

**Sadalia Daily Democrat**  
**Sedalia, Missouri**  
**Friday Morning, November 22, 1878**

### **MINE EXPLOSION**

A terrible mine explosion occurred at the Sullivan Coal Mine, this place, today. The explosion was caused by the igniton of lamp flames with gases. A terrible velocity was added by the fact of there being eight kegs of powder down below. There were thirty men in the mine at the time. The scene became desperate. There were thirteen killed outright, eight or nine wounded, and many of the others suffering from suffocation. It is impossible at this hour to get the names of the unfortunates. Tom and Sam Handford are known, however, to be killed. A great crowd of relatives consisting mostly of women have gathered around the ill-fated mine and their lamenations are pitiful.

**Sedalia Daily Democrat**  
**Sedalia, Missouri**  
**Saturday Morning, November 23, 1878**

**Particulars of the Recent Mine Explosion**

Terre Haute, Ind., November 22 - The following is the correct account of the explosion of the coal mine of the Handford Bros., at Sullivan, twenty-five miles south of this city, at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon. It was the gas only which exploded. A dozen kegs of powder had been stored in the magazine in the upper vein, but it was not ignited. The depth of the upper vein is two hundred feet and the other vein in forty-five feet lower. Two entries or rooms were being excavated toward each other, and the gas had accumulated in the roof. One of the miners in the other had been warned that they were nearly through and any more blasting might go through, and fire the gas in the other entry. They were directed to fan the gas out of it before connecting the two openings. One of them, however, took the risks, and tried one more blast. It broke through the thin wall of coal and the accumulated gas exploded with a tremendous concussion.

Eight men were killed by the shock, or soon died of suffocation. There were at the time twenty-seven miners at work of whom fifteen were in the lower vein. Seven of these were saved after a lapse of over one hour, but how they managed to survive in the dense fumes and damp is a mystery. The twelve men in the upper vein were badly stunned but unhurt. There were but four or five men courageous enough to go into the lower vein after the explosion; but after they had saved the seven who were living, they worked on until three o'clock this morning, recovering the bodies of the dead. Then work was resumed after a rest of three hours and by twelve o'clock today the last corpse was taken out. Ingress to the vein was obtained through a very small hole in the debris. The bodies were taken to the homes of the men and will be buried tomorrow without an inquest.

The timbers of the mine are badly shattered. The citizens of Sullivan are subscribing liberally towards the relief of the bereft families. Joseph Handford, Tom Irvin, and Jack Smith distinguished themselves for their bravery in periling their own lives to save the living and recover the dead. The last names especially won the commendation of the whole community.

**THE DAILY CONSTITUTION**  
**Atlanta, GA**  
**Saturday Morning, November 23, 1878**

Terre haute, Ind., November 22 - The explosion in the coal mine at Sullivan yesterday was caused by ignition of the gas. Eight men were killed. There were at the time twenty-seven miners at work, of whom fifteen were in the lower vein. Seven were saved after the elapse of an hour. The twelve men in the upper vein were badly stunned, but escaped injury. The following were killed: Thomas Handford, Samual Handford, John Seeden, Albert Smith, John Bulyer, William Vales, and Patrick Dunn.

There were but four or five men courageous enough to go into the lower vein after the explosion occurred, but after they had saved the seven who were alive, they worked until three o'clock in the morning in recovering the dead. At six o'clock the work was resumed and at noon today the last corpse was taken out.

**Fort Wayne Daily Gazette**  
**Fort Wayne Indiana,**  
**Wednesday morning, November 27, 1878**

The funeral of six miners killed by the explosion in Handford Brothers' coal shaft at Sullivan, Thursday morning, took place Saturday afternoon, two of the eight corpses being sent to other localities for interment. The bodies of the two Handfords were placed in a hearse, and the other four in a large wagon. There were 2,000 people in the procession. Every business house in Sullivan was closed while the ceremonies were in progress. The blue ribbon club, of which five the men had been members marched in a body.