

MORE THAN 100 MEN ENTOMBED IN MINES FRIGHTFUL CATASTROPHE AT VIRGINIA CITY

Workmen Heroically Struggle to Rescue Their Comrades in The Mine Before They Perish
From Foul Gases Caused by The Explosion.

SCORES OF MINERS ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE DIED IN TERRIBLE AGONY

With Pick and Shovel Dozens of Men
Are Racing Madly With the
Grim Monster, Death.

Parties from Pratt City, Ensley and
Bessemer Rush to the Scene to
Assist in Gruesome Task.

BESSEMER, February 20.—(Special).—By a "dust" explosion in the Virginia mines, 17 miles southwest of Birmingham at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon between 110 and 125 union miners, negroes and whites, are entombed 300 feet below the surface, and it is probable that none of them will live to tell the story of the disaster.

At midnight every available man is being sent into the mine in relays as rescue parties, but as yet the rescuers are at least 100 feet from the imprisoned miners and the fate of the latter is still a matter of doubt, with every chance in the world against them.

Hundreds of anxious people are gathered around the mouth of the shaft uttering silent prayers for those below, and the rescue parties are straining every effort to reach the entombed men in time to give them a breath of the life giving air from above before it is too late.

The only hope now is that a few of the number who were in the mine when the explosion occurred may be alive and may be saved.

The mines are the property of the Alabama Steel and Wire company, known as the Schuler property.

Made the Fatal Mistake.

Yesterday afternoon the day shift prepared the last shot, which is at 4 o'clock, and some one below the third level made the fatal mistake of overcharging or undercharging a shot. Either of these will cause the dust accumulated about the shot to ignite and result in the explosion. From the little beginning the explosion came, dealing death and destruction.

All of the miners were below the second level, which is about 600 feet from the surface. The rescuers have succeeded in going a little below the second level, and they are rapidly going further and further down.

Unavoidable Delay.

There has been considerable delay as the rescuers have had to rebuild the props which support the roof of the main shaft. The force of the explosion tore away these props, and they have to be rebuilt as the rescuers progress.

The rescuers are closing up the mouths of the various rooms as they reach them in order that the air may be controlled and turned down the main shaft. Lower down in the mines the air circulates back upward into the rooms.

Most of the miners are supposed to have just left the rooms and to have started up the shaft or to have been in the entries when the explosion occurred. All are supposed to leave the mines before this last shot.

Rescuers late tonight had almost reached the third right entry and they expect to find some of the entombed miners when they reach this entry. It is about 200 feet to the next lowest entry and it will be several hours before they get into this entry. They expect to find the first bodies shortly after midnight or 1 o'clock.

The Explosion Was Terrific.

The force of the explosion was so great that rocks, rafters, sticks and other missiles were hurled 350 to 400 yards from the mouth of the shaft. The tracks leading into the mines were covered with dirt and rafters which formed the props.

It is stated by witnesses that the flames from the explosion leaped more than a hundred feet into the air.

At frequent intervals members of the rescue party are brought to the mouth of the shaft overcome by the gases and fire damp at the place where the rescuers have reached.

Was First Day in Mine.

P. N. Stuckey of Johns, one of the entombed men went into the mine today to work for the first time. Mr. Stuckey is an experienced miner, but for some years has been working for furniture men of Bessemer and Blue Creek. His extended absence from the mines was due to the fact that it was impairing his health. Recently he felt well and able to go back.

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GRAY EXPLAINS THE CATASTROPHE

"Windy Shot" Probably Caused
The Trouble

MEN FEAR "AFTER DAMP"

Donaldson Says at Least One Hundred Men Imprisoned in the
Mine Are White and Are
Expert Miners.

Bessemer, February 20.—(Special).—State Mine Inspector Gray tonight explained the probable cause of the explosion. He stated that a "windy shot" and a "dust" explosion were similar. A windy shot is when the force of the explosion blows outward and creates a great deal of dust and also raises all the dust in the room. In this dust there is more or less gas and this all explodes. The explosion spreads from room to room with awful rapidity, overtaking in a few seconds any one who might attempt to escape.

Fear the After Damp.

Owing to the "after damp" which is feared, only a few lights can be carried into the mines now. There were only a few safety lamps at the mines, and they are all in use, but they are entirely inadequate for the needs. Safety lamps have been sent for but have not arrived. As soon as they do the rescuing parties can be increased in size and the work hastened. Lack of safety lamps delayed the work.

