

**The
Official Story
Of
Floyd Collins**

By
RICHARD H. LEE

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Official Reporter at Sand Cave.

In which the author attempts to give an accurate and unbiased account of an occurrence, unique in history, which touched the heart of the world.

*To all those courageous and un-
selfish souls who risked their lives
to save Floyd Collins, not seeking
glory or reward, but because he was
a fellow being in distress,*

*This volume is respectfully dedi-
cated.*

7.11.64 1500 * (Spec Colls) E. Davis

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INTRODUCTORY

On the 30th of January, 1925, Floyd Collins, cave owner and professional cave explorer, was entrapped by a falling rock while crawling through a narrow underground watercourse in Barren County, Kentucky. For eighteen days he lay entombed, while hundreds of people made every effort possible to rescue him.

The most skilled men obtainable gave their unstinted advice and aid. From the beginning of the work until its end, there was hardly a minute when one or more of the rescue party were not in imminent danger of losing their own lives.

The interest taken in the incident was most unusual. It was without precedent that the misfortune of one inconspicuous citizen, involving no one but himself, should so arouse the public that for more than two weeks the story was carried on the front pages of every newspaper in the country, so that even the affairs of nations seemed unimportant.

Floyd Collin's life was not saved. From the beginning the odds were overwhelmingly against the rescuers. When it was all over, and the work had been abandoned, the newspaper phase of the story died; but the affair was so unusual, so long a matter of public interest, and was the subject of so much rumor, speculation and comment, that it is felt that this brief story, adhering rigidly in every particular to Kentucky's true and painstakingly made official record of the facts, will be appreciated.

Colby E. Davis

The Kentucky Caves

One of the elements which did much to draw public attention to the Floyd Collins tragedy was the fact that it occurred in a so-called cave, situated in the famous cave region of Kentucky. It was within a few miles of explored caverns which have been noted for many years, and at least one of which, Mammoth Cave, has been classed as one of the seven natural wonders of the world. There is something mysterious about this gigantic underground realm which appeals to the imagination, and which lent a peculiar feeling of awe to the situation.

The true cave territory, so far as it has been explored to this date, lies mainly in Edmonson County, and extends at points into the adjoining counties of Hart and Barren. It includes the Mammoth Cave, the New Entrance to Mammoth Cave, Great Onyx Cave, the Colossal Caverns, Great Crystal Cave, of which last Floyd Collins was a half owner, and a host of others. Each of them has its particular attractions and beauties, and all of them are well worth the seeing, those more recently discovered as well as those which have been known for years.

There is an endless list of them. There are Diamond Cave, Hidden River Cave, Horse Cave, Ganter's Cave, Dorsey Cave, Salts Cave, White's Cave, Dixon Cave, Long Avenue Cave, Preston Cave, Highland Cave, Indian Cave, Parker Cave, Doyle's Cave, Cave of the Hundred Domes, Mammoth Onyx Cave, and Cedar Sink Cave. In addition to these, there are dozens of caverns which have been explored but which, owing either to their smallness or inaccessibility to the traveling public, have not been exploited. There are certainly hundreds, and possibly thousands, of miles of this vast system of subterranean chambers which have not been discovered, and which will disclose new wonders when they are finally explored.

The territory which includes these caverns is, roughly, in the shape of a parallelogram, bordering on picturesque Green River in the north and extending back so as to include something like seventy-five square miles. The surface of the soil is, on the whole, unfitted for agriculture, and this has helped to preserve the natural rugged beauty of the place. It is practically all wooded, and the northern part of it contains hundreds of acres of virgin timber.

Colly E. Davis

The rock underlying the region is a series of strata of unusually pure limestone, deposited some time back in the ages before the Coal Age, and averaging more than six hundred feet in thickness. Green River has cut its narrow channel deep down into it. Surface waters, seeping down, gradually wore underground channels for themselves, until they became permanent streams. Water from rain and melting snow, always seeking the easiest way downward to Green River, began more and more to take advantage of these embryo sewers, rather than to perform the task of cutting passage for themselves across the uneven surface, until at last almost the entire drainage system of the territory became subterranean.

Throughout the centuries these underground streams developed, wearing away the stone more and more rapidly, until they became rivers. By this time the whole process had begun over again. Water from these underground rivers was seeping still further down, and forming still lower channels for itself. As the lower channels were formed, those above them were abandoned by the streams. This process was repeated time after time.

Water carved out the caves, and water adorned them. After the running streams had left the upper levels, and possibly even before it had entirely left them, the water seeping in minute quantities through the roofs and walls, carrying with it limestone in solution, deposited its burden in various forms on the walls and ceilings. These ornaments are in a thousand different shapes, ranging from massive columns of translucent cave onyx, capable of supporting many tons, to flowerlike traceries of gypsum, so fragile that they will break off if they are breathed upon.

The Kentucky caves have never been widely advertised. Nevertheless, nine people out of every ten who come into western Kentucky from other states and other countries, visit the caves. Mammoth Cave was known, and had attained some degree of notoriety, fifty years before gold was discovered in California; before the Yellowstone or the Yosemite were known, and before the sequoias of the Pacific coast had ever been seen by a white man. There is something about the hint of gigantic subterranean amphitheaters, unfathomable pits, and endless columned corridors that makes even the most travel-weary globe-trotter go hundreds of miles out of his way to see the caves.

The thought that a man was pinned, helpless and alone, in a hole which leads down into this vast underground labyrinth,

was sufficient to create more than a passing interest.

It should be explained here that Floyd Collins' accident did not occur in a cave. The stone fell upon his foot while he was returning from a tour of exploration in which he had been attempting to discover a new cave, it is true, but the passage through which he was crawling at the time cannot be called a cave. It was altogether outside the limestone formation in which the true caverns are situated, and had been worn by water through a mass of loose, broken, unstratified material.

So far as the writer can learn, no person has ever met accidental death while touring any of the exploited cavern. Compare this record of the Kentucky Caves with that of any busy street in your own city!

Collins' E. Davis

The "Cavers"

As said before, the cave area proper is not a first-class agricultural region. Although some of its little valleys are as fertile as could be desired, the topography is so rough and broken, and the soil is so rocky, that productive tillage is in most parts of it unprofitable.

The caves are the great sources of revenue. Without them the land would be valuable only so long as the timber lasted, and then it would be of little worth. The caves, in a large measure, bring the income that enables the inhabitants to live.

Until comparatively recent years, Mammoth Cave was practically the only cavern which had been explored and cleared out so that it could be traversed. With the increased facilities for travel which have come in later years, however, the development of the automobile and the consequent improvement of old roads and construction of new ones, came such an increase in the number of visitors that exploration began anew and literally hundreds of miles of new caves were opened. New passages were discovered in the old caves, and the community in general got ready to take care of the tourists.

Those who owned land along the main highways were particularly anxious to find caverns under their property, because they knew that many beautiful caves are rarely visited on account of their inaccessibility. Every sinkhole which could possibly lead into a cave—and there are thousands of them—was inspected. A new profession sprang up, which, to call it by the name given it by its followers, is "caving." They invariably speak of themselves as "cavers," or sometimes, in all seriousness and without a trace of double meaning, "cave men."

Floyd Collins was a caver. He and his father, Lee Collins, were the owners of Great Crystal Cave situated only a few miles from the so-called "Sand Cave" which has recently become so well known. Floyd had explored and opened the greater part of the Great Crystal Cave, and thus had had experience in work of this sort.

His own cave, however, was somewhat removed from the main highways, and it was his desire to locate, open and operate a cavern which would be more accessible and thus more profitable.

About six and a half miles from Cave City, Kentucky, and only a few hundred feet from the Mammoth Cave highway, is

situated what is known to the inhabitants of the community as "Sand Cave." In reality, it is not a cave, in the sense in which the term is applied to Mammoth Cave and to all the underground passages of the region which are visited by the public. This was shown by all of those, both practical "cavers" and men with greater technical training, who were questioned by the court of inquiry.

This "Sand Cave" is situated at one end of a great, elongated depression, probably caused by the collapse, ages ago, of a large cavern. This narrow hollow ends abruptly against a cliff, at the foot of which is the little hole in the ground which was recently the scene of so much agonized effort. All the rock which once roofed the original cavern is piled, helter-skelter, in the bottom of the valley. It was broken by its fall into pieces of all sizes. Much of it has weathered into dirt, and this has drifted down and filled in the crevices between the stones.

Floyd Collins thought that if he could work his way through this mass of debris, he would find that this cliff marked the limit of the collapse, and that if he could gain to a point far enough under it to get clear of the rubbish which had drifted back in that direction, he would find a continuation of the original cavern, spacious and never before seen by man. He had reason to believe that it would be of some size, for the surface of the ground back of the cliff appears to be intact, and the cave-in itself is so wide and deep as to indicate that the chamber which once existed below it was of great extent.

At the foot of the cliff, through this ancient pile of debris, there is a narrow, tortuous opening. It was through this tunnel that Collins proposed to crawl in his search for the hoped-for cave.

One B. Doyle owned the land upon which this cliff and the opening under it are situated. With him, and with two adjoining landowners, Edward Estes and Jesse Lee Cox, under whose farms it was thought that the cave hoped to be found might extend, Floyd Collins entered into a contract. Under its terms he was to do all the work of exploring, and in the event a cavern was found and opened up, he was to receive a half interest in it. Further, as his home was situated several miles from the place, he was to receive board and lodging at the homes of Doyle, Cox and Estes, in succession, for a period of several weeks, during which time the exploration was to be conducted.

He moved his working clothes and tools to the farm of B. Doyle on the fifth day of January, and started operations. He was to have stayed at Doyle's house only a week, but it seems

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that Doyle had just killed hogs and there was a plentiful supply of meat at his house, so Collins stayed with him about two weeks. He then moved over to the house of Edward Estes, leaving his clothes and tools at the Doyle farm.

He worked his way into the tunnel day by day, getting further and further back. There is some evidence to show that on Wednesday, January 29th, he attempted to remove a rock which was blocking the passage by exploding a small charge of dynamite upon it; and that he also built a fire at the mouth of the tunnel, so as to heat the current of air which continually swept into the opening and thus dry out the passage.

At any rate, on the morning of Friday, January 30th, between 8:30 and 9:00, Collins left the Estes home, telling young Jewell Estes, the 17-year-old son of Edward Estes, that he was going into the cave. Night came, and he did not return. This, however, was not unusual, according to both Doyle and Estes, as it was Collins' habit at times when he was engaged in work of this kind to remain in caves overnight, sometimes as long as twenty-four hours at a stretch.

A community club met that night at Estes' home, and it was remarked in this gathering that Floyd had not come back from the cave.

After this meeting was over, Estes went to B. Doyle's house to ascertain whether or not Collins had come there. Doyle was not at home, but his 12-year-old boy told Estes that Collins had not come to their place.

After a time Doyle came home, and learned from his boy that Floyd had not returned, and that Estes had become uneasy about him. Doyle then went down to the mouth of the tunnel, crawled in about half way, to what he called the "Slick rock," and called Floyd's name, but received no answer. After this he went back to his house and went to bed. He waked up between four and five o'clock the next morning, when, according to his statement, a feeling of great uneasiness assailed him. He immediately went to the Estes home, got young Jewell Estes, and went to the cave. He and Jewell crawled into the entrance, calling for Floyd as they went. At first they received no answer, but after Jewell had passed the "slick rock," about halfway down the passage, at which Doyle was obliged to stop, Floyd answered. At first they could not understand what he said, but he finally made them understand that he was pinned down in the tunnel below them, and that he wanted his hammer and drill to use in an effort to free himself. Doyle crawled back out of the hole and got the hammer, which was outside, and

Jewell Estes found the drill inside the tunnel, at a place where Floyd told him to look for it. Taking these tools with him, young Estes attempted to negotiate the remainder of the passage, but was stopped a short distance before he got to Collins by what he described as a breakdown of the roof.

Jewell Estes and Doyle came on out of the cave, and found Edward Estes there waiting for them. They explained to the elder Estes what Floyd had told them of his condition; that is, that he had kicked a rock while attempting to worm his way out of the tunnel, and that something had fallen upon his foot in such a way that he could not release it.

The three of them scattered to notify Collins' family and friends of his plight. Soon many natives of the community had gathered around the entrance, and efforts were being made to reach the imprisoned man. The record is somewhat confused as to who was the first man to reach him, but it is certain that Homer Collins, younger brother of Floyd, did reach him, and succeeded in feeding him and covering him with a quilt and some burlap sacks.

From this point, until the end, the crowd at Sand Cave steadily increased. A great many of those present—indeed, too many—were charged with a desire to rescue Floyd Collins. Trip after trip was made into the tunnel, but all of them had the same result—nothing was accomplished, except that on a few occasions food and drink were taken to the imprisoned man.

The great majority of those who went into the hole were sincere in their desire to rescue Floyd Collins, and certainly all of them who went any great distance down the passage risked their lives. It is a sad fact but a quite understandable one, that later on bottles of coffee and milk, packages of sandwiches, bundles of covering, and various tools and appliances, were found scattered all along the tunnel, left there by persons who had suddenly felt the urge for daylight, and considered not the manner of their going.

There was much to excuse them, however. They were in a veritable death-trap, and the wonder of it is that there are not half a dozen more victims now resting with Floyd Collins. It required an iron nerve to negotiate the tunnel. As some of them put it, "as long as you kept your mind on Floyd, and didn't look at the ceiling, you were all right."

There was no room for action. Through at least half the passage the workers must needs crawl, flat on their faces, like snakes. As they neared Collins, they found that the passage inclined downward. Then it suddenly dropped, vertically, for

a distance of eight feet, and started back under itself at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Here Collins lay, his head, shoulders and chest projecting from beneath a heavy lime stone ledge, which extended from wall to wall, somewhat lower than the remainder of the roof, and effectually obscured the lower part of his body from vision.

Near the spot where Collins was imprisoned, the passage became so constricted that there was not room to turn around, and a man going in head first was compelled, on returning, to come feet first, on his back for a few feet; then to come feet foremost, up a sheer ascent of eight feet; then to back up for several yards more before he could turn. If he went in with his feet before him, as was the only practicable way to negotiate the latter part of the passage, when he came to the spot where it doubled under itself, where Collins was imprisoned, he could not, unless he was very small, bring the upper part of his body down to where he could be of any assistance.

In addition to these physical difficulties, there was the icy temperature, made worse by the dripping and seeping water, which thoroughly wetted everyone before he got to Collins, and the frightful mental strain caused by the evident dangerous nature of the passage, and the occasional thud of a falling stone.

One young negro essayed to make the venture, but he had no sooner knelt down and stuck his head into the hole than he backed out, his face ashen, clutching his throat, and yelled, "Somebody cut mah collah—Ise swellin' up!"

In the meantime, certain thoughtful souls had come to the scene loaded with moonshine whiskey, possibly with the intention of using it to warm and strengthen the workers when they came out of the hole. The majority of the rescuers, however, were too busy to care to imbibe, so many of the more sympathetic bystanders partook copiously and added drunkenness to the general confusion.

The affair was taking a dangerous turn. The more efficient and capable workers were impeded at every step. Magistrate T. C. Turner, in whose district Sand Cave is situated, and City Marshall O. L. Hanson, of Cave City, did very able work, but the situation was more than any two men, however capable, could handle. More and more people were arriving all the time, and the crowd at the mouth of the tunnel was becoming more and more congested. Experienced, sincere and honest men, who had crawled through the passage time and time again, were annoyed by newcomers, who, though surely sincere in their de-

sire to help, might have undone all the work that had been accomplished.

Some of the new arrivals were asked not to enter the passage. Disgruntled, they remained to originate and spread rumors of foul play. It was even noised about that at least one of the men who had been putting heart and soul into the attempted rescue, was present with the sole intention of seeing that Floyd Collins remained in Sand Cave.



