

# RUSHING MASSES OF ICE AND EARTH SWEEP DOWN UPON MACE AND BURKE, KILLING NINETEEN PEOPLE

## BATTLING BRAVELY TO RESCUE VICTIMS

Fighting Time and Cold, Little Army of Men Is Digging Persistently for the Dead and the Dying.

The Hope That There May Be Some Beneath the Mass of Snow and Ice Who Are Still Alive and Who May Be Saved if Reached in Time, Spurs the Bands of Sturdy Rescuers on to a Dogged Fight Against the Greatest of Difficulties and Discouragements in Their Path.

## MINING CAMPS ARE BURIED BENEATH TONS OF DEBRIS HURLED DOWN UPON THEM

Monster Avalanche Hurtles Down Mountain Side, Strikes Ridge, Bounds Into Air and Descends Upon Mace, Covering It Like a Blanket—Town and Sleeping Inhabitants Engulfed in the Slide.

## ONE MORE CHAPTER IN TRAGIC EVENTS

Slide-Stricken Canyon Is the Stage on Which Other Catastrophes Have Had Their Setting in the Past

Narrow Defile in Which Are the Snow and Debris-Covered Towns of Mace and Burke, Aside From Being One of the Richest Silver and Lead Belts in the West, Has Been Swept by Previous Destructive Avalanches, and Has Been the Scene of Bitter Labor Strifes.

### The Freakish Movement of the Slide

Wallace, Feb. 28.—(Special.)—Not in the ordinary manner of snowslides did the avalanche of snow and rock descend upon the sleeping town of Mace last night. It was the most extraordinary phenomenon ever experienced in this country, which is accustomed to freaks of disasters of this sort. The slide originated upon the higher range of hills which forms the northwest wall of the canyon. Sweeping down the steep slope of Custer peak, gaining each second in volume and momentum, the tremendous mass struck the lower range, which is the direct wall of the canyon, and which is known as the "hogback." The slope of this hill deflected the swiftly-moving mass upward and, as a boy leaves a springboard, the vast volume of the accumulated snow and rock soared into the air above Mace, and then, its momentum spent, it settled like an awful blanket upon the silent town. The slide, thus deposited, is piled in places 75 feet deep and extends a distance of 3,000 feet along the canyon. The shock of its impact was terrible. For miles the awful roar was heard, and the jar which followed the stroke of the death-dealing mass was felt for a great distance. There are many details of the pitiful situation at Mace which indicate the terrific force of the stroke which thus descended upon the town. Houses a hundred feet away from the edge of the snow are shattered, demolished by the force of the impact and the compression of the surrounding atmosphere. One house, a considerable distance away, was turned completely around upon its foundation. In the big public school building, a quarter of a mile from the slide, every pane of glass was smashed. Thus the destructive slide combined the features of a tornado. Everywhere in the vicinity are evidences of its awful force. That anybody survived the terrible experience is a marvel. For the length of the canyon people rushed from their homes in the night's darkest hour, awakened by the roar and the jar of the concussion as the incredible volume of the swiftly-moving mass fell upon the town, which was literally crushed beneath it. The manner of the descent of the tremendous mass explains why there were so few escapes; there was nothing pushed ahead of the slide; everything was buried beneath it. The protecting "hogback," which has veered off so many other slides, proved in this instance an ineffectual buffer and accentuated the indescribably grievous results of the disaster.

Wallace, Feb. 28.—(Special.)—Nineteen are reported to be dead and the total death toll may reach many times that figure when the last chapter is written of the most disastrous avalanche which has ever visited this region. Up Canyon creek, whose narrow course through the mountains has been, in years past, the scene of so many tragic occurrences, two tremendous slides occurred between sunset last night and sunrise this morning, carrying death and destruction to the busy mining towns of Mace and Burke. Perhaps it will never be known how many lives were lost in the disaster; the work of rescue is so difficult and the weather conditions are so unfavorable that it will be weeks before the last of the debris is removed. At midnight tonight, 24 hours after the first of the slides, there are within one of a score of dead and many injured—how many it is impossible to tell on account of the confusion which reigns. However, none of the injured who were dug from the snow today have died; at the hospitals tonight it is said that the chances of all of them are good for recovery. One of the most seriously injured is Mrs. Pascoe, wife of the superintendent of the Standard-Mammoth mine. She, however, is better off than was at first reported. Her husband and three children, who were in the house with her were instantly killed. On account of her condition she has not been informed of their fate.