Shortly after midnight it was rumored that eight bodies had been found and anxious men went down the slope in the hope of identifying their friends. The rumor, however, is unconfirmed, as no bodies have yet been brought to the top, and officials who are on the scene state that it may take eight or ten days to recover all the bodies. There is no doubt but that many were caught on their way to the top who would have been saved if the explosion had taken place a few minutes later.

Ira and Kirk Powell of Pratt City are among the dead.

The output of the mines is in the neighborhood of 600 tons a day, all of which is converted into coke before it leaves the camp for the furnaces at Gadsden. It is impossible to estimate the loss. The mine is completely crippled and will take at least two months to repair.

R. V. Donaldson, the fire boss of the mine and brother to William Donaldson, one of the entombed men, said at midnight:

"I do not suppose there is a living man in the mine. The after damp is fearful and a man could not live in there five minutes."

"The explosion was evidently due to a 'windy shot.' This mine is one of the best ventilated mines in the district and this very fact added to the intensity of the explosion. I do not think the bodies will be brought to the top until nearly daylight, although we may find some at any time. In my opinion there were at least 125 men in the mine at the time of the disaster. Of this number at least 100 were white miners."

The day shift of Virginia mine is composed of between 120 and 125 men, but as it was the Monday following pay day and an unusually bad day the number was smaller than usual. No record is made of the men as they go to their work, but they send their names and checks up with the car after quitting work in the evening. The explosion occurred just before the time for checks to be sent up, hence it is impossible to obtain an exact list of the miners at work yesterday. A canvass has been made of the camp but a complete list cannot be secured. In fact it will not be possible to know just who was in the mine at the time of the explosion until the rescuing party has completed its labor.

At present the number is estimated to be anywhere between 100 and 120.

LIST OF THE MEN IN MINES:

SAM SLOGGETT,
BERT SLOGGETT,
SAM BURDFIELD,
EARL HOPKINS,
ROBERT PEARSON,
F. N. STUCKEY,
JACK VANCE,
CHARLES PICKETT,
CHARLES MORELAND,
TOM CODY,
TOM CALDWELL,
ANDREW NICHOLSON,
JOHN McDONALD,
WILL MEERS,

ALBERT HUNTER,
STEVE TIERER,
HENRY TURNER,
DAVE SMITH,
BOB HALL,
GEORGE HUFFMAN,
HENRY JOHNSON,
JIM HUFFMAN,
L. A. STEELE,
L. M. HOWARD,
J. C. JACKSON,

SAM CARTER,
STEVE HAWKINS,
DAVE HARRIS,
WILL GREEN,
RUBE HOSSELL,
OLIVER PARSONS,
CHARLES McFALLS,
TOM CODY,
GEORGE PENNELLY AND SON,
LUKE BAILEY,
ED CARGO,
JOHN BROWN,
FRED SMIDLY,
WILL DICKENSON,

AMOS BROWN,
J. A. STALLIN,
J. A. SMITH,
SAM SIMPSON,
CHARLES JONES,
J. L. DAVIS,
WILL STEWART,
HENRY STEVENS,
JOSEPH BURTON,
HOMER DORSEY,

WHITES.

JESSE WEAVER,
WALKER SHOEMAKER,
BARRY KYKER,
MEL BROWN,
SAM JONES,
A. J. TIDMORE,
FRED MORGAN,
WILLIAM DEFALDSON,
ROLAND BENNETT,
JOHN CAHLEY,
JACK POOL,
OLEN POOL,
BOB BEALL,
LEE HORDEMAN,

COLORED.

PERCY WYATT,
ACY HOOKS,
JAKE HOOKS,
JOHN DUDLEY,
TOM CRIGLEY,
JAKE BENTON,
JACKSON BOWEN,
PEARL TOLES,
T. J. McCARTEN,
CHARLES BENTON,

ALL ALABAMA IRON AND STEEL PROPERTIES MAY BE COMBINED

ENGAGEMENT IS
NOT BROKEN OFF

CROWN PRINCE FREDERICK WILLIAM AND DUCHESS CECILIA
WILL BE MARRIED AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED BY EMPEROR.

Berlin, February 20.—The Associated Press learns from a person in the confidence of Crown Prince Frederick William how the story of the breaking of the Princess engagement with the Duchess Cecilia of Mecklenburg-Schwerin originated.

