

The Anaconda Standard.

EXTRA EDITION.

VOL. VI.—NO. 135.

ANACONDA, MONTANA, WEDNESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 16, 1895.

PRICE—FIVE CENTS

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BUTTE'S NIGHT OF HORROR

Scores of People Blown Into Atoms By Mysterious Explosions.

HEROIC FIREMEN MEET THEIR DOOM

The Darkest and Saddest Page in the History of This Commonwealth—While Surrounding a Fire Near the Montana Central Depot Many People Were Mowed Down Without a Second's Warning—More Than Forty Dead Bodies Recovered—Scenes Never Before Equalled in This Part of the World for Heartrending Affliction—Cruel Deeds of Death—It Came Like the Crack of Doom—Hundreds of Saddened Hearts—Hospitals Filled With Wounded and Dying—The Streets Crowded With Heartbroken Survivors.

BUTTE, Jan. 15.—The most terrible calamity in the history of Montana occurred this evening in this city, filling hundreds of homes with woe and placing the entire city in mourning. The extent of the awful catastrophe cannot be told tonight and the full force of the horror will not be realized for many days.

At midnight, to-night, with the awful tragedy of two hours ago, appearing like a horrible dream, men and women, parents and children, husbands, relatives and friends are running from one undertaking room to another, and from one hospital to another, in the dread fear of finding some loved one who is missing.

With the fearful list of dead, the chief horror is that comparatively few have been identified and many bodies are so mutilated that they will never be recognized.

Some bodies are undoubtedly consumed in the flames, for at this hour the sickening smell of burning flesh arises from the ruins.

CALLED TO DEATH.

It was at 9:55 o'clock that the quiet city was slightly stirred by an alarm of fire which called the city fire department to a little fire near the warehouses between the city proper and South Butte, not far from the Montana Central depot. The fire did not promise to be an extensive one. Probably 200 people had gathered there to watch the fire when the fire department arrived and proceeded at once to the work of extinguishing the fire.

LIKE THE CRACK OF DOOM.

It was 10:08 o'clock, suddenly a deafening explosion occurred, which made every building within five miles tremble and which shook the city of Butte to its foundations.

From Walkerville to South Butte and from Meaderville to Ricker a frightened people rushed from their houses, from stores, from saloons, from hotels, to see a volcano of fire extending hundreds of feet into the air.

Except to those near by there was no further horror, save the dread conjecture of what had exploded, how many might be injured in that fearful second of time and how many killed.

Windows all over Butte were shattered. Many plate glass fronts on Main street and Broadway were demolished and clear up on the Anaconda hill even the windows of the office were broken. People several blocks away from the explosion were thrown to the ground.

THE AWFUL HORROR.

If the explosion caused a dread and terror to the people miles away and safe in their homes, who shall describe the endless horrors of the scene at the explosion? How many indeed are there left to tell the awful tale?

It is believed that in the first explosion, which was the heaviest, only the firemen were killed. Spectators of the fight with the fire were thrown to the ground and temporarily stunned, but it is not believed many, if any citizens, were killed in the first explosion.

HEROES RUSHED IN.

But there were heroes in the little company which had witnessed most closely the first horror, and as soon as the shock was over, while some ran in terror, others immediately began pulling the mutilated bodies of the firemen and the injured from the proximity of the flames.

From all over the city the people began moving toward the fire and the crowd had greatly increased within five minutes.

THE SECOND EXPLOSION.

Just about that length of time after the first explosion, a second explosion, al-

most equal in volume to the first, heightened the terror all over the city and spread death and desolation at the disastrous scene.

SCORES KILLED.

In this explosion scores of citizens were killed and injured. Parts of bodies were buried scores of feet away.

One man near the Northern Pacific water tank was almost struck by the leg and thigh of a human being, driven by the force of dynamite from the fearful scene.

HEARTRENDING.