Above—Jewell Estes, first person to enter Sand Cave after Collins' entombment.

Below—Lee Collins thanks William B. Miller. Maddox in center.

The Kentucky National Guard Arrives

The day after Collins was imprisoned, Saturday, January 31st, Kentucky newspapers carried items of the incident. By Tuesday following the whole country knew of it, there were several newspaper correspondents on the ground, and more were coming in on every train.

The civil authorities, leading citizens of the community, and some of the newspaper men conferred, and decided that outside aid was necessary to quell disorder and keep the crowds under control, and on Tuesday, February 3, a telegram was sent to the Governor of Kentucky requesting that he immediately dispatch National Guard troops to Sand Cave.

On Tuesday afternoon, Lt. Edgar Cross and twelve of his men, from Smith's Grove, Kentucky, arrived, and a little before daylight Wednesday morning Capt. Julius L. Topmiller, of Bowling Green, Kentucky, followed with fifteen men.

Their sole duty was to keep the onlookers back out of the way, and to prevent disorder, and they set about it with diligence and dispatch. The effect was almost instantaneous. Disorder on the part of the crowd disappeared, and all those who were not rescue workers were kept out of the pit. Guards were posted at all necessary points, so that persons having no right to enter were denied admission.

There was, however, not much improvement in matters at the mouth of the cave. Although drinking had been abruptly stopped, ill-feeling and misdirected effort were still rife. Through all of it, many men were working as steadily as the circumstances would permit, but the work was so absolutely disorganized that, even when it appeared that one party was making progress, as soon as it would come out of the tunnel others would enter and begin upon an entirely different plan of endeavor.

Once or twice it seemed that the rescue was near at hand. On one trip, William B. Miller, diminutive Louisville reporter, aided by a party of selected men, succeeded, so it was thought, in moving the rock which pinned Collin's foot several inches. This was done by placing a short iron bar, with Collins' assistance, against the imprisoning stone, setting the other end of the bar against a short screw-jack, and extending

the jack. Just when it seemed that the rock was certain to be pushed off the unfortunate man's limb, however, the bar slipped. They were never again able to secure a hold with it upon the stone.

On one other trip more drastic measures were attempted. Homer Collins led this party, the man directly behind him being Lt. Robert Burdon, of the Louisville Fire Department. They had devised a leather harness to be fitted around Floyd's body, under his arms. This was attached to a stout rope. Homer fed his brother on this trip, and then succeeded in placing the harness upon him. Then Burdon and the others pulled on the rope, and felt the body give several inches, but this distance was only gained by the stretching of the body; and the unfortunate man's anguish was so great and his screams so heartrending that his brother called a halt and would not allow the scheme to be tried further.

Even if they had succeeded in dragging Collins from his trap by this method, there was only a very remote chance that they could have brought him to the surface. Burdon afterward said that the chances were a thousand to one against success; for, as he said, unless Collin's foot had slipped out so easily and with so little damage to it that he would have retained consciousness, they would never have gotten him out alive. In other words, it seemed to be pretty well the consensus of opinion that even if the man were loosened, unless he had then been able to move and help to get himself out, he would have been killed by being dragged through the narrow, tortuous chamber, around curves, up steep inclines, over jagged stones,

There is not space here for a detailed account of all the parties and individuals who crawled into the passage. Men from all walks of life lay together in the mud. One college president, Charles E. Whittle, of Bowling Green, Kentucky, worked in the tunnel for hours; and on the same day, others were there who could not write their names. On many of these trips the party did not consist alone of two or three men who are mentioned as having fed Collins or as having attempted to put into practice some plan of rescue, but contained also sometimes as many as a dozen others, who lay in single file behind the leaders. They constituted a line of communication with the outside, relaying messages and articles in and out of the tunnel.

Then, early Wednesday morning, misfortune in a new form overtook the rescue workers. A portion of the passage fell in, blockading it so that it was impossible to reach the en-

tomed man. This slide was within ten or fifteen feet of the body. Various attempts were made to remove the obstruction, and several parties entered the cave, lay in the form of a chain, and passed out stones and earth.

On Wednesday afternoon Dr. W.D. Funkhouser, of Lexington, Kentucky, and Mr. M. E. S. Posey, executive secretary of the State Highway Commission, arrived, at the request of Governor Fields. Dr. Funkhouser is head of the department of zoology at the University of Kentucky. His research work in forms of subterranean life had given him an unusual familiarity with caverns. He began and maintained a very accurate and helpful record of the parties and individuals who entered the hole, of their purposes in so doing, and of the work reported as actually done in each instance.

It is felt that especial mention is due the Kentucky Rock Asphalt Company for the services which it rendered. It furnished thousands of dollars worth of machinery and equipment, and many expert workmen. From this organization also came Mr. H. T. Carmichael, its production manager, who later supervised the sinking of the shaft at Sand Cave. Mr. Carmichael arrived a little after noon on Tuesday, February 3.

During the whole of Wednesday, although frantic efforts were made, practically nothing was accomplished. Party after party went into the tunnel, but none of them was able to penetrate the cave-in, which grew worse as the day wore on. The party which discovered the blockade reported that they could get to within ten feet of the imprisoned man; but parties which went in later in the day emerged with the report that they were unable to get within twenty feet of him.

A little before midnight of the same day, a party of practical miners from Muhlenburg County, Kentucky, arrived at Sand Cave. They were headed by Mr. D. E. Bennett, of Drakesboro, Kentucky. These men had had years of experience in general coal mine work, and, in addition, were specialists in the timbering and safeguarding of mines. They were picked men, and several of them had served for years as rescue experts in case of mine disasters.

The party included one man, Roy Hyde, a timberman and mine rescue worker of long experience, who was also an ordained Christian minister. He was small in stature, but conscientious and fearless, and he very evidently had the complete confidence of all the members of his party. He was selected by the other Muhlenburg County men to go into the tunnel and make a preliminary report. Hyde entered the hole, guided

by Lt. Ben L. Wells, of Bowling Green Kentucky, who had made numerous trips into it and who was thoroughly familiar with its condition. Some time afterward they emerged, and Hyde stated that he and his men could timber the tunnel up to the point of the cave-in, but that he could not report then as to the feasibility of going through the blockade until he had made the passage safe up to that point.

This plan was then adopted. All the workers present at the mouth of the cave were set to cutting timbers in accordance with the specifications laid down by the miners, and the work of timbering was begun.

The odds against the workers had been increasing day by day. Up until Tuesday night the newspaper stories had all been to the effect that the removal of the body might take place at any time; but with the blockading of the tunnel that idea was necessarily modified.

At about midnight, Wednesday Governor Fields called Brigadier General Henry H. Denhardt at his home in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and asked him to proceed to Sand Cave and take charge of the work of rescuing Floyd Collins. General Denhardt commands the 75th Infantry Brigade of the National Guard, and is also Lieutenant Governor of the State of Kentucky. Governor Fields advised him to take as many officers and men as he thought necessary, but General Denhardt stated that there were already enough there on duty. He summoned Major William H. Cherry and Captain Alex M. Chaney, both of Bowling Green and both members of his staff, and they immediately proceeded to Sand Cave, arriving a little after two o'clock Thursday morning.

Some time after their arrival, Hyde and his party came out of the hole and reported what was called by them a "mud squeeze," and that here they were compelled to stop. They stated that the ground was of such a nature, and so soft and unstable, that timbering was impossible; and, further, that as miners, they were unwilling to work in ground that they could not make reasonably safe behind them, or to permit anyone else to do so.

This appeared to be the end of all hope, so far as getting Collins out through the original tunnel was concerned. In the light of later events, it now appears that there was never any real chance of recovering the body in this manner, although it was only natural that the efforts of the rescuers had been directed along this line theretofore.

General Denhardt immediately called together the men who had been exercising some degree of leadership and who were more familiar with conditions than others, and they, with Hyde, talked the matter over. Very little time was consumed in this conference, and it resulted in Hyde being sent, at the request of General Denhardt, into the tunnel to make an accurate final report as to the possibility or impossibility of continuing the attempt to penetrate through it to Collins.

Hyde is a preacher. He is a fearless little man; but he is an expert on conditions underground, and he knew better than any of those about him how hazardous the undertaking was. Before he entered on this final inspection, he asked that he be allowed a few moments of preparation. He walked into a nearby tent, got down upon his knees, and offered up a prayer that he might be permitted to return from his perilous journey. Then, at a few moments after 5 o'clock Thursday morning, he entered the mouth of the tunnel for the last time.

After some time he came out, pale but cool, and stated that there had actually been a fresh slip since the last trip he had made, and that conditions were so far worse than before that any further attempt in this direction would be absolute suicide.

General Denhardt immediately called the workers around him, stated that further trips into the hole would not be permitted, and asked if they would undertake to sink a shaft, straight from the surface of the ground, through the sixty or seventy feet of sliding and supportless debris which intervened, to the body of Floyd Collins. Every man present voiced his anxiety immediately to begin it. Mr. Carmichael, the most experienced man present in this line of work, was named by General Denhardt to superintend the actual digging of the shaft. Mr. Carmichael, exhausted by continuous effort and lack of rest since his arrival, had shortly before gone into Cave City and gone to bed.

The arrival of General Denhardt and his staff marked the end of delays. There was no more working at cross-purposes. Within five minutes after this last conference, Major Cherry, together with D. E. Bennett, leader of the Muhlenburg miners, had been dispatched into Cave City to obtain the necessary men and machinery. Major Cherry went to the hotel and awakened Mr. Carmichael sent him to the cave to take charge; and then set about the marshalling of resources.

Major Cherry's efforts were met with unqualified success. None of his requests for aid was refused. He had simply

to state what he wanted, and it was furnished, without question or delay. From the tools and machinery available in Cave City he first selected those that could be used, and they were immediately carried to Sand Hole. Other equipment, which could not be secured so near the scene of action, was obtained in Louisville and Nashville, and some of it the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company transported to Cave City immediately on fast passenger trains which ordinarily did not stop at all at that station. The railroad company also voluntarily furnished laborers, and tools of its own.

By the time the first of the machinery arrived at Sand Hole, the surveys had been made, the site of the proposed shaft located, and the ground cleared for action. The survey was an accurate one to a point approximately halfway down the tunnel, the remainder of the distance having been arrived at by making a composite plat from the descriptions of the other part of the passage given by the most intelligent and capable of the men who had been through it. This map was prepared by Dr. Funkhouser..

By sundown Thursday a track had been laid from the shaft site to a dump in the ravine; hoists had been installed, the men had been divided into crews, each with its particular task.

Actual excavation had begun, and the shaft was down several feet.

Authority is a wonderful thing. For days, the whole nation had hung upon the news of Floyd Collins. Everybody was anxious to help in any way he could. Hundreds and hundreds of people had come to the scene, prepared to work unceasingly in any way in which they were directed. Owners of machinery and tools, great corporations, everyone, would willingly have given of their equipment and man power to the end that Floyd Collins might be saved. All present were surcharged with a desire to help, without limitation or reservation. The working day, in the minds of everyone, consisted of twenty-four hours.

But nothing had been accomplished. Floyd Collins grew weaker and weaker. Food could not be gotten to him. All the the frantic effort at the cave mouth was unavailing.

Then in an instant everything was changed. Disorganization gave way to organization. Pointless effort became directed effort. There was work to do, and every man knew his task. The greatest difficulty with which those in charge had to contend was in compelling the workers to stop

and rest when the limit of physical endurance was reached. Never again will the boss of a construction job have such men to work with.

Hour by hour the shaft grew deeper. There was no delay. There was no waiting, for either men or supplies. Long before a crew had finished its shift, the relieving crew was standing at the mouth of the hole, eager to get to work.

At certain intervals timber gangs went in to shore up and protect the work of the excavators. They did not have to wait for a single stick of wood, a tool or a nail. As they came out, an excavating crew went down. The organization functioned with the efficiency of a well regulated machine; but there was this difference: it was a machine with a soul.

So the shaft went down, and as it deepened the story took more and more space on the front pages of the papers, the headlines became bigger and blacker, and the interest of the public grew more and more acute.

On the ground above the cliff a mushroom city sprang up. Tent after tent was erected. The Red Cross installed a dispensary. Physicians and nurses were in constant attendance. Kitchens and dormitories were maintained, and the workers ate and slept within a hundred yards of the shaft.

Newspaper correspondents, photographers and motion picture camera men thronged the scene. The trees on the top of the cliff suddenly sprouted telephones. In the hotel at Cave City the pounding of typewriters and the clicking of many telegraph keys was incessant, day and night. Floyd Collins was the most talked of man in the world.

The scores, of newspaper men present contributed one of the most interesting features of the whole occurrence. They were tireless, and the most resourceful men the writer has ever seen. There was competition between them of the most unrelenting sort. They never slept. They did not have time to eat. They were forced to be on duty twenty-four hours a day; but they never failed. They had to be in two places at the same time; but they never missed a story.

There came a time during the course of the work when it was absolutely necessary that no one be admitted to the cave mouth except the men who were actual workers. For days, thousands of people were gathered at the top of the cliff, eager to get down into the ravine for just one look at the thing. If a tenth of them had been permitted to do so, the work could not have proceeded.

The newspaper men, however, had to see what was going on.



Above—Magistrate H. C. Turner and City Marshal, O. L. Hanson.

Below—Floyd's father bids Brenner and Marshall good-bye.

Their jobs depended on it—in this profession there is no excuse for failure. A wire enclosure was constructed down in the hollow under the cliff, and to this all newspaper correspondents and photographers, after first securing passes, were admitted. Here they were as little in the way of the workers as was possible, and yet they could obtain full view of all operations.

These newspaper men deserve great commendation for the manner in which they conducted themselves under pressure so terrific that it would have driven an ordinary man to the ragged edge of desperation.

The Court of Inquiry

Somebody has tried to estimate what the Floyd Collins' tragedy cost in money. This is impossible, because, in the first place, the value of the services performed cannot be considered in terms of dollars and cents. Then, in the second place, any attempt to reckon the total amount of money spent in connection with the episode would lead the amateur statistician into such a maze of matters so remote from the incident itself that he would be forced to stop in confusion. If the time expended by citizens all over the country in street corner discussions could be included, that item alone might run into the millions.

Certainly, the volunteer workers and those who furnished equipment gave services running far into the thousands. No one was paid anything. An offer of payment would have been an insult.

Some actual cash was necessary, however. The workers had to be fed and housed. There were no accommodations within a radius of several miles around the scene, and it was absolutely necessary that the men who were engaged in the attempted rescue be kept close at hand.

There was no difficulty about securing funds. It was not even necessary to make a public appeal for money. Prompted by the same spirit that had moved hundreds to come in person, additional hundreds of people who could not be present themselves voluntarily sent donations of money. The Red Cross received and disbursed a great deal of these funds, as did also leading citizens of the community. This shower of checks began early, and was for some time sufficient to take care of all pressing needs. On February 8th, however, a few days after the shaft had been started, and when hope was high and everything was progressing smoothly, an incident occurred which threatened summarily to put a stop to the proceedings, and to reinstate the reign of distrust and suspicion.

For several days sensational occurrences had been lacking. Untiring, whole-souled, organized effort was resulting in steady progress, and the workers were hourly cutting down the distance between them and the unfortunate victim; but everything was according to schedule, and the newspaper men were obliged to subsist without the aid of startling and unlooked for de-

velopments.

Then it was that a certain press correspondent, whose longing for sensation overbalanced his regard for truth, originated and broadcasted a rumor. His dispatch had it that there was a rumor at Sand Cave, growing stronger day by day, that the whole affair was a hoax and a fake; that either there was no one in the cave, or that if there was, he was not pinned there, but had plenty of room to go in and out, enough to eat and drink, and was thoroughly comfortable; in short, that the whole thing was pre-arranged and was a scheme to gain publicity for the cave country.

