

19 MINERS DIE WHEN EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH STEELARTON PIT

Warning Of "Fire Smell" Saved Lives Of Many Workers

Swift Death Overtakes Men Battling To Build Barriers Against Gas Blast In McGregor Mine

STELLARTON, Jan. 14. — Nineteen Pictou County miners perished today when a violent explosion rocked the Acadia Coal Company's McGregor mine. Two others were hospitalized and a third miraculously escaped uninjured. The disaster, the worst in this mining county since the Allan Shaft blast of 1918, occurred at 1.10 p. m. as the men gallantly attempted to block off a fire suspected at the bottom of the pit. They had volunteered for the "danger" job after the night crew reported "a smell of fire at the lower level." The regular 100-man day crew were not in the mine when the blast occurred.

Grim Post-Yuletide Scene

The pithead presented a grim post-yuletide season scene tonight as rescue crews and draegermen brought out the dead, two and three at a time. Standing in the bleak cold weather, many up to their knees in snow, were the sorrowing relatives and friends. While the first rescue squad to return from the deathly bottom one mile down reported there would be little hope that any of the 19 men survived, the gathering throngs hoped to the last that some might be brought out alive.

Cause of the blast baffled the mine officials and investigating Department of Mines inspectors up to midnight. As late as 11 o'clock this morning, tests showed the 21 volunteers were "winning the battle against the fire danger," a mine spokesman said.

One Section Of Mine Sealed Off

One section of the mine had already been closed off by the men, and they were working on the second "stop" when the explosion occurred. Three men came out alive. They

STELLARTON, N.S., Jan. 14—(CP)—Prime Minister St. Laurent has sent a sympathy message to the families of miners killed in today's explosion at the McGregor mine here.

In a message to H. B. McCulloch, member of Parliament for the district, Mr. St. Laurent said: "I am deeply distressed by the news of the terrible explosion at Stellarton, and would be glad if you would express my sympathy and that of the other members of the government to the families who have been bereaved."

were James "Jimmie" Hawboldt, well-known Westville track star of a decade ago; William Sewell of Mount William, and Fraser Lormier, mine mechanic. Lormier was credited tonight with leading his two companions to safety. Hawboldt and Sewell were enginemen, working apart from the other 19 miners. When the blast came, they were blown to another level, and heard Lormier's cries to crawl in his direction, where the air was still sufficiently pure.

Sewell was injured the more seriously, and will be confined to hospital for some days. Hawboldt was expected to be released today. Lormier escaped without a scratch. He had been doing maintenance work in the mine at the time of the blast.

Dosco Manager Rushed To Scene

Harold C. M. Gordon, general manager of Dosco and its subsidiary companies, including Acadia Coal Company, sped to the scene of the accident from Sydney, and descended into the mine immediately upon arrival. He was still underground at 1 a. m. today. A quartet of inspectors and mining engineers from the Provincial Department of Mines, headed by Chief Inspector T. J. Casey, were also on the scene, and descended into the colliery before all the bodies had been recovered.

An official inquiry before Judge Welsford MacDonald of Pictou, was expected to get underway in a day or two. Other members of the Mines Department party included George Vacheresse, deputy inspector for Pictou County, Arthur Phillips, mainland inspector, and Edward Cole, departmental mining engineer.

'Cream Of The Pit' Die Instantly In 1:20 p. m. Gas Blast

STELLARTON — Pictou County today mourns its mining dead.

Nineteen men, freely called the "cream of the pit" by their fellow workers last night, paid the price of coal yesterday when the McGregor Mine exploded in the Borehole balance of Number 7 section.

They had gone below to build a fire stopping after a fire "smell" had been noticed about three a. m. yesterday. Their work was about completed when the blast came. It was a gas blast.

The men died instantly, never knowing what hit them.

There was no evidence of a second blast from coal dust exploding; it was presumably killed by rock dust scattered through the pits here as a precaution for many years.

The searing flash with its tremendous impact came approximately at 1.20.

Rescue work started as soon as word reached the surface.

Three men near the scene of the explosion got out — Stellarton ex-councillor Fraser Lorimer, former runner Jimmy Hawboldt and William Sewell.

Others in different parts of the pit were able to get out.

Rescue men with their kits went below as soon as they could get their gear on. Barefaced men went to the bottom of the slope and as far in as the air would permit.

Hoping at first to find life, they plunged into the stricken section, disregarding the possibility of another blast.

First bodies found were those of Sam Campbell and Leonard Wheatley. These were carried to the surface and with it the news it was unlikely any of the group would have survived.

WORK UNTIL 11

From then until nearly 11, the work went on, new teams of men relieving those who had gone ahead, until all bodies had been removed to the surface. There was no shortage of workers, Albion and other miners being on the scene ready to go below on a moment's notice.

After the last body had been found, work continued to save the mine. Three temporary stoppings were erected to close off the air from the affected area. Permanent stoppings will go in later but for the time being reliance is on brattice cloth—a heavy canvas.

Last men up, including senior officials of the company, arrived at the surface around one o'clock this morning.

There were no horses in the mine to be brought to the surface.

Under the direction of MacKenzie Fleming, all 24 men of the Rescue Corps took part in the job of locating the bodies. They reported the section smoke-filled so that their lights were no help to them. They had to feel about in the dark to find their colleagues.

As the bodies were located, they were carried in stretchers to the bottom of the slope where the rakes were available. Barefaced men were there to give them a hand.

'CREAM OF THE PIT'

(Continued from Page 1)

The slope itself is more than 2,000 feet long and the rescuers had to walk underground better than half a mile to the accident area, up and down in the workings.

Hard, Tiring Work

With their "draegar" gear on their backs, and breathing through the masks, it was hard and tiring work.

But there was not even thought on that score.

The teams moved to their places at the pitmouth as their turns came, grim-faced and intent on their task, treading their way through the large crowd which had quickly assembled.

With them, in single file from the washrooms, came the bare-faced men who were going along to help.

Work during the afternoon was directed by Mine Manager Frank Simms, George Fraser, H. S. Haslam, newly-appointed assistant manager for the mainland collieries and R. P. Nicholson, assistant to the general manager.

Acadia Superintendent Alex Sample, whose son, Winton, was among those lost, was in Cape Breton with General Manager H. C. M. Gordon attending current wage negotiation meetings.

The meeting there broke up as soon as word was received from Stellarton. They reached here shortly after seven o'clock and immediately went below, Chief Engineer Louis Frost arriving with them.

Local Department of Mines officials Harold Lowe and George Vacheresse were at the scene of the accident and helping from the first. Department Chief Casey

and other officials from Halifax arrived later.

U. M. W. Board Member Frank Munro was also in Cape Breton and hastened back to the scene as quickly as he could get here. He came along with U. M. W. District 26 President Freeman Jenkins, Steve Dolhanty and other union officials

The Dead

ALBERT MOSS, overman, Stellarton
WINTON SAMPLE, overman, Stellarton
BRENTON WHITE, Westville
JOE NEARING, Stellarton
ARTHUR MOSS, Sylvester
R. H. McNUTT, Stellarton
WILLIAM MACLEOD, New Glasgow
DAVE RUSSELL, Westville
ED ARTHRELL, Stellarton
JOHN MAILMAN, Stellarton
ED MacCALLUM, Stellarton
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, Westville
TOM CARPENTER, Stellarton
ROBERT DAVIDSON, Stellarton
SAM CAMPBELL, Westville
ARCHIE HAYMAN, Westville
BAIN NICHOLSON, Stellarton
JAMES WRIGHT, Stellarton
LEONARD WHEATLEY, Mt. William

The Casualty List

THE DEAD

Robert Davidson

Bain Nicholson

Albert Moss

Winston Sample

Ed Arthrell

Tom Carpenter

All of Stellarton

Brenton White

Robert Cunningham

All of Westville

Joe Nearing

John Mailman

Arthur Moss

R. H. MacNutt

Ed MacCallum

Jim Wright

David Russell

Archie Hayman

Sam Campbell, Westville, Leonard Wheatley, Mount William.

William McLeod, New Glasgow

Nearing was the son of Dominique Nearing, former United Mine Workers, District 26, Board Member.

Sample was the son of Alec Sample, superintendent of Acadia Mines, which operated the McGregor Pit.

Arthrell was the son of the underground manager of the mine.

INJURED, IN HOSPITAL

James Hawboldt, New Glasgow, Bill Sewell, Stellarton.

Hawboldt is a former marathon runner. He was hit on the hip by a flying rock. Sewell was badly burned about the face.

INJURED, RELEASED FROM HOSPITAL AFTER TREATMENT

Fraser Lormier, Stellarton.

A former Town Councillor, he made the first report of the explosion. He was operator of a pump below ground and suffered minor injuries in the blast.

Brief Obituary Data On Eleven Of 19 Victims

NEW GLASGOW—The following brief data on eleven of the victims of the MacGregor disaster is all that could be obtained at press time today. Complete data is being compiled by mine officials and will probably be available for publication tomorrow.

Winton Semple, Acadia Avenue, son of Alex Semple, mine superintendent, and Mrs. Semple, was overman at the mine, and had always been keenly interested in mining, going to night school after his regular schooling was completed to get his mining papers. His wife is the former Flo McNeil of Trenton and they had no children. He is also survived by four brothers and three sisters: Clarence, Reid and Sylvanus in Stellarton, Benvie in Alberta; Jean (Mrs. Leo Campbell), Lois (Mrs. William Campbell), Stellarton; and Laura (Mrs. John MacKenzie), New Glasgow.