When the plan was first proposed by the Crown Prince to visit the Duchess Cecilia somewhere in the south Emperor William made the condition that she must be accompanied by her mother, which conformed to the German ideal of propriety in such cases. The Grand Duchess Anastie was angry because the Emperor had not permitted the meeting to take place at Cannes, but finally consented to Elorege as the place for the meeting, but when the date arrived she delayed her departure and let Cecilia go alone, promising to follow in a few days. The Crown Prince, seeing the awkwardness of the situation arising from the absence of his fiancée and mother, and the delay in her arrival, wrote to the Emperor for advice. The Emperor telegraphed:

"Send Cecilia to her mother. You return at once."

While the incident has necessarily caused some fiction between the two families, the Associated Press is assured on the highest authority that the engagement has not been broken off. The ruling family of Mecklenburg-Schwerin evidently is considerably agitated over the affair. The Grand Duchess Alexandrine, elder sister of the Duchess Cecilia, suddenly came to Berlin on Saturday and had an hour's private talk with Emperor William, after which she took the next train for home.

Large Mills Remain Closed.

Lodz, Russian Poland, February 20.—Slight disturbances occurred in different sections of the city today. The large mills remain closed and many persons are leaving the city owing to the report that a mobilization of reserves will be ordered February 23. Additional troops arrived here today.

Deal Now Pending in New
York May or May Not
Be a Go

HOADLEY-GATES PEOPLE
SAID TO HAVE THE TENN.

On Other Hand Men Who Have Con-
trolled Tennessee in Past Say
Nothing Is In Story—Sloss
Co. and Others.

New York, February 20.—(Special).—It may or may not be a combination of all the Alabama iron and steel properties under Mr. Hoadley of the International Power company.

Stories current are to the effect that the deal is a go, to use the language of the street. It is said that the Hoadley-Gates combination have a full majority of Tennessee stock. On the other hand men who have been in control of Tennessee in the past say there is nothing to the story. Yet it is all over the street and seems to be generally believed.

In the meantime things have been active today in other properties. The Sloss company's full directory was in session and a price was practically agreed upon. The Republic's Alabama properties are offered and terms consequent upon other deals have been agreed upon.

One Hundred Million.

If the deal goes through it will be a hundred million dollar corporation, comprising practically all the big iron making.

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IMMENSE LOSS
IN MARINE FIRE

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION ON
A PIER WORKS ITS WAY INTO
AN OCEAN LINER AND FIREMEN
FIGHT DESPERATELY.

Boston, February 21.—A fire, causing immense losses, broke out on pier 4 of the Hoosac tunnel docks, Charleston, early today. Its origin has not been determined, but it is believed to have started from spontaneous combustion.

Five alarms brought the greater part of the apparatus of the city to the scene. The flames spread with startling rapidity, communicating with the Furness-Leyland line steamer Philadelphia, which was tied along side the pier, and in a few moments was in a mass of flames from stem to stern.

It is feared that two of the sailors aboard have been lost. When the flames were discovered most of the crew jumped overboard. Captain Dickinson himself hanging by a rope over the boat's side until he was assured that no one remained on board.

From the Philadelphia the flames jumped over to the steamer Dalton Hall of the Antwerp line, which was soon aflame. It is thought that the crew of the Dalton Hall escaped.

The flames are apparently uncontrollable and beyond the best effort of the firemen. Two fire boats responded to the alarms, but for an hour the water thrown by them had no appreciable effect upon the flames.

The wharf was filled with valuable imported goods.

The Philadelphia arrived here Saturday from Liverpool. The Dalton Hall was loaded with valuable cargo and was to have sailed tomorrow. Piers 3 and 4 have been destroyed, and the steamers Michigan of the Warren line and the Martello are threatened. It is thought the loss will be nearly \$1,000,000.

Will Sell Entire Stud.

Lexington, Ky., February 20.—Mrs. William Barnes, proprietor of the Melbourne stud, has decided to abandon the horse breeding business, and has consigned all thoroughbreds to be sold here in March.

Every Home in Virginia City is a
House of Sorrow, and Everyone
Mourns Loss of a Relative.

Moaning Women and Children About
Entrance of Mine Reflect Poig-
nant Grief Caused by Horror

EDUCATION NOW WHOLLY STAGNANT

Students in Russia Rebel
Against Autocracy

ALL SCHOOLS HAVE CLOSED

Picture of the Emperor Is Torn to
Shreds at Immense Meeting
Held By Students and
Tutors.