It would certainly have been a poor, lame way to induce people to visit the caves. On the contrary, it is quite probable that it has produced in the minds of many timid people, who cannot know that the explored caverns are much safer than the streets of their own cities, a profound desire to stay out of caves. The truth is that Sand Hole is not a cave, but only a passageway used as a means of discovering a cave. It was not meant to be, and certainly will not be, used even as an entrance if the cavern discovered by Floyd Collins is eventually opened to the public.

As a matter of fact, there were no rumors at Sand Cave. This reporter's statement was absolutely contrary to the statements of all the brave and honest men who had seen and talked with Floyd Collins. To believe it, one must have believed that all these fearless and unselfish ones, as well as the State of Kentucky itself, through its direct representatives, were either fools, liars or parties to the crime.

Rumors are dangerous things. This one was murderous. People who were on the scene knew it was untrue, but people in other places, all over the country, who depended upon the newspapers for their information, read it and were influenced by it. Donations ceased to come in. They were not merely decreased: they stopped. In their place came a flood of telegrams, letters, and long distance telephone calls, directed to everyone who had figured in the papers as being in a position to know the truth, asking whether or not Floyd Collins was pinned in Sand Cave.

Prospective furnishers of supplies paused. Even new arrivals among the actual workers were influenced. A question arose in their minds. Is there any truth in this rumor? Are we the victims of a gigantic frame-up? Are we making fools of ourselves? In their hearts these men should have known, and did know, that it was not so. They had worked

long under terrific strain, without rest. Some of them had passed the ordinary limit of physical endurance; they were being sustained by their emotions. They were in exactly the right condition to be led astray by such falsehoods as this, which they would have laughed at had they been cool and rested and in the normal possession of their faculties..

This was the greatest menace that had arisen. It was the most overwhelming of a long list of misfortunes. The author of the lie had been shown the error of his ways and had departed with more haste than grace, though still unrepentant and maintaining that "the day of fake journalism had not passed." But the damage was done, and the leaders of the work realized that they were up against the supreme obstacle.

On the evening of the day this false news was published, Sunday, February 8th, General Denhardt, accompanied by Captain Chaney, made a flying automobile trip to Frankfort, the capitol of Kentucky. This journey consumed the greater part of the night, but the party arrived at Frankfort in time to breakfast with the Governor and to lay the facts before him. When they left the Capitol a little later, they carried with them an order from the Governor, signed by the Adjutant General of Kentucky, appointing a military court of inquiry to examine into the whole affair.

The court consisted of the following officers of the Kentucky National Guard:

Brigadier General Henry H. Denhardt,
Lt. Col. Henry J. Stites,
Maj. William H. Cherry,
Capt. John A. Polin,
Capt. Julius L. Topmiller,
Capt. Alex M. Chaney.

One member, Major Cherry, was unable to serve, on account of illness. All of the other members sat, and all of them, save Captain Topmiller are lawyers by profession. General Denhardt, as ranking National Guard officer in Kentucky, was president of the court.

Col. Stites is a lawyer of many years' experience, and is now engaged in practice at Louisville. He was during the war and is now Inspector General of the 38th Division.

Capt. Chaney, who was named as recorder of the court, is county attorney of Warren County, one of the largest counties in Kentucky. He has had several years' experience as a judge advocate in criminal prosecutions before military courts. He is now Intelligence, Plans and Training Officer of

the 75th Infantry Brigade.

Capt. Polin, of Springfield, Kentucky, is an ex-member of the Kentucky Legislature, has been county attorney of his country, and is now a practicing lawyer. He is also in command of Troop A, 53rd Machine Gun Squadron, Kentucky National Guard.

Capt. Topmiller is a business man of Bowling Green, Kentucky, and commands the Service Company, 149th Infantry. He is man of great technical knowledge and ability.

Major Cherry, who was unable to sit upon the court, is in business in Bowling Green. He is an efficient member of General Denhardt's staff, and has had years of experience, both at home and abroad. He is Executive Officer of the 75th Infantry Brigade.

This was the personnel of the court. The members were well fitted for their duty. All of them except Major Cherry and Captain Topmiller are lawyers, and these last two officers had been at Sand Cave for several days and were familiar with the situation.

It was their duty to call before them in public sessions all persons, who were in a position to know anything at all about the affair, and to obtain from them their sworn statements. They were to make every effort to gather all the information that they could, whether about Floyd Collins himself, his associates, his entombment in Sand Hole, the effort made to rescue him, or any fact obtainable about the whole matter, from its beginning until the date the court was assembled, and from day to day thereafter until the end.

This the court did. The writer was employed as official reporter, to make and preserve a true record of all proceedings, including a verbatim report of all evidence introduced. He has that record in his possession, 700 pages of it, and from it he has verified every statement made in this article.

The court convened for its first session at nine o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, February 10th. The first witness called was William Burke Miller, one of the first men to get into the hole and see, touch and talk with Collins; and after him came many others. Every effort was made to procure the testimony of everyone who had been in the hole or who was in a position to know any fact bearing on the matter. Each witness who had been one of a party which went into the hole was asked to give the names of the other members of that party, and to give the names of others outside his own party who had been in or who had any knowledge of any fact which

ought to be made part of the record. When the court concluded its examination of each witness, the witness was asked to state any fact connected with the affair about which he might not have been questioned, and then the bystanders were invited to submit to the recorder of the court any question which any of them desired to ask, that the recorder might put it to the witness.

Practically every witness was asked, during the course of his testimony, if he knew of any facts which would have sustained the press dispatch which had caused the trouble and every one answered that he had not, and that he had not heard any such rumor from anyone in a position to know or from anyone at all in the vicinity of Sand Cave or Cave City.

Everyone who had anything to say had an opportunity to tell it. In fact, everyone, whether he had been working or merely talking, was hunted up, placed upon the stand, sworn, and directed to tell what he knew.

This was the end of rumor. There was no more thoughtless talk. The simple, unadorned facts were being told before the court of inquiry day by day, in public hearings. The workers told their stories and went back to work. Several important witnesses, including Mr. Carmichael, were not asked to testify until the job was completed, in order that they might not spend an unnecessary minute away from the shaft.

Conditions at the mouth of the cave improved steadily after the first session of the court. Men whose effort had been retarded by the question in their minds as to the genuineness of the affair, were able to work with renewed vigor and a clear conscience. Indeed, it seemed that there was added strength in their work, if that had been possible. Contributions of money again gradually began to come in, although never in such volume as at first.

The sinking of the shaft was proving to be even a more difficult task than had been anticipated. The material through which it was being driven was so loose and formless that every inch of the walls had to be timbered. Some of the workers have described it as being like quicksand, which required constant watching in order that it might be held in check. It took advantage of every opening, and of every slightest giving of the timbers. Several slides occurred, material slipping off the walls and leaving great cavities, which had to be immediately shored up with timbers painstakingly cut and designed so as to fit exactly into the hollow left by each slide.

The workers at the bottom were in constant danger. In addition to this, they were obliged to stand deep in mud and muck, for water continually seeped in. The space was restricted. The shaft had been designed so that it was six feet square inside the timbers, and there was scarce room for three men to work in it at one time. They were unable to use the quick methods ordinarily used in the sinking of mining shafts. They could not use dynamite or blasting powder, because the concussion might have caused the rock to fall in on Collins, lying there below them, and might have buried the workers themselves in a shower of stones and mud.

The work was done with picks and crowbars and shovels. Stones and boulders of all shapes and sizes were encountered, and these had to be separately pried out and removed. The material taken out was shovelled or lifted into a metal hoisting bucket which, when full, was drawn out by a hoisting engine. When the bucket arrived at the surface it was emptied into a small truck, which was in turn drawn, by a cable attached to a tractor, along a wooden track until it was some hundred or more feet from the shaft, and there dumped.

Collins' Body Found

By Friday, February 13th, the shaft had been driven fifty-five feet down into the earth. According to the calculations previously made, the workers were getting close to the spot where Floyd Collins was entombed.

Collins, however, had not been seen nor fed since Wednesday of the week before, and there was grave doubt in the minds of the men in charge, although they were careful to keep it to themselves, that he was still alive.

On this particular day, workers in the shaft had struck two separate empty spaces, and these, although they were examined and found to be of small extent and to lead nowhere, were taken as indications that the bottom of the pit was very close either to the great cavern that Collins had discovered or to the original natural passage itself.

Then little Ed Brenner stood out. He volunteered to make the journey into the original hole, now grown many times more dangerous by reason of the disturbing of the surrounding earth to "listen to the sound, the sound of our working; and to find out, how far we are, and give the boys a sound—the boys in the pit." But let him tell it in his own broken English. After it was over, and he had come out, and appeared, smiling and glad of what he had done, before the court, General Denhardt asked him, "Did you hear any sounds they made?" Brenner answered, "I certainly did;" and then the questions and answers were as follows:

Q. "How far do you think it was from where you were to where the sounds were coming from?"

A. "The sounds came ten feet from me; ten feet, to my estimation. Yes, I think it is ten feet from where I am."

Q. "How far back in the tunnel did you go?"

A. "I was at the place where it is caved in."

Q. "You saw the cave-in there, did you?"

A. "Why, certainly; I was at it."

Q. "Did you hear any sound while you were down there?"

A. "What you mean? Our men working?"

Q. "No; any other sound. Did you hear anybody breathing?"

A. "Yes, I heard one deep (illustrates by gasping) like this."

Q. "A kind of a long, loud breath?"

A. "It was like somebody in a groan. It is a groan, but not a loud groan, like you hear a man that's got hurt, in a hospital, you know."

Q. "A gasp?"

A. Yes; now you got it. Now you got into my dictionary. If I brought my dictionary with me I tell it a lot quicker. It was a gasp."

And then he tells of finding an empty canteen, a lantern and the harness which had been used in the unsuccessful attempt to drag Collins out of his trap.

A little later he was asked:

"Where was this gasp you heard in relation to where you were? Was it in front of you?"

A. "Yes, it was in front of me."

Q. "Did you hear the knocking from that place, or had you gone further back? Where were you then?"

A. "No, I was about two feet back from there; back from the fall. I crawled back and just waited on the signal—savvy? Then I hear that deep gasp in front of me, or right behind me, or somewhere—I can't tell at first—then I know it is in front of me. I couldn't hear no more, and I hollered out, 'Floyd! Floyd!' But Floyd don't answer, for he is where he can't, I guess. So I holler 'Hold out; we're coming!'"

"There is a rock sticking out here, see? And I took the canteen—but first I took a rock and hit it, and it didn't sound right, and so I took that canteen and hit it three times. I tapped three times, and they started hitting over there, and I heard that."

And the last question and answer was;

"You say you tried to talk to Floyd and tell him to carry on; that you were coming after him?"

"I said, 'Floyd, hold out; we're coming!'"

They worked as they had never worked before. The shaft was sliding, moving, creeping. The timbers creaked; one side of the whole thing sank several inches. Only the knowledge of their nearness, gained after such bitter exertion, could have kept them in that death trap.

Tests had been made with a diamond drill, which removes a core of material as it penetrates into the earth. These cores afford an accurate forecast of what will be encountered at any given depth. One core had been taken in the bottom of the shaft itself, and another some fifteen feet to one side.

the core taken from the shaft showed that at about 55 feet there was a limestone ledge, and beneath it was a pocket containing seven or eight feet of mud. The core test made outside the shaft showed a similar ledge and cavity at the same depth, with the exception that the cavity was not filled with mud, but was empty.

When the bottom of the shaft had reached the ledge, the whole thing was in such a dangerous condition that the workers did not dare to go through the limestone into the unsupported region, for fear that walls, timber and all would come tumbling down upon them. For this reason, at that point a lateral heading was begun in the side of the shaft wall which had been proven, by Brenner's knocking experiment, to be nearest to the hole in which Collins lay. The material encountered was of such a nature that they could not drive a straight tunnel, but were compelled to follow the line of least danger. The heading was first driven out from the shaft for a distance of about two feet, then turned at right angles and proceeded about ten feet further; always directly on the top of the limestone ledge. At this point, however, it was felt reasonably safe to proceed downward, and they drilled and chipped into and through the limestone.

The last small piece came out, and they felt empty space below. The opening was rapidly enlarged; Ed Brenner made his way through it.

He saw a rope, and a few bottles. He was in the original passage, past the cave-in, and about eight feet from Floyd Collins.

* * *

Above the cliff outside, the crowd swayed and stamped with eagerness to learn the final outcome. In their wire enclosure down at the cave mouth, the newspaper correspondents and photographers and the motion picture men stood, every nerve taut, notebooks and cameras ready. A few miles away, at the nearest landing place, were several airplanes, tank full, ready to fly at a second's notice, to take the first photographs back to newspapers in Cincinnati, Chicago and New York. This was the zero hour; they must not fail.

Then, at a few minutes before four o'clock, Monday afternoon, February 16th, the signal rope in the shaft was tugged; the hoisting engine was thrown into gear, and the bucket came out of the hole, bearing two of the workers. There was a hurried consultation. Then this announcement was made to the newspaper men:

"Collins' body has been found. He is apparently dead."

Floyd Collins' body had been found, but its removal from the earth seemed as remote as ever. The only advantage that the shaft workers now had over the rescuers who had previously gone through the original channel was that if they could succeed in loosening the body and bring it up over the huge protruding rock and into the heading, they would have more room to work in, and would not be faced with the task of dragging him a hundred and seventy feet through the narrow passage way. Yet this advantage was offset by the fact that the danger of a collapse, both of the natural cavern and of the man-made opening, had materially increased.

Several of the best men in the shaft crew crawled into the tunnel and reached Collins. Brenner, Marshall, Blevins, Maddox, all of them made the trip. None of them could discover any possibility of getting him out.

Then little Maddox remembered that when he had made his trips into the hole before the shaft had been started, he had noticed a small opening at Collins' side, leading, apparently toward a point directly under the point where the heading had recently been opened into the cavity. He begged to be allowed to dig down into the floor of the heading, in an effort to find a natural opening that would lead in under Collins' body, possibly to his feet. Permission to do this was given him, and he was to have sole charge of the project. Brenner, Marshall and Blevins were left with him, charged with the duty of forcing him to abandon his scheme if, in their opinion, it led into too much danger.

He began to dig about three o'clock Tuesday morning, and at seven o'clock the job was finished. He did not reach Collins' feet, or make it possible to remove him, but he did make it possible for a man to go into the shaft, through the lateral heading, and down to a point within two feet of the imprisoned man's head, without ever entering the natural passage at all. By doing this, he also made possible an unmistakable identification of the body and an authoritative medical examination.

Captain C. E. Francis, of the Kentucky National Guard, was the first medical man to make the journey. He was accompanied by Brenner, who led the way and assisted in the examination. Capt. Francis returned, and pronounced that Collins was dead.

The shaft was growing more and more dangerous. It was no longer a question of saving a living man, but only a matter of removing a body, already buried under hundreds of tons of

earth, that it might be again buried at the surface. It meant several days' further work, and that the lives of other men might be sacrificed.

Even then the task was not abandoned. It was suggested that if the imprisoned leg or legs of the dead man could be amputated, he might be removed. Dr. C. C. Howard, of Glasgow, Kentucky, a skilled surgeon, received written permission from the father of the dead man to perform this operation, and signified his willingness to make the attempt.

