence to Elk garden make arrangements and notify me. Force goes from here also/

Wilson.

Thomson 3278

Postal Telegraph-Cable

H. M. Wilson

Engineer in Charge.

Pittsburg, Pa., April 24

President Bush, Western Maryland Railroad, Baltimore, Md.

Engineer Jones with helmet men Ryan and Davis
reach Cumberland ten twenty four tonight wire if you can have
them hauled special to Elk Garden.

Wilson.

Phoned
8:25 - PMH
C

Postal Telegraph-Cable

H. M. Wilson

Engineer in Charge.

Pittsburg, Pa., April 24

Bureau Mines, Washington, D.C.

and Jones
Paul with helmet men Ryan and Davis reach Cumberland
ten twenty four tonight hope Bush will ~~carry~~ *haul* through on
special. ~~Car~~ *one* with Roberts and Kellam *on car* probably catch
six twenty five Pennsylvania reaching Shippensburg twelve
forty one midnight hope Bush will furnish special engine
there.

Wilson.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH

H. M. Wilson

Engineer in Charge

Pittsburgh, Pa. April 26, 1911.

Paul, Government Rescue Car, Elk Garden, W. Va.

Use your discretion regarding proceeding Birmingham
or remaining. Have wired Brown open bids if you not there. Better
order car one home soon as can spare it.

Wilson.

Copy sent Washington

WESTERN UNION

Geo. S. Rice

Mining Engineer

Pittsburgh, Pa., April 26, 1911

Bureau of Mines, Washington, D. C.

Paul wires quote twenty bodies recovered. Three located total twenty three. Press reports much in error. None of Government men overcome. Man overcome wearing apparatus removed mouth piece. Nine will be ready for examination tonight. No necessity keeping here Pittsburg and Wilkes Barre crews unless car be detained to facilitate examination of mines. Shall Jones proceed to examination or shall I proceed Birmingham to open bids twenty eighth. end quote. Have replied Wilson away. Jones will act as you may direct.

R I C E

WESTERN UNION

Geo. S. Rice

Mining Engineer

Pittsburgh, Pa., April 26, 1911

Paul, Government Rescue Car, Elk Garden, West Virginia

Wilson away. Repeating your message to Director. Jones
will act as you may direct.

R I C E

April 29, 1911.

The Director:

c.c. to Engineer in Charge^v

I transmit herewith Mr. L. M. Jones' preliminary report on the explosion in the No. 20 mine of the Davis Coal & Coke Co., near Elk Garden, West Virginia.

This report is not intended to supplant or anticipate Mr. Paul's report but is to give prompt information as to the disaster.

Yours very truly,

Mining Engineer.

Encl.

c.c. to Mr. Paul

May 3, 1911.

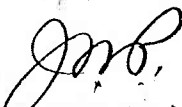
Lee Ott, General Superintendent,
Davis Coal & Coke Co.,
Thomas, W. Va.

My dear Mr. Ott:

I am writing to recall the conversation I had with you in Elk Garden the day of the inquest, that you advise me as soon as No. 20 mine would be in condition for me to return with a view to seeing the conditions undisturbed at the faces of the Deane and Kinney entries.

We wish to take some additional samples of the coal and of the road dust in the mine, as well as to get a complete record of the action of the forces in the mine. When our report is completed, you will be furnished a copy of the same.

Yours very truly,


Mining Engineer.

THE DAVIS COAL AND COKE COMPANY.
THOMAS, W. VA.

LEE OTT,
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

May 6th, 1911.


8-81

Mr. J. W. Paul, Mining Engr.,
Department of Interior,
Pittsburg, Penna.

Dear Sir:--

We have your letter of May 3rd, and beg to advise that you at liberty to go to the No. 20 Mine at any time now. Would suggest that you write to Mr. Robert Grant, Supt., Elk Garden, W. Va., when you are coming, and he will arrange to accompany you.

Yours truly,


General Superintendent.

Ott No 20 Mine,
Elk Garden, W. Va.,
Explosion Apr. 24, 1911