

DEATH TOLL 39 IN MINE ACCIDENT

Fire in Stope at Hollinger Causes Big Roll of Deaths

Majority of Men at Work Escape, but 51 Trapped. Twelve Rescued. Thirty-nine Meet Death. Rescue Work Carried on by Untiring Heroes. Help from Toronto and Pittsburgh.

Fire starting in an old unused stope at the 550-ft. level at the Hollinger Mine on Friday morning was responsible for the death of 39 men. The fire is believed to have started in waste material in the stope and was first noticed before nine o'clock in the morning. There was a considerable volume of smoke and soon gases began to form. Immediate orders were given that all men be brought from underground. Shift bosses and others notified their men and others to make at once for the surface. The idea of fire underground was so strange to many of the men that when they were told, they thought it was a joke. Some shift bosses returning to warn their men risked their own lives. One shift boss, at least, died himself because he stayed to assure the safety of his men. Capt. Geo. Pond, dragging Ira Graham to safety, was himself overcome by the smoke and fumes and had a very narrow escape. He fell on his lamp when he collapsed, the carbide flame burning his clothes but not injuring him. He was taken to his home where he was ill for several days but is now recovered. Ira Graham and W. M. Stevens died from the effects of the smoke and gas, all efforts to resuscitate them being unavailing. Hundreds of men underground made their way safely to the surface, one group getting through an unused air shaft. Smoke soon filled the mine and spread to all levels, while gases formed, notably the fatal carbon-monoxide. Rescue parties risked their lives to reach the men at the various levels, but the smoke and gases prevented much success, though there were noteworthy rescues made. A check-up of the men underground around noon on Friday showed that there were 51 men in the workings, counting the two dead there were 49 more to account for. On Saturday morning the special train from Toronto referred to in another column reached here and there were ap-

Mine Resumed Work This Morning

Employees Who Have Been Idle During the Period of the Fire Will Be Paid in Full

The Hollinger Mine resumed work this (Thursday) morning, the workings being all free of smoke, fire, gas, etc.

Wednesday afternoon Mr. A. F. Brigham granted an interview to the newspapers, the following being given The Advance:—

Hollinger Consolidated Gold Mines,

Timmins, Ont., Feb. 15th, 1928.

Instructed by the President, as a result of a conference in Montreal, I make the following announcement:

The Mine will resume operations Thursday morning, February 16th, 1928.

Employees who have been idle during the period of the fire will be paid in full.

A. F. BRIGHAM,
General Manager.

Judge Godson to Conduct Enquiry Into Disaster Here

Royal Commission of Enquiry Announced by Premier Ferguson on Monday in the Provincial Legislature. Enquiry Will Open at an Early Date and Will be Thorough.

In the provincial legislature on Monday afternoon Hon. G. H. Ferguson, Premier, announced that His Honour T. E. Godson, judge of the mining court of Ontario, had been appointed by royal commission to investigate the accident at the Hollinger Mine. Judge Godson will be assisted by a competent counsel, though who this may be has not yet been decided upon. According to the Premier's statement to the House the enquiry will open at an early date and "will be as thorough and far-reaching as possible." The Premier explained that in selecting Judge Godson special attention had been given to the particular needs of the case. It was desired to have someone with judicial experience and training and at the same time it was just as necessary to have a man with a very thorough knowledge of mining and the conditions in the North. Judge Godson was the ideal man for the work, being a justice of the supreme court of Canada so far as mining matters were concerned, and one well versed in the mining arena and general conditions.

"It is absolutely essential for the lives and safety of the men who are going underground," said the Premier, "that they have the fullest assurance of every possible protection against accident or disaster. Our hope is that a thorough and exhaustive enquiry will find the cause of the disaster and the means for guarding against its recurrence."

In opening the address on the speech to the throne, W. E. N. Sinclair, Liberal leader, congratulated the Premier on the very prompt way in which he had taken up the matter of an investigation. Mr. Sinclair expressed the hope that the commission would find some means to avert any similar tragedy from taking place in the future.

