



VERY LATEST NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

A MINE EXPLODES.

**Terrible Calamity and Great
Loss of Life at Sullivan,
Indiana.**

**The Shaft Completely De-
molished and Thirty
Men Engulfed.**

**Nine Miners Killed, Two Fatally In-
jured, and Others Hopelessly
Imprisoned in the Mine.**

**Heartrending Scenes at the
Mouth of the Shaft.**

**Complete List of the Killed, In-
jured, and Saved.**

SULLIVAN, IND., Nov. 21.—This usually quiet village was to-day the scene of a horrible accident, although the loss of life was not as great as was at first supposed. Half a mile north of the station-house, and on the Evansville and Terre Haute railway, is situated the Sullivan coal shaft, a mine working two veins of coal. At a few minutes past 4 this evening,

A LOUD EXPLOSION

was heard. At the same time a huge volume of smoke and flame issued from the shaft, while rocks and huge pieces of coal were thrown into the air as high 300 feet. Those employed above ground about the mine were paralyzed with horror as they recognized the fact that a violent explosion had taken place, and remembered that

THERE WERE THIRTY MEN BELOW working the veins. Fifteen men were in the lower shaft and the same number in the upper shaft.

The explosion was so violent that the timbers underground were shattered, as were also the walls, causing large pieces of rock to fall and completely stop up the passage-way in many places.

TO ADD TO THE HORROR

of the occurrence, it was discovered that the cages were, as a result of the accident, fastened below, and one of the huge ropes broken, thus entirely cutting off all communication with the imprisoned men, and all hope of escape or rescue.

Ropes and pulleys were, however, immediately put into position, and men sent down to ascertain the condition of the miners below.

The mine is two hundred and forty feet deep, and it was sometime before help could reach the imprisoned men. The gas was so over-powering that men could stay below only a few minutes.

ONE BRAVE YOUNG MINER,

Joe Handford, who had two brothers below (both of whom were afterward found dead), at last, amid the applauding shouts of the bystanders, volunteered to go below.

THE WAIL OF IMPRISONED MEN.

By placing one's ear to the mouth of the shaft the piteous cries of the imprisoned men could be faintly heard from the depths 240 feet below, a sound which could not but strike the auditor with horror. As an occasional voice from the darkness below ascended to the mouth of the shaft the assembled women would fairly jump forward, thinking that they might again hear the voice of some dear one.

There were of course many disappointments, the effects of which can better be imagined than described. One woman, who had a young son of about twelve engaged below, bent over the shaft and

CALLED PITEOUSLY

to all present to go to his rescue—calling with the emotion that only a mother in such a position can feel. At last he was brought up, dead.

Nine men were killed out right, of which the following is a correct list:

THE DEAD.

Sam Hanford, Tom Hanford, John Bulger, Wm. Vale, Albert Smith, Jack Lee-Pat Dunn, John Smith, Pat Croutchef.

THE INJURED.

The following are fatally injured: James Harper, and E. Crouch.

The following are known to be safe, and have been brought to the surface: B. Griffith, Wm. Richardson, John Richardson, Henry Nichols, Thomas Maskell, Joe Smith, Frank Smith, George Jarvis. This is all the names your correspondent can obtain to-night.

SIX STILL IMPRISONED.

Six men are still at this hour (nearly midnight) below, and some of them are certainly alive, as an occasional cry can be heard.

The Indiana State Sentinel.

INDIANAPOLIS, WEDNESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 21, 1878.

EXPLOSION IN A MINE.

A Frightful Accident in Sullivan County —Terrible Fatality and Suffering.

[By Telegraph to the Sentinel.]

SULLIVAN, Ind., Nov. 21.—This afternoon the citizens of this place were horror stricken by a terrible explosion in the Sullivan coal mine, situated on the railroad about 300 yards north of the depot. A large crowd at once congregated at the mouth of the ill fated mine. Thirty miners were working in the mine at the time of the explosion. The distance to the first vein is one hundred and eight feet, and the second vein is sixty feet lower. The noise from the explosion could be heard for miles. This was no doubt caused from the explosion of eight kegs of powder that were stowed in the mines. A volume of flame issued from the mouth of the shaft that rose to a height of over one hundred feet. A large and excited crowd soon gathered around the mouth of the mine, but it was some time before the miners were able to descend. Men, women and children relatives of those working below, and others who believed that their friends were killed, swarmed around the shaft, uttering cries that were heartrending, and begging description.

THE ATTEMPT TO RESCUE.

Several miners were at last enabled to enter the mine, but it was with great difficulty that they could proceed on account of the smoke and gas. The bodies were found before many feet had been traversed. From their appearance it seemed as if the miners had endeavored to escape after the explosion, but had fallen exhausted from the effects of gas.

RECOVERY OF BODIES.

