

27 Men Killed In Mine Disaster

Most Harrowing Accident in the History of Indiana County

CORONER'S INQUEST HELD

The disaster which occurred in the Ernest mine No. 2 of the Jefferson & Clearfield Coal & Iron Co. last Friday afternoon, was the most horrible disaster of recent years in the bituminous coal district. Twenty-seven employees lost their lives and five injured, are now in the Indiana hospital. Bodies of nineteen miners were taken from the mine early Saturday morning and brought to Indiana by special train and placed in the care of local undertakers. Seven other were taken out of the mine later and brought to Indiana, making a total of 27 bodies.

The complete list of dead, as given out by the coal company yesterday, follows:

- J. William Ball, aged 36, foreman, American, wife and 5 children.
- John Connelly, aged 37, American, rock boss, wife and 5 children.
- Norris Allen, aged 32, American, wife and one child.
- Paul Taggart, aged 30, American, wife and small child.
- James Herman, aged 19, married, no children.
- Mack Schmidt, aged 36, American, loader.
- George Bunton, Jr., aged 25, motorman, single.
- Alex Broskin, aged 40, loader, wife and 3 children.
- Ferdinando Vassaneli, aged 30, wife and 4 children.
- Vincenzo Camerata, aged 45, wife and 5 children.
- Arturo Rossi, aged 32, single.
- Giuseppe Saldari, aged 27, single.
- Agostino Micone, aged 21, single.
- Domenico Ruzzini, aged 24, single.
- Giorgio Guerino, aged 26, single.
- Giovanni Paolo, aged 23, single.
- Pompeo Giorgio, aged 22, single.
- Giuseppe Stocchi, aged 28, single.
- Domenico Panei, aged 30 ...
- Antonio Fuzzani, single.
- Erminio Sigismondi, aged 21, married about one month ago.
- Ignally Valceresky, aged 40, wife and eight children.
- Stanly Valcerusky, aged 22, single.
- Steve Fenis, aged 30.
- John Tassick, aged 39, wife and 4 children.
- Frank Bonofhoski, aged 30, wife and 3 children.
- Charles Strandquist, aged 35, mine foreman, single.

Investigation of the accident by the coal company officials and Mine Inspectors Thomas Lowther, of this place, and C. H. Crocker, of Blairsville, showed that Fire Boss Charles Strandquist and Mine Foreman William Ball lost their lives while making the second gas test of the day in the mine. Two examinations of the mine are made daily. The first was completed at 11 o'clock Friday morning and the second test was nearly finished when the explosion occurred, killing all of the company men engaged in making the test.

The seat of the explosion was the fifteenth right room of heading 3 and 4, about a mile and a quarter from the entrance. Ordinarily 43 men worked in this section, but on account of the funeral of one of the crew held in Indiana that day only 30 miners were at work in the room, which lessened

the loss of life, as every man on duty in the vicinity of the explosion was killed instantly. The three injured miners in the local hospital were some distance from the heading when the let-go occurred.

B. M. Clark, of Punxsutawney, assistant to President Lucius W. Robinson, said that half a dozen theories as to the cause of the explosion might be advanced, any of which might be correct, but that it is doubtful if investigation, as thorough as it will be, will ever reveal the real cause of the disaster. The mine has a tendency to be gaseous at times, and for this reason extra precautions have always been taken in regard to the daily test for gas.

The Jefferson and Clearfield Coal and Iron Company, with its allied interests, did not take out regular compensation, preferring to conduct an insurance system of its own. Attorney Henry I. Wilson, of Big Run, who has charge of the concern's compensation work, was here conferring with the officials in regard to adjusting the compensation. In commenting on this phase of the accident Mr. Wilson said the disaster will cost the company between \$50,000 and \$60,000 in compensations.

The greater number of the dead were buried in St. Bernard's Roman Catholic cemetery Monday.

An explosion occurred in the same mine six years ago, at which time 11 men lost their lives.

Coal Company Exonerated.
The Jefferson & Clearfield Coal & Iron Co. in whose mine at Ernest the disastrous explosion occurred last Friday evening, was exonerated from all blame connected therewith by the coroner's jury, which conducted the inquest Wednesday afternoon, with Coroner Dr. H. B. Buterbaugh presiding.