With the Government enquiry, the coroner's inquests (which are also in the nature of an enquiry) and with the enquiry being conducted by the Hollinger Mine itself to see if blame is attached to anyone and to guard against similar or other accidents in the future, there will be three distinct enquiries made into the disaster, and as each of them will be thorough and carried along conscientiously along their respective lines, the public can be assured that every effort will be made to place any responsibility and particularly to guard against any danger to the men in the future.

Many people thought that the mass meeting on Tuesday afternoon was losing no time in asking a public enquiry. It appears now that a day before this the Government had moved with such promptitude that an enquiry was actually ordered and preparations were under way to carry through the investigation with all possible speed. This prompt action will increase the public confidence not only in the Government, but also in the safety of the mines.

Inquest Opened Into the Deaths at the Hollinger

First Session on Tuesday to View Bodies. Another Session Wednesday to Inspect the Scene of the Accident. Adjournment to Next Week. No Hollinger Employees on Coroner's Jury. Jury a Representative One of High Standing.

The inquest into the deaths in the accident at the Hollinger Mine last Friday opened on Tuesday morning with Coroner H. E. Montgomery presiding. Apparently very considerable care and thought had been given to the selection of the coroner's jury, the jury being a representative one, with no employee of the Hollinger on the list, and the calibre of the jurymen being unusually high. The following were the jurymen duly sworn: Roy Asselstine, foreman of jury;—shift boss at McIntyre. I. E. Dunn, relief officer, Timmins. P. C. Maltais, of the Ostrorser Co. staff. A. Laprairie, manager Timmins branch of the Canadian Explosives Co. Chas. Burke, shift boss, Paymaster Mine, Union man. Alec Koskela, proprietor of the Finn Baths, Rea street, and formerly a miner. R. Cornthwaite, of the McIntyre staff.

R. Anderson, shift boss at McIntyre. Howard Hefferman, miner, Vipond. G. H. McQuarrie, of the Blue Quartz Mine, Matheson. Wm. DeFau, shift boss at the McIntyre.

A. Rochefort, boss powderman on McIntyre night shift. After the jurymen were duly sworn in, Coroner Montgomery asked them if they wished to view any of the bodies, and some of the jurymen expressing the opinion that the jury should view the bodies, the jury adjourned to the undertaking parlours for this sad duty. After leaving the undertaking parlours the jurymen proceeded to their homes and businesses, to meet again on Wednesday afternoon at the central shaft to go down to view the underground workings where the tragedy occurred.

After viewing the scene of the fatalities, the jury adjourned, to meet again next Tuesday at 10 a.m.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR SENDS MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY

Mayor Longmore this week received the following message from the Lieut.-Governor:—
February 14, 1928
Mayor of Timmins, Ontario,
"His Excellency, the Governor-General of Canada, has asked me to convey his deepest sympathy to the relatives of all those who lost their lives in the Hollinger Mine disaster."
"W. D. ROSS,
Lieut.-Governor of Ontario."

FUNERAL OF THE LATE FRANK MARTIN, MONDAY

The funeral of the late Frank Martin was held on Monday at 2 p.m. at the Timmins Baptist church and the cemetery here, the services being conducted by Rev. M. R. Hall. The funeral was very largely attended the late Frank Martin being highly esteemed. There was an unusual array of beautiful floral tributes testifying to the esteem and regard in which the deceased was held and the sympathy for the widow and family so suddenly bereaved. The late Mr. Martin was 26 years of age and was a native of Nova Scotia. He is survived by a widow and five children, to whom all hearts will go out in their sorrow. The deceased was a brother of the late Henry Martin, who was killed in an accident at the Hollinger three years ago. Blake Martin, of Timmins, is also a brother, and it was from his home on Kirby avenue that the funeral took place. The Moose and the L.O.L. attended the services in a body, the deceased being a valuable member of both orders, and the funeral being under the auspices of the Loyal Order of Moose.

LATE B. TOWLER BURIED UNDER L.O.L. AUSPICES.

The funeral of the late Bert Towler, a popular young man of town, who was one of the thirty-nine to meet death in the Hollinger disaster, was held at 11 o'clock Tuesday morning, with services conducted by Rev. R. S. Cushing at St. Matthew's Anglican church and the funeral being under the auspices of the Orange Lodge of Timmins. There was a large attendance of the Orangemen of the district, together with members of the L.O.B.A. The casket was draped with the Union Jack, and decked with many beautiful floral tributes.