The writing authorizing this medical man to perform this most unusual operation was as follows:

"Whereas, I, the father of Floyd Collins, knowing that he is now dead, and not desiring that Mr. Carmichael or any of his men risk their lives in their further attempts to secure his body, and believing that his body could be recovered with less danger to the lives of the rescuers by his leg or legs being amputated, and realizing that probably a part of his leg or legs will have to remain in the cave;

"I hereby agree and request that Dr. C. C. Howard and whatever assistants he may designate, be and they are hereby authorized to amputate the leg or legs of Floyd Collins for the above reasons.

"This February 16, 1925.

LEE COLLINS.

"Witness:

"W. S. COLLINS.

"WM. T. RUNNER."

Donning slickers and boots, they went into the shaft, guided by the workers, and made their way to Collins' body.

The scheme was found impossible of execution. The rock above the body had so far sunk that the surgeons could not reach further down than the shoulders; so the idea was given up. Some one suggested that the man's head be cut off and exhibited to those who still doubted that Collins had been in the cave, if there were any persons who still had such doubts. This, however, was too brutal a plan to be considered.

Then was held the strangest coroner's inquest on record. The office of coroner being vacant in Barren County, it was the duty of Squire T. C. Turner, as magistrate of the district in which Sand Hole is located, to conduct the inquest.

Under the laws of Kentucky, it is required that the coroner's jury view the body of the deceased. Never was the letter of the law complied with at so great a risk. A jury was

impanelled, and consisted of men who stated their willingness to go into the hole and examine the body of Floyd Collins. The jurors were Messrs. Norman Parker, Thomas L. Gorby, Johnnie Geraldts, Ish Lancaster, Claude Monroe and Wallace Page.

Led by Squire Turner, the jurors were let down into the shaft. One by one they crawled into the narrow aperture which Maddox had made, and gazed upon Collins' cold, still face, put their hands upon him, moved his head. One by one they retired to the foot of the shaft. At length they were drawn to the surface. They had performed their preliminary duty; they knew that Collins was in the hole, and that he was dead.

They retired to the City Court room at Cave City to continue the inquest. Witnesses were introduced and heard, in order that Barren County might have its own record of Floyd Collins' death. Questions were propounded by Hon. J. Lewis Williams, Commonwealth's Attorney for the Tenth Judician District of Kentucky, Magistrate Turner, and the members of the jury.

This was the first occasion on which the testimony of young Jewell Estes, the boy who first talked to Collins after his entombment, was secured. Lieutenant Ben L. Wells, a West Point graduate, and professor of mathematics in Ogden College, at Bowling Green, Kentucky, also testified. He had been a constant worker at Sand Hole from almost the very first. Then little Brenner was called, and the second story of his heroism, simply told, was added to the record. Everett L. Maddox whose ingenuity, perseverance and bravery had made the inquest possible, also testified.

The last witness was Mr. H. T. Carmichael, who had had charge of the digging of the shaft. He gave a detailed report of his actions since his arrival, of the beginning of operations in the shaft, and the whole story of its progress, hour by hour, until the end. He praised highly the courage and industry of the men under him amid such frightful surroundings. While he was describing the extremely dangerous condition of the hole, a man who had just come from the scene announced that the shaft had already begun to come together; that the surface of the ground around its mouth was beginning to sink, and that a crack an inch wide encircled the entrance at a radius of about twenty feet.

This was, in truth, the end. The Court of inquiry, which had attended the inquest, included the testimony there heard into its own record, and immediately afterward swore and examined the separate members of the jury. The record was then practically complete. That night and the next day two or three

more witnesses testified, further to clear up relatively unimportant points.

In the hotel at Cave City, a sentimental newspaper man wrote "thirty" on a placard and placed it in full view upon the clock behind the desk. The story was finished.

For ten years, we had been fast becoming a nation of cynics. Years of war had wracked us, torn us, until our emotions were fully spent, and we had become hard and callous.

At first we were shocked and numbed when we read of battles in which thousands were slain. We thought only of the awful cost, so that we could not rejoice even over our own victories. Then, later, we had become so accustomed to gigantic losses of men that we were gleeful without reserve when the newspapers had it that we had gained a few yards of shell-scarred ground, even when it cost ten thousand lives.

Our post-war writers had been telling us that we were selfish and Godless, and, through constant repetition, we were beginning to believe it.

Then Floyd Collins, unknown to the world, humble even among his own unassuming fellows, was trapped in Sand Cave.

The newspapers got it. The nation read it, because it was a "different" story.

A day passed, and Collins was not rescued. The nation became interested, discussed the matter, offered suggestions.

A few more days went by. The man was suffering, cold and wet and hungry and alone in the dark. Then the people of the country stood up, forgetting that they were hard and selfish and cynical, and worked and prayed that Floyd Collins might be saved.

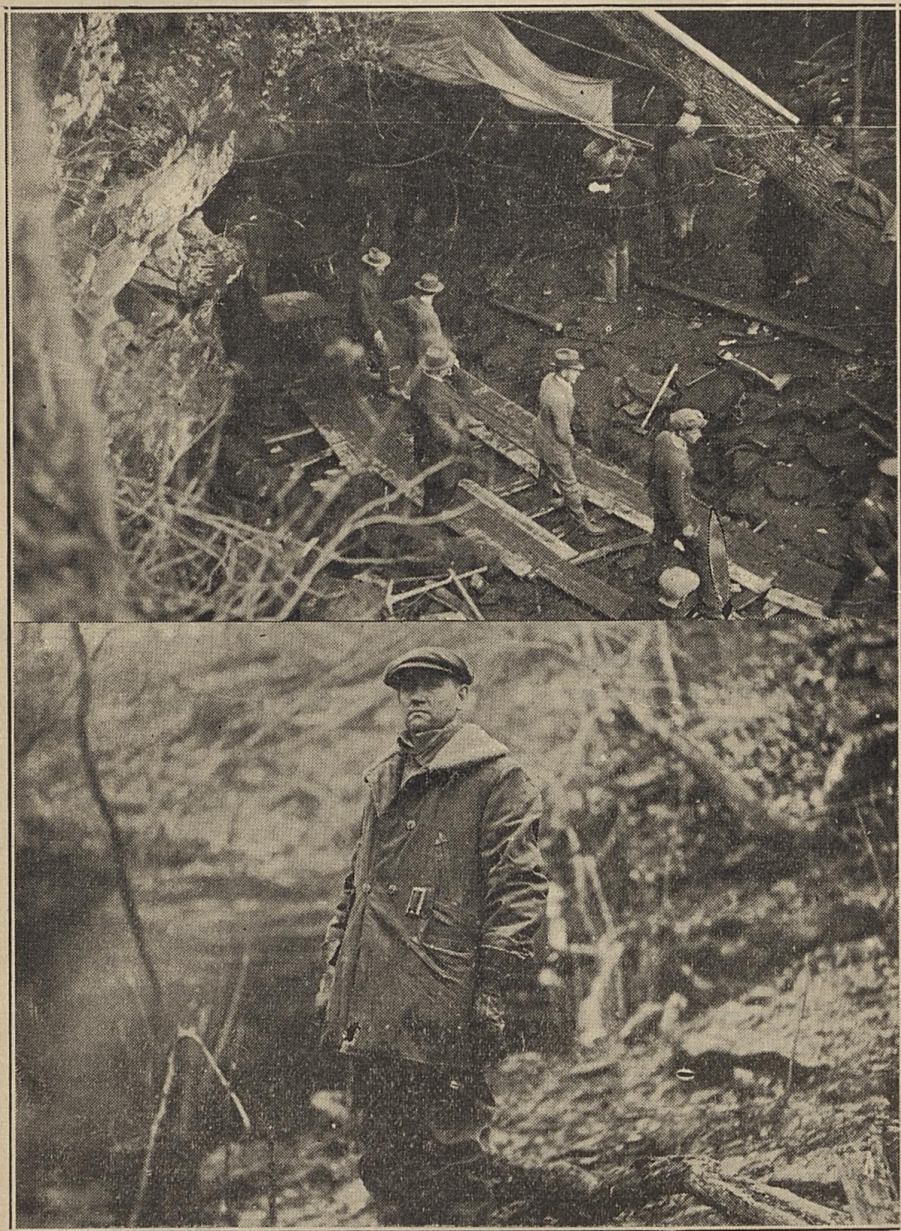
Floyd Collins is dead. A true product of the caves, he is fittingly entombed.

His funeral was held in the little grove above the cliff. Never was more reverence shown at such a service. Never did those who attended the last rites for any man so truly feel the reverence which they displayed.

It was not only poor, tortured Floyd Collins, his sufferings over, lying there beneath the hill. The ceremony was not alone for him.

It was the unveiling of a splendid monument to these people themselves who were there, to America, and to all humanity.

In that simple service there came to all of us the wonderfully consoling realization that America still has a heart; that we, as human beings, are kind and good, and that there still remains in us a spark of the Divine.



Upper—View at Cave Mouth shortly after the shaft was begun.

Lower—Johnnie Gerald.

Extracts From The Record

The official transcript of the testimony in the Floyd Collins affair would be very good reading. It is, however, over seven hundred pages in length—much too bulky to be incorporated in its entirety in this volume.

This record contains the sworn statements of all the men who saw and talked with Collins, and of practically everyone who had first hand knowledge of his plight and of the efforts made to rescue him. The stories which these men told, in their own words, of the perilous journeys which were made through the original passage, of their conversations with the entombed man, their attempts to free him and the cave-in which made further travel in the tunnel impossible, are extremely interesting. Then the story, given by the workers themselves, of the almost superhuman labor in the shaft which finally resulted in the discovery of the body, is itself a very unusual and refreshing tale of resourcefulness and bravery.

A reading of the whole record would clear up many matters about which the minds of the newspaper readers are still hazy. It would show why the necessity arose for troops to come to the scene and take charge. It would show why a military court of inquiry had to be held. It would show what kind of a community this is, where men spend their lives underground, roaming through natural Catacombs laid down before the first man lived. Finally, it would allay all doubts and questions in the mind of every reader, leaving only wonder and admiration.

On Monday, February 8th, nine days after Floyd Collins was caught in Sand Cave, a newspaper dispatch appeared which stated that rumors were afloat in that community to the effect that the man was not caught in the cave; that the affair was a hoax upon the public, and a scheme by which it was hoped to gain publicity for the Kentucky caves. This dispatch was untrue, because there were no rumors at Sand Cave; but after it had appeared in the papers the idea that perhaps the whole thing was a fraud spread very rapidly over the country. Proof of this was afforded by the fact that donations of men, machinery and supplies which had theretofore been coming in in sufficient quantities, immediately ceased. To disprove this rumor publicly and rout it at once from the public mind was

the primary purpose of the Court of Inquiry.

It is quite sad, but none the less true, that the idea that the affair was a fraud still exists in the minds of many people. Even to this day the writer frequently has to answer the question, "Was there really a man in there?"

To answer this question once and for all time, it is thought proper to embody in this volume a series of excerpts from the testimony heard by the court, thus giving the courageous men who saw and talked to Collins after he had been entombed an opportunity to tell their stories in their own words.

It was also a cause for some degree of wonder, to people who had not been at the scene of the tragedy and were not fully informed as to conditions there, that the Governor of Kentucky should have sent National Guard troops to Sand Cave to take charge. The extracts from the evidence which follow will also clear up that point.

A day or two ago the writer heard a lady say, "If that's the kind of place the caves are, I don't believe I want to visit them." For fear that she may be only one of a number of timid people who, on account of the Floyd Collins affair, may have received the impression that the Kentucky caves are dangerous places, it is thought well to include in this digest of the evidence all the statements made as to the formation of the so-called "Sand Cave," so as to show how widely different it is from the true caverns.

WAS IT A HOAX?

William Burke Miller, Louisville reporter:

I went in on my hands and knees for, I should say, about twenty feet, where the passage becomes so narrow that you are forced to get down on your stomach and move yourself along with your knees and elbows.

Q. What weight are you, Mr. Miller?

A. I am a hundred and ten now sir. I am usually around a hundred and twenty, but I am a little bit light right now. The cave is very twisted and turns and the roof has a lot of big rocks in it and a lot of smaller ones that are just stuck up there and look like they might fall. I don't know anything about caves, but I could see from the condition there that we were in a place that might be dangerous. I went on in front, and made the squeeze all right. I didn't have any trouble, and I didn't stick in any of the tight places, and went on until before I realized it I was right on top of Floyd. When I got to within, I should say, ten feet of him, I began calling, "Floyd,

Floyd," at the direction of some of those behind me. All the answer I got was a sort of a groan; just an "Uh; uh!", and I knew then that someone was down there. I slipped going down this so-called chute, and landed right on top of him almost before I realized I had come to him. I twisted down until I was right at his face, and found that somebody had been there and had covered his head with some sort of a cloth, like oilcloth, that went on down over part of his body. The cloth was wet, from the water dripping down the rock.

Q. Someone had covered him over with a cloth?

A. Yes, sir; there was an oil cloth over his head and face

Q. Did you receive any information there from him as to when the first person had gone back to him in the cave?

A. No, sir; at that time I did not.

Q. Did you later?

A. Yes, sir. I learned from Floyd on one of the three trips Tuesday evening that his brother had been in there and had fed him.

Q. What was your information as to when that occurred?

A. I believe he said he was fed Saturday evening.

Q. That was the next day after he was hung in the cave?

A. Yes, sir; and he also said that Gerald's had been down there digging and moving rocks from around him.

Q. What is Gerald's name—his first name?

A. John Gerald's, I believe. Floyd also asked me to try to get hold of Eddie Blair. He said that Eddie was an old time cave explorer and he thought that if some of us would get him, he might be able to get him loose.

Q. Eddie Blair, you say?

A. Yes, sir, Eddie Blair. When I came back out to ask for Blair, I was told that he was a man with a large family and that he was an explorer in Mammoth Cave. Somebody also said that he did not like to take the risk because he thought it was hopeless.

Q. I want you to just proceed now with the incident of your arrival at the body of Floyd Collins. Just tell what was said—the first word that was spoken.

A. Well, first he shouted out, "Oh, you and the stones are hurting me!" I had struck him, going down the chute, before I knew it. I tried to back up through the squeeze. I had to go with my feet behind me, and it was a little bit hard. When I got my body back up far enough, I lifted the cover from his face, and he immediately began begging me to put it back. He said, "Put it back; it keeps the water from dripping on

me." He insisted that I put it back between his face and the rock, so the water dripping down the side of the rock would not strike his face. I believe that is about all that passed at that time. I tried to turn in the place and got hung, and was a little bit frustrated for a minute, and then started back up and kept on till I got to a wider place and turned around.

Q. Describe the particular place at which you found his body, the condition of the rocks and the water and the cavity he was in, and the relation of his body as to the ground.

A. There is no water—that is, pools of water—in the place where Collins' body is. There seems to be a passage of water down through the stones from above that trickles down this rock at intervals.

Q. What kind of stone forms that cave there?

A. I don't know. I don't know what it is.

Q. Do you know sandstone from limestone?

A. I believe I could tell the difference now. I believe it is sandstone at this point above him, and that the rock across his body is limestone. At least Floyd said so, when I asked him about trying to chip or burn it away.

Q. Did you ask him about the rock then?

A. Not on this trip.

Q. What was the condition of his feet?

A. I couldn't see his feet. All I saw was his body to where this rock crosses it.

Q. How much of his body was covered by stones or dirt?

A. I wouldn't say that his body was covered by stones or dirt. My view was cut off by this overhanging rock that came within, I should say, two inches of his chest. There didn't seem to be any loose rock or dirt.

Q. How much of his body could you see?

A. About to here. I could see to where that huge stone comes across, hanging down.

Q. You couldn't tell whether or not that stone was across his chest.

A. Yes, sir; I could just get my hands through it.

Q. You could get your hands between his chest and the stone?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. It was not pressing on his body, then?