There were still heroes left to help pull the shrieking wounded and groaning dying to a distance. But the people up town hesitated. There had been two explosions and there might be more. There were rumors of car loads of powder in the vicinity besides that stored in the warehouses.

Five minutes later a third explosion did come, but it was a mild one, and it is believed that very few, if any, were injured in this.

BUTTE'S MOST AWFUL HOUR.

It had all occurred in 15 minutes, the most horrible quarter of an hour in Butte's history.

The horrible aspect of the scene, after the explosions, was beyond description. Words could give no idea of it. It presented more the appearance of a field of battle than anything else.

The dead were strewn everywhere and the cries and groans of the injured and dying presented a scene altogether unearthly.

Blood and brains were spattered all about. Here were legs and arms scattered around, and there were pieces of flesh and entrails. It was sickening.

SICKENING.

Between the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern depots, a space of about 300 feet, the ground was literally covered with parts of human bodies and with the dead and injured. The scene was one of utter and absolute destruction. The houses in the vicinity were as thoroughly wrecked as if a cyclone had passed through them.

STACKS OF DEAD BODIES.

One of the rescuing corps gathered 27 dead bodies in one pile. Eight were in another. Two and three in other piles.

The rescuers pulled some of the bodies out still quivering, remnants of human beings still groaning, while legs and arms had been torn off. Shapeless trunks quivered and died in the arms of the living.

One man says he picked up a head with part of a shoulder attached to it just thrown at his feet and he fancied there was a dying gasp. As long as he lives he will never forget the frozen horror in the eyes of the bodiless head, made lurid by the fearful flame.

DEATH'S PITILESS FURY.

The fire was spreading. Butte's fire department was practically annihilated. The hose cart was a wreck and the hook and ladder truck was turned on its side.

The fear of more explosions kept prudent citizens from the scene of horror for a time, but the demands of humanity could not be withstood and in a very few minutes hundreds of busy, willing hands were at work.

CARING FOR THE DEAD AND INJURED.

Every vehicle in the city was brought into service to carry away the scores of the dead and the hundreds of injured. The hospitals were filled, the spare rooms in the hotels were taken, and private houses were thrown open where necessary.

THE CALL TO DEATH.

Box 72 sent the Fatal Summons to Many a Brave Man.

Box 72 was the fatal call to the firemen, the last call of death to most of them. The firemen found the flames coming out through the sidewalks of either the Kenyon-Connell or the Butte Hardware company's warehouses. There is some doubt as to which building the fire started in, as they were both very close together, and both are in ruins.

The firemen hesitated for a moment before going to work on the fire on account of a remark dropped by a bystander that there was powder in the building, but they were assured a moment later that there was no powder in the vicinity, and the unfortunate boys then rushed to their death.

The hose wagon crew consisted of Chief Cameron, Assistant Chief Sloane, Sam Ash, Ed Sloane, Dave Moses, Dave Magee and Jack Flannery.

Magee was the driver, and remained with the wagon about 40 yards away, while Flannery was at the hydrant. The hook and ladder was manned by George Fifer and Pete Nolan of the regular paid department, and William Orr, one of the volunteers.

DOOM.

Chief Cameron directed the attack on the building and while some of the firemen hauled a line of hose along, the others started in to tear off the iron covering of the building so that they could get at the flames.

Just as they had succeeded in tearing off a part of the covering and secured an entrance the first explosion came. A blinding sheet of flames forced the roof from its fastenings and shot 100 feet into the air, followed by a second of deadly silence, and then came the awful roar, carrying with it annihilation to those who closely surrounded the death trap and destruction on every hand.

The brave firemen, who had fearlessly rushed in where they had reason to suspect there was overwhelming danger, were blown in all directions and buried under the burning ruins.

HEROES MEET DEATH.

The hook and ladder truck, and Fifer and Nolan were blown 50 feet into the air and torn into fragments. The horses were both killed instantly. Orr, who had jumped off the truck a moment before the explosion, had a part of his jaw torn away by a flying missile, and was knocked senseless.