BODIES BEING SENT AWAY FOR BURIAL ELSEWHERE.

The remains of several of the victims of the accident at the Hollinger have been sent to outside points for burial. On Tuesday afternoon the body of F. V. Pare was forwarded to Ottawa. This young man, who stayed at the Dorando Hotel, was well known and popular here, but had no relatives in the district.

The body of the late M. Whelan was to be shipped to his old home in Newfoundland. He also had won many friends here but had no relatives in the district.

The body of the late I. Whitney was also to be shipped to his former home. He was a Schumacher resident and had hosts of friends there who are deeply grieved at his untimely death.

HOLLINGER PAID \$200 IN EACH OF THE 39 CASES

Cheques Issued to Tide Over Families Until the Workmen's Compensation Money Comes in

Following its usual custom of seeing that the families of any employees who die in the service of the company do not want in the time of their bereavement, the Hollinger Mine this week issued cheques for \$200 to each and every one of the thirty-nine families or next of kin affected by the deaths resulting from the disaster at the mine. The cheque for \$200.00 in each case was a straight donation from the Hollinger with the intention of providing against the relatives suffering any hardship until such time as they will be receiving Workmen's Compensation Act payments. This \$200.00 was also over and above any back pay that may be due to any of the men. The Workmen's Compensation Act provides for the payment of \$125.00 for funeral expenses, and also allows each widow \$40.00 a month and \$10.00 for each dependent child under the age of 16 years. The payments for the children continue until the children reach the age of 16 years. In case the widow remarries the payments are discontinued, but widows who do not re-marry are paid the \$40.00 per month for life. In addition to the money that will be received under the Workmen's Compensation Act, in many cases personal life insurance policies were carried and also many belonged to fraternal and other benefit associations. In practically all cases the only danger of actual want was for the immediate present, until such time as adjustments would be made, and the payment by the Hollinger of the \$200.00 each removed this danger.

PREMIER AND OTHERS SEND MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY

Last week Premier Ferguson; Hon. Chas. McCrear, Minister of Mines; Hon. Wm. F. Mulayson, Minister of Lands and Forests, and other members of the Provincial Cabinet, sent messages of sympathy with the people of Timmins and district in the sorrow that had overtaken the people here through the deplorable accident at the Hollinger Mine.

The majority of the 39 dead from the fire at the Hollinger were married men with families. As noted elsewhere Mr. Stevens was the father of 14 children still alive, but these are all adults. Mr. Nadeau had a family of eleven children, the youngest only a babe and the others young. In another case the widow is left with nine children.

MOWAT & MACGILLIVRAY GIVE \$2,000 TO RELIEF FUND.

A wire received here on Monday from Mowat and MacGillivray, Ottawa stock brokers, said—"Kindly enter our subscription to relief fund for two thousand dollars and advise by wire to whom we forward cheque. Partners and all members staff this firm extended deepest sympathy."

The Rescued

Friday Afternoon:
The following were the twelve men rescued from the mine on Friday afternoon, the particulars being bulletined at The Advance office at the time:—

G. ZOLEB, Messines avenue.
D. KRAKANA, 85 Sixth avenue.
A. TESOLIN, Moneta.
J. KRUSAC, Schumacher.
D. KURANEN, 48 Balsam street.
FRED JACKSON, Hollinger Lane.
I. LIZZIE, Schumacher.
M. LOZACK, 65 Gillies Lake.
O. KEAT, 61 or 63 Birch, north.
C. LEVEN, Boston Hotel.
N. PETHICK, Cedar House.
C. H. TRAVANNA.

All of the above were taken to the hospital, where they made good recovery. Most of them were able to return to their homes on Sunday. Most of them found the experience affected their hearing for a time but this passed away.