At 12 o'clock to-night 17 bodies have been brought to the surface, but the miners who were not in the mine at the time of the explosion are using every exertion to recover those that remain. It is impossible for those remaining to be alive, for, judging from the condition of those brought to the surface, they must be terribly mangled. The following are the dead: Albert Smith, Patrick Duun John Buiger, Thomas Handford, Samuel Handford, James Smith, Jackson Ludon and William Vail, badly wounded. Ellsworth Kroutz, badly burned; James Harper, leg broken and skull fractured badly and burned. Ellsworth and Harper will both die. There are six dead bodies yet in the shaft, but they have been identified by the miners at the bottom assisting to bring the bodies to the surface. When the bodies were removed they were surrounded by the anxious crowd, and when one badly mangled and burned was identified by some mother, wife or child, the cries that rent the air were horrible to listen to. The brave men who are hunting for bodies are nearly exhausted, but are being relieved by fresh supplies of men. They are still at work at this time, 1 a. m., bringing bodies to the surface. Thomas and Samuel Handford, who were both killed, were proprietors of the ill-fated mine.

This is the first explosion that has ever occurred in any of the mines in this section. This mine was never regarded as dangerous, and but little trouble has ever been experienced from gas, which was the immediate cause of the explosion.

Sullivan is a town of 1,500 inhabitants, situated on the Evansville and Crawfordsville Railroad, and is the county seat of Sullivan county. It is 27 miles south of Terre Haute. There are ten shafts leading to coal mines, which is one of the principal interests of this section.

November 28, 1878

AGONY.

**Fearful Suffering of Im-
prisoned and Suffo-
cating Miners.**

**Most Destructive Explosion
in a Coal Mine at Sulli-
van at 4 P. M. Yes-
terday.**

**Two of the Owners, Messrs.
Handford Killed With
the Rest.**

**Nine Persons Killed and Many
Wounded.**

**Two of the Victims are Young
Boys.**

**Gallant Assistance From the Shelburn
Mines.**

A Dreadful Tale of Misery.

[Form Friday's Daily.]

The explosion of the Handford coal shaft at Sullivan yesterday afternoon at four o'clock is one of the most terrible catastrophes that ever occurred in the west. The loss of life and the fearful agony of the killed and wounded beggars description. The mine is situated three hundred yards north of the Sullivan depot and was worked in two veins by thirty miners.

The explosion was caused by an accumulation of gas igniting from the lamps. As there were eight kegs of powder in the shaft at the time the terrible report was greatly heightened and the result made much more deadly. The depth of the mine is variously estimated at from 108 to 180 feet to the first vein, with the second vein from 45 to 50 feet below.

As soon as a crowd had collected assistance was rendered to the suffering men below, and they stood badly in need of it. The explosion had thrown many into the water, had crushed others with falling rock, and was fast suffocating those who were unable to get out, as the cage had been damaged. One of the large cables had been broken. A big crew of miners from Shelburn hastened down to aid the sufferers all they could. All night long the efforts of brave men in a noble cause continued and the full extent of the horror is now known:

THE CORRECT LIST

of the killed is as follows:

Thos. Handford, Saml. Handford, Jno. Bulger, Wm. Vail, Albert Smith, James Smith, Pat Dunn, Jack Leeden and Pat Croutcher.

James Harper has his leg broken, and E. Croach is also hurt, among others. Of the thirty miners, all the rest have escaped.

THE KILLED.

Two of the men killed were proprietors of the mine, Messrs. Thomas and Sam'l Handford. The other two owners, Joe and — Handford, were not in the mine at the time of the explosion, and accordingly escaped unhurt.

The mine had been worked for about four years and was a three and a half foot vein. In many of the "rooms" the miners were compelled to proceed on their hands and knees. The coal was principally sold south, but some of it came up this way.

Mr. Thos. Handford was between thirty and thirty-five years old and his brother about twenty-eight.

The depth of the mine is stated correctly to be 201 feet to the first vein add the second about fifty feet below.

James Smith, a brother-in-law of the Handfords, was also killed. He leaves a family.

Albert Smith, who was also killed, was a single man, and not over twenty-one years old.

"French Jack," one of the killed, was a single man, about thirty-five years old.

Young Jno. Bulger, who was instantly killed, was but sixteen years old. He ran the carts to the coal cage. Bulger was a son of the section boss. His companion, Wm. Vail, also about the same age, was killed with him. Patrick Dunn was known to be killed, but his body was not found last night.

The miners best acquainted with this mine were all killed, and it was necessary to get some of the "old timers" from Shelburn to go through and hunt the bodies.

THE ORIGIN

of the explosion was a "room" which had been closed up a long time and not used. The gasses must have collected in it. A miner, whose "room" adjoined, put in an extra heavy charge, and the walls were blown down, causing the gasses to escape and ignite from the lamp.

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.

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.

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, Samuel 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.

Victims of the Sullivan Mine Disaster
November 22, 1878

Fatalities

Thomas Handford

Samuel Handford

Jon. Bulger

William Vail

Albert Smith

James Smith

Pat Dunn

French Jack Lee

John Smith

Pat Croutchef

James Harper

E. Crouch

Jackson Loudon

Elsworth Kroutz