Thomas Carpenter, 65, Oct. 15, a native of Newfoundland, who had been working in the mines here since 1907, resided on Pleasant Avenue. Mrs. Carpenter is the former Lydia Luther, also a native of Newfoundland. They met in Pictou County. He is also survived by two sons, and three daughters: Clarence of Moncton, who has come home since the disaster; Cyril in New Glasgow; Gladys (Mrs. Victor Henderson), Westville; Emma (Mrs. Milton MacKenzie) New Glasgow; and Miss Mildred, R. N., on the staff of the TB Hospital in Moncton.

Albert Moss, Acadia Avenue, is survived by his widow, the former Helen Young; two sons, Allan, en route from Ontario; Robert at home; and one daughter, Diane at home. He was recently installed as the Assistant Patron of Harmony Chapter No. 5, O. E. S.

Arthur Moss, brother of Albert, resided in Sylvester. He is survived by his widow, the former Doris Pringle, and a young son and daughter.

John Henry Mailman, 36, Pleasant Avenue, was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mailman. He was married to the former Ila Stone of Oxford Junction, and they have a 15-months-old son Freddie. A sister, Mrs. George Fraser of Acadia Avenue is the only other surviving member of the family.

William MacLeod, 62, Westville Road, was a native of Westville, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Murdoch MacLeod. He is survived by his widow, the former Jessie MacEwan of Westville; two daughters, Florence (Mrs. Arthur Adams) Dartmouth; Lena, in Halifax; a son William in New Glasgow; three sisters, Mrs. W. D. MacKay and Mrs. J. R. Sutherland, New Glasgow; and Mrs. Leonard Williamson, St. Catharines, Ont. Archie Hayman, another victim of the disaster, was married to Mrs. MacLeod's sister.

Edward Arthrell, 37, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Arthrell of Stellarton. He is survived by his widow, the former Elsie Cranwell and five children, Margery, Sylvia, Patricia, Margaret, and James Henry; three sisters, Mrs. S. Fleming, Mrs. Charles Fleming, both of Stellarton; and Mrs. D. Hicks, St. Catharines, Ont.; and one young brother Gerald, Stellarton.

The remains will be resting at the home of his parents, Cameron Lane, South Foord Street. Funeral arrangements will be announced later.

Joseph Bernard Nearing, 47, Stellarton, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Dominic Nearing, Lourdes. His widow is the former Clementine MacDougall. He is also survived by two sons, Harold Joseph and Bernard Douglas, and a foster daughter Irene, 5; a daughter Margaret (Mrs. Harry Demont), Trenton, by a former marriage, and a sister Margaret Nearing, New Glasgow.

Brenton Rufus White, 26, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Arthur White, Stellarton. His widow is the former Gloria Smith of New Glasgow and they had no family. He was one of a family of 12 of whom the surviving members are Herbert, Robert, Clifford, Joseph, Kenneth, Jack, James in Stellarton; William in Priestville; Frank in Abercrombie; Alice (Mrs. Al. MacDonald), Westville; Pearl (Mrs. Clarence Cleary), Stellarton.

James David Wright, 35, was the son of Mrs. Maud Wright of Westville and the late Robert Wright, who was killed in the Drummond explosion. His widow is the former Margaret Atkinson of Stellarton. He is survived by two sons, James, 12, and Dennis 10; brothers Charles Forrester in Alberta, Clifford in Worcester, Mass., George in Labrador, John Linton in Montreal, Robert in Westville; sisters, Hilda (Mrs. Vernon Burke) Worcester, Margaret (Mrs. Ernest Edwards) Montreal, Clara (Mrs. Ludgie Rousseau) Southbridge, Mass. Another brother Percy was drowned at Brown's Point a few years ago. The members of the family in the United States are on the way home and funeral arrangements have not been completed.

Edward Henry MacCallum, 36, was the son of Henry MacCallum of New Glasgow and the late Mrs. MacCallum. His widow is the former Bertha Fitzgerald of Stellarton and he is survived by two sons Edward, 2, and Clifford 1. Surviving sisters and brothers are Grace (Mrs. Clifford Carr), Stellarton;

Mildred (Mrs. Fred Chambers), Halifax; Hector at home; Robert in the Army, Montreal; Reginald in Middleton; Helen (Mrs. William Beamish) Halifax; and Anna (Mrs. Roy Berge), Halifax.

Robert Alexander Davidson, who would have been 24 in June, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Davidson, Evansville. His widow was the former Gertrude Foster of Evansville and they had two sons, who survive, Ronnie, 4, and Reg, 3. He also is survived by five brothers and two sisters, John, Rutherford Street; Charles, Foster Avenue; George W. and Clarence at home and Albert who is employed in Montreal; Mary and Elizabeth at home.

Robert Bruce MacNutt, 32, was a resident of Acadia Avenue, Stellarton, and is survived by his widow, the former Murdena Wilson, and two children, Sharon, 8, and Robert, 10 months. He was born in Westville, where his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George MacNutt, reside. He is also survived by three brothers, Vincent, Harlan and Lindsay, Westville, and four sisters, Mrs. Doris Ritchie and Mona, Toronto; Lorraine (Mrs. Keith Rankin) Stellarton, and Helen (Mrs. Joe Robertson) Plymouth.

John Bain Nicholson, 33, Poole Avenue, Stellarton, was married to the former Kathleen Beryl Stewart and there are three children, Patsy Diane, 9, Garfield Bain, 6 past, and Lucetta Margaret, who was a year old last August.

Two sister, Lucetta (Mrs. Victor Webster), Quebec, and Jean (Mrs. Minnie Livis) of Montreal, and a brother, William, in Hamilton, also survive. His father, Archie Nicholson, was electrocuted at Sinclair's Corner in 1924 when he was returning from work at the Allan Shaft. Four years ago he lost his mother, the former Margaret Bain, who was killed in an automobile accident on the Trenton airport road. A brother, Dave, died as he was about to leave for work in Levis, Quebec, and his stepfather, Philip Hickson, also died the same year. Hugh Nicholson of the U. I. C. is an uncle of the deceased, and Don Nicholson, U. M. W. local secretary is a cousin.

David Russell, 60, Irving St., Westville, is survived by his widow, the former Elizabeth Mae Fraser of Westville. They had no family. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Angus Russell of Westville predeceased him. He is also survived by three brothers, James, Boston, Mass.; Angus and William, Westville; and two sisters, Elizabeth (Mrs. Anson Grover), Connecticut; Catherine (Mrs. Albert Piers), Dorchester, Mass., who are coming home tonight. One sister Janet (Mrs. Bernard McGarvey), and a brother, Robert, predeceased him.

Archie Hayman, 63, was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John David Hayman and was a resident of Westville all his life, residing on Victoria Street. He is survived by his widow, the former Martha MacEwan; three sons, David in Germany; Bill in St. Louis, Miss.; and Russell in London, England; two daughters, Rosalind (Mrs. Raymond MacLeod) and Catherine at home. There are 13 grandchildren. One daughter Mary, died at the age of three. Also surviving are one brother, Donald, Hoyt St., Westville; five sisters Mary (Mrs. James MacDonald), Ethel (Mrs. Gus Roy), Florence (Mrs. Jack Muir), Annie (Mrs. George Reid), all of Westville; and Margaret (Mrs. William Hatfield) of Stellarton. Mr. Hayman was a member of the Knights of Pythias.

Robert Lorimer Cunningham, 45-year-old resident of Foxbrook Road, was a son of Josiah and the late Mrs. Cunningham, also of Foxbrook Road. His widow was the former Bertha Martin of Coalburn and there are two children, Robert 15, and Beverly 8. He is also survived by three brothers, Harry, Waterside; John, Westville; Fraser, Six Mile Brook; and one sister, Effie (Mrs. Earl Pemberton), Bear Brook.

Samuel Campbell, Murray's Lane, Westville, who was 52 last September, is survived by his widow, the former Annie Florence MacAulay of Pugwash; one son Samuel, two daughters, Jean, (Mrs. David White); Mary, (Mrs. Fred Wright), all of Westville. One sister Sadie, (Mrs. Herbert G. Bovey), Somerville, Mass., also survives, as well as two half-brothers in the West, and a cousin in Springhill. A sister Jean died in 1925. He was the son of Alexander Campbell of Ayreshire, Scotland, and his mother was the former Agnes Muckle of Belfast, Ireland, both coming to Canada, and marrying in Westville.

Leonard Wheatley, 30, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wheatley, Mount William. Also surviving are two brothers, Fred at home, and Ronald in Thorburn; two sisters, Mary, (Mrs. Hector Sibille), Mount William; and Eileen (Mrs. Merle Lee) of Milltown, N. B.

Two Brothers, Brothers-in-law Among Victims

Two brothers and two brothers-in-law were among those who lost their lives in the MacGregor Mine explosion yesterday.

Albert and Arthur Moss were two brothers, both members of a family long associated with the mining industry in the county. A resident of Sylvester, Arthur had driven all the way in yesterday morning and when it was found there was no work, he was given a priority for a job because of the distance.