The jury, also determined that the explosion was due to an unknown cause. The text of the verdict follows:
"That the 27 men came to their death on February 11, 1916, at Inspector's Report about 3:20 p. m. at Ernest Mine No. 2, Ernest, Indiana county, Pa. The deceased came to their death as a result of an explosion of gas in said mine, ignited by some unknown cause."

The coroner's jury was composed of John F. Clements, Josiah Neal, Dr. A. H. Stewart, J. Willis Wilson and Hon. Wilmer H. Wood. The report of the Commission of Mine Inspectors, the commission being named by J. E. Roderick, chief of the State Bureau of Mines to comprise Thomas S. Lowther, of Indiana; C. H. Crocker, of Blairsville; Nicholas Evans, of Johnstown; T. A. Furniss, of Punxsutawney, and C. B. Rhea, of Latrobe, follows:

"That explosive gas that had accumulated on a fall had been driven down off the fall by another caving of the strata above on the open lights of the two men who were working in No. 2 room pillar off 14 1-2 right entry, said lights igniting the explosive gas." Their report also stated that they had no criticisms to offer concerning the work of the superintendent, mine foreman and assistants, which includes the fire boss, as they had done their work in compliance with the mining laws of the state.

AMERICA PAYS HOMAGE TO HER FIRST PRESIDENT



SEARCH in the plains where flashed the sword of Washington. What find you there? Tombs? No; you find a world. Washington has left behind him the United States as a trophy of his battlefields.—Chateaubriand.

Cherrytree Works Have Been Sold Pittsburghers Are Purchasers

A deal has been closed whereby the property of the Cherrytree Iron Works at Cherrytree, Indiana county, has been sold to William Brown and associates, of Pittsburgh. The new owners, who will incorporate under the name of the Cherrytree Machine Co., have taken charge. The company, it is said, has orders for 18 months of work from an eastern ordnance

company, and has also been promised an order for not less than 1000 mine cars. A large extension to the main building will be constructed a new cupola and electrical crane will be installed and other improvements will be made. William Burnside and brother, of Bellefonte, purchased the property last summer from the Cambria Title, Savings and Trust Co., of Ebsenburg.

Bars Opened Wednesday

The doors of the barrooms throughout Indiana county were thrown open to the public Wednesday morning, after having been closed for more than a year. All the bars in the town were opened excepting that of the Central hotel which is undergoing extensive improvements. Thousands of dollars were spent by Indiana county hotel men in the last few weeks in repairing and rebuilding the hotels and cafes.

DIRECTORS ARE WORRIED.

The Indiana board of school directors are in a quandary on account of the crowded conditions of the two ward schools. Every room is crowded to capacity and the teachers cannot give the time necessary to each pupil. A new room is badly needed in the grades but necessity will be more pronounced at the opening of the may mean the erection of a new building. The crowded condition in the high school has been alleviated to a considerable extent through the converting of a room used as a library into a class room. The new teacher is Miss Marian Hunter of Leechburg, and she is qualified to teach all High School subjects.

Men Drowned In Soft Mud

Philadelphia, Feb. 18.—Andrew Surab, aged 40; his son, John, aged 10, and John Carpenter, aged 8, were drowned today in Darby creek, near this city. The boys were skating on thin ice when they broke through and fell into the water. The elder Surab attempted to rescue them, but his heavy boots caused him to sink to the bottom where he stuck in the soft mud.

LIST OF LETTERS

Remaining uncalled for in the Indiana office February 12, 1916:

- Miss Nannie Black, Mr. Mahlon Craft, Miss Beatrice Cassidy, Mrs. A. E. Covade, Mrs. Martha E. Dormyer, Miss Cora Hanna, Miss Emma Oravis, Miss Sara Richards, E. T. Robbins, Miss K. Rummel, Mr. A. Slater, Mr. Ernest Strandquist, Mr. Carl Stewart, Miss Nanna Snyder, Mr. Charlie Weifert, Mr. Daniel W. Williams, Mr. Bingham Wimer.

When inquiring for letters in this list please state that they were advertised, giving date.

HARRY W. FEE, P. M.

Best stores advertise in The Patriot.

101,208,315 Population Is the U. S. Census Estimation

Bridge Regarded Unsafe by Countians

Citizens residing in the vicinity of the Conemaugh river in Indiana and Westmoreland counties are backing a movement asking for the construction of a joint county bridge to take the place of the one now spanning the river at Blairsville. The present bridge is regarded unsafe and is the sixth bridge that has been erected in that vicinity.