Of the others of the injured, it is said that they will probably recover. There are comparatively few fractured bones in the list of injuries; most of the wounds are from the impact of stones and broken timbers, swept down by the slide; these bruised and stabbed the bodies of those caught in the slide and, while some of the injured may be permanently crippled, it is confidently believed that none will die.

#### Day of Terror.

It has been a day of terror in the Coeur d'Alenes. For days the heavy snowfall in the mountains has piled up vast banks and drifts, whose tremendous weight on the steep hillsides has been a menace to all who live on the lower slopes or in the little valleys of the region. Those who are familiar with conditions here have given warning of what was likely to occur and since Friday the people up the canyon have been cautioned to leave their homes for places of greater safety. As far as known, this warning went unheeded and it is believed that there are many yet buried beneath the mountain of snow and ice which fills the canyon completely at Mace, four miles above Wallace, and at Burke, seven miles up at the head of the canyon.

Comparatively little snow had fallen in the mountains during the early part of the winter and there was lacking the foundation of ice which sometimes acts as an anchor for the later snowfall. On the bare hillsides tons and tons of snow have been massing for a week and the result was inevitable; the snow is heavy with moisture, the typical "warm snow" of these mountains; it had not drifted as much as would the lighter, dryer snow, but it piled in great masses and last night the inevitable result transpired. This morning found the Coeur d'Alene region stricken as it has seldom been afflicted in its long history of tragic incidents.

#### First Slide.

It was just before 11 o'clock Sunday night that the first slide came down; this descended with resistless force upon the town of Mace, burying its sleeping inhabitants beneath a mass of snow and ice, in places 75 feet deep and in all extending 3,000 feet along the canyon. The big boarding house of the Standard-Mammoth company took the full brunt of the blow; the residence of Superintendent Pascoe was in the extreme edge of the slide but it was utterly wrecked and its five occupants with the exception of Mrs. Pascoe, were instantly killed. Almost the entire town of Mace was buried; scarcely a building remained intact after the onslaught by the force of the concussion. Cars were swept from the tracks and buried; houses were crushed like eggshells and their occupants buried beneath tons and tons of packed snow.

Wakened by the roar and the shock, the people of the canyon three miles up and four miles down the stream, rushed from their houses. They knew too well the portent of that awful sound; they feared that they would be next to be entombed in the awful rush. But the bravery characteristic of miners manifested itself and from all sides relief rushed to the aid of the stricken town. From Burke came miners and from Gem and Black Bear. From Wallace a special train was dispatched as quickly as possible with workers and physicians and nurses. There was no

hesitancy, even though it was known that another slide might come at any time.

And another did come. At 5 o'clock this morning, another rumble and its succeeding roar of impact told of a second disaster. Burke was the scene of the later disaster and the town at the head of the canyon was sorely stricken. This slide was not as extensive as the earlier one and included only a part of the town. How many it caught can only be conjectured tonight, as the rescuers have made slow progress, although a vast amount of snow has been removed. There are many houses involved in the ruin here. The estimates of the number of persons buried beneath the snow vary from 50 to 100. None of the larger buildings of the town were caught.

This morning, daylight revealed a pitiable spectacle in the canyon. There were wreck and ruin, widely spread. In two places the canyon was absolutely filled with snow and ice, the mass which had slid down the hillside containing immense stones, gathered in the lightning dash down the precipitous slopes. Scattered about were fragments of houses, which the night before had been the shelters of happy, comfortable homes.