Married To Sisters

Archie Hayman of Westville and William MacLeod, New Glasgow, were the brothers-in-law. They are married to two sisters, formerly of Westville.

Winton Sample was a son of Alex Sample, superintendent of all Acadia collieries.

Ed Arthrell was a son of Henry Arthrell, underground manager of the MacGregor.

Joe Nearing was a son of Dominic Nearing, for 12 years U. M. W. District Board member at Stellarton.

Condition Of Injured Miners Said "Good"

NEW GLASGOW—Condition of James Hawboldt, Westville, and William Sewell, Stellarton, was reported to be good at the Aberdeen Hospital this morning although both men were having difficulties in breathing, believed due to inhaling dust and flames from the explosion at the McGregor yesterday.

The two, employed as engineers, were some distance from the scene of the blast but were hit by it and suffered burns. They were reported "pretty sore" today.

Fraser Lorimer, also below at the time, escaped most lightly at all. He got first aid treatment at the mine and then stood by during the afternoon, helping.

Rushed To Hospital

Hawboldt and Sewell were rushed to the Hospital where preparations for more were being hurried.

A Hospital spokesman said simply this morning: "We were hoping to get more but they told us they didn't think we would get them. They were right." The staff had been setting up extra cots and making ready to ship nearly cured cases home. With 138 in, the staff had no choice but that if more men from the mine needed attention.

Rush Blood Plasma To New Glasgow

Minutes after news of the disaster reached Halifax, an R.C.M.P. cruiser car from the Halifax detachment was speeding over icy roads with an emergency cargo of blood and plasma for the Aberdeen Hospital at New Glasgow where the injured were to be taken.

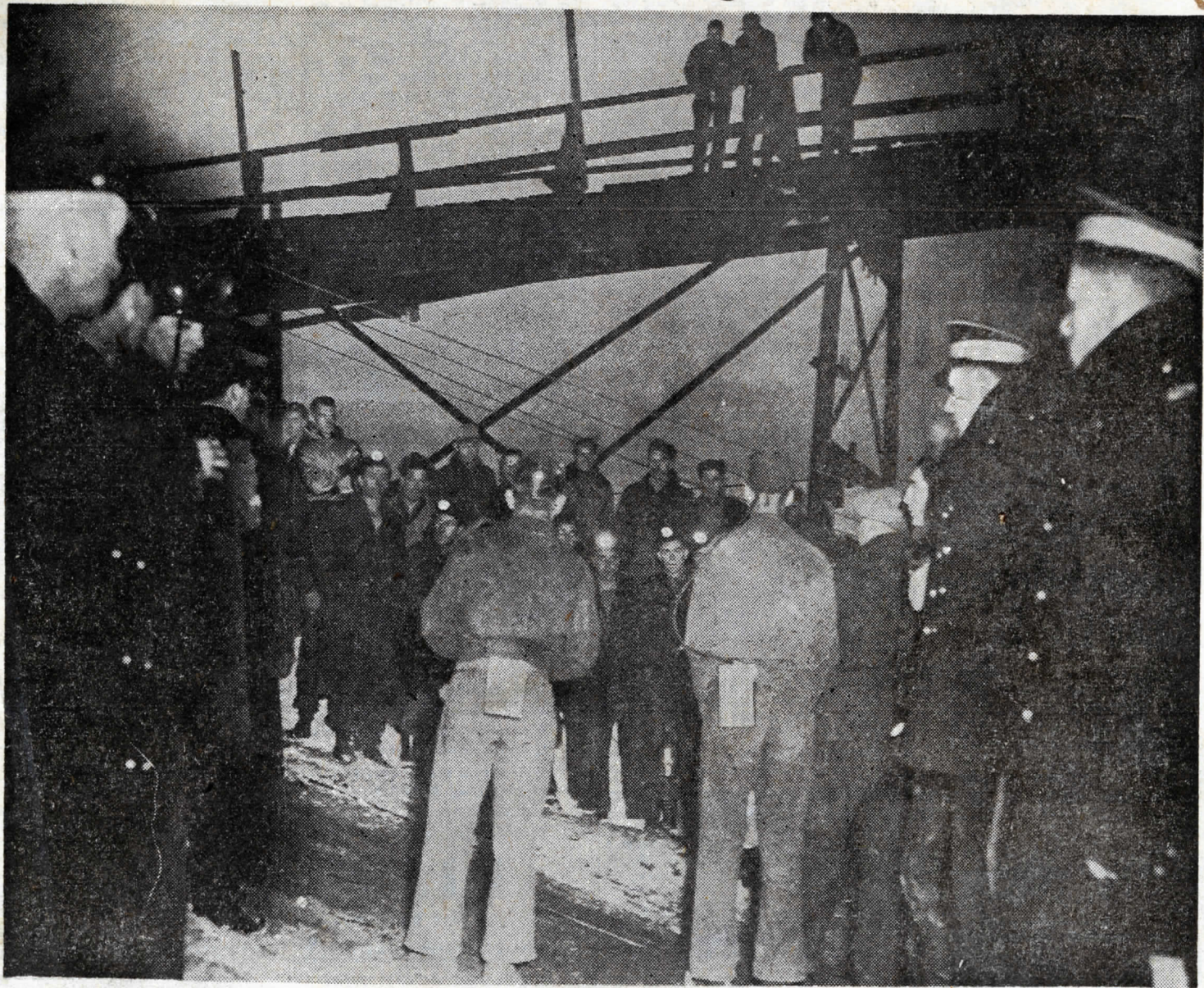
Red Cross officials had phoned the hospital to notify them the emergency shipment was on its way and reported they would stand by in case more were needed. It was not known at that time that only a fraction of the miners in the explosion escaped death in the blast.

Sufficient Supply

The Blood Donor Clinic at Halifax, hard pressed for blood during the last few months, breathed a sigh of relief over the fact they had enough blood on hand to supply nearly any emergency. A clinic then underway and over 300 pints collected from the crew of the aircraft carrier Magnificent had added considerable stock to the clinic's usual supply.

In the car carrying the blood to the victims was Inspector E. L. Martin, officer commanding the Halifax Division of the R.C.M.P., who went to the scene to direct police work there, and Corporal Kenneth Fraser of the Halifax detachment.

Tense Scene At McGregor Pithead



AT THE PIT HEAD — Their faces tense, a group of miners, their headlamps gleaming fitfully in the growing dusk, take a few minutes rest before continuing their grim task of recovering bodies at the McGregor Mine in Stellarton where 19 miners lost their lives in an explosion yesterday. Mounted Police can be seen keeping back crowds of the curious, while overhead another group watches the sombre scene.—(Hannight Photo).

Rescue Crews On Grim Task

The grim task of recovering the bodies fell to the rescue crews, trained by veteran Draegerman Jim White of Moose River disaster fame, and directed by Mackenzie Flemming. Three crews of five each went into action immediately after the blast took place.

By 4 p.m. they returned with the first two bodies. Their grim work went on throughout the afternoon and night, and it was not until 11 p.m. that the last of the 19 victims had been brought to the surface.

Ambulances and hearses waited at the pithead, and removed the bodies to Westville, Stellarton and New Glasgow funeral homes. Most of the victims were badly burned and mangled. Rescue workers said they had been blown against the mine wall when the first "stop" blew out.

Eyewitness Stories Untold

Reporters and photographers were barred from Aberdeen hospital tonight, and were unable to get eyewitness accounts from Hawboldt and Sewell.

Only they know the true story of what happened one mile underground, where the blast occurred. Winston Sample,

Draeger Job Monday Said To Be One Of Toughest Yet

STELLARTON—Down through the years the draeger crew of the Acadia Coal Company has gained fame for bravery and efficiency displayed in the face of grave danger. The group added to an already enviable reputation, in the Monday McGregor Mine disaster.

The job they were confronted with is said by veteran miners to be the toughest yet. Unfavorable conditions, along with steepness of the mine, added to their difficulties.

Called Back To Duty

A draeger team captained by Bob Hoegg made the first descent into the deeps. It was not a new experience for Hoegg by any means. Still young in years but long on experience (he has been a member of the crew for 12 years and team captain for seven) Hoegg captained the first team to enter the Allan Shaft after the blow in April, 1950. His team rescued the men at that time. He was back on the job for the reopening.

Due to the dense smoke which made lamps useless, it was necessary to grope around for the victims. The initial two located were first examined to ascertain if they were still alive, then carried out and taken to the surface.

While some of the dead were lying face down, the majority were on their backs with hands across the face. Winton Sample, mine overman, when found, had a watch hanging from the bib of his overalls. Rescue men claim the time-piece was still running.

Draegermen first entered the mine early in the morning to work on the stoppings. Due to the fire that was prevalent, their safety equipment was necessary. When this work was completed, about 12.30, the barefaced workers took over, those who later lost their lives in the explosion.

Those working on the stoppings were Draegermen Bain Nicholson, (one of the victims) William Scully, Ritchie Hawboldt, Jim Dooley, Woody MacLean and Captain Bob Hoegg. MacKenzie Fleming, rescue superintendent, accompanied the men.

Hoegg had been off duty about an hour when called back, not taking time to change into working apparel, pulling on draeger equipment for a hurried trip down to the scene of the blast. No falls were encountered on the way in, but fallen timber obstructed the road here and there.

