

# TWENTY-TWO RESCUED FROM MINE DISASTER

## Searching Party Finds Some Survivors of Johnstown Accident Maniacs.

### MANY DEAD BODIES RECOVERED

#### President of the Cambria Steel Company Thinks the Victims Will Number But 125.

JOHNSTOWN, Penn., July 12.—At 1 o'clock this morning it can be stated that of the 600 men supposed to have entered the mouth of the Rolling Mill Mine of the Cambria Steel Company Thursday morning, ninety are known to be dead and twenty-two rescued.

Four hundred, so the mine officials claim, escaped when the explosion occurred, leaving eighty-eight still to be accounted for. Some of these, according to those in charge of the rescue work, are dead, but the majority, they claim, have escaped. From physicians, heads of rescue parties, and others who are familiar with the different headings in the mine, it is learned that at least thirty-five additional bodies will be brought to the temporary morgue at daylight, making the total list of dead 125.

This, so President Powell Stackhouse of the Cambria Steel Company stated, will be the extent of the dead, but until all checks by which the miners are known are presented at the office of the company an accurate list of the dead will not be known. Some of the bodies, it is admitted by the officials, are entombed in closed headings or buried beneath slate. Some may be recovered, while others may never be found.

The scene at the armory to-night was one of extreme confusion. Bodies were in the process of embalming, others were being transferred to caskets by a large force of men, while people who thought a relative or friend might be among the dead and those who knew they had come only out of curiosity, walked around the room gazing into the drawn faces of the dead miners.

Outside the armory was a crowd of fully ten thousand people. They were jammed close to the walls of the building, and the ragged edges of the crowd extended several hundred feet away. Those who were nearest the windows were making efforts to look into the Morgue, and the police had a hard time to keep the crowd in check.

Orders were issued late to-night that no more bodies are to be taken from the mine before daylight. Rumors are out that seventeen dead are loaded on cars ready to be brought out, but the morgue attendants are tired out with overwork, and were given a chance to rest.

One of the unknown survivors at the Cambria Hospital died late to-night and two others are expected to die before morning.

From dawn to dusk flying ambulances coursed the Johnstown streets bearing gruesome burdens from mine to morgue, from morgue to homes. Great throngs surged about the pit mouth, the improvised morgue at the armory, and about the stricken homes of the dead. Bulletin boards were eagerly scanned for news from the scene of the disaster. Exaggerated rumors of all kinds prevailed. One report gained circulation that disaster had overtaken the rescuing party which entered the mine shortly after 9 o'clock. This proved one of the entertaining yarns that had its origin among the crowd at the pit mouth. Returning rescuers substantiated the details of the report by officials.

#### INCIDENTS OF RESCUE.

It is difficult to picture with any degree approaching its full worth the work of rescue and the attending scenes and incidents of the day at the centre of interest. How brave men went into the jaws of death in its most horrible form, encountered their fellows transformed into raving maniacs by hours of waiting in the pitch darkness of the earth's interior, lifted them moaning from their beds of fallen rock and then, bending and crawling on all fours, carried them a quarter of a mile under ground to where cars could be reached to take them outside.

Along in the early part of the afternoon cheering word came from the innermost recesses of the mine that life yet lingered in some of the bodies found. The rescuers made first for No. 4, left heading, which they had been unable to reach the night before. Desolate even for the scene of a mine interior was the heading that stretched out before them. Falls of roof almost choked up the heading, but through and over the debris the brave men pushed their way.

In the front young Patrick Martin, his brother Peter, Philip White, and several cousins of the Martins made their way. Suddenly, in an open space, they were startled by the frenzied laugh which emanated from a blackened form that rushed at them out of the darkness. The man grasped firmly a pick handle and tried in his frenzy to beat down his rescuers. He was overpowered and dragged back to the main heading to the cars. Thirteen other living men were found in the chamber and physicians were quickly taken to the spot.