ALL BUT DAVE MOSES.

Of the firemen who were close up to the building Dave Moses is the only one who is thought to have escaped. The others must have met instant and horrible death, and their bodies had not been recovered at midnight. The hose wagon was shattered and Dave Magee was thrown almost directly under one of the horses, which fact no doubt saved his life. Both his legs were broken and he was badly cut and bruised. Flannery was at the hydrant some distance away and escaped with a few bruises from being knocked down by the concussion.

Ed Ogden, a volunteer fireman, was just climbing on to the hose wagon when the crash came and was thrown to the ground, sustaining a bad scalp wound.

Tom Burns, another volunteer, was between the wagon and the burning building, and his body was filled with flying pieces of iron, while his face was badly powder burned. He was taken to the Sisters' hospital and his condition is serious.

"Shorty" Carmichael, another volunteer, was close to the building and had a very narrow escape.

After the third explosion the Quartz street brigade went to the scene and went bravely to work, almost in the face of death, for it was understood at that time that there were three other cars of powder close to the burning buildings which seemed certain to explode.

TOLD BY AN EYE WITNESS.

J. R. Dutton, an electrician, was one of the eye witnesses to the first explosion. He escaped with a broken arm, however, and walked to Murray & Freund's hospital, where he was seen by a STANDARD reporter. He said: "I was riding down on a street car along by the Garrison house, when I saw the fire and saw a policeman turning in the alarm. I got off the car and ran over to the fire and was the third man there. When the department arrived they went to work on the west side of the building, where the fire was the fiercest. Some one shouted that there was powder in the building, but it was denied and the firemen kept at work."

"I stepped back a little way for fear there might be danger, and that is why I am alive. The firemen started in to tear off the iron covering of the building, and they had just got an opening when the explosion came."

"The sight was simply awful. The firemen were thrown in all directions, and the air was filled with shrieks and screams which could be heard even in the terrible roar. The next instant I was knocked down and was senseless for several minutes."

AT THE HOSPITALS.

The sight presented at the different hospitals to-night is a sickening and heartrending one. As soon after the third explosion as possible wagons of all kinds and carriages of all kinds were pressed into service as ambulances, and the work of removing the injured to hospitals was soon in active progress.

Willing hands worked rapidly and the hospitals filled up in an incredibly short space of time. The regular staff of hospital surgeons was largely increased by doctors from all over the city, but even the augmented forces were unable to attend to the victims with anything like the

rapidity with which they were brought in.

INDESCRIBABLE AGONY.

Some of the late patients received waited with quiet and pitiful resignation for their turn at the doctor's hands to come, while the groans and moans of the others made the scene one of indescribable agony.

BUTTE'S NOBLE WOMEN.

The ladies of Butte were prompt with their assistance and there was quickly a large corps of lady assistants at all of the hospitals. Their only thoughts were to minister to the wants of the mangled forms lying all around them and their attentions were gratefully received.

SOME OF THE INJURED.

Murray & Freund's hospital was quickly filled with torn and suffering humanity.

McHale, a Montana Central brakeman, died just after reaching the hospital.

Joe Lavin had his abdomen torn out and cannot live.

Officer John Steinborn had his left leg and arm broken and a bad hole under his ear. He will probably recover.

Henry Tiggerman had a bone sticking through his chest and internal injuries which will probably be fatal.

The names of seven or eight other men, all badly hurt, could not be learned.

There were 15 men in the Sisters' hospital at midnight. One died just after reaching the hospital.

Otto Floto, while assisting in carrying off the dead and wounded, saw a flying object passing by and upon investigation found it to be a human head.

KILLED BY THE CONCUSSION.

Many of the killed contained no marks or bruises, having been killed by the terrific concussion. Many were seriously injured by flying bricks, stones and other debris, at a distance of several blocks from the explosion.

THE AWFUL FORCE.