After making the first run the Hoegg squad rested up while the other two teams went into action. They were back on the job again for the last swing in which the final ten bodies were taken up.

Draegermen's Captain Had Lucky Break

STELLARTON, Jan. 14—
Draegerman Captain Henry
Heighton, of Stellarton, was
thanking his lucky stars tonight
as he and his squad worked
feverishly to get the bodies of
their buddies out of the charred
workings of the McGregor Mine.

Heighton had been working on
day shift up till this week in the
immediate vicinity of where the
explosion occurred in the mine.
He was scheduled to change over
to 3 p.m. to 12 midnight shift to-
day, but was notified this morn-
ing about fire breaking out in
the mine and that there would
be no work for the afternoon
shift. It was 2.30 p.m. when he
was notified to go out for draeger
work.

Telegrams Of Sympathy Sent To Mayor Sobey

STELLARTON — Telegrams of sympathy received by Mayor Frank Sobey included: Lt. Gov. J. A. D. MacCurdy: "Will you kindly convey my profound sympathy to the families of the miners who lost their lives in yesterday's explosion."

Premier A. L. Macdonald: "On my own behalf and on behalf of all by colleagues in government I wish to express by deepest sympathy over the great disaster that has struck the town of Stellarton. Other towns too have suffered but your town has the greatest load of grief. I should be glad if you would tender to the relatives of all the deceased miners our condolences in which I am sure all the people of Nova Scotia join."

Hon. A. H. MacKinnon, Minister of Mines: "As mayor of Stellarton, I wish to express to you my feelings of deep regret over the terrible tragedy at Stellarton caused by the explosion at the McGregor Mine. I would appreciate your extending my heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved families."

Kings Road Motors, Sydney: "Sincerest sympathy in your tragic disaster."

Mayor Gordon S. Kinley, Halifax: "City of Halifax extends deepest sympathy to your town in its hour of trouble. If there is anything we can do for you please advise."

J. G. Glassey, Mayor of Truro: "Citizens of Truro saddened and chocked at the great disaster that has happened in your town. On their behalf extend deepest sympathy and hope for no further loss of life."

The mayor of Antigonish and Mayor Bennett of New Glasgow telephoned to Mayor Sobey, expressing sympathy of their communities and offering any assistance possible.

Favorable Report On Injured Men in Aberdeen Hospital

NEW GLASGOW — William Sewell and James Hawboldt, who were injured in the MacGregor mine explosion Monday, were said to be as well as can be expected at the Aberdeen Hospital this morning.

Sewell is a cousin of Brenton White, Westville, who was killed in the explosion. They had worked together in the mine for some time.

Message Received By U. M. W. Local From John L. Lewis

STELLARTON — John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, wired the following message of sympathy to the executive of Local 4481 yesterday:

"The officers and entire membership of the United Mine Workers of America are shocked by the disaster in Stellarton which took the lives of 19 miners. This explosion following on the heels of the terrible catastrophe at West Frankfurt, Ill., during the Yuletide season should bring home to all the citizens of Canada and the United States that these recurring horrors in the mining industry are totally unnecessary and can be prevented. It is shocking indeed to contemplate the degree of human tragedy. Every serious-minded citizen will hope that public authorities will move to take the necessary legislative steps to ensure safe-guarding the lives of the men who mine the coal so essential to modern enterprise and our accepted way of living. Every member of the union wherever situated will join in extending condolences to the grieving families of Local 4481 and to all those affected."

The message was signed by Mr. Lewis, Thomas Kennedy and John Owens.

60 Entered Pit Barefaced To Aid Draegermen

STELLARTON—When buddies are in trouble, fellow miners flock to the rescue, regardless of the danger involved. All but obscured in the background but none-the-less important in the recovery of the bodies of the 19 miners who perished in the Monday explosion, were 60 workmen who entered the pit barefaced to lend a helping hand to the draegermen.

Asked by company officials to aid in the work, the men selected were more than willing, pitching in and working constantly until the last body had been brought to the surface.

A Company spokesman was lavish in his praise of the men. "There were any number of volunteers," he said. "They asked to be called if their services were required."

The men waited near the bottom of the pit to transport the dead to the surface on the riding cars, being unable to proceed to the explosion area minus draeger equipment.

Arrangements Being Made For Funerals

STELLARTON—The sad duty of preparing Christian burial for the 19 victims of the McGregor's searing blast yesterday was going on this morning with no definite arrangements made to date.

The effect of the tragedy in the homes was just beginning to be felt fully as the stunning shock of the news wore off.

The loss of so many men cast a gloom over the entire community as the word spread rapidly. Many homes were touched directly by the loss of a loved one and relative; many more by the loss of a tried friend.

Group Church Funerals

The News understands there is a possibility of group church funerals and that caskets will be closed; most of the bodies were burned and some of the men were injured, probably by flying debris.

It is also understood that H. C. MacQuarrie, Stellarton, is handling 12 of the funerals; Osborne Eagles of Westville the other seven. Neither was available this morning, being out consulting the families as to their wishes.

Today men who had striven with all their energy in the rescue work yesterday had time to think of their loss. The women of the affected families and the friends had had the agony of the waiting period yesterday.

Most of the women folk of the men concerned stayed in their homes. The men not occupied in rescue work stood around the pithead or gathered in groups around the Albion property, ready to act if their help was needed.

Despite the cold after the sun went down, several hundred men and women were coming and going all the time until the last body was brought up. The crowd was solemn.

It was a grim scene. At times a man could be seen wracked by sobs for a lost son; or a son in tears for a father below. Sympathy for all those affected was felt throughout the watchers; heads would be seen nodding recognition.

Talking was at a minimum; men and women stood silently, moving back out of the way when bobbing lights indicated men coming up or moving into place to go down.

Bodies were carefully identified when brought to the surface; no information was given out by company or men until they were sure.

The funeral of the late Mrs. Herbert Gordon will take place Saturday from the home at Eger-ton. Service at 1.30 o'clock. Interment in Glenbard Cemetery.

The funeral of the late Samuel Campbell, Water Street, West-ville, will be held from St. Paul United Church on Saturday at 1:30 p. m. Interment: Auburn Cemetery.

The funeral of the late Archibald Hayman, Victoria Street, West-ville, will be held from St. Paul United Church on Saturday at 1.30 p. m. Interment: Auburn Cemetery.

The funeral of the late Leonard Wheatley, Mount William, will be held from the Pentecostal Church, Marsh Street, New Glasgow, on Saturday at 3.30 p. m. Interment: Auburn Cemetery, Westville.

The funeral of the late Arthur Moss, Loch Broom, will be held from St. Paul United Church on Saturday at 1.30 p. m. Interment: Auburn Cemetery. The remains are resting at the home of his sister, Mrs. Stewart Murdoch, Drummond Road, Westville.

The funeral of the late Mrs. Dr. Hugh Munroe, George St., will take place Saturday afternoon. Service in Westminster Church at 2 o'clock. Interment: Lorne Street Cemetery.

Funeral Services For Victims Of Mine Blast Will Begin Tomorrow

STELLARTON—Funeral services for the men who lost their lives in Monday's McGregor Mine disaster will be held in their different communities and according to their faiths starting tomorrow.

The first service will be that at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Stellarton, for the late Joseph Nearing. The body will leave the home in time for 9 o'clock Mass.

Five members of Christ Church will be buried that afternoon following service there. The funeral of J. H. Mailman, senior warden of the church, will be held at 1.30. James Wright and Bain Nicholson will have a joint service at 2.45 and an hour later a service will be held for Brenton White and Robert Davidson. All five will be buried at the church's cemetery where graves were being dug this morning after snow had been removed.

The service will be taken by the rector, Rev. A. E. Kingsbury. He will be assisted by Rev. G. R. Thompson, Truro, Rural Dean of Amherst Deanery, Rev. W. A. Anderson, rector of St. Bee's, Westville, and Rev. Joseph Abbott,

New Glasgow.

Thursday evening service will be held for three members of Sharon-St. John United Church in their homes. On Friday morning two more services will be held at 11 o'clock and another at 1 p. m., two of these being Presbyterian.

On Friday afternoon at two thirty, a mass church funeral service will be held for these of the United and Presbyterian faiths.

The first Thursday evening service will be for Albert Moss at his home, Acadia Ave., at 7.30. The second service will be for Thomas Carpenter at his Pleasant Ave. home and will be at 8.30. The third for Winton Semple will be held from his home on Acadia Avenue at 9.30. All will be conducted by Rev. R. D. Macintosh.

On Friday morning Mr. Macintosh will lead the service, for Edward Arthrell from the home of his father, Harry, on Cameron's Lane at 11 a. m. At the same hour, Rev. M. Y. Fraser will conduct the service for Edward MacCallum at his home, Brown Row. At 1 p. m., Mr. Fraser will conduct

FUNERAL SERVICES

(Continued from Page 1)

the service for R. H. MacNutt at his home, Poole Avenue.

Following the mass service in Sharon-St. John, burial will take place at Brookside Cemetery of these men, provided that is possible. Heavy snows have made it difficult to locate lots in time to get the graves opened up. Lodge committal services will take place at the cemetery.

In Westville it was stated by Undertaker Osborne Eagles that the funerals would probably be held on Saturday, this so as not to conflict with services in Stellarton.

"But we haven't been able to get anything definite yet."