A. No, sir, not at all.

Q. Did you carry any light with you?

A. Not that time—Yes, I carried a flashlight with me that time.

Q. Did you use that flashlight there, and look at Collins?

A. I only looked at his face. I didn't try to get down under that stone.

Q. Did he make any statement as to his physical condition or as to whether or not he was suffering?

A. He said he was cold.

Q. Said he was cold?

A. Yes, sir; but he didn't mention being hungry.

Q. About what is the temperature of the cave? Is it cold?

A. You will have to understand that when you go in the cave, before you get very far you have to crawl through a little water, and you don't get any distance before you are soaking wet in front, and the water dripping down from the top gets you wet on the back, and by the time you reach him you are pretty cold.

Q. In relation to the temperature outside, is the temperature of the cave about the same?

Q. It is colder inside the cave than it is outside?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long did you stay back there on your first visit?

A. I don't believe I was there over half an hour that first time. I didn't stay long, because as soon as I looked at him it seemed to me that it was hopeless, and I turned around and said so to the man behind me.

Q. What was hopeless?

A. Getting him out.

Q. That was your opinion?

A. Only my opinion; yes, sir.

Q. Then did you proceed to come out of the cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mr. Miller, who was with you on that first trip?

A. Mr. Doyle is the only name that I knew.

Q. How many men came out of there with you?

A. Well, they were already out by the time I got out, you understand. I was the first man in and the last man out. I don't know how many there were, but not over four or five.

Q. And that was about ten o'clock Monday morning, February the—

A. Is it the second or the third? Sunday, I believe, was the first, and that would make it the second.

Q. Monday, February 2nd?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When did you go back again?

A. About five-thirty that afternoon.

Q. Who went with you?

A. Homer Collins, a brother of Floyd Collins, led, and I went second. Lieutenant Robert Burdon of the Louisville Fire Department was third, and I don't know who was behind him.

Q. Do you know how many men there were in that party?

A. I know there were more than we three, because frequently while we were down there two or three of them above would call down to see if we were coming out. I don't think there were over five or six or seven.

Q. Did you carry any food or water with you on that trip?

A. Homer had two sandwiches that he gave Floyd, and I believe he had some coffee.

Q. Did you proceed that time as far as his body?

A. No, sir. I was behind Homer Collins. You see, when one man gets down in this place the others have to lie back of him or at the top of him on that chute.

Q. What man went down to him?

A. Homer, his brother.

Q. How close did you get to him that time?

A. I could see his head.

Q. Did you hear him talking?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did Homer call his brother by name?

A. Yes, sir he talked to him and called him by name, and I could hear Floyd eating and swallowing those sandwiches.

Q. You heard Homer call him by name?

A. Yes, sir. He called him by name, and carried on a conversation, and Floyd's nerves seemed to be in a pretty bad shape, seemed pretty well shot, because he insisted that we were never going to get him out of there. When Homer tried to get this leather harness on him that he had fixed up so that we could try to pull him out, he begged us not to pull on it, because he was afraid we would pull his leg off. Homer took some time down there with his brother. I don't know whether it took him so long to feed his brother, or whether it was working with the harness, because it was mighty hard to work down there.

Q. What kind of harness was it?

A. It was a leather harness, similar to a Sam Browne belt, except that it had two straps and they did not cross the body.

Q. Did you make any effort to pull his body out at that time?

A. After a long time had passed Homer said that the

roose was fastened in there under Floyd's body, and we attempted to pull in on it, but we couldn't make much headway with it.

Q. Was his head—you didn't describe that a while ago—was his head lying toward the way you went into the cave, or the opposite way?

A. Yes, sir, his head is to you as you enter the cave, and he is lying on his left side at an angle, I think, of about forty-five degrees. His face is right on this rock, and he is lying just as close to the rock as possible. It seems that he is too closely fastened or that on account of all this covering on him he cannot get his hands up, or is too weak. That is the position he was in all the time. In all the trips I made in there and the times I saw him, he had never changed position.

Q. Did you ever see his hands?

A. I felt his hand.

Q. When was that? How did you feel his hands?

A. He was able to move small stones out of the place where he was and help get them up to me so I could pass them out, sliding them over to me, and I touched his right hand in taking the stones from him. I felt the right hand only.

Q. What was keeping you from seeing his hands?

A. This large stone there, about two feet across.

Q. At what angle was his body lying?

A. At about—just like that (indicating).

Q. At about a forty-five-degree angle?

A. Yes, sir. The passage turns down this way, and then twist and goes down like that. You cross over this big stone that bars the passage, and you are right on him.

Q. Did he ever complain to you or tell you what was hurting him, if anything, or what part of his body it was, or how it was hung?

A. He said his left foot was caught. At first he told me it was his toe that was caught, and then later said that only his heel was caught.

Q. How far back on his body did you have your hand?

A. The furthest I got was right on his right calf.

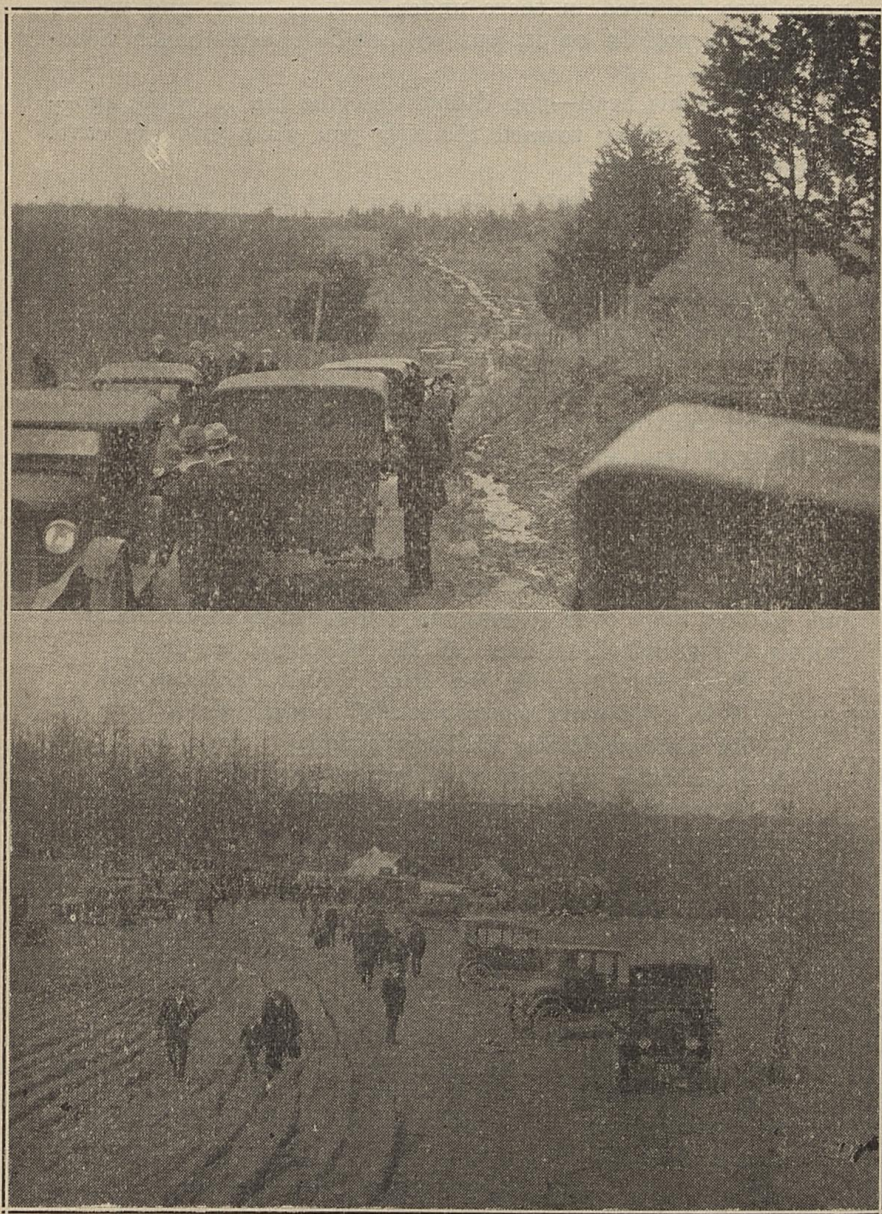
Q. His right knee cap?

A. No, his right calf; the calf of his right leg.

Q. Did you ever go on over his head in any way further on so that you could look back over the rock?

A. I did after I had taken the electric light down. That was the last trip Tuesday, or early Wednesday morning.

Q. What position did you have to get your body in to



Above—Thousands of cars parked on road to Sand Cave.
They filled both sides for four and one-half miles.
Below—Sightseers reluctantly leave the scene at dusk.

reach down to his leg?

A. I would have to come down that chute feet-first, and when I put my right foot down I would have to be careful not to hit his head, because the place is so narrow down there, and when I put my left foot down I could hardly get it by without touching him, touching his head. This is a narrow place down there, just a little bit wider than this chair, and it goes back like that (illustrating) and you want to bring this right toe down alongside his body that is lying there, and you can get the foot under the ledge. After you get down on this left knee you are as far as you can go, and his head is right there.

Q. Between your knees?

A. Yes, sir. When you get to this point it seems that there is more room inside this place, after getting your head down. You have to duck your head till you get down.

Q. By doing that—

A. You get down to him enough to draw this dirt over his head and pass it out. You can't get back up very well.

Q. Where is his head?

A. Right about here.

Q. And the thing that keeps you from getting further down is this large rock?

A. Yes, sir. Just about here it hits you, and about that high (illustrates) and you have got to get down just as tight as you can until you are right jam up against it.

Q. And by doing that and stretching you are able to reach the calf of his leg?

A. Yes, sir; and it seems to turn and go to the left.

Q. It doesn't lie right straight out?

A. No, sir.

Q. From what you could see there, what is your opinion as to the position of his foot?

A. I think, it is lying on its side.

Q. Which foot is that?

A. His left foot. The right foot is free.

Q. Could he move his right foot around?

A. Yes, sir, but he couldn't pull it out. That night I put the crowbar there he wanted it to be against that rock that was on his foot, and we had to be particular about getting it at the proper angle. I felt him catch it with his foot and he pushed it and kicked it into place, and I could see this leg move.

I said, "What are you doing with it?", and he said, "I

moved it with my right foot."

Q. Did he tell you why he went in there?

A. He said he had been exploring around and that he had found behind where he was then a cave, or rather a chamber that was very beautiful, but he didn't tell me how large it was or go into any details about it. He said it was directly behind him and that he had come up from an eighty-foot drop and was crawling back out when in pushing and clambering out he kicked something and a rock fell across his feet.

Q. He was proceeding to come out of the cave then?

A. That's what he said. I tried to make him tell me about the place where he had been and insisted to him that there might be another way, but on all of the trips that I made to him—

Q. How many different times did you talk to him?

A. Five times—no, I take that back I talked to him seven times, but it was only five times that I reached him.

Q. On most all of those trips you talked to him, then?

A. Yes, sir. I was trying to make him say there was another way into the cave, and that he had come in another way, but he always insisted that he was coming out the same way he went in, and that there was no other entrance.

Q. How far back did he say the cavity was back there?

A. He said if I could get that rock high enough off his body it would only take a few feet for it to drop.

Q. How far did he say the drop was into that other chamber?

A. He said it was eighty feet.

Q. Did he say whether or not he had been down there?

A. Yes, sir, he said he had been down there and was crawling up when this happened.

Q. Did he say that there was a bluff or a precipice behind him?

A. No, sir. From what he said I understand him to mean that the drop was not steep. It was not so steep but that he could climb it, on account of its rough facing.

Q. Did he say what size cavern that was?

A. No, he never told me that.

Q. Mr. Miller, from your conversation and talk with him, was he at himself the first time you talked to him, or not?

A. He was in a stupor that morning. I think he wanted to be left alone.

Q. Was he rational in all your other conversations with him?

A. Yes, sir. On Tuesday he said himself; "I'm at myself now."

Q. That was Tuesday?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you say you talked to him about another opening to the cave?

A. Yes, sir, and he said there were none.

Q. On this particular occasion, when he told you he was at himself, what did he tell you about other openings to the cavern, if anything.

A. I said, "You didn't come in this way," and he said, "Yes, I did." I said, "Isn't there some other opening in the cave below you there?" and he said he couldn't find any, and that is why he had come back this way.

Q. Did he state that he had attempted to find another opening?

A. Yes, sir, and he had been searching for other openings and other caves.

Q. What did you say to him on that occasion?

A. We asked him how he was, and he said he was hungry, and said, "My foot's free."

Q. Do you think he was rational at that time?

A. He sounded to me like he trying to get us to come back there. I don't think he was telling the truth about his foot being free.

Q. You don't think he was telling the truth?

A. No, sir.

Q. You think he was trying to get you to come back to him?

A. Yes, sir. I think he believed we had abandoned him, and was trying to get us to come back.

Q. Did he ask you to come back?

A. Yes, sir; he said, "Come on back and get me; my foot's free."

Q. Mr. Miller, on your last trip into the cave was Floyd Collins' body in Sand Cave?

A. Yes, sir. The last time I was in there I heard his voice.

Q. And the first time you were there you heard his voice, did you not?

A. Yes, sir, and on all the other trips.

Q. You either heard or saw him—

A. Seven times I heard him, I saw him five times.

Each time I saw him his body was in identically the same position.

Q. Did you call him by name on all these trips?

A. Yes, sir; I called him "Floyd".

Q. And did he answer?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Were you present in the cave when his brother, Homer, was in there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did Homer call him by name?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. He answered to the name of Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is there any doubt—

A. Once or twice he called and asked for his brother, Marshall Collins.

Q. You heard him ask for his brother, Marchall Collins?

A. Yes, sir, I heard him ask for him. He just said he wanted to see Marshall. I believe that was the trip Monday night, with Lieutenant Burdon and Homer.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any doubt in your mind that this is Floyd Collins in Sand Cave?

A. No, sir. There is a man down there, and they say it is Floyd Collins.

Q. Do you think he has been there continually, or not?

A. No, sir. From the time I first saw him until the last time I was down there, his position had not changed. There is no doubt in my mind but that the man is caught there, because the excretions and urinating of his body causes a stench that is horrible down there.

Q. Do you think there is any way for him to slip out the back way, and then slip back in again and take his position there when he hears someone coming?

A. No, absolutely. He couldn't have gotten in the same position twice, and he was in identically the same position every time I went down there. He is lying right up against the stone with this rock over his chest. His breath was gaspy, and he complains about being cold. He was warm as to body, his body felt warm, but he was inclined to shiver, and would complain loudly whenever the covering was removed.

Q. You have heard rumors around, have you not, to the effect that he was either not in there, or else had some way to go out and return?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know of any fact to base those rumors on?

A. I have never heard of any fact at all to base them on.

Q. Do you think there is any foundation in fact for this

or?

A. I don't know, I would be badly fooled if that should be proven. I don't think Floyd Collins is any actor, because he didn't impress me as being a man of that type at all. He seemed to me like a man in agony, and on a terrible strain. I don't believe that can be assumed, at all.

Q. You have been underground continually since your arrival?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you seen anything that would point to the fact that this is a frame-up or a fake?

A. No, sir.

Q. Have you found anything in your investigation which would indicate to you that this thing is a fake or a frame-up or a hoax?

A. No, sir. I have never heard of anything like that. I have never found anything that would indicate it to be a frame-up or a fake or a publicity scheme or anything like that at all.

Q. You have seen nothing upon which an honest opinion of that sort could be based?

A. That is it; nothing.

Q. In your opinion, then, these rumors that have been sent out to that effect are simply for publicity, and with no basis at all in fact?

A. Either that, or just doubts that have come up in other people's minds. They are just rumors; that's all.

THE RECORDER: Those rumors come from people that haven't been closely in touch with the situation, don't they?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you try to use the jack down there?