The concussion was felt for miles, and many of the largest buildings, like the Owsley block, the Lewisohn building and others, rocked like cradles.

WOULD MAKE THE HEART BLEED.

A woman, whose name was not ascertained, was so affected by the shock that she gave premature birth to a child in the street.

IMPOSSIBLE!

It was reported by some of the rescuing corps that several human ghouls, while pretending to assist in the work, went through the clothing of the dead and injured and robbed them.

AS TO THE CAUSE.

Major J. E. Dawson denies the statement that there was powder in any car on the Great Northern tracks. A person who witnessed the entire fire says the first explosion was from the Kenyon-Connell Mercantile company's building, the second was a car of powder and the third was from the Butte Hardware company's warehouse. Major Dawson says no powder was on the tracks and has not been for a long time.

WRECKED.

All the warehouses in that vicinity were burned together with six wood racks. The Great Northern freight depot is a complete wreck. The passenger depot escaped with its windows being shattered. Every window in the coaches and sleepers of No. 23 was smashed.

Conductor Sankey was in the freight office and was slightly injured.

THE WORK OF THE FIRE.

At 2:30 o'clock the fire had about burned itself out. The buildings destroyed are the Butte Hardware company's warehouse, the old abandoned Schlitz Brewery building, the Kenyon-Connell company's warehouse, the old electric light plant, the old Miller & Chapman warehouse, now occupied as a flour and feed warehouse, and the warehouse of the Parchen-D'Acheul Drug company. They were all burned to the ground and the financial loss is tremendous, but at this time it cannot be estimated.

NARROW ESCAPES.

Alderman Charles Schatzlein and George Lapp had a remarkably narrow escape. After the first explosion they heroically started to see whether there were any firemen at the nozzle, as it could not be at once told that the catastrophe was so frightful. They had nearly reached the point for which they aimed when the second explosion came. A hack saved their lives. The horses were killed and the back shattered, but Mr. Schatzlein escaped with some bad cuts on the head and Mr. Lapp escaped with a few bruises.

Every button on Lapp's overcoat was blown off and his clothes were torn. Mr. Schatzlein was taken home and his wounds sewed up. He is not dangerously hurt.

SLOANE'S GREAT SORROW.

The Sloane family suffers perhaps the worst of all. John Sloane has both his legs broken and both his sons were killed.

M. W. Genzberger stood near the Garrison house with a man whom he did not know, but who had been walking to the scene with him. The man beside him was killed and Genzberger was covered from head to foot with blood.

FOUND A DEAD BOY.

The dead body of a small boy, name unknown, was picked up in East Gold street by James Thompson, after the second explosion had occurred. There were no marks on his body and he was evidently killed by the concussion. The body was sent to one of the undertaking rooms.

A NIGHT OF HORRORS.

Butte's Streets Filled With Thousands of Heartick People.

All night crowds of anxious people were searching the ruins for the dead, and

they found a number of limbs and other portions of human bodies. In a window of a Northern Pacific passenger coach an arm was dangling, having been torn from its socket. Pieces of skulls and brains were lying about everywhere and were gathered together in a basket.

HIS THREE COMPANIONS KILLED.

James Cassidy was standing with three others watching the fire when the first explosion occurred. His three companions were killed, but he escaped without injury, although the concussion tore his clothing to shreds.

LEYDEN'S NARROW CALL.

Chief of Police Leyden reached the scene right after the first explosion. He was in the act of wrapping his fur overcoat about a dying man, whom he had just pulled from the wreck, when the second explosion came. A sheet of flame seemed to strike him and burned his scalp and most of the hair from his head. His injuries are not considered dangerous.

Mayor Dugan and City Marshal McNichols did loyal service in directing the work of rescue and the marshal remained at the fire all night.

Dave Magee, the driver of the hose wagon, had a miraculous escape from instant and horrible death, and strange to relate his only injuries are a pair of badly bruised legs, which it was at first thought were broken.