Mr. Eagles said the service for Leonard Wheatley of Mount William would be held Saturday afternoon at 3.30 at the Pentecostal Church, Marsh Street, New Glasgow, with Rev. I. D. Raymer officiating.

District U. M. W. officers, who came here as soon as possible after the explosion, will stay on for the funerals and the investi-

Funerals of Five Disaster Victims In Century-Old Christ Church Yesterday

STELLARTON — Five flower-covered mounds in Christ Church cemetery today mark the final resting place of five victims of the disastrous McGregor explosion, which brought sorrow and heartbreak to 19 families in this coal mining area this week.

Yesterday afternoon hundreds of grief-stricken relatives, neighbors, friends, fellow-workmen and mine officials slowly wended their way homeward from the century-old church where three funeral services for the five young men had been held.

The church was crowded to capacity and scores of people had to stand outside with a sharp, cold wind making it uncomfortable. Almost all remained for the services which lasted all afternoon and as each group of mourners returned home, others arrived.

At 1.30 the funeral service for the late John Henry Mailman, church warden, who served with the Ambulance Corps in World War II, was conducted by Rev. A. E. Kingsbury, assisted by Rev. G. R. Thompson, Truro, Rural Dean of Amherst Deanery, who read the Scripture Lesson - Corinthians 15; Rev. Joseph Abbott of St. George's Church, New Glasgow, who read the comforting words of the Shepherd's Psalm. Mr. Kingsbury gave the final prayer and conducted the committal service.

Two favorite hymns were sung "Unto the Hills" and "A Few More Years Shall Roll."

Bearing the flag-draped casket to its resting place in the family lot were: Veterans Clifford Smith, Ray Stancombe, Hector Marcipont, Sidney Hopton, Charles Brown and George Colburne.

Double Funeral

At 2:30 two more flag-draped caskets were born into the church, those of John Bain Nicholson, an Army veteran, and James David Wright, who served with the Army in Italy, and the Anglican funeral service was carried out. Psalm 39 was read by Rev. Mr. Abbott, who also gave the final prayer, while Rev. W. A. Anderson of Trenton and Westville took the lesson.

The choir again led in singing the hymns "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" and "The Old Rugged Cross" and later the bodies of the two men who had worked together were laid side by side in the graveyard where Mr. Kingsbury conducted the committal services. "Reveille" and the "Last Post" were sounded by Bugler Robert Stewart.

Pall bearers for Mr. Nicholson were: John Scully, Archibald Lambly, William Farris, Charles Morris, Blaine Cheek and George L. MacDonald, fellow workmen and close friends.

Pallbearers for Mr. Wright were Raymond Stancombe, Clifford Smith, George Wilson, Clem Roy, Robert Sarson and Charles Brown.

Second Double Funeral

About 4 o'clock funeral services began for Robert Alexander Davidson and Brenton White. Psalm 90 was read by Mr. Anderson, Scripture by Mr. Abbott and Mr. Thompson gave the closing prayers.

"The Old Rugged Cross" had again been selected by loved ones and "God Be With Us Till We Meet Again" was also sung.

Committal service was conducted by Mr. Kingsbury and members of the Orange Lodge, of which Mr. White was a member, attended a body and held their service at the grave. These bodies, were buried alongside the former two.

Bearing the Davidson casket were Frank MacKay, John Doyle, John Duff, Buddy MacKay, Tom Connors and Donald Fraser.

Pall bearers for Mr. White were, Frank Hines, Alex Hayes, James Murrell, Jack Taylor, Arthur Eaton and Charles Morgan.

FUNERAL NOTICES

The funeral of the late Leonard Wheatley, Mount William, will be held Saturday afternoon at 3.30 at the Pentecostal Church, Marsh Street, New Glasgow.

FUNERAL NOTICES

The funeral of the late Joseph Nearing will be held tomorrow (Thursday) from the home on Stellar Street, Stellarton, in time for 9 o'clock Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church.

The funeral of the late J. H. Mailman will be held Thursday at Christ Church, Stellarton at 1.30 p. m. Interment at the church cemetery.

The funeral of the late James Wright will be held Thursday at Christ Church, Stellarton, at 2.45 p. m. Interment at the church cemetery.

The funeral of the late Bain Nicholson will be held Thursday at Christ Church, Stellarton, at 2.45 p. m. Interment at the church cemetery.

The funeral of the late Brenton White will be held Thursday afternoon at Christ Church, Stellarton at 3.45. Interment at Christ Church Cemetery.

The funeral of the late Robert Davidson will be held Thursday afternoon at Christ Church, Stellarton, at 3.45. Interment at Christ Church Cemetery.

The funeral service of the late Albert Moss will be held from his home Acadia Avenue, Thursday, Jan. 17, at 7.30 p. m.

The funeral service of the late Thomas Carpenter will be held from his home Pleasant Avenue Thursday, Jan. 17, at 8.30 p. m.

The funeral service of the late Winton Sample will be held from his home Acadia Avenue Thursday, Jan. 17, at 9.30 p. m.

The funeral service of the late Edward MacCallum will be held from his home Brown Row Friday morning at 11.00 o'clock.

The funeral service of the late Edward Arthrell will be held from the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Arthrell, Cameron's Lane, Friday morning at 11 o'clock.

The funeral service of the late R. H. MacNutt will be held from his home Poole Avenue, on Friday afternoon at 1.00 o'clock.

McGregor Mine Explosion Draws World Attention

STELLARTON—The tragedy at the McGregor focused attention of the world on this mining town yesterday and today.

Newsmen rushed in from provincial points; more distant papers called local newsmen and ex-newsmen when they could get through on the toll circuits—eager for any and all details.

A Toronto paper flew men down to Halifax last night; they were in Stellarton today.

Both the Canadian Press and British United Press, major news agencies in Canada, had men here by the evening.

Two men motored in from Sydney, where interests are closely allied with those here. They gathered up a story and then motored back in this morning's early hours.

News Slow Getting Out

Because of the need to keep the one line from the mine reserved for emergency use, news was slow in getting out. The News got its information out for first brief coverage of the accident by walking (and thumbing a sleigh-ride) to Mac's Garage on the Stellarton highway approach.

As other newsmen arrived, they too had to walk to the highway, get a car there and phone from either Stellarton or New Glasgow. Outside newsmen were staved off on long distance phone calls while the first emergency existed by Maritime Tel deliberately reserving toll lines for rescue work communications.

Cameramen were discouraged, particularly at the pit head where the flashbulbs were not welcomed by men concerned with explosions and their colleagues.

"We don't like it because it reminds us of the explosion," one miner told a visiting photographer disgruntled at being shooed away. But some pictures were taken. Big outside newspapers and news agencies were dickering for their use during today's early morning hours.

Inquiry Not Likely Until First Of Week

STELLARTON—Best opinion available this morning was that the investigation into the McGregor Mine tragedy will not get underway until the first of the week, at least.

The News could get no direct quotes but feeling was general that the investigation would take second place to the funeral services, most of which have now been arranged.

Test Gas Samples

Meantime senior company officials and five draegarmen were below in the McGregor this morning. They went down to the temporary stopping and brought back tubes of gas which are now being analyzed. Reports on these were not available at press time.

Because the single line to the pit office is still held for emergency calls only, The News was not able to get much information on what had been discovered underground.

Shortly after noon, however, it was learned the investigating party had returned to the surface and were in the washhouse getting cleaned up.

Accompanying the draegarmen were H. C. M. Gordon, R. P. Nicholson, H. S. Haslam and Louis Frost, top men of Dominion Coal.

Local representatives of the Mines Department, Harold Lowe and George Vacheresse, were also at the pit.

While there were hints from Halifax of the official investigation getting underway here on Friday at 2.30 with County Judge Welsford Macdonald in the chair, nobody here took that seriously.

At that hour a mass funeral service for Stellarton United and Presbyterian Church victims will be being held and all company and union officers will be present as well as many of the McGregor and Albion workers.

The Albion remained closed today.

General Manager Suggests Spontaneous Combustion Of Oily Waste May Have Set Off Explosive Mixture At Edge Of Gob

STELLARTON — Spontaneous combustion of something like oily waste which would break down quicker than wood and generate sufficient heat to set off the explosive mixture at the edge of the gob was the cause of the McGregor Mine explosion a week ago Monday, General Manager H. C. M. Gordon suggested at the concluding session of the official inquiry yesterday.

Judge Congratulates All on Creditable And Amicable Manner

STELLARTON—"I think we have heard everyone who could throw light on the subject and I must congratulate all on the creditable and amicable manner in which the hearing has been conducted," Judge Welsford Macdonald stated yesterday afternoon as he concluded the hearing on the McGregor Mine explosion.

Acting as a commissioner under the Coal Mines Act, Judge Macdonald will weigh the evidence and present a report to the Minister of Mines including such recommendations as he sees fit from the facts.

Emphasizing that as only his opinion but based on his knowledge of mining in Pictou County for more than 20 years, he said he had given the matter every consideration since the blast.

He had never known a heating to develop with such rapidity that an explosion could result so soon, instancing one occasion when it had taken two weeks to track down a fire stink and get stoppings in.

"So I am convinced it was not heating by coal or wood but of something which would heat quickly which is at the seat of the trouble — something like oily waste which would heat without the usual fire signs. Further the oily waste must have been in the vicinity of fine coal dust.