Everywhere was disaster; everywhere were the evidences of the awful destructiveness of the visitation; the awful agencies of death which had come under the cover of darkness and had done their work too well. It is impossible adequately to describe the scene. On every hand were evidences of the terrific force of the slides. It was appalling.

Here, a house, entirely clear of the

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### IS RESCUED ALIVE FROM SNOWY TOMB

Wallace, Feb. 28.—(Special.)—After having been entombed in the disastrous snow and landslide at Burke for eight hours, James Rodgers, aged 22 years, was rescued alive at 2 o'clock this afternoon.

Rodgers was caught under a portion of the blanket of debris that was precipitated upon the little mining camp early this morning and buried to a depth of several feet. Luckily for him he was not struck by any rock or earth of sufficient hardness to kill him, but was completely entombed in the snow. So dense and heavy was the blanket above him that he was unable to dig his way out, and in an almost comatose condition was discovered by the force of rescuers that worked diligently all day in an effort to save the living and recover the bodies of the dead. After being taken from the snowy tomb Rodgers was removed to a place where he could be given medical care, and it is said that he will recover without suffering any serious effects from his harrowing experience.

Spokane, Feb. 28.—The list of dead and injured in the Coeur d'Alene landslides was revised late this afternoon. It follows:

#### DEAD AT MACE

- R. H. PASCOE, Superintendent of the Standard mine.
- EDDIE PASCOE, son of R. H. Pascoe.
- INEZ PASCOE, daughter of R. H. Pascoe.
- MRS. ED KITTRELL, wife of the bookkeeper of the U. Stores company.
- Two Kittrell Children.
- MRS. JOHN FENNEL.
- AL LAIRD.
- MRS. LAIRD, mother of Al Laird.
- RICHARD MOYLE.
- NELS THOMPSON.
- T. B. MOORE.

#### INJURED AT MACE

- Mrs. R. H. Pascoe
  - Miss Katie Pascoe.
  - Mrs. E. W. Hooper.
  - Mrs. Gust.
  - William George.
  - George Gibson.
  - Mrs. George Gibson.
  - Mrs. Abe Winchester.
- Others taken out alive at Mace slide: Six children of William George, Miss George, B. T. Barnett and wife, Mrs. George Hooper, William Brand, wife and child; John Fennell; William Newton, wife and children; Gano Duncan, wife and child; Mrs. Gassaway; Ed Wheatley, wife and child; Paul Edwards, wife and three children; Thomas Flanagan.

#### DEAD AT BURKE

- DAVE SHEPHERD.
- DICK RICHOTT.
- Two Children of Al Newman.

#### INJURED AT BURKE

- Al Newman.
- Mrs. Al Newman.
- James Rogers.

Spokane, Feb. 28.—Nineteen are now known to be dead at Mace and Burke and the death list will probably be increased as the rescuers penetrate the debris. The fight against time and cold has been waged bravely and persistently by the little army of men who are hoping to find under the heaps of ruin in the ravines some who have escaped death. Although the greatest of difficulties have thrown discouragement in their paths, these men have dug and torn and strained frantically for more than 24 hours, pausing scarcely to warm their numb bodies before again seizing their shovels and returning to their work. Old men, young boys and men of the cloth have joined their efforts with those of the able-bodied in the common cause. Mace is situated on the creek bed and the mountains rise on either side of the canyon. The slopes have been well denuded of trees by the slide. The main body of the avalanche, which started from the top of Custer mountain, passed beyond the town, and striking the opposite slope with terrific force, rushed up to a depth of from 40 to 50 feet.

The damage to the town was done by an offshoot from the main slide, which carried away the construction train on the track as it plunged into the ravine, and shooting up the other side, stopped a short distance beyond the Pascoe home. The boarding house of the Standard mine, where about 200 miners were sleeping, was missed only about 120 feet. The first slide was that which wiped out almost all of the town of Mace, five miles up the canyon from here. This catastrophe occurred at 10:45 Sunday night, while all the population except the men on the night shift in the Standard and in the other mines in the locality were sleeping. The Burke avalanche occurred at 5:30 this morning.