St. Petersburg, February 21.—1:40 a. m.—With the decision of the student body of the great University of St. Petersburg to suspend studies for the remainder of the university year, almost the whole educational system of Russia has entered upon a period of stagnation, the protest of the youth of Russia against the bureaucratic system and other governmental grievances. Other universities of Russia, gymnasia and even grammar schools, are already on strike, and the military in various portions of the empire have been obliged to resort to force to restrain school boys of tender years who are joining the general movement.

The meeting of St. Petersburg students at which over 3000 participated, besides voting with unanimity to suspend studies until September 1, adopted a set of political resolutions demanding the formation of a constituent assembly and characterizing the proposed summoning of the zemsky zabor, as inadequate for the emergency. The resolutions after speaking of "the progressive demoralization of Russia under the influence of the absolute regime" declare for freedom of speech, the press, conscience, the right of association and assembly, and to strike, which are described as necessary conditions for the further progress of Russia.

Disapproval of Government.

The meeting almost unanimously decided to express disapproval of the action of the government in dealing with their petition to the Emperor on January 22, and its sympathy with the victims of the soldiery. A large faction strong revolutionary feeling was manifested at the meeting, the red flag was waved, and the "Marseillaise" and other revolutionary songs were chanted. A large portrait of the Emperor in the great auditorium of the university, where the meeting was held, was torn in strips. The police did not interfere.

Strong forces of police and Cossacks had been posted outside the buildings to prevent an expected street demonstration, but none occurred.

Many professors and instructors in the university were present at the meeting, most of whom were in full sympathy with the objects of the assembly. Two tutors and a small number of students who wished to obtain their diplomas this year made an ineffectual attempt to present the general tide.

POPE TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS.

Cardinal Will Be Appointed From
America for First Time.

Rome, February 20.—As there are no vacancies at present in the sacred college, Pope Pius X has expressed his intention to appoint new cardinals at the next consistory, the date of which has not yet been decided as a great deal depends on negotiations now going on regarding the conferring of these offices.

It has been almost definitely decided to nominate for the first time a South American Cardinal in the person of the Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, but as the appointment might revive a claim on the part of Argentina and possibly on the part of Chile, also for like honors, the Vatican has informed all the South American republics that the distinction is being conferred not on one special country, but on a deserving man. It is probable that cardinals will be given to Hungarians and Italians, but none will go to Great Britain or the United States.

Has Troublesome Times.

Since the Virginia mine was opened, eighteen months ago, it has been the scene of troubles. The mine is the Blue Creek vein, one of the richest in the Alabama mineral district.

When the Schulers first opened the mine it was their intention to operate it on the open shop plan. Union men were employed and in a short time were in the ascendancy. The Schulers refused to treat with the miners and a strike ensued. The fight was a hard and bitter one. The company stood firm and the miners, backed by the combined miners' organization, who at that time had no strike on hand, proved a formidable foe. Tents were provided for the strikers and little headway was made towards breaking the strike.

The Schulers finally decided to give

Bessemer, February 20.—(Special).—The rescuers will not be able to reach the imprisoned men before 2 or 3 o'clock at the earliest, and it may be later than that before the first bodies are reached. In all probability it will be day light before the first bodies reach the surface.

The scene around the mouth of the shaft is remarkable. In the semi-gloom the tense faces of a hundred spectators and miners are only lit up by the dim light of the few mine lamps. Every face bears an anxious expression. None know whether their relatives and friends are alive or dead. Conversation is limited and none speak except in hushed whispers as if they were standing at the bedside of a deceased relative. A note of anxiety and grief is in many voices, and there are tears in the voices of the few women who remain at the camp besides the weeping are the earnest calls for volunteers to go down in the mines, and the pick and the shovel as the work gets clear away the debris about the mouth.

Women Go Sorrowfully Home.

About dark all the women were sent home and the wives, daughters or sweethearts of the entombed men could be heard wailing and sobbing as they went home, accompanied and cheered by their friends who were more fortunate in that they had no loved ones in the mine at the time of the explosion.

There are few homes in the mining settlement of 90 homes where the grim reaper was not a visitor yesterday afternoon. In every house the lights burned all night, for none slept tonight.

Among the first to arrive at the mines from Birmingham was Ed Flynn of the United Mine Workers. He discarded his coat and is in the mouth of the mines working with might and main aiding in the work of cleaning the mouth of the shaft from debris. He is superintending the work of passing plank pillars down into the mine to close the openings of the roof and to rebuild the props. He said tonight:

"I do not know what the United Mine Workers will do, but you can state that we will do our share towards furnishing relief to those who are in need. We will do all possible. What that will be, I am not prepared to say."