Fine Coal Accumulates

"My reason for saying this is that such fine coal accumulates at our bankheads. I know of a fire starting from a spark of a welder's outfit landing in fine coal and travelling some distance before it was noticed. That was true at our bankhead fire at Springhill and we had another like it at Dominion No. 4.

"The heating must have been close to the fringe of the gas blanket and if the heat spread to the fine coal the stink would be detected. But it wouldn't break into active flame but would be hot enough to ignite the gas in the fringe.

"That is the only theory I can develop to explain the circumstances."

Asked by Freeman Jenkins if the short circuiting of the air by the opened door made any unfortunate contribution, he added he had thought that over and was inclined to believe if the door hadn't been opened the gas blanket would not have descended delaying the action of oxygen, and the blast would have come earlier.

"When the door was closed the gas was pushed back by the air and the heating started again. This is only my opinion."

Liable to Heating

Mr. Gordon prefaced his opinion by stating that all Stellarton mines are liable to spontaneous heating in either the long wall or pillar wastes. Oxygen must be excluded and that was done by laying down a gas blanket through the area.

At the upper end of the blanket the gas was complete, methane in most mines but a mixture of methane and carbon dioxide in the McGregor.

"That 100 per cent blanket continues down, gradually mixed with air until at the edge of the blanket it is explosive at all times. The ventilation circuits carry past the working places and hold the fringe back from the working places but that depends on barometric pressure. It moves in when the glass falls and for that reason in the pillar drawing sections it can become dirty. Gas comes in and fouls the places.

"At all times the fringe is explosive."

Symptoms of Both

Asked about the gas that made the men sick Sunday night, he noted he had asked questions of symptoms himself, trying to draw from that what the gas was. The symptoms described seemed to be those of both gases in the mine. The pains in the chest seemed indication of carbon monoxide.

Asked about suggestions to prevent recurrence, he stated in his time at Acadia it had been necessary to close off many fires with stoppings and there never had been such an explosion but now it will be necessary to see that "absolutely no oil or oily wastes are left in pillar wastes; every care taken to see no oil is left."

"And shouldn't the men be withdrawn for 24 hours?" questioned the union chief.

"After our experience of Jan. 14, that will have to be the case. Our practice of the past was when we thought there was no danger."

Dual Capacity

Asked about examiner-shot firers having dual capacity, the general manager said he had no objection to both jobs being done provided the men had time to do their jobs. In the pits here he thought the safest thing was to have the firer do the examining.

"But isn't there a tendency of one man acting in dual capacity to neglect one duty for another?" he was asked.

"I don't think so," was the reply. "In the case you mentioned of a hung shot I can see him held up on completing his rounds but he would have to report that to his opposite number coming on and that man would have to examine the uncovered area first.

"Every examiner must be aware of the Coal Mines Act regulations and it is up to him to inform the manager if he cannot cover his territory."

Asked about fire stink still in the McGregor, he said there was "aftersmell" which would continue for some little time yet.

"The explosion definitely would have been worse had not the officials and men building the stoppings not used a lot of stone dust behind them. That minimized the explosion."

Questioned from the floor about examiners carrying test tubes, he said a trained man could detect fire stink quicker than any apparatus.

Mine Has Good Record; Expected To Be Re-Opened

STELLARTON — The McGregor Mine, which exploded to bring heartbreak to the County yesterday, was one of the least troublesome of the mines in this area.

So far as could be found out, it has never had so serious an explosion before. Most of the other mines have bad records of past explosions which have taken heavy toll of human life.

The McGregor, in recent months, has been the "big producer" of the Stellarton area. With the Shaft closed and the Albion petering out, reliance on the McGregor increased. Men were shifted from the nearby Albion as places there were worked out and new ones developed in the McGregor.

400 EMPLOYED.

More than 400 men were employed at the stricken pit up until the time of the explosion. While nobody could be quoted when this was written it seemed understood by all the mine would be re-opened, with the explosion sealed off.

But again nobody would be quoted as to when. Consultations between company and Department officials would take place on this and the time would depend on circumstances. Certainly there would be no re-opening until there was a surety of safety.

The toll yesterday was the worst to strike Pictou County since 1918 when the Allan Shaft blew and took 88 miners. The Shaft blew several more times before it was closed but never with as serious a loss of life.

Trouble at the McGregor has been along the line of "fires"—where the smell of burning gas is noticed. The Stellarton field is known for this, believed due to the length of time mining has been going on here and also to the way the seams have been faulted and twisted in underground disturbances of past ages.

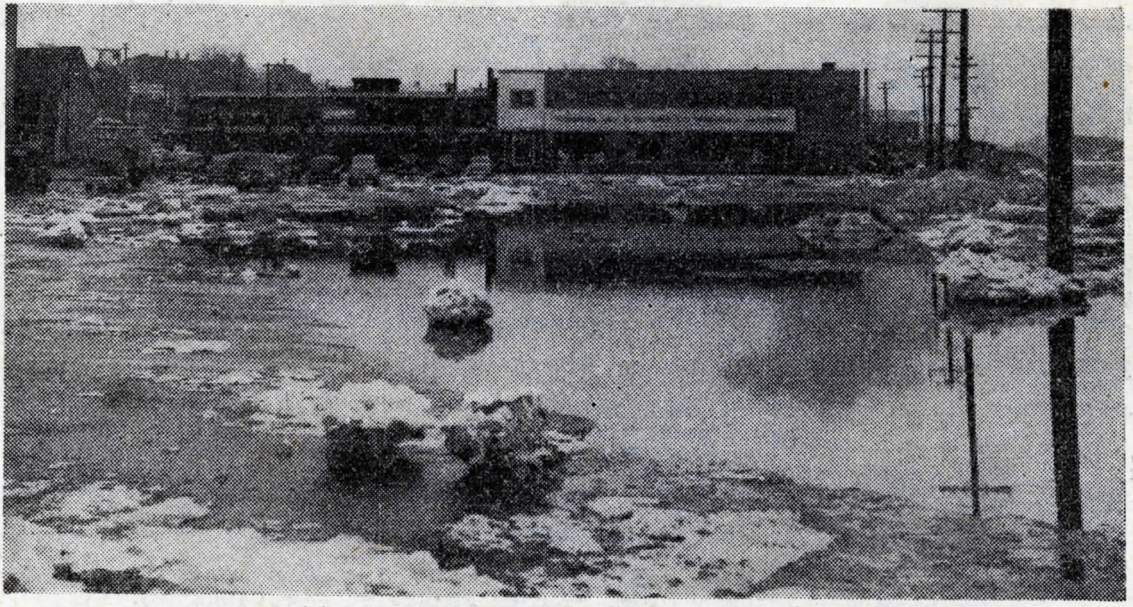
TREATED AS ROUTINE

The practice of handling these "fires", which only rarely means actual flames in sight or even smoke, has been highly developed here and so yesterday morning was treated as routine; the mine was shut down in its ordinary work and the crew picked to build the stopping.

Ordinarily that and constant checking of air and gas conditions in the rest of the mine is sufficient. In a day or two mining has been safe afterwards.

What happened yesterday to make the difference may come out at the official inquiry which will follow but miners yesterday doubted it; it was "one of those things," the unexplainable forces of nature suddenly let loose.

Puzzling to men whose duties include keeping the records at the mine was the fact that trouble in any pit is most apt to come on a falling barometer. But yesterday the "glass" was rising.



BEAUTIFUL MILL-POND APPEARANCE of a large section of the parking grounds Thursday morning gives little indication of the roaring turbulence Wednesday night when the East River overflowed the bank and hurled big chunks of ice well up towards the Goodman and Thompson and Sutherland buildings. The river backed up into many of the cellars in the central business section. In the above picture are seen some of the hunks of ice which were left behind as the river level slowly returned to normal.

Deputy Mines Inspector Witness At Investigation

Nurses Collect \$72 For March of Dimes At Game Last Night

NEW GLASGOW—Members of the Registered Nurses' Association collected \$72.00 for the March of Dimes at the hockey game at the Stadium last night. The Lions Club, which is conducting the local campaign to raise funds to fight polio, waxed enthusiastic this morning about the support received from the nurses, the Hockey Club and the public in general.

The nurses with the March of Dimes cans went among the crowd last night between the second and third periods. It was only one of numerous ways the club is using to boost the fund total.

To Discontinue Fox-Raccoon County Bounty

PICTOU—After one year's trial the municipal council decided there had been enough bounties paid on foxes and raccoons and at the annual session passed a resolution amending the amended by-law by striking out the words and figures "for each fox or raccoon, \$2.00"

The resolution didn't pass without some opposition but not enough to defeat it. Councillor W. S. MacLean said that although last year the bounties had amounted to "quite a sum" he hadn't heard any criticism against the by-law and there had been a resolution from the Pictou County Farmers' Association, asking that the bounty be continued.

Councillor W. Grant Blair stated that it was not generally known that the county was paying for this service which had costs them \$4,000 last year.

Highly Decomposed

In addition Councillor Blair mentioned the situation at the county office where highly decomposed snouts were received, sometimes by mail (worms and all). Some 816 checks had been filled out for bounties and this year it might cost the municipal-

STELLARTON — "We know there was an explosion and we know there must have been something to explode the gases," Harold Lowe, deputy mines inspector, told the explosion inquiry yesterday afternoon.