His brother, William A. Magee, was standing within 10 feet of him when the accident occurred and the top of his head was blown off and his body badly mangled. Dave Magee was seen at his home on lower Arizona street a couple of hours after the disaster, of which he gave a graphic account.

WHERE THE FIRE STARTED.

He says that the fire started in the Kenyon-Connell hardware warehouse and that the first explosion took place in that building and did no great damage.

None of the firemen were hurt by it, and they attacked the building with renewed vigor to be met an instant later by the second explosion with its terribly fatal results. Mr. Magee gives the following version of the appalling catastrophe:

DAVE MAGEE'S AWFUL STORY.

"After reaching the fire we laid 1,000 feet of hose and Flannery stayed at the hydrant. I drove up to the building with the hose and then drove back from it about 200 feet and stopped. A moment later the first explosion occurred in the building and the flames burst through the roof, but no one was hurt by this explosion. The boys then went back to the building again, thinking that the danger was all over."

"Jack Sloane came over to the wagon and got an axe, and started in to cut an opening to the building. My brother William got in the back of the wagon and advised me to drive farther away for fear of another explosion."

"I told him there was no danger and got down to blanket the horses. I usually get off on the side nearest the fire, but this time the horses were between me and the fire, and it is exceedingly fortunate for me that such was the case."

"Just as I pulled the blankets down from the seat and spread one of them out to throw it over the horse, the second explosion came. I did not see anything and only remember hearing the awful roar and being knocked down. When I recovered a moment later I found the wagon partly on top of me with the tongue across my breast, and the off horse was lying right on top of me. The blankets had caught fire; pieces of wood were burning all around me and I was momentarily choked and bewildered. I struggled to get loose, but was unable to free myself."

BY THE SIDE OF DEATH.

"People were screaming all around me and crying for help and I could hardly make my voice heard. After a while a man came along and I begged him for God's sake to help me out. With his assistance I managed to get out from under the weight that was pinning me down and struggled to my feet. I limped along, but was getting along slowly when a couple of men came along and carried me into the Garrison house and from there I was brought home."

"The last I saw of Jack Sloane he was pounding away at the door, and when I saw Cameron last he was taking the links out of the hose between the wagon and the burning building."

"All of the other boys were close behind Sloane and they were certainly all killed. It is impossible that Dave Moses could have escaped."

William Magee's body was found close to the demolished hose wagon.

PITIFUL GRIEF.

Mrs. E. L. Sloane is stricken down with a grief that is almost beyond human comprehension. In addition to the death of her sons, Jack, the assistant chief of the fire department, and Ed, one of the paid members, her husband had both of his legs torn off at the knees and his recovery is doubtful.

HOUSES ROCKED.

The Garrison house rocked to and fro like a tree in a strong windstorm under the concussion of the third explosion, and every person in the building except those who were too badly injured to move sought safety in flight.

BEAVE OFFICERS.

Officer Dan Collins had a very narrow escape from death or serious injury. He was standing close up to the building when the second explosion took place, but escaped with only a badly cut nose from a flying splinter.

The police distinguished themselves by their bravery in rushing into the scene of the awful disaster and carrying out the injured ones, when it looked like almost certain death to venture near the burning buildings. They seemed to give no thought

to themselves, and their remarkable bravery resulted in the saving of many lives.

WITH THE DEAD.

The Awful Sight Witnessed at the Undertaking Houses.

Never in all history was there a more horrible sight than the undertaking establishments presented at 4 o'clock this morning. All are crowded with horribly mangled and mutilated remains. Here is a heap of human shreds so frightful in its aspect that the horrible sight is covered with a shroud. Over there is a half head, the ghastly top blown off, and a mutilated trunk below it. Here is an armless and legless trunk with the face disfigured beyond all possibility of recognition.

Every corpse is disfigured and the complete roll of death will not be known for days, and may never be known for in Butte's population there is so large a portion that knows no home and that always runs to a scene of excitement that some will never be missed. Undoubtedly some perished in the flames.