Sorrow for Every Home.

Every home in Virginia City has been turned into a house of sorrow. The women and children, who are unable to render any assistance to the rescuers, are gathered around their husbands, brothers and sweethearts.

There was scarcely a home in the entire city which escaped without the loss of one or two members of the household.

The colored people, naturally more demonstrative, are gathered around the slope, wringing their hands and their cries can be heard above the din and noise made by the rescuing party. The road between Virginia City and Bessemer is literally strewn with buggies and wagons conveying relatives and friends of the victims. Many have walked to Virginia from the scene of the disaster and are anxiously asked for the latest news from the wrecked mine. Every vehicle in Bessemer was pressed into service, and many have walked to Virginia. The crowd at the opening of the mine is rapidly increasing. All the neighboring miners in the district have been appealed to for experienced men and there is not a mining camp in the district that has not responded to the appeal.

A large number of men from Johns, Sumter, Wylam and Pratt are already on the ground and others are en route from Blocton and other points.

Superintendent A. W. Reed, one of the leaders of the mine, is now in the thickest of the fight which is being waged for the life of the doomed. In addition to directing the work he is wielding a pick. Deputy Sheriff Jerry Fountain is at the mouth of the mine and taking an active part in the work of rescuing. Even the doctors who have gone from the surrounding cities are lending a hand to the work which is being done to reach the entombed miners.

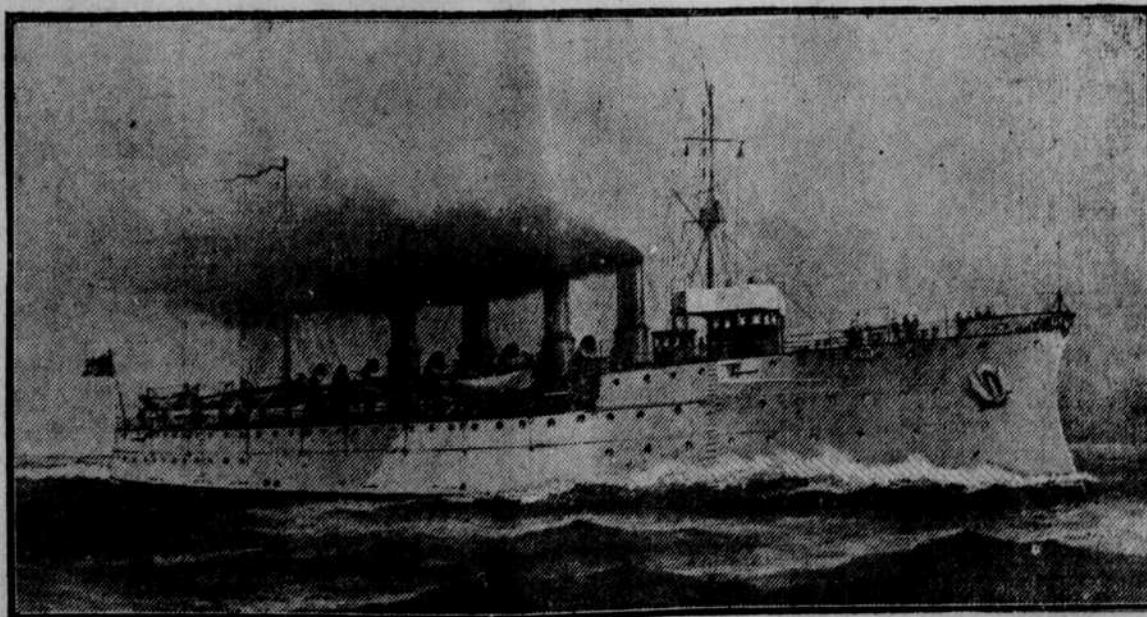
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SCOUT CRUISER BIRMINGHAM.



The magnificent new scout cruiser which is to be built for the American navy shown above will be called the "Birmingham," and the christening of the vessel for Alabama's metropolis is a distinct honor for this city. The scout cruiser is a new type of vessel designed for the navy and in this type the armament is made less important than the capacity for speed and endurance. They are so designed that they can take long voyages at a high speed and can go long distances without recouling. They are known as the "greyhounds of the navy." Much of the credit for having the vessel named "Birmingham" is due to Congressman Underwood, who represents the Ninth Alabama district. The cost of the new vessel will be \$1,800,000.