At 3 P. M. the train of nine cars came to the pit mouth, where waiting ambulances stood. Eight men were lifted over the sides of the cars and, half carried, wended their way to the ambulances. They were all Poles. One big, strapping fellow among them collapsed as he reached the ambulance, and doctors spent several minutes resuscitating him. As the men were driven hurriedly to the Cambria Hospital the train of coal cars with the physicians re-entered the mine. In another half hour they came out again, this time with six living, but almost dead, miners. One man in his paroxysms had locked his jaws so that force had to be employed to pry them open for the insertion of life-instilling fluids. These six were taken in an unconscious condition to the Cambria Hospital. One man brought out with this crowd died just as he reached daylight.

At that time three more headings, believed to be filled with the dead, were unsearched. Thirty-nine bodies were lying within reach in the main heading. Three were brought out at 4:35 P. M. Their



bodies were piled high in the coal cars and covered with canvas. These remains were in a terrible state, showing that there had been slow death in each case. One of the men had his mouth and nose tied about by a towel. The rest of his face was burned beyond recognition. The bodies of all were twisted, most of the arms being crooked, so as to shield the face. The only one who could be identified at the pit mouth was Mine Boss Joseph Tomlinson.

One of the volunteer rescuers who came out with this load of dead stated that fire was raging in parts of the mine that would take some time to quell. Most of those who were brought out alive this afternoon had saved themselves by crawling into a chamber and turning a valve on the compressed air pipe line which runs along the entry. One man was found dead with his hands clutched so tightly about a monkey wrench that it could not be removed.

The bodies of the eighty-seven men taken from the mine, and identified, included the following, the others being Huns and Slavs:

#### SOME OF IDENTIFIED DEAD.

THOMAS, JOHN R., Sr., 60 years old, labor boss, of School Place.

WHITNEY, JOHN C., fire boss, 55, married.

BLANCH, WILLIAM, assistant foreman, 35, married.

TOMLINSON, JOSEPH, fire boss, 35, single.

LEES, WILLIAM, 32, married.

LEES, DANIEL, 24, single.

MCCANN, MICHAEL, 46, married.

MCCANN, PHILLIP, 22, single.

CROOK, JOHN, 31, married.

CHESTNUT, FRANK, 22, single.

SADLER, JOHN, 22, married.

HOLLY, JOHN, 42, married.

BISHOP, THOMAS, 36, married.

Three sections of the Klondike have now been cleared. There are still three sections to be explored, and those in a position to know say as many more men are still entombed and probably dead.

Forty-nine cars were used in bringing out forty-six dead bodies and four living injured. The discovery of the dead bodies was made by a searching party about 10 o'clock last night.

#### CORONER SELECTS JURY.

E. L. Miller, the Coroner, has selected his jury which will make the investigation into the cause of the disaster. When these men will be called to begin the inquiry depends entirely on circumstances. It is not expected that the inquest will be begun until all the bodies have been recovered and those injured are able to testify. This probably will be at least a week. Coroner Miller said:

"I am compiling a list of names of all those known to have been in the mine at the time of the explosion. I will visit these men personally and find out what they know. Then they will be summoned before the Coroner's jury."

"This disaster, which has brought sorrow to the many homes of this city, shall be vigorously inquired into."

At the conclusion of the day's work Mine Superintendent Robinson was asked what the plans were for continuing the work of getting out all of the bodies. He said:

"We will work night and day and will not stop so long as there is a single body in the mine. The fact that the fire damp is all out of the mine now will facilitate the work, and while there is considerable debris on the mine tracks that will have to be removed before the cars can be taken to all sections of the Klondike, I do not think that it will take many hours to know the extent of the loss of life."

"The disaster is not due to any special amount of gas in the mine. That is shown by the little damage done to the property. The explosion seems to have produced an unusual amount of firedamp that I cannot account for. It did the deadly work and was really all that gave us trouble. There is not a mine car in the workings that is damaged or broken. Usually in such an accident as this cars are wrecked and burned. The mules used for moving the cars from the different rooms to the leads were all dead, and I counted some sixteen of them, and then became too busy to notice how many more were about us."