SOME OF THE DEAD.

There are 12 dead at the Butte Undertaking rooms. Three are identified.

These are:

MIKE MEADE.
WILL SMITH, colored.
GEORGE WILTON.
At the Montana Undertaking rooms there are 10 dead. The identified are:

JACK SLOANE, fireman.
GEORGE FIFER, fireman.
WILLIAM MAGEE.
JOHN F. CHARLES, a brother of County Commissioner Dave Charles, believed to be identified beyond doubt.

Another body has a receipt in a pocket signed Foster.

At Sherman's undertaking rooms there are 19 dead. Those identified are:

CHARLES GETTENBURG, an employe of the Butte Hardware company. His folks live in Osage, Iowa.
C. E. TRACEY, who worked for Elvers & Mayo.

C. W. ENGLISH.
FRED KREMBACK, a policeman.
JAMES O'LEARY, a boy.
ALBERT GODDARD.

One body at Sherman's numbered 15, has a watch, chain and papers which may lead to identification.

Another body numbered 20 is supposed to be that of GEORGE GALBRAITH.

No. 10 has in its pocket a note book which makes it possible that the body is that of J. J. ENRIGHT.

No. 11 has a watch chain, two pocket knives, keys and letters which may lead to identification.

No. 8 is believed to be the body of McHALE, a brakeman on the Montana Central.

No. 9 is believed to be the body of PROFESSOR ROBBINS.

Another body is believed to be that of CONJAGNA BARNINA.

The total of bodies at the three undertaking establishments is 41. There are more dead than this.

AT LEAST FIFTY KILLED.

The total is likely to be 50, and may reach more.

Among those undoubtedly dead but whose remains cannot be recognized is Fire Marshal Cameron. All that has been found of him is the cap of the heroic and noble chief, a cap which when found was filled with blood. His remains may be unrecognizable in one of the undertaking establishments and may be completely annihilated.

THE DEAD FIREMEN.

What is left of the fire department furnishes the following list of paid firemen killed:

A. D. CAMERON, chief.
JACK SLOANE, assistant chief.
DAVID MOSES.
GEORGE FIFER.
PETER MALLARD.
ED SLOANE.

A number of volunteer firemen are also believed to have been killed.

Dave Moses' body is not identified, but a boot attached to an unrecognizable body is thought to be his. Dave was a brother of Mrs. Abe Hoyman.

OTHER VICTIMS.

Another man thought to be dead is Joe B. Miller. Miller was a young lawyer and came here from Salmon City, Idaho, and was stopping at the Hotel Butte. He was evidently attracted to the scene by the fire. He has been here about a week on law business connected with mining. Miller was about 28 or 30 years of age and one armed. He was married and has a family living at Salmon City.

MEASURES FOR RELIEF.

Generous Butte Will Do Her Best to Help the Afflicted.

Measures for relief have already been inaugurated. No relief can relieve the souls of anguish and sobs of despair, which are heard in scores of homes on Butte to-night. But many are in distress. The suffering will be the great. The people of Butte, who escaped the sad disaster without loss of friends must respond nobly and will do so.

Marcus Daly was the first one to send word to the STANDARD office that he was ready with his purse and in every other way to help to whatever extent it might be found necessary by the committee.

F. A. Houser, of the Horvath smelter, stated that his check for \$500 is ready at the call of the STANDARD, or any committee which might be appointed.

Scores of other business men called at the STANDARD office to-night offering subscriptions.

ORGANIZED RELIEF.

In view of the fact and in order that the relief might be of an organized character Mayor Dugan at 4 o'clock this morning appointed the following relief committee:

H. L. Frank, Henry Mueller, W. R. Kenyon, John Canby, D. J. Charles, John E. Lloyd, Alec Johnston, A. Pincus, M. B. Brown, Fayette Harrington, P. A. Largey, D. J. Hennessey, F. E. Shaw, William E. Hall.

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