Answering questions of U. M. W. President Jenkins, he said, to have the blast there had to be an explosion mixture and something to set it off.

Asked by his boss, Chief inspector Tom Casey, if he had any opinion on that, he said no. Nor had he personally seen a fire without smoke. He had seen no smoke.

Details Movements

Mr. Lowe detailed his movements during the morning from the time he had been called, in and out of the mine. He had gotten the slight fire smell when he went in, been satisfied all was going well as the morning went on and went home to lunch, taking a test to the Acadia office.

He had been called by George Vacheresse to come back right away, got stuck in the snow and there heard of men trapped and finally got out and to the mine as draegarmen were going below. He had checked about medical and other help and about Springhill and Halifax being notified.

He had gone down with Leonard Macdonald and came back later to return with "Casey and Phillips," department officials.

Witness advised the union chief that he had his safety lamp with him and visited the McGregor many times. His trips were usually with the manager and if he had suggestions to make he did it on the spot and the matters were rectified.

"They were usually about a gate or something like that." He was satisfied with the ventilation in the mine.

"Never have I known of spontaneous combustion which came from a small evidence of heating in its first stages to be the igniting element of an explosion in such a short time."

Have To Come Together

Mr. Lowe said all the gases in the world can be collected together but until they are ignited they do no harm.

"The two have to come together."

He could not tell Mr. Jenkins how the explosion mixture came about nor where. No evidence had been brought out to show the heating had come to the smoke-producing stage.

Mr. Jenkins suggested the heating itself could be a contribut-

UMW Has Number of Recommendations to Prevent Recurrence

STELLARTON — "Our primary purpose throughout this hearing has been to seek to prevent a recurrence of what happened at the McGregor explosion and to this end the U. M. W. has a number of recommendations," Freeman Jenkins stated at the conclusion of hearings.

Invited to speak by Judge Macdonald who "welcomed" suggestions, the union head outlined this program: that the manner of examination of the McGregor be given immediate study by all concerned and the practice of persons acting in dual capacity be discontinued; that all waste or gobs be sealed off where possible; when fire is detected and it is necessary to shut off a section, if conditions allow, that temporary stoppings be erected and all men withdrawn for not less than 24 hours and further that these recommendations be put into the Coal Mines Act.

Tom Casey, of the Department, stated that was being considered now.

James Hawboldt Out of Hospital

WESTVILLE—James Hawboldt, injured in the McGregor Mine explosion January 14, was able to return to his home on Drummond Road Thursday afternoon. He is still suffering from the effects of his injuries and the experience, but his friends will be pleased to hear that his condition is such that he was allowed to return home.

Uruguay Abolishes Presidential Post

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Jan. 26 (AP)—A constitutional change abolishing the presidency of Uruguay and substituting a nine-member executive council for it was officially promulgated yesterday. It becomes effective March 1. The change was approved in a plebiscite Dec. 16.

La Have River Down

HALIFAX, Jan. 26—(CP) — The flooding La Have River reached its peak and fell two feet yesterday, allowing south shore industries to resume operation at New Germany. But the Musqu-

Highly Decomposed

In addition Councillor Blair mentioned the situation at the county office where highly decomposed snouts were received, sometimes by mail (worms and all). Some 816 checks had been filled out for bounties and this year it might cost the municipality \$10,000.

"It's a bleak picture for the farmers," Councillor W. E. MacConnell said. "They are asking for it and I believe they are prepared to pay for it."

Fourteen councillors apparently thought 1,980 snouts were too many for one year with about 100 additional for this month, and voted in favor of amending the by-law and discontinuing the payment of bounties on foxes and raccoons.

Ordered To Pay \$2,300 In Alimony

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 25 (AP) —Henry E. Huntington II, grandson of the railroad magnate, was tapped today for \$2,300 a month in alimony, \$6,000 in lawyers' fees and \$1,500 in court costs. His wife, former model Martha Outlaw, 33, charged Huntington left California for Reno, Nevada, with \$9,000 withdrawn from a bank account, leaving her only \$72 to care for herself and their two sons. The temporary support was sought pending trial of Mrs. Huntington's divorce suit.

CHANGES

(Continued from Page 1)

after Sing had threatened her and her other daughter with "hatchet men," if she told the truth about Sherrie's death.

She got Vickie to believe that a gray-haired man had kidnapped Sherrie by taking Vickie outside and showing her a man getting into a car. She said she told Vickie that the man was taking Sherrie away.

Vickie had told police she pulled away from "the kidnapper" before he snatched Sherrie.

Detective Captain William Browne said questioning would continue today.

Police said they were holding Mrs. Kader, Sing, 45, and Mrs. Kader's mother, Mrs. Dorothea Sing, as material witnesses.

"The two have to come together."

He could not tell Mr. Jenkins how the explosion mixture came about nor where. No evidence had been brought out to show the heating had come to the smoke-producing stage.

Mr. Jenkins suggested the heating itself could be a contributing factor in producing the gas but how did the right mixture with the air come about. "I can't explain what's back in the gob," said witness.

Asked if he thought the door in No. 4 found open had contributed, witness said some gas would come down but when the door closed it would be dissipated by the ventilating system and in a short time all would be back to normal, the other gas being pushed back into the gob.

Mr. Jenkins asked if it would be possible the spontaneous combustion would be around a "tree" or other wood waste left behind in old workings, causing it to go afire and cause the explosion, supposing the right mixture of gas and air to be there.

"Well, that is one supposition," said Mr. Lowe.

"Or perhaps it could be a spark from a fall," added Mr. Jenkins.

Fire Without Smoke

Witness and Mr. Munro then discussed the possibility of a mine fire without smoke. Witness had heard of one at the Allan Shaft but it had been attended to by Mr. Vacheresse of the Department and not himself.

During his duties as deputy inspector he had not come across dangerous practices in the McGregor, he told Mr. Gordon, and he agreed with the procedure adopted there on the day of the explosion, not thinking there was undue bearing in mind there was always danger with a heating.

Asked by Dolhanty if it was necessary to build temporary stoppings, he said such made it more convenient to build the permanent stoppings. They weren't to head off the spontaneous combustion as to better things for the stoppings builders. It was a matter of judgment as to the time available.

He hadn't been asked as to his opinion regarding the permanent stoppings but he had heard from the manager what the plans were and agreed with them.

Discussion On Gas

On the point of men going in where some gas was known to have been, as reported in evidence, he would "definitely" ob-

ject to that. A discussion with fellow department men followed on what constituted sufficient gas under the Coal Mines Act to prohibit working but Dolhanty pointed out his question was based on the point of an examiner coming up and advising the men, during which time the situation might worsen.

Analyst Jack Ross of Acadia Coal identified records of tests made from McGregor the day of the explosion and was questioned by Mr. Jenkins on a note attached stating the stop cocks on one tube were not operating freely.

Opened With Pliers

That was the tube of the 11 o'clock tests, he said, and he had made the note since he had to open the cocks with pliers under the water. That would not affect the test unless it had been interfered with by somebody on the way to him. He had seen no sign of leaks from the tube or cocks when it was placed in water and the cocks were "very secured."

He inspects the tubes as they come to him and they are also inspected at the mine. His complaint was based on the fact the tube stops were hard to handle.

Joe MacPherson testified he had worked at stripping the barrier, cutting various depths according to instructions. Some times they were told to ease off. The pillar started to "run freely" at one place but not the narrow point and "the manager said to back out a piece."

He had seen no dangerous practices nor smelled anything out of the ordinary. While he did not know gas except as gas, he understood fire smell was like kerosene which he would know.

La Have River Down

HALIFAX, Jan. 26— (CP) —The flooding La Have River reached its peak and fell two feet yesterday, allowing south shore industries to resume operation at New Germany. But the Musquodoboit River formed a new ice jam and water rose two to four feet over the eastern shore train line, and was still rising late last night. All rail traffic was halted.

A worktrain was breaking ice off the Canadian National Railways line to New Germany and traffic was expected to resume today.

Elsewhere in the province conditions had returned to normal.

CARDS OF THANKS

Donald Hayman, Hoyt Street, Westville, and his son, Roy Hayman, wish to extend thanks to their many friends and relatives for their kindly interest in them following the McGregor Mine disaster Monday. Their wives also extend thanks for kindness shown them during the anxious hours of waiting for word from the mine.

Record Of N. S. Mine Disasters

GLACE BAY, Jan. 14—Death in the deeps is no stranger in Cape Breton, but today's tragedy in the McGregor pit became a personal affair for men of the mines.

It's not easy to put heart-tugging scenes into statistics, but a run down the record of fatal accidents in Nova Scotia coal mines since 1900 goes like this:

1. July 25, 1917, 65 killed by explosion, No. 12 Mine, New Waterford.
2. Eighty-eight killed by explosion at Allan Shaft, Jan. 23, 1918.
3. Twenty-one killed in crash of runaway trip at Princess Mine, Dec. 6, 1938.

There were many other mishaps.

McGregor Mine May Be Re-opened Monday

STELLARTON—If work on installation of three new permanent stoppings continues successfully, the McGregor Mine may be re-opened Monday, The News learned today.

Pumps in the mine, stricken by blast in the boreholes section Monday, were re-started yesterday. Water had not reached them and they went into action when the power was turned on.