A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. Did you have any success?

A. Well, Floyd said that I had raised the rock. I was using rocks behind the jack, and got it out to eight inches, and it slipped. He didn't complain of the rock falling back and hurting him, but he said that a small rock had fallen in there and was preventing him from using his foot to help me with the jack. He then advised me to try to reach down and see if I could pull loose rocks from around him and pass them back

up and get them out of the way. That is when the acetylene torch was suggested.

Q. You say you have been in there seven times?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. State approximately how far apart these times were that you went in to him.

A. The first time was Monday morning between nine and ten o'clock. The second time was Monday evening, about five-thirty to seven. The next three times were between five-thirty Tuesday evening and two-thirty Wednesday morning.

Q. How close were these three times on Tuesday?

A. Well, the first time I went in about five-thirty and stayed down there and came out about seven-thirty, I should say. Then I went back again about eight, and came out about ten-thirty. Then I went in again and when I came out and got back to the hotel it was three in the morning. I suppose I got out the last time just about half an hour before that.

Q. That was the last time?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And on each of those trips you saw him?

A. Yes, sir, and talked with him.

Q. And you say his body was in the same position?

A. Identically the same position; yes.

Q. In your opinion, then—

A. There is no hoax, as far as he is concerned. I am sure he is jammed there.

Q. He is jammed?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What covering is there over Collins' body?

A. Well, he is covered with burlap sacks around his body, and then this piece of oil cloth is over his face, going down over his body, and then there is a blanket, I believe, or a quilt. He is wrapped in a lot of stuff, and I think that is what imprisons this arm, his right arm. He whimpers and begs you to put it back over him when you take it off, because he seems to begin shaking with a kind of an ague whenever you take it off of him.

Q. At the time you took this 32-volt electric light in there, and at the time you lighted it, did you see the face of a man in there?

A. I saw this side of it.

Q. That was the same man you had been seeing in there?

A. Yes, sir, it was the same man I had been seeing. There had been no change, because the whiskers on his face

are just about the same length. I would just laugh at that idea about his coming out and coming in again. There is nothing to that. I just don't think anything about that report that the man is crawling in there at intervals, crawling out and crawling in whenever anyone comes down there. That man is jammed down there, that's all. He is not slipping in there and lying down, because his body is always in exactly the same position—and, well, he just couldn't do it. His whiskers are long, and his head seems feverish every time you touch it.

Q. What size man, in your opinion, was he?

A. He told me he weighed a hundred and sixty. He seemed pretty hefty.

B. G. Fishback, Farmer:

Q. You say "where Collins is"—what do you know about that?

A. I have been to him; seen him, had my hands on him, and talked to him.

The first word he spoke to me—I stayed in the elbow there with four or five fellows back of him, passing stuff out as he took it out. About the first thing of any importance, they ordered a jack sent down. A compressed air jack was sent down, and they said it was too large. Then they sent down a smaller jack, which was a lever jack, and they said that was too large, and he said send him a Ford jack, and so they sent down a Ford jack, and that wouldn't do. They wanted a Ford jack cut half in two. When this fellow came out with his crew, I backed up in the elbow and they passed out by me. When Mr. Miller—he was leading—when he come to me he said, "Let's go out." And I told him no, I wanted to go down to him. He said he didn't want him bothered, but I could crawl down and take a flashlight and talk to him to keep him company, to keep him in good spirits, you know, and tell him that he hoped to get him out when we got the proper jack. Well, I crawled on half the distance from the elbow to where Collins was, and I called out, I says, "How far am I from you?", and he said, "I do not know how far you are from me," and I said, "Can I get down there to you?", and he said, "Yes." I said, "Is there any hole I can fall off in?" and he said, "No." So I crawled on down a piece and it became very tight, and I stopped, and he said, "Come on down to me and get these rocks off of my feet and catch hold of my shoulders and lift me out." So I said, "I'm a large man and I don't be-

lieve I can make it," and he said, "Who are you? Hanson?", and I said, "No, I'm Fishback."

When I got to him—I had a flashlight burning, but it was muddy, where I had set it up where this water drips on it, and the light was very dim. When I got to him I had to come over kind of like this. There is a rock here, and I had to turn around and I set down my feet right down where there set a lantern.

Q. Was there a lantern down there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. An oil lantern?

A. Yes, sir. The lantern set upon a shelf of rock, like, on the edge of a rock. When I stepped down, put my feet down, I stepped on something that felt soft, and I thought possibly I had stepped on Collins, and so I asked him if I had stepped on him, and he said "No," and said it was a bunch of quilts he was wrapped up with that I was stepping on. Well, I turned around. I had on two pairs of leggins and a pair of heavy shoes, and I was unable to get down except just to his shoulders. The position I was in, I couldn't lift more than twenty or twenty-five pounds at the most. Well, I looked the situation over, and about that time rock began to fall and I couldn't tell where it was coming from. It seemed to me that it was right back of where Collins was.

Q. Do you mean back towards his face?

A. Those rocks that fell down seemed to be about a foot below Collins' feet. Well, I began to get out. Collins asked me what I was doing in a minute or two, and I told him that I was going out, that my flashlight had about gone out and there was no one in the cave then but myself. As I started out there was a rock in the place that I had to crawl out fell. It was about a foot square and run to a point, a comb, in one corner.

Q. That was Tuesday afternoon?

A. That was Tuesday. I had been in the cave then possibly two hours—maybe three. I went in something like six or six-thirty.

Q. Then it was approximately nine o'clock Tuesday night?

A. Something like that. That was the time when Mr. Miller come out to get the jack.

Q. Go on, Mr. Fishback.

A. Collins appeared to be wrapped up good, and he asked me to give him some milk. I told him I didn't have any, and he said there was milk there; so I found a bottle that had milk

in it there, and it was very muddy. There was mud all over it, just like it had been rolled in the mud. I asked him where the tube was that they gave him the milk with, and told him that Mr. Miller would be back in a few minutes and give him some milk, because the bottle that I had was so muddy, and had mud in the neck of it, and I didn't have anything to wipe it off with, and I was so muddy myself that I didn't think it would be a good idea to attempt to give him the milk in that bottle, with the mud all over it. Well, my flashlight gave out on me, and I came on up the passage to the squeeze and rested a few minutes, and then came on out to the mouth of the cave. There was no one in the cave back to Collins for some time. I don't know when Mr. Miller got back. When he came back he went second man then, and Mr. Maddox led the crowd.

Q. What Maddox?

A. I don't know. He is a Central City boy, and he went down to Collins. I was third man. We crawled down to within a few feet of Collins, and Mr. Maddox began to hand out stuff. The first thing he handed out was a pint empty bottle that had had milk in it. He handed out two pint bottles that had had milk in them, and one that had about half an inch of milk in it then, but that was not the bottle I found when I went down there. He passed out something like—Oh, I guess a hundred and fifty pounds of small rock. This was the second time I was in. I stayed there for two and a half hours, and in the meantime they brought out a blanket—a quilt. This quilt was real wet and muddy, but it was warm in places, and had less warmth in other places where it was wet, and where it was wet it was real cold. The quilt they asked about awhile ago—when Maddox came out he didn't cover him with it, but taken the quilt out, and had an army blanket passed down, but Maddox said the next fellows would go to work so soon that it wouldn't be worth while to cover him up. This quilt was left at the elbow.

Q. That is the blanket they were speaking of?

A. I think so; yes, sir.

Q. You say there was a rock that fell in?

A. There was a rock fell—this was the first time I was in—fell about half way between where Collins is and the elbow, where the water drips.

Q. How far is the elbow from the mouth of the cave; that is, relative to the distance from the mouth of the cave to the body, where is the elbow?

A. Well, it's hard for me to tell you the exact distance

or get anything close to it, but it's something over two hundred feet, I judge. That is, from Collins to the mouth of the cave.

Q. From Collins to the mouth of the cave is something over two hundred feet, you think?

A. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you see Collins' face?

A. Yes, sir. I just got kind of a side view of it.

Q. Was he or not pinned in there?

A. Well, he was covered up, wrapped up in a blanket when I saw him.

Q. Did you see his feet or knees?

A. I could only see where the blanket came down to just about his knees, or hardly so low. His feet run back under a rock, it seemed to me. However, the lantern was muddy and the flashlight was weak, and I don't know. It appeared to me that a rock had fallen out and was pressing in, not on his feet, but under his feet, and that kept his feet from coming out.

Q. Under his feet?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was there anything over his feet?

A. I couldn't see his feet.

Q. And you think the rock that kept him from getting out was under his feet instead of over them?

A. Yes, sir. I think that as he crawled out he pushed up with his heels on the back wall, and the rock fell down below them, and is pushing up under them. You see, when the rock fell in below his feet that shuts off the passage so that he can't come out.

Q. It looked to you that stones had fallen and caused his imprisonment?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. In your opinion, from your examination of him, was he pinned in there or not?

A. Positively.

Q. He was positively pinned in?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. In your opinion, had his body or any part of it changed its position from the first time you were in there till the last?

A. I was only in there one time. The second time I didn't go back to him.

CAPT. TOPMILLER: Did you talk to him the last time you were down?

A. Not myself, but Mr. Maddox talked to him all the time.

Q. You heard his voice, did you, the last time?

A. Oh, yes, sir, I heard his voice.

Q. Did you recognize it as the same voice that had spoken to you the first time you were down there and talked to him, Mr. Fishback?

A. Yes, sir, it was the same voice. I recognized it.

Q. Do you think there is actually a man down there in the cave?

A. I know there is positively.

Q. Do you think that he has been down there some time?

A. I have no reason to believe that he hasn't been down there all the time.

Q. He looks like he had been down there for some time, does he?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is his position? How is he lying?

A. He was laying kind of on a slope, and had his face kinder on the side, like.

Q. He was lying close to the rock?

A. Yes, sir, there was the rock right there by his head, and he was laying with his head up against the rock, or dirt, whichever it might be.

Q. Was his head close to either wall? Close to either side wall?

A. Yes, sir, his head was right against the wall.

Q. And he looked like he had been lying in that position for some time?

A. Yes, sir. I never heard him make any groans or anything like that while anyone was down there with him, but I know as soon as Mr. Miller left him and went out he began putting up—began to kind of cry and sigh, like.

Q. Did he seem to be in his right mind when you talked to him? Mr. Fishback.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he seem to know what was going on?

A. Yes, sir, absolutely.

Q. Did he offer any suggestions about how his foot was caught there, or how to get him out?

A. The first thing that he said about it was for me to come down there and begin to get the rocks off of his foot and take hold of his shoulders and lift him out.

M. E. S. Posey:

LT. COL. STITES: Mr. Posey, have you had an opportunity to make up your mind whether or not there is a man in that cave?

A. I certainly have.

Q. Do you think there is a man in there, or not?

A. I most certainly do.

LT. COL. STITES: You don't think there is any possibility of this being a hoax of any kind?

A. I know absolutely that it isn't.

Q. The reason I asked you that question is that there has been some rumor to that effect.

A. Well, as I said before, if these boys hadn't seen this man down there like they said they had, I don't think they would stay here a week's time, going through the conditions which we have out there, and still remain enthused and anxious and doing everything they can to try to get the man out.

Lt. Robert Burdon, of the Louisville Fire Department:

I go on down, and keep on until I get to where Floyd Collins is. When I get to him—I am going feet foremost—I am only able to kick him with my feet. I can't stoop over, and I can't bend down. I can only feel him with my feet. I pull back to a crevice, and rest a few minutes, and then go down head foremost. When I get down through this place and come to a stop, my head is resting on a rock, and I am able to reach back here and get hold of him. I can feel around and make a survey of what I can do for him. His hands was down at his side, and his face was right straight up. I ask him if he has had anything to eat. He tells me, "Very little." I ask him who has been down there, and he says his brother Homer and another Johnny somebody. He said his brother Homer had fed him twice. I asked him who put the grass sacks and cover over him. You could feel that. I couldn't tell whether there was any blankets or comforts or what, but I know there was some grass sacks around him, because I could feel them, and I got a glimpse of them with my flashlight. He said his brother Homer had put them around him. These men on the outside said they thought there was another entrance, or had been another entrance to the cave. They said they thought there was another sink hole near this one where there was a rope ladder down in it, leading down into it. When I get there to him I naturally ask the boy if there was another way into the cave.

Q. What boy?

A. The boy down in the hole. I ask him if there is some way I can come around and come down and come in back of him and get him out, and he says, "No." I ask him where this sand rock is they were talking about, and he don't know what I am talking about. It is evident that he never was in

no sand rock. Then I ask him how did he get caught, going down or coming out, and he says, "Coming out." He says that back of his feet there was a cavern, and he had been working in there, and as he was coming out he got caught. He must have been pulling himself out—there wasn't room to crawl—and he couldn't get on his hands and knees, and he must have put his feet against a rock to act as a brace, and in doing so kicked something loose and let something slide down on his feet. It was impossible for me to see the rock on the man's foot. I have never seen it, and don't see how anyone else could.

Q. You say you haven't seen the rock that is on his foot?

A. No, sir, and I don't see how anyone else could see it.

Q. You can see a rock wall there, can't you?

A. You can see a rock wall, yes, sir. Not a solid rock, it don't look like, but, for instance, like a row of curb stones propped up there. I asked him if his foot was hurting him, and he says, "No," that his heel was hung in a vice, like. He says it is not resting right on his foot, but that it has his foot fastened so that he can't get it out. After looking the thing over there, I see what kind of a condition he is in, and realize that there hadn't been anybody down there to feed him but these two boys. I find milk and coffee and sandwiches all the way down the passage, some in crevices here and some stuck away in cracks there. I realize that out of all the people going down in there, not one in ten was doing anything for him. Taking all this into consideration, I come back and the only method I could suggest was to put a rope around his chest and pull him out. I told Floyd that; told him what I intended to do—that is, I told the boy they call Floyd, if it is Floyd.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a man in there, then?

A. Yes, sir. I tell him what I want to do, but that it might pull his foot off, and he says, "Pull my foot off, but get me out of here," and I says, "I'll do that, partner." Well, I come on up, and it was two hours' time from the time I had entered, and I had a conference with his father and brothers and a doctor. This boy is buried down there in that hole. It is wet, it is cold, and it is dark down there, and the rocks above you seem as though hung by threads. It is miserable down there, and he says only two men has been down there since Friday and fed him. I don't know if there have been any more or not, but that is what he says. I told them my method was to get a rope around him and pull him out at any

cost. I told his father he had one chance in a thousand, and the doctor said that was the only chance he saw. The thing about it was, if we was to break his foot or pull his foot off when we pulled him out, he wouldn't have much chance. He would lose consciousness, and then we would certainly kill him if we tried to drag him through. It would jam his head against the rocks, and he couldn't help himself, and it would be impossible to get an unconscious man out alive. But they tell me he is better off outside dead than dying this horrible death down there.

Well, after an hour's recreation, getting warm, and so forth, outside, the boy's brother comes over with a leather harness he had made. We take this harness, this boy's brother Homer—at least, he claims to be his brother—and there is another boy, Skeets Miller, the "Courier-Journal" reporter. I didn't know Skeets at the time. There is them and myself. I wanted all the men with me I could get, and I wanted good men, because I knowed if anyone went in between me and Homer they was going to be compelled to go all the way, if I had to push them down.