#### DISPATCHES WARNING TO PEOPLE OF BURKE

That more lives were not lost at Burke is due to the presence of mind of Seaman Howe, foreman of the Hecla mine. Realizing the danger which threatened the sleeping and unsuspecting citizens of the other town a mile further up the stream, he sent Bert Clement on to Burke to rouse the inhabitants and urge them to seek safety.

Among the last to be taken out of the snow alive at Mace was Mrs. George Hooper an old woman who lived on the outskirts of the town. She was buried under the snow 16 feet, and it took four hours of the hardest work to get her out. She had suffered from the cold, but was not badly injured.

### VETERAN RAILROADER IS DEAD UNDER SNOW

Nels Thompson, one of the victims of the disaster at Mace, was well known in Missoula, where he has relatives. At the time of his death he was a section foreman on the O. R. & N. railway, an occupation he had followed for many years. He was in Missoula two weeks ago, at which time he left for Spokane, where he leaves a wife and two daughters and a son, the children all being nearly grown. Mr. Thompson was for a time stationed at Victor, where he was engaged on the section of the Bitter Root branch of the Northern Pacific railway. For many years he was stationed at De Smet, where he became known to all the railroad men. He was well liked and popular. He was a brother-in-law to Mrs. Albert May, wife of the chief of the Missoula fire department, and was a member in good standing of Missoula lodge, No. 16, A. F. & A. M. Fire Chief May was to have left last night for Mace, going by way of Spokane, on the first available train. Mrs. Thompson is ill at the family home in Spokane. Mr. Thompson was intending to take his son to Mace next week to go to work with himself.

#### CARRIAGE SAFE.

There was some anxiety yesterday among the Missoula friends of Charles Cartright, formerly a Missoula baseball hero, and now a mining superintendent in the canyon, but it was learned last night that he is safe.

### THREE MEN KILLED IN ANOTHER SLIDE

At noon yesterday discovery was made that there had been a slide during Sunday night at the mine of the Carbonate Hill Mining company, near the famous S treble on the Snake branch. This slide, took with it the entire plant of the company and killed three men: ERIC HOLM, JOHN BERGMAN, GUS BERGMAN. The hills at this point are almost entirely denuded of their timber, fire and the axe having removed all of the trees, and snowslides of many winters have left their paths on the slopes. This means, of course, that when a great weight of loose snow piles up, without the anchorage of a frozen hold upon the earth, there is certain to be a slide. The unusual depth of snow this season makes it probable that there will be more slides in this district unless there is a radical drop in temperature.

Out of the canyon which reaches out from Wallace to the north and which extends to Burke at its upper end, have come millions of silver and lead, the wealth of the hills that rise abruptly on either side. In this canyon have been enacted many tragic scenes in the labor wars and in the conflicts with the elements which have characterized the development of the richest lead-mining district in the world.

It is a narrow defile, this famous canyon. In places its floor is just wide enough for the little stream which flows through it and the two railway lines which lead up to the mines jostle and push each other all the way up; in places the same ties serve for the two lines, so closely are they crowded into the narrow space which nature has allowed them. The towns which are located along the canyon stretch along these lines of railway. They are towns of a single street, which is formed by planking over the railway ties; along this street are lined the houses which make up the towns, stuck in between the railway and the base of the hill, into which builders have burrowed, to gain space to set the small structures which house the people of the towns.

In each town the company boarding house is the principal building; on either side of it extend the cottages which are the homes of the men with families; these houses are stuck in wherever there has been found a space large enough. There is the little group of stores and there is the line of saloons. Up or down, as the case may be, is the office of the mining company. The hoist and the mill complete each group. Unattractive are these towns in the extreme. But they have produced great wealth and they have been the scene of many stirring incidents.