Work on the first stopping followed, wood blocks five foot long and squared being cemented into place. When the first is finished, probably this afternoon, two more

will be started.

The stoppings will completely seal off the section where the explosion took place.

The mine was looked over this morning by Mainland Inspector Arthur Phillips of the Department of Mines for the province. Mr. Phillips went down with the men at seven this morning, coming back to the surface at 11.

Conditions underground, as found by the party going down yesterday and again today, were all expected, considering what had happened and the fact the air had been off 35 hours.

Tests were favorable with oxygen content in the temporarily sealed-off section down satisfactorily.

Meantime it has been announced officially that the official inquiry will get underway at two o'clock Monday afternoon in the I. O. O. F. Hall, Stel-

larton, with Judge Welsford Macdonald acting as commissioner.

All information pertaining to the accident will be presented and it is expected that senior Mines Department officers will be present.

Mines Minister A. H. MacKinnon is present in the County today primarily to be present at the funeral services but it is also expected he will be consulting about the inquiry and re-opening of the mine. With him is Chief Inspector Tom Casey and Main-

land Inspector Arthur Phillips.

All Acadia pits, The News understands, will be closed tomorrow for the funerals; they do not work Saturday. While no spokesman was available, it was understood Stellarton stores would be closed for the funerals Friday afternoon.

Contributions Being Listed As Received

STELLARTON—While many donations have been reported for the McGregor Mine Disaster Fund, the following is a list of those monies actually received by Frank VanBuckirk, treasurer, who states that all others will be announced as received:

Mickie West, Stellarton...	\$ 2.50
Ed Lockhart, Stellarton...	2.50
Shirley MacKenzie, Stellarton	5.00
Ladies' Auxiliary, Canadian Legion, Westville	50.00
Province of P. E. I.	500.00
Halifax Herald	100.00
Grand Lodge of N. S. (Masons)	250.00
Donald MacIntosh, Springhill	100.00
Pictou County Women's P. C. Association	25.00
Better Canada Club.....	30.00
Thelma Weir, Stellarton	2.00
Molly Crockett, Stellarton	2.00
Fred J. Macpherson, Bridgewater	100.00

More Messages Of Condolence At Town Office

STELLARTON — Further communications of condolence have been received this morning at the Town Office here in connection with the McGregor Mine explosion.

A resolution from New Glasgow stated:

"Whereas the town of Stellarton has this day met with such a severe calamity and shock by the explosion at the McGregor pit wherein many of their citizens as well as those of the adjoining towns lost their lives, families and homes have been bereaved and saddened thereby,

"And whereas the citizens of the town of New Glasgow have been greatly crushed by this grief and sorrow which has befallen our neighbor,

"Be it therefore resolved that this resolution of sincere sympathy be extended to the mayor and council of the town of Stellarton to be conveyed to the bereaved families and that all help and assistance possible be offered to the town of Stellarton in this time of their distress and trouble."

New Waterford, Chester

P. G. Muise, mayor of New Waterford, wrote the following:

"News of the terrible disaster at the McGregor pit has saddened the hearts of every citizen of our town.

"We take this means of conveying to you our deepest and heartfelt sympathy at this time of mourning and grief and we wish to make known to the families who have been bereaved that our thoughts are with them in their hour of sorrow.

"This terrible disaster has brought back to our minds, in fresh detail, the scenes in our town in 1917 when 65 of our coal miners suffered a like catastrophe.

"It is therefore with kindest feeling that on behalf of each and everyone of our citizens we send this missive of sympathy to you and your citizens and to each family bereaved."

Ian M. Mitchell, municipal clerk, Chester, wrote:

"At the present session of our Municipal Council now sitting a resolution was unanimously passed expressing the deepest sympathy of our Council in the tragedy that has befallen your town in the death of 19 of your citizens.

"Please accept our deepest sympathy to your town as a whole and in particular to the bereaved families of the deceased miners."

TOWN AND MINE SILENT AS STELLARTON MOURNS 19 WHOM BLAST KILLED



RESCUE crewman, Blair E. G. Cheek, pulled one man to safety, brought out 4 more

Work Hours at Grim Task

Then began the grim task of lifting the bodies to the surface. They emerged one by one and two by two. Final pitiful loads were lifted above the ground at 9.40 p.m. Toronto time.

One by one and two by two the women went back to homes suddenly empty.

Exhausted but unable to rest, Blaine Cheek, 23, sits in one of these dwellings mourning the loss of 19 friends. "There is one good thing about it. They all went fast. None of them knew what hit them," Cheek said.

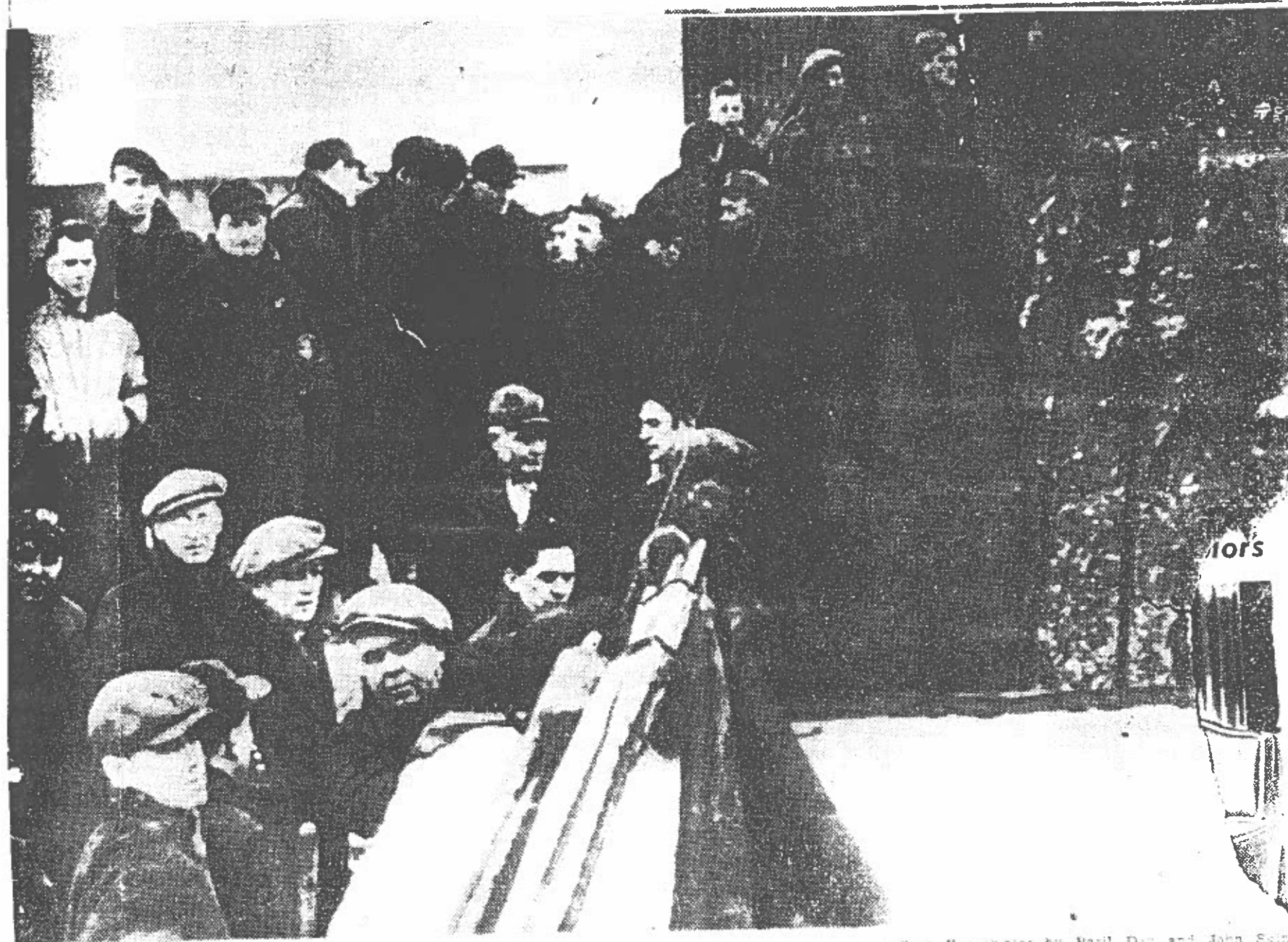
For more than four hours after the explosion Cheek toiled on the end of a stretcher to move one body at a time from a point where it was left by the Draeger team to the mine slope for lifting to the surface.

"It was heavy work," he said. "Each trip meant going 400 yards, falling and stumbling over rails. I think I made five trips. I'm so tired I really can't remember. I went to work yesterday on the 7 a.m. shift. We knew there was a fire there that had to be sealed off. The foreman told me he wanted me and Archie Lambly to timber along a wall.

Still in Mine Clothes

TORONTO STAR: Tues., Jan. 15, 1952 3

Lie in Makeshift Morgue



—Star Wirephotos by Basil Day and John Squire

MINERS LOOK FOR NEWS of their stricken companions above the fatal shaft. Relatives, too, crowded about clinging to hope even after all hope had ebbed away. Only three of the 22 miners working in the area at the time survived the blast. Swirling smoke over the 150-foot area where bodies had been scattered made rescue operations difficult.