

MINE SWALLOWS HOUSES

Old Workings Cave in Under the Town of Olyphant, Penn.

The Pavements Give a Warning, and Then the Earth Opens and Four Buildings Tumble In Headlong.

SCRANTON, Penn., Jan. 2.—Abandoned workings of the Eddy Creek Colliery of the Delaware and Hudson Company, beneath the very heart of the town of Olyphant, caved in this afternoon and engulfed four frame buildings, covering an aggregate ground space of 6,000 square feet. The settling was gradual, and people in the affected territory escaped without being immediately endangered.

A gang of men and boys who were at work in the mine encountered a flooded "dip" or depression in a vein while making their way out by a circuitous route. They had to swim from one rise to the other. No one, either above or below ground, sustained any injury. At 3 o'clock the settling began. At 3:30 it was no longer perceptible. In the intervening half hour O'Brien's three-story hotel, Mrs. Ann Evans's double dwelling, Mrs. Jane Ackery's double store building, and a one-story barber's shop became a mound of debris in the yawning pit, with the uppermost part of the mound forty feet below the surface.

O'Brien's Hotel, which plunged first into the opening, has entirely disappeared. A few houses are projecting over the edge of the pit.

The vein that caved is 115 feet below the surface. The settling started in the street just in front of the hotel property. First the brick street pavement was seen to be working, and the telegraph poles and trees along the curb began to wobble. The cause was apparent, and an alarm was given to all the neighborhood. Two sick guests were removed from the hotel and carried two blocks to a private house. Some attempt was made at saving the contents of the buildings, but the rapidly increasing size of the opening in the street put a stop to this, and every one fled from the neighborhood.

Twenty minutes after the disturbance was first noticed the opening had widened until it reached all the way across the street and half way beneath the hotel. Then, with a terrific crash, the hotel pitched forward, turned completely about, and landed on its roof in the bottom of the abyss. A moment later the adjoining dwelling of Mrs. Evans fell over the edge and was demolished upon the ruins of the hotel. The Ackery store and the barber's shop slid into the chasm at about the same time and piled themselves, broken and twisted, on the other debris.

To-night it is believed there will be no further settling, but no one has gone to bed in any building within fifty yards of the disturbed area.

The property damaged is estimated at \$30,000. District Superintendent Bennett of the Delaware and Hudson Company went into the mine, and with a party of other officials made an examination about 5 o'clock. They came out and reported that the settling had ceased.

The workings which caved were in the uppermost part of the worked-out veins. The timbers, it is explained by the officials, supported a thin roof of rock, which in turn supported stratas of quicksand and gravel extending to the surface. The timbers rotted, the roof gave way, and all above then sank into the pit.

WOMAN ROBBED ON ELEVATED.

Fellow-Passenger Leaps on Alleged Thief's Shoulders as He Runs Down Stairs.

Passengers, crowded in the "rush hour" fashion into a northbound Sixth Avenue train pulling into Twenty-third Street at 6 o'clock last night, were startled by a frantic scream from Mrs. Rose Braner of 383 Mount Hope Place, in the Bronx, who was standing in the middle of a car. At the same moment they saw a man who had been standing near her plunge through the crowd and reach the door.

Down the stairs he bounded, but J. H. Brehune of 368 East One Hundred and Seventy-sixth Street, who with others had rushed from the train after him, made a flying leap down the staircase and landed on his shoulders. Both fell, regained their feet, and had a fight, when the others arrived and held the man until Policeman Craven of the Broadway Squad came up and took him to the West Thirtieth Street Station. He gave his name as Frederick Earle, a bartender, of 216 East One Hundred and Second Street. Mrs. Braner said she had felt a tug at her chatelaine bag, hanging beneath her muff, and reaching down felt a man's hand in it. The hand, she said, had taken \$75 in bills. Then she raised an outcry and Earle ran. The money was not found in his possession.