

# DEATH IN THE PIT.

## Another Terrific Colliery Explosion in Pennsylvania.

Explosion of Fire-Damp in the Pine Brook  
Mine—Four Persons Severely Injured—  
The Death of One Probable.

From Our Own Correspondent.

SCRANTON, Saturday, April 6, 1872.

There are but three mines situated in what is known as the old borough of Scranton, all of which are the property of the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company, the second wealthiest company in this county. These three mines have been worked for years, and are still explored for coal, which is consumed in the two large rolling-mills and three immense blast-furnaces. One of these mines is the Pine Brook shaft, on Penn-avenue, Seventh Ward, near the Dickson works. It is without doubt the most dangerous mine in the coal regions. Gas, or fire-damp, is found in great abundance in this mine, and great precaution is needed on the part of the miners to prevent the ignition of the accumulated gas. Accidents frequently occur, caused by the sheer carelessness of a miner or a laborer. To illustrate how the gas accumulates in the Pine Brook shaft, I will state that there is a large iron pipe extending from the bottom of the mine to the surface, which protrudes through the side of the breaker, out of which an immense quantity of gas constantly escapes. Every dark night this gas is lighted, and that part of the city is illuminated so brightly that one can read a newspaper one hundred feet away with ease.

A fire-boss is employed at this mine, whose duty it is to visit every chamber with a safety-lamp before a miner enters. He carefully scrutinizes the roof of every gangway and chamber, and if any indication of sulphur is observable (which is of a dark-red substance) he brushes it away with a towel. When the fire-boss reports "all right," the men enter the car and are lowered into the mine.

The same routine of business was transacted yesterday by this "fire-boss," on whose word hangs the lives of two or three hundred human beings. The men went to work, believing that all was right. They worked all the morning with safety; at noon they congregated in the main gangway to eat their dinners and have a social chat. The miners always do that; they huddle together, and while they munch their meals, merriment rules supreme. The men at Pine Brook shaft resumed their work after dinner, little dreaming of anything to occur which would bring consternation to every human soul within the inclosure. A little after 3 o'clock gas had accumulated to such an extent in the chamber of ANTHONY MCHALE, that his lamp came in contact with it, and a terrific explosion occurred. Every gangway door was blown from its hinges, props were knocked from their positions, and a terrible sacrifice of human life would have occurred had all the miners been in the immediate vicinity of the gangway. As it was, three men and one boy were terribly injured, one of whom will not live to see to-morrow's sun. Their names are: ANTHONY MCHALE, miner, of Sand Banks, burned in the face and hands; JOHN NILES, of Bellevue, burned in the back and hands; EDWARD SULLIVAN, of Pine Brook, laborer, terribly burned in the face, body and hands; and a little boy named STANTON, knocked down by the concussion and badly hurt.

SULLIVAN will die without doubt, as his physicians have already given up all hopes of his recovery. The casualty caused intense excitement throughout the city, and hundreds flocked to the scene, all anxious to take a glimpse of the poor victims as they were carried to their several homes.

A man named FREDERICK GREEN was found dead this morning in a dike on Scranton-avenue, Hyde Park. Foul play was suspected, and an inquest was held by Alderman D. M. JONES, of the Fourth Ward. The evidence was contradictory, and the jury returned a verdict that the deceased died from apoplexy. It is evident to my mind that GREEN was murdered, as the inhabitants of that locality are of the worst character. His pockets were rifled, and a cut was found on his right temple. E. R. W.