Yesterday's snowslides are not the first that have visited the canyon with destructive force. At least two death-dealing avalanches have swept down the abrupt walls of the canyon, one at Burke and the other near where yesterday's slide occurred at Gem.

#### No Avenue of Escape.

Burke is at the head of the canyon and is more crowded than any of the other towns. The mountain sides at Burke are as abrupt as mountain sides can grow. As they come so close together at their bases as to leave no room except the little slit which it filled by tiny houses, two close-packed railway lines and the creek. There is absolutely no avenue of escape from a snowslide coming down the hills at this point, except down the canyon. The slide which dashed down the hills in 1890 filled the gulch completely and it is likely that yesterday's destructive avalanche repeated the performance. The great mass of snow filled the canyon from side to side; everything in the town was buried.

The slide of 1895, which came down the hills near where yesterday's avalanche destroyed the town of Mace,

was not as destructive of life as this one. This big slide came down just above the row of houses at the Black Bear mine; its lower edge caught four or five of the cottages and the number of dead was not more than five or six. But yesterday's slide had its very center against the big boarding house; its upper wing caught the house of the superintendent, the last cottage in the row. This accounts for the high total of the list of dead.

#### Terrific Force.

This 1895 slide came with such terrific force that the snow piled nearly 30 feet deep above the railway tracks. Its weight of snow was removed with shovels and a rotary plow. But the force of the slide packed the snow upon the O. R. & N. tracks so deep and so solid that the rotary could make no impression upon it; it was not until summer that the line was opened and then the track was cleared by the use of giant nozzles, a hydraulic line having been laid from the flumes on the mountain side which supply the power houses and the mills below.

Scores of smaller slides have occurred here; there has been no winter without its record of some slide. But it has been only those winters when a late and heavy fall of snow has piled up great weight without anchorage that have furnished the disastrous avalanches of which yesterday's vast slide is an example. The wonder is that the people in the canyon did not heed the warning given by old residents that a big slide was probable. This warning, the dispatches say, was given Friday and was repeated Saturday and Sunday. But the people had heard the warning so often that they regarded it as a "wolf" cry and did not leave their homes.

In Burke canyon have been fought sanguinary engagements in the labor wars of the Coeur d'Alenes. It was at the old Frisco Mill, just below Mace, that the great tragedy of the strike of 1892 was enacted. It was here that the dynamite was slid down the wood chute into the mill, wrecking the structure and killing the men at work there. It will be remembered that Harry Orchard was credited with participation in this outrage. It was the dastardly act in the whole list of crimes that made the strike of 1892 a notorious struggle.

#### Carrying Dynamite.

It was down Burke canyon, too, that striking miners came in 1893, upon a stolen train, carrying vast quantities of dynamite which they took down the creek to Kell-g, where they destroyed the Bunker Hill & Sullivan mill and blotted out several lives. This was the preliminary step in the strike which led to the establishment of the famous bill pen and the inauguration, for the second time, of military law in the Coeur d'Alenes. Yesterday's tragic events form another chapter in the sanguinary history of Burke canyon. Deplorable as the story is, it is gratifying that the tale is not one of human depravity.

### TWO GREAT ROADS BATTLE WITH SNOW

Unprecedented weather for this time of the year is causing a great amount of trouble and expense to railroads in western Montana and the Coeur d'Alenes. Conditions are seemingly progressing from bad to worse and one slide and washout follows so closely upon the other that they are becoming the rule instead of the exception.

The scene of trouble has seemingly shifted from the east to the west during this winter. The Dakotas and eastern Montana have not caused delays this winter that usually originate in that section, but this has more than been made up in the west. The Cascade range is the cause of a great deal of delay, slides and washouts practically paralyzing all traffic. A bad washout near Pasco has stopped all eastern movement and no trains from the coast reached here until 2:30 yesterday afternoon. Another is expected about 9:30 in the morning. The Coeur d'Alene line of the Northern Pacific has been nearly entirely blockaded for the last two days

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