COLVER MEN GIVEN FINES

The cases of officials of the Ebsenburg Coal Company at Colver, charging with having assaulted union officials who visited the place to organize the field, were finally disposed of in court at Ebsenburg, the men having been sentenced to pay the costs when they entered pleas of nolle contendere at the December term of court. J. F. Wilkinson paid \$25; E. F. Saxman, \$200; E. S. Saxman, \$50; R. F. Sweixele, \$25, and Leo F. Crouse, \$25. In the second case the defendants were ordered to pay the costs and further sentence was suspended.

Another New Building

Plans are completed for the new three-story brick apartment and business block, 50x59 feet, which Mrs. D. H. Tomb will have erected on the corner of Carpenter Ave. and Gompers Alley. Bids will be asked for the erection at once, as it is planned to start the erection March 1. One of the storerooms on the first floor will be occupied by the E. R. Lumsden Company.

Punx'y Hotel Recently Sold

A deal has been consummated whereby Dr. J. P. Benson and W. P. Wehrle become the owners of the Whitney hotel building in Punxsutawney. The room formerly used as a barroom, which is being remodeled, will be occupied by the Rowbottom Bros.' shoe store. The room, formerly the hotel of lice, has been rented, but the owners are not at liberty to divulge the name of the renter. It will be opened the first of April. E. E. Shaffer will continue to live on the third floor of the building. No disposition has been made of the second floor and the barn has not been rented.—Punxsutawney Spirit.

New Town in the County

A new town in this county has been started across the river from Seward and it will known as Robin-dale. A school has been started and has an enrollment of 20. H. George is the teacher.

Invitations, Reception and Visiting Cards

CORRECTLY AND PROMPTLY PRINTED

Send to This Office For Samples and Prices

Washington Bureau's Figures Allow Pennsylvania 8,453,004, On January 1.

Washington, Feb. 18.—The Census Bureau estimates the population of the United States on January 1, 1916, at 101,208,315.

The estimate for July 1, 1916, is 102,017,312.

Both estimates are based on the assumption that the rate of annual increase since 1910 has been as great as it was from 1900 to 1910.

The government estimates of the population of the different states on Jan. 1, 1916, includes:

- Pennsylvania, 8,453,004; New York, 10,179,971. The government estimate for July 1, 1915 is 10,086,568, as against 9,687,744, the revised estimate of the state census taken for June 1, 1915.
- Illinois, 6,110,888; Ohio, 5,119,491; Texas, 4,386,638; Massachusetts, 3,690,748; Missouri, 3,401,241; Michigan, 3,035,148; New Jersey, 2,914,928; Connecticut, 1,234,031.

Train Citizens For the Navy

As Many as 2,500 Can Cruise in Warships for \$30 Each.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 17.—Secretary Daniels decided today to inaugurate a system of civilian naval training similar to that on which military training camps have been established at Plattsburg and elsewhere. It is planned to use six battleships to take 2,500, if that many present themselves, for training for a month's cruise, beginning about August 15. The plan, which was drafted by Assistant Secretary Roosevelt, proposes that the cost to the men shall be sufficiently low, not exceeding \$30 each, to enable those in moderate circumstances to join. The only compulsory requirement is that each volunteer declare his intention of giving his services to the navy in case of war.

The object of the plan is to establish a naval reserve of civilians.

Injured Man Has Chance to Recover

Altoona, Pa., Feb. 18.—Lugi Gabello, 38 years old an Italian miner of Indiana, was struck by a locomotive at Kittanning Point west of here, Friday. He is in the Altoona hospital suffering from a fractured jaw, fractured clavicle, fractured skull, fractured nose, crushed right arm at the shoulder, lacerations of the face, forehead and scalp, lacerations of the chest, contusions and lacerations of the legs and numerous minor contusions.

COMMITTEE IS NAMED

Chairman H. C. Christy has named the following persons to compose the committee who will arrange for the program incident to the celebration of Indiana's centennial: Frank L. Neff, A. I. Reese, Ira A. Myers, J. R. Richards, D. W. Simpson, H. W. Thomas and H. C. Christy. The committee will get together at once and will report at another mass meeting to be held in the near future.