In an interview with Mr. Fred Jackson, one of the men rescued, the story of his experience was graphically told. "We were in the stope between the 550 and 675 levels," he said, "and were beyond the fire stope. In order to get to the shaft we would have to pass the fire and crawl through the smoke and gas to get out. So, I called the men back, opened the air line, so as to provide fresh air for us. One of the men collapsed and I gave artificial respiration and pulled him around, another succumbed. We drank water and saved our tea, and on Saturday Zolob and I made an attempt to get to the main shaft. Zolob would not let me go far, repeatedly saying:—'Maybe die, maybe no!' He must have crawled on his hands and knees the whole length to the shaft, but he won out and saved our lives by giving our location. There were five of us alive including George Zolob and one dead."

Another group of men rescued were saved by one of their number who had a wonderful ability to find his way. Through the smoke and darkness he led the others to the shaft, travelling along drifts, crosscuts, etc., and being able to take them along safely. The others say that without his skill and knowledge of the underground workings they would have been hopelessly lost.

The Dead

The following is a list of all the dead, with the approximate time the bodies were brought to the surface. In each case every possible effort was made to resuscitate the men, where there was the faintest chance of life being restored. In many cases hours of patient effort were given to attempts to restore those brought to surface:—

Recovered on Friday before noon:—
W. M. STEVENS
IRA B. GRAHAM
Recovered on Sunday at 12.25 a.m.
F. MARTIN
J. N. HIGHAM.
Recovered on Sunday at 12.25 noon
SAMUEL DUNLOP, 109 Maple S.
O. CHENIER
O. AHBENKOSKI.
Reported at 10.15 p.m. Sunday
D. NADEAU, Rea Street.
G. MASONOVITCH, Canada Hotel, Schumacher.
Reported at 11.15 p.m.
W. LINDSAY, 11 Cambrai Ave.
A. VALO
T. GRENKO.
Reported on Monday morning early:
F. V. PARE, Dorando Hotel.
O. TREMBLAY, 34 Fifth Ave.
A. KUMPULA, 45 Messines Ave.
W. Y. ALTONEN, 62 Spruce st.
Reported at 2.30 a.m., Feb. 13th:
T. SARAR, Schumacher.
J. BALISH, Schumacher.
I. WHITNEY, Schumacher.
Reported at 4.35 a.m., Feb. 13th:
ALFRED AUBREY, 57 Birch S.
B. TOWLER.
M. WHALEN.
P. KLIMKO.
W. ROBERTS, 24 Third Ave.
H. BARRETT, 38 Cambrai Ave.
Reported at 11 a.m., Feb. 13th:—
M. SWITHY, 65 Fifth Ave.
B. HEDE.
Monday at 12.45
J. KANGAS, 104 Maple-south.
E. LEBLANCE, 67 Third Ave.
Reported at 5.30 p.m., Feb. 13th:
J. AUBREY, 85 Balsam St.
O. BASTIEN,
C. HACHA, 9 Borden Ave.
O. TITLIT, 38 Wilson Ave.
S. MAKI, 58 Sixth Ave.
A. AHO, 106 Maple St. South
R. IRVING, 3 Maple St. South
M. GARDEJ.
CHAS. E. RICHARDS, Cambrai Ave.
C. JOHNSON.

AMBULANCE BRIGADE DID GREAT WORK AT THE MINE

Skill, Experience and Courage of Local First Aid Men Was of Special Value

The assistance given in the trying days at the mine by the St. John Ambulance men is worthy of special note. Their knowledge and experience in first aid work proved invaluable and they gave the most untiring and generous service. Among those who did fine work in the efforts at rescue were:—Tom Richards, superintendent of the S. J. A. C.; Sergt. G. A. Gibson, Cpl. Hogg and Privates Wallace, Jenkins, Kitcher, Madden, Bowness, Rigby, Glover and Andrew Bough. All the St. John Ambulance members acted as stretcher bearers and assisted in general ways. Supt. Richards and Cpl. Hogg gave great assistance at the respiration work on those brought up from underground on Friday. Private Wallace made several trips underground both Friday and Saturday, while other members of the Brigade here were ready and willing to do anything and everything that they could do to help. They were untiring in their efforts and with the skill given by their work in the Ambulance Brigade their services were especially useful.

On learning of the tragedy that had overtaken Timmins, Mr. J. A. Bradette, M.P. for this riding, hurried back to Timmins to give any help or comfort he could to those afflicted.