Well, the doctor told me to take some food along with us to feed him, to help strengthen his vitality before we tried to drag him out. The doctor didn't realize how long it would take to feed him. You had to do it all for him; he couldn't help himself. You had to feed him like a mother bird feeds her young. Well, we got on down there, and it is cold and wet, and a cramp hits you, and you suffer with chills. We have to wait down there while he is being fed, and after we get him fed and this harness around him and the rope in place, in reality we are not able to pull ourselves out but we give a pull, and we merely stretch him; move his body about six inches. I don't mean to say we moved his foot six inches, but just merely stretched his body, so that his head and shoulders moved about six inches. Well, when we pull on the rope and stretch him out it hurts him, and he begins to holler and scream, and his brother won't pull any longer. He says he would rather see him die there than to hear him holler that way.

We come on out. When I hit the entrance there, I take one more breath, and the next thing I know I am in the tent there and they are trying to revive me. Then I am put in a machine and brought to the hotel over here, wet and cold, and am put to bed. I go to sleep, and then wake up and toss and tumble. I can't sleep. I have to get up and turn on the electric light. I get to going over this in my mind, studying how I

am going to get him out of there with my rope. I realize that the first mistake I made was taking time to feed him instead of trying to get him out as soon as I got down to him. The next mistake I made was taking his brother down there to perform such horrible execution. There was a wire sent back to Louisville that night for a hose hoist.

On my next trip down into the cave we go down with this Delco light system, Skeets Miller, myself and a fellow by the name of Jenkins, and the other human chain along behind us I don't know. Yes, I do know that there was a man by the name of Fishback, I found out later. When we go in there with the Delco light system there had been rescue work started. You could see it had been started. The whole entrance to him was greatly improved.

Q. When was that?

A. That was the night the Delco light was taken in. I judge it must have been Wednesday night. Well, Skeets Miller is working with a small crowbar and asks for a small hoe. There was a couple of crowbars there, and a coal oil lantern, and there was other things around, and it was evident that somebody had been there and that rescue work had been really started. Up to that time, on my other trip, and in going down with the rope, there hadn't been nothing done. When we get the electric light down there the situation becomes bright. It looks fine. We are working there, and Skeets Miller tells me he has one foot loose; I heard Floyd tell him that one foot was loose. The boy works this here small crowbar up in place. We have only got this crowbar up against this imaginary rock. We can't see the rock at all. We pass word back to send down a jack; and after a while here comes a railroad jack. That was too big, and we sent for an automobile jack. That come back, and it was also too big. Well, we ask them to send down a Ford jack, and insist that it must be a Ford jack. Finally that comes down, and it is also too big. We will have to saw it off, and Skeets tells me just where he wants it sawed off. I tell him it's no use to try to explain that to them from down here, they would never get it right; I said, "Let's go out and get the right kind of a jack ourselves." Well, he laid the crowbar down very gently, so as not to get it away from the rock, and we come on back and left a man by the name of Fishback on guard, I judge, about midway down. I ask him his name as I come out, and I says to him, "Whatever you do, don't let no one down here now. We have got things where we are going to bring him out." Well, Miller

goes on to get the jack, and I go in the tent, and as soon as I get a little warm I go on down there to keep guard myself. When I get down to where Fishback was, he was gone, and I go on down a little further and find him laying down under this huge rock, completely exhausted. He looked like he was just about ready to die. He was just merely breathing, and I thought there was no chance to ever get him out if he stayed that way. He had been working to try to get through this first squeeze here, and that caused him to be in that predicament, I judge. Well, I tell him he is in no danger, to just keep still and get some rest. Well, I tell him a few funny jokes, and as soon as I get a laugh out of him I tell him to take some of his clothes off. He's got on a big overcoat, and I tell him to take it off. He follows my instructions, and I give him a pull to get him started. I never see Mr. Fishback after that.

Well, Miller finally returns with this small jack. He had a small cylinder jack, which you turn with a wrench. He puts it against the rock and the other end against the crowbar. Well, we work and we work—that is, he works. I am sitting right here where I can see all this. Skeets has got this man's head right between his legs. I am sitting right here on top, where I can see. I am not imagining this; I know. We have got an electric light system down there. There is plenty of light. There is no room for doubt. I saw all this. I can see the jack turn. We believe the rock is moving, for the jack is coming out, and this rock back here is still intact. Then, all at once, the crowbar slips down, and we are never able to get it back on that rock again. We punch, and punch, and poke, and try, but we are never able to locate that rock again.

Finally we are compelled to come out again. This one foot was free, and we had moved the rock. We were getting so we thought sure we was going to be able to get down and see this rock, even if we didn't get him out. Well, we were forced to abandon that, and it looks like with it the hope of ever getting him out.

Q. Lieutenant, could you determine, by your investigation down there, how this man's foot was hung? Have you now any idea as to how it was hung?

A. There was no way that I could see his foot. I couldn't see his foot no way I tried. They way he explained it to me was that he was coming up there on his way back, and that he had his foot against a rock, acting as a brace, and that he kicked something loose and let something down on him; kicked a rock loose. He told me it wasn't resting right directly on his foot

that the pain didn't hurt him, but that it had him there so that he couldn't get this foot loose and couldn't get back. He was helpless.

Q. How many times did you see him?

A. That one time, to really get my hands on him. That one time.

Q. You heard him call his brother "Brother," did you?

A. Yes, sir, he told me his brother Homer had fed him twice.

Q. That was the first time you were down there, on Monday?

Yes, sir.

Q. And you asked him who had fed him, or if he had been fed?

A. No, sir, I didn't ask him. He said his brother Homer had fed him twice, and that Johnny somebody had fed him once.

Q. How long did you stay there and talk to him?

A. I judge I was there possibly five minutes, talking with him.

Q. Did he tell you anything about another cavern or opening or anything like that?

A. No, sir. I asked him about it. I thought there would be possibly some way to come in right back of him, and he told me I couldn't do it.

Q. Told you there was no other way?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And that the way he came in and the way you came in is the only way?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you think that even if you could have gotten his foot loose, either by cutting his foot off or pulling it off, or by getting the rock up off it, that the chances would have been one in a thousand of getting him out alive?

A. No, sir, I don't; because the chances are that we would have killed him dragging him along through there, with all that jagged rock sticking out there. There was no way a person could get in back of him until we had gotten him about twenty feet from where we would start with him, because there would be no way to pass him until you got about that far—till you got to that crevice about twenty feet from him.

Q. Could you pull any weight to amount to anything up through there?

A. Yes, sir, I think so; if you would just pull an inch at a time, and hold it there, and wrap it around this here windlass that you were pulling him with.

Q. And you finally gave up hope, you say, of getting him out alive, did you?

A. Well, we only had one hope of ever getting him out alive, from the time I first entered the cave. I only had that one hope of ever getting him out. My only hope was that this rock would break or his shoe would break and let his leg and foot slip through, and that he would regain consciousness so that he could help himself out. That was my only hope of his ever coming out of there alive.

Q. Do you think there is a man down there, Lieutenant?

A. I am positive that there is a man down there; yes, sir. I don't think—I am positive.

Q. You know that?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is he hung there, or is he loose, to come and go as he wants to?

A. No, sir; he is hung there. He is not loose. There is no question about that. He is hung down there. He can't move. He is helpless.

Q. Do you think he is getting out the back way, and moving around in there, and then getting back in and taking that position again?

A. He is not. That is only a silly theory that someone has advanced—someone that has never been there and seen him like I have.

Q. Do you know of any grounds or foundation for that theory, Lieutenant?

A. None whatever. It is only a silly theory, to create and cause such comment as that.

We were all eager to go, the men in the Fire Department; I guess more through ignorance than anything else. We were all eager to go, and—

Q. Men in the fire department run into a good many dangers, do they not?

A. Yes, sir, yes, sir. They do all the time, and they all clamor for honor. To have effected a rescue of this kind would have been a great thing.

Q. Do you—

A. We are all working on the merit system, and we try to—well, a man wants as good a credit at the end of the year as possible. They have the merit system in New York, and in



Brigadier General Henry H. Denhardt, who had general charge of operations at Sand Cave.

nealy all the metropolitan departments, and of course, I wanted to promote my interests as much as possible; but when I got down here I forget all about my interests, and I go in the name of Humanity. When I go down there and hear and see the man begging and pleading for help, and get my hands on him, I forget all about this, I forget my merits. I don't know what you would call it. It's just one human being calling on another for help, and you wanting to do all you can, and willing to risk your own life, to help him.

Q. You have been on the ground there, and have talked to a good many people, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you ever heard of anything from any source that would lead a reasonable man to believe or think, even though he hadn't been in that cave, that there was no man in there?

A. No, sir; but in anything like this some ignoramus will say something and other ignoramuses will keep it going. No sane man would begin to think of such a thing.

THE PRESIDENT: No sane, honest man.

A. That's it; no, sir.

✓ Dr. W. D. Funkhouser, head of the Department of Zoology, University of Kentucky:

LT. COL. STITES: Have you reached any conclusion as to whether or not there is a man's body in that cave?

A. I have, sir.

Q. What is that conclusion?

A. My conclusion is that there certainly is a man in that cave.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you heard any doubt as to that fact from any authoritative or reliable source?

A. Not the slightest, from any source, whether reliable or unreliable. I haven't heard it at all.

Columbus Doyle, neighbor of Floyd Collins:

I went in second until we got to the squeeze, and couldn't make it through, and so Marvin just took my place as second man and went on down.

Q. Who was the first man on that trip?

A. Miller; little Miller, the "Courier-Journal" reporter.

Q. Did you hear Floyd's voice when you were in that time?

A. Yes, sir, I thought I did.

Q. What did you say to him?

A. I just asked him how he was getting along, but I

couldn't carry on any conversation with him.

Q. Did you hear his answer?

A. Yes, sir, I thought I heard him answer me.

Q. You know his voice, don't you, Mr. Doyle?

A. Yes, sir, I know his voice, and I thought I heard it then.

THE PRESIDENT: Are you satisfied that you heard his voice?

A. Well, I thought so. I stayed in there and little Miller called the man by name, "Floyd!" and he answered and he told him his name and told him where he was from and said, "You know me. I've been down here before." I went down to the squeeze and around two turns, and the best I could get at it I was anywhere from ten to twenty feet from him. I didn't go any further. I never did go any further than that. I called him, calling him "Floyd," and he answered. I asked him how he was getting along, and he said he was getting along fine. I asked him if he got his milk, and he said, "No. It's hanging on the string and I can't get it." I asked him who had been down there next to him, and he said, "Johnny Gerald's." I asked him who had been there before that, and he said, "There hasn't been anybody down here since my brother left." I said, "How long has it been since you have had anything to eat?", and he said, "It's been a long time; maybe ten or twelve hours." Then I said to him, "Well, the men are cold, and they have gone out to warm up, and I will be back with them when they come back. They will be back pretty soon." Then I turned and came out. That is the last time I went down.

LT. COL. STITES: Did you ever reach any conclusion as to whether or not there was a man actually in the cave, and caught down there?

A. I purposely waited till all the workers came out, and called to this Mr. Smith and said I wanted to go down there and see this man and talk to him and make certain about it. I said I wanted to be there with nobody to bother me and nobody coming in. I told him not to tell these workers I was going down there to talk to him. After they had come on out, Mr. Smith came down to the squeeze and I went through the squeeze and went on until I had gone around two or three turns in the ground down there, and then I called, "Floyd!" And he answered; the man down there in the ground answered, There is somebody down there. I know that, absolutely. There is no question about that.

Q. Have you talked to his neighbors that were around out there at all?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you hear any of them there say anything about the whole situation probably being hoax?

A. I got my information on that point from the newspapers. I didn't go around there trying to investigate all those stories. I just didn't pay any attention to it.

Q. Do you think there was any basis for anybody at any time making the charge that the whole thing was a hoax, and that there was nobody caught down there in the cave?

A. I wouldn't want to be responsible for that report; no, sir.

✓ Lee Collins, father of Floyd Collins:

Q. You have been around Sand Cave continuously since you arrived there, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir, up here.

Q. At Sand Cave?

A. Yes, sir, most of the time.

Q. You have talked to nearly all the neighbors there, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you any reason to believe, from what you have heard there that there is nobody hung up there in this Sand Cave, Mr. Collins?

A. What is that? That I have got any reason? What's that?

Q. Has anybody told you that there is nobody in that hole there?

A. I learned from a gentleman that came from Louisville yesterday, he was talking to another fellow up there, and he said it was a humbug. He said it was a money speculation, and he said that if Floyd was down there he would come out when he got ready to come out.

Q. You say you heard that from a Louisville man?

A. Yes, sir. It was yesterday that I heard that. Yes, sir.

Q. You know, don't you, Mr. Collins, your boy is hung in that cave?

A. Certainly I do. I haven't seen him, and I didn't see him go in, but I know absolutely that he is hung up down there. I will just say, that if that boy ain't in there I would give all my part of Heaven. I would say that. Certainly he is in there.

Q. You have heard people that you have confidence in tell

you that they have seen him, have you not?

A. Yes, sir. My boy is one of them that seen him and fed him.

Q. Which one of your boys is that? Is that Homer?

A. Homer, yes, sir.

Q. You know something about the formation of caves in this country here. Do you know of any other opening there by which Floyd could be going in and out, and putting himself in the same position?

A. No, sir, I do not.

Q. There isn't such an opening, to your knowledge?

A. There is not.

Q. Don't you know the conditions of the country and the other caves around this Sand Cave country as well as any other person there?

A. I think I do.

Q. Don't you believe if there was any other opening by which you could reach him or by which he could move backwards and forwards down there, you would know it?

A. I certainly would.

Q. And you know there is not any other way?

A. I know there aint. He was three weeks trying to get through this crawl hole. He told me there wasn't any other opening, only the one he found. He told my wife that, over there. He said he had two days of dangerous exploring to do before he was through. He told my wife, he says, "Miss Janey"—he calls my wife "Miss Janey"; she is his step-mother—he says, "Miss Janey, I dreamt an awful dream. I dreamt I got in the cave and got caught there, a rock caught me, and the angels come and took me out." My wife says, "Floyd, if you had that dream, you stay out of there, for you are going to get killed." He didn't tell me that dream. Will Hanson, town marshal of Cave City, Kentucky:

LT. COL. STITES: You have talked to the neighbors out there, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir; numbers of them.

Q. Have any of the neighbors out there said anything to you that would make you believe that there is any basis for a statement that this was a wild tale about there being a man there in that cave, or a hoax, or anything like that?

A. I haven't heard any rumors at all out there like that.

Q. Do you believe that there is a man trapped in that

cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Johnny Gerald, of Cave City:

As I went down, I looked down and saw some gentleman in front of me. I hollered down to him and asked him to let me down. Floyd heard me and recognized my voice and Floyd said, "There is my friend. Let him down and he will get me out." I later learned that the man in front of me was Mr. Ben Wells, of Bowling Green.

Q. He was between you and Floyd, was he?

A. Yes, sir, he was between me and Floyd. So he came back and let me by him, and I proceeded on by him and he came along after me. I went down there to him, to Floyd, and I talked to Floyd and asked him about the entrances to the cave, if this way was the only entrance, and he said this was the way he came in.

Q. Did he say whether or not there was any other entrance?

A. He told me there wasn't. He said there wasn't. I looked at the hole and didn't think it was hardly possible for him to get through it, and I said, "Floyd, you know what you are talking about, don't you?"

And he said, "Yes, I do." I says, "Did you go through this hole?", and he says, "Yes." I said, "I don't see how you did it." He said, "Well I did it, but it was awful tight." Then he called me and says, "Bring me some milk." Well, I called for a quart of milk, and they sent down a quart of milk, and I couldn't reach it to him, so I called for a string to let it down by, and they sent down a string, a piece of twine string.