Mr. Robinson would not discuss the presence of gas in the mine beyond saying that it was never considered sufficient to give alarm. The company had five fire bosses and one assistant employed continually, and had taken every precaution to prevent disaster. He had never heard any of the men express fear of accident, and did not think statements to the contrary were reliable or correctly reported.

#### REPORT OF INVESTIGATION.

State Mine Inspector J. T. Evans, who has been in the mine almost continually since the explosion, was joined here tonight by Chief Roderick of the Bureau of Mine Inspection. Mr. Evans entered into a full report of his investigation. He said:

"Mr. Roderick can hardly credit my description of the condition of the mine after such a dreadful calamity. It is wonderful that there should have been such havoc in loss of life with such a small explosion."

"There was very little rock brought down by the force of the explosion. A number of doors were blown open, and some boards knocked off, but the cost of repairs will be insignificant, not more than \$25, I should say."

"I will have to take a look over the mine," interrupted Chief Roderick doubtfully, and with a laugh.

"There was no explosion of dust; no evidence of it," said Mr. Evans. "All the men were working with locked safety lamps. There are a dozen things which might have caused the explosion. The man responsible is assuredly among the dead."

"How soon could the mine be placed in condition for resuming operations?"

"So far as I have examined things, I believe the men could start in Monday."

It was reported that a portion of the Cambria Steel Company Works was forced to suspend operations to-day owing to short supply of fuel. The long suspension of the mine would seriously hamper the work.

The Rolling Mill Mine has been worked about fifty years. Five or six years ago the section where the disaster of yesterday occurred. The miners fancifully called it the Klondike. It is said that for the past three years gas has been noticed in it, and careful inspections were kept up. In the last three years safety lamps had been carried by the men. Frank Sabot, one of the boys who met death in a heroic endeavor to save his comrades, was safely out of the mine after the explosion. He had worked in the mine ever since the Klondike was opened up. He had "trapped" in the mine longer back than that. After the explosion he hastened into the vault of death to do what he could to close the traps and check the spread of the after damp. He was found lying near a partly closed door leading off to one of the left headings.

Soon after the discovery of the first corpses the mine officials began to make arrangements for the removal of the bodies from the scene of the disaster. At the armory of Company H, a big barnlike frame building on the outskirts of the city, preparations were methodically forwarded to transform the place into a temporary morgue. Chairs were placed in rows opposite each other and rough boards and planks placed upon them.

Nearly a score of young men were called in to assist the undertakers of the city; dry goods establishments were opened, and hundreds of yards of muslin, toweling, and other goods gotten out for the purpose of preparing the bodies for burial.

Sleepless mothers and wives waited all night for news from the missing ones and peeped through drawn blinds as the cortège passed on its way to the Morgue.

#### COMPANY'S LOSS LARGE.

Outside of the property loss this catastrophe will cost the Cambria Steel Company a large sum.

The company has for many years past paid to the family of every person killed in its employ \$1,000, outside of what it expended for medical purposes, and it has paid every man who has lost an eye, limb, or became otherwise partially disabled, the sum of \$500. It is understood this will not be deviated from.

Measures for relief of the stricken families have already been taken. As near as can be learned there was not one dozen Americans killed, the rest were Huns and Slavs. These foreigners lived in different sections of the town and it is difficult to tell how many are actually missing.

Harry Rodgers, the foreman of the mine, is undoubtedly dead. He and Foreman Foster were together in a section close to the Sixth when the fire damp exploded. The doors of the section were blown down. Both leaped to it to put it up. They inhaled the poisonous gas and Rodgers staggered.

"Come on," said Foster, "let's try to get out. You are giving way."

Rodgers became half angry at Foster's words. He could hardly stand them. In the darkness the two became separated and Foster does not know whether his chief is alive or dead. Soon afterward Foster met Powell, the fire boss. Both did what they could to warn the other miners and fought their way to safety.

From the positions of the bodies the miners were evidently eating their lunches when suddenly stricken down by the explosion. They were seated in groups of five and ten, with their buckets and the remains of their lunches scattered over the floor. Evidently their lives were snuffed out quickly and easily.