Q. Did you go through, at that time, to the place where his body was.

A. No, sir, I did not.

Q. Did you ever go down through the place where his body was lying?

A. Yes, sir. As soon as they sent me down this string I tied it around the bottle of milk and let it down in there, I got down on my face, and Floyd kept telling me to bring it back the other way, but I couldn't get it over far enough. I got it as close to him as I could, and said, "Floyd, that's the best I can do." I said, "Can't you get it?" and he grunted and squirmed, and finally says, "No." I went to moving some rocks and passing them back to Mr. Wells. He passed it back up the opening somewhere—I don't know where. I worked on

for some time and worked out the opening so I could see down to Floyd, but I couldn't get to him. So I came out and went up to the tent and begged for some little man that could slip in the opening and hand me some limestone rocks lying across the crevice there. I begged for some little man to go down with me and get down there where I couldn't get and hand those rocks up to me. I couldn't find anybody that was willing to go. There were two young ladies there from Munfordville, and they came up to me and said, "We'll go with you down there." I said, "Thank you. It's too bad that you girls are the only ones that will go down, when there are boys here." One of them was Miss Miller. Her father runs a restaurant in Munfordville. I said, "We'll get him out some way." I went back down there with Mr. Wells as my second man, and I think that fellow from Bowling Green, the president of Ogden College, Charlie Whittle, went along, and this Poynter boy, and Mr. Fred. Mr. Wells was second man. He was where I could reach him all the time. When we got back down there I said to Mr. Wells, "We've got to get those rocks out of the way." I said, "I'm going down on to his body." I managed to get my head down this way, and managed to pick up these rocks. Mr. Wells held my feet. I backed out and managed to get the rock out to him, and he passed it on back. There was one there that I couldn't get out. I started out with it, and couldn't reach it around. It was too long, you see. I got a small rope and looped around it, and Wells helped me pull it out. I passed it back to him, and when I did that I managed to turn around again and went right in to Floyd. I stepped on his head. He hollered, "Oh!" I said, "Did I step on you, Floyd, and he said, "Yes." I go down and got this bottle of milk down under my leg, and in the position I was in I couldn't get it to him. He was laying on his side. I managed to turn his head up with my hand. I laid my flashlight down, and would pour him a mouthful of the milk at a time, and then wait till he had swallowed it, and when he had finished it I passed the bottle back to Wells. Well, I went to passing back rock. I called for a bucket, and—there was this big rock that came across him here, and under it was dirt and gravel. I filled this bucket up and would pass it back to Wells. Floyd told me the only chance was to go under this rock and down to his foot. I asked him if it was solid rock—it was ceiling rock—and he said it was not. I told him it would be pretty dangerous, and he said yes, it would. I worked on for a little bit, and then I came out.

I was pretty well exhausted. Well, I came out and, I don't know, I rested for some time, and went back again with Mr. Wells. I don't know who the others were this time. There were not over five or six or seven, and Mr. Wells was second man. We worked down there until we could get a space of about that much on the back here, in under the rock. We didn't have room to work much. I uncovered Floyd's face with the quilt I had put on him.

Q. Now, wait a minute. When did you put that quilt over his face?

A. The first time I went down there, by cramming it into the hole with my foot.

Q. That was the time you took the milk down there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. I thought this was the first time you had been in where he was?

A. Yes, sir, it was the first time I had been clear down to him.

Q. Then how did you cover him up the first time you were down?

A. I threw it in there and pushed it in with my foot. I covered him up the second time and part of it fell over him and part of it didn't. He said that it was all right. I worked a while and came on out again. Is this the second trip I was on? I had forgotten. I came out on the second trip about twelve o'clock in the night.

Q. What night was that? Was that twelve o'clock Monday night?

A. Yes, sir. That was the second trip I took. That was the trip I fed the milk to him. I came out and rested a while and went back on the third trip and worked on in under this rock.

Q. Did the same parties go in with you on this third trip?

A. Mr. Wells was my second man. He was always my second man.

Q. Was he second man on all the trips you made into the cave?

A. Yes, sir. He was with me all three of the trips. We worked on till we made a place where you had a little room back under the rock. You could not get down to see back under there. You could see back a little piece, but not enough even to turn round, I had to get over him like that. I pulled the cover off his eyes and he was watching me work. My feet got to trembling a little and he noticed it, and he says,

"Johnny, you are cold. Why don't you go out and rest a minute and then come back?" I said, "Yes, I am cold Floyd, and I am going to have to leave you for a while." He says, "Wrap me up before you go." I took the quilt and stuck it over his face and laid it over his head, and I asked him, I said, "Will that smother you?" And he said it was all right, the air was coming in.

Q. You have stated that you covered up his face, and that later you uncovered his face, and that you uncovered his face and placed this quilt around his head. Formerly you had stated that you had known Floyd Collins practically all your life. Is that correct?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Are you assured, definitely, that it was Floyd Collins that was in there?

A. I know that to be his face. I know it as well as I would know my own mother or brother.

Q. You had your hands on him?

A. Yes, sir. I washed his face?

Q. You washed his face?

A. Yes, sir. Mr. Whittle handed me a wet handkerchief, and I washed his face. Not Whittle—Wells.

Q. And you wrapped up his head?

A. Yes, sir. Just put this quilt over it.

Q. Did you ever take hold of his hands?

A. No, sir.

Q. What shape was he in, that you couldn't get either hand out?

A. I couldn't make the statement that he couldn't get either hand out. I had put these quilts over him and I had crammed them down on his shoulders like this. Possibly if I had taken them off he might have been able to move his hands.

Q. When you were feeding him, did you ever ask him if he could raise his hand up and help feed himself?

A. No, sir; I don't think I did.

Q. Why didn't you inquire or make an investigation to find out whether or not he had at least one hand loose?

A. I don't know just why I didn't.

Q. It was a very awkward way you had to feed him?

A. It was, for a fact. Yes, sir.

Q. And you never thought of asking him if he could use his hand?

A. No, sir. He told me his hands wasn't fastened.

Q. Did you ask him if he could feed himself?



Mr. Carmichael and Gen. Denhardt read sheaf of telegrams asking if the affair is a hoax.
Mrs. Vaughn and son, Robert, and Judge Bohannon, at General's left.

A. No, sir. I just asked him if he could get the bottle, and he said he couldn't. It was laying against his head.

Q. Couldn't you take hold of his arms?

A. I didn't try to.

Q. Which arm was under him?

A. His left arm.

Q. What position was he in when you saw him? He hadn't been covered up when you first saw him.

A. Yes, sir, there was a quilt or something in there. Yes, sir, there was some cover there.

Q. Did you ever uncover him and see what condition his arm was in?

A. No, sir. When you would take the cover off he would look like he was freezing to death. I figured I would examine him more closely later when I had got room to work under him.

Q. Did he ever raise his hand or arm while you were in there?

Q. No, sir.

Q. From the position he was lying in, his right arm and hand were not held down, were they?

A. No, sir; there was nothing solid on his arm. He had merely crawled up in there and was wedged, like you had driven him in it.

Q. Did you ever question him any about his physical condition as to whether or not he had any pain?

A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. What did he say about that?

A. He said he didn't have any, except one time he said he had a tooth that was hurting him a little.

Q. A tooth?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Could he move his head back and forth?

A. Yes, sir, yes, sir. He could turn his head, but he couldn't turn it very much, because he was penned in there by the quilt. He could turn his head up for me to feed him.

Q. Just what position was he lying in?

A. Well, that's pretty hard to describe. He was laying on his left side, with this arm under him, and the rock coming down this way. It seemed like the place made a turn and came back behind him. It was like he was laying in an elbow of rock with his nose right against the rock.

Q. What part of his body could you see?

A. About that much of his body.

Q. You say his arms were at his sides. Could you see from his elbows to the top of his head?

A. I think so, but I never entirely uncovered him, and so I couldn't say more.

Q. Where is his head, relative to the level of the place where you crawled in to him? Is it below or above? Is there a drop there, or not?

A. Yes, sir, there is about a four to six foot drop.

Q. His head is from four to six feet below the natural level of the passage?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. His head rests on a rock?

A. Well, I never examined it. I just put the quilt over him. It is possibly gravel or sand. I don't know.

Q. Back toward his feet, what is the condition of the hole down there?

A. I couldn't tell you. I have never seen it. There is just merely a little hole over his head that you can see through there.

Q. How far back can you see towards his feet?

A. Right there, is all.

Q. Right there where you pointed, at the elbows, what is it that covers his body? Stone, dirt or what?

A. Stone.

Q. What kind of stone is it?

A. Limestone.

Q. Evidently, was he coming up through this entrance from the direction of where his feet were?

A. That's what he said, yes, sir.

Q. And you could see no opening through there?

A. No, sir. I couldn't get down to see whether there was any opening or not.

Q. From your examination, were his feet held by rocks falling from above, or do you think that he was held by the misplacement of a rock that went under his legs?

A. I couldn't tell you about that.

Q. He talked to you, didn't he?

A. He told me a little rock dropped from above and wedged him in like a handcuff on a man's hand, right above the ankle. He couldn't pull it out and couldn't move it.

Q. Do you know of any—

A. I says, "How large do you think it is?" And he says, "I don't believe it would weigh over fifty or sixty pounds."

Q. Do you know any way to see any opening beyond his

feet?

A. No, sir. There was a little hole overhead through a solid rock, is all.

Q. Had his head and the rest of his body come up through the place where his feet were held?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. That is what he said?

A. Yes, sir, that's what he said.

Q. And there is an entire absence of any opening there now as far as you can see?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How much stone or dirt appears to have fallen on his body?

A. I don't think any had fallen on him. This stone is just merely laying over his body.

Q. In order to get to his feet, how much of that large rock would have to be moved?

A. I couldn't tell how thick the rock was. You would probably have to remove it clear on back to his feet, I expect.

Q. Does that rock over him appear to be a solid rock, or not?

A. He said it was not a ceiling rock. He meant that it wasn't solid clear on to the roof. Just a big flat rock laying in there.

Q. In the position that his body was lying in, was there any way that you would have had to tunnel down under it, Mr. Gerald?

A. Well, that was, I thought, the only possible chance.

Q. Were you able, on account of the small size of the place, to ever remove anything from under his feet? Under his body?

A. I never did remove anything under his body. I just cleaned it out in behind him there and started a hole in the rock behind him.

Q. Did he tell you anything about a cavern in there behind him?

A. Yes, sir. He told me, he said that there was a pit there.

Q. Did he make any statements to you about what size it was?

A. Yes, sir, he told me that it was about twenty-five feet long and ten or twelve feet wide and forty to sixty feet deep.

Q. Did Floyd Collins have any light down there with him?

A. Not that I know of.

Q. Did he ever tell you how he found his way back through there?

A. Oh, you know he had a light with him. Sure he had a light in there, but I didn't see it. Possibly somebody had moved it.

Q. And there was no light down there when you got there?

A. No, sir, there was no light down there when I got there.

Q. Did you ever make an attempt to move his shoulders?

A. No, sir, I did not.

Q. I believe you have stated that you are satisfied that Floyd Collins was in there?

A. Yes, sir. I know it to be a fact.

Q. You are well acquainted in this neighborhood?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you ever hear any of the neighbors or residents of this section say they didn't believe Floyd was there?

A. No, sir.

Q. Is there any basis that would sustain anything like that?

A. No, sir.

Q. And you feel pretty sure he is there?

A. I don't feel it—I know it.

Q. You saw him?

A. Twice. I talked to him and heard him, and watched his face and saw him and heard him talk.

CAPTAIN TOPMILLER: Do you know of any entrance to that cave?

A. No, sir.

Q. You say that Floyd himself told you that there was not any other entrance?

A. Yes, sir.

THE RECORDER: Was he imprisoned there—fastened?

A. He said he was; yes, sir.

Q. From what you could see, do you think he was?

A. I think he was; yes, sir.

Q. Do you think he could move around in there and then get back in the same position?

A. No, sir. It was impossible.

Q. That would have been impossible?

A. Yes, sir; impossible.

LT. COL. STITES: Did you ever try to account for the fact that he didn't move his arms at all?

A. The only thing was that the quilts I had stuffed down there. I had stuffed them down tight in order to cut all the

air off that I could. The air passing through there was freezing him. He told me to stuff them as tight as possible.

Q. Had he been there since Friday when you first saw him?

A. Yes, sir, that's what they say.

Q. Did he seem to be in his right mind?

A. O, he was in his right mind all right. I know he was.

John C. Anderson, Glasgow, Kentucky:

I went on in behind, third man. I was with somebody that said he was from Bowling Green. I don't know what his name was. Maddox went down on ahead of us, and this boy went up next and I went next. We got down there, and I saw Maddox, he was in there around the man, holding his shoulders. He had a little trouble there at first, trying to keep his light from going out. While he was doing that, I told this boy from Bowling Green, I says, "I am going on down here. Let me back up to this corner, and you back by me, and let me in." He did, and that put me in second man. All three of us had a look that way.

Q. Did you see a man in there?

A. Yes, I saw a man in there.

Q. There is no doubt about that?

A. I saw one side of his face. I leaned down over into there and I had to hold on with my hands back at my sides. I only looked at the man about three or four minutes. We went in at two-thirty and came out at six-twenty.

Q. Did you go back another time?

A. No, sir.

Q. What conclusion did you come to after going in there and looking it over for three or four hours?

A. The first thing Maddox asked him was, "What do you want?" and he said, "I want some warm water and some milk, and a damp warm rag and a pair of dry gloves." We relayed this report out, and the water came in. He drank the water.

Q. He drank the warm water?

A. He drank every drop of that.

Q. How did he drink it?

A. Well, I saw that. That was at the time I was looking at him. Maddox had to run his hand down his neck. His face was against the wall of the cave. He had to run his hand down his neck and straighten his face up so he could drink it.

Q. Did he drink it all?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he say he wanted anything to eat?

A. By that time we had backed out and set the bottle up. He got impatient, and says, "Aint they going to send me any gloves?" I happened to have an old pair of gloves, and I passed them on in, and crawled in head foremost. When I got in there, Maddox reached his hand back over his shoulders and took the gloves, this way. That was about the closest I really was to him.

Q. Was there any way for him to put those gloves on?

A. He bragged about putting them on himself.

Q. How did he get them on?

A. I don't know, just exactly. Maddox was down there, and he can tell you about that.

Q. How could the man put the gloves on the hand that was under his body?

A. His hand wasn't under his body all the time. He had just a little bit of the use of his left hand, and considerable use, up and down this way, of his right hand.

Q. What kind of gloves were those?

A. White gloves.

Q. Did he have any other gloves on his hands at that time?

A. Yes, sir, he had another pair of gloves on, but they was wet.

Q. Did he take the ones off of his hands that he had on them?

Yes, sir, that's the reason he wanted new ones; they was wet.

Q. Did he take them off himself, or did somebody else take them off?

A. Maddox took the old pair off of him.

Q. But you say that Floyd put the new pair on himself?

A. Yes, sir, and he bragged about it—bragged about being able to put them on himself. I think that about that time the milk came in, and Maddox said, "Do you want to drink your milk now? Here it is." And he said, "No, I don't feel like drinking it right now. Just set it up there." So we put it up in the corner there.

Q. Did you see any other food scattered along the hole there?

A. No, sir, but I saw several empty bottles; perhaps a dozen.

Q. What did he say about how he got in the place, if anything?

A. Maddox asked him what in the ——— he was doing in such a hole as that. I says, "Don't talk to him that way. We are in here to get him out and not to talk to him that way." I says, "Partner, we are going to bring you out of here, and we ain't going to skin you all up, either." He drew a long sigh, and says, "That's what I have been longing to hear somebody say." Maddox began passing these rocks out from under his shoulder, and every now and then he would say, "Fellows, you said you were going to get me out, and I believe you are going to do it."

Q. What did he say about there being any other opening to the cave? Did he say anything about that? Did you ask him about that?

A. I did later. Our lanterns went out about that time and we had to relay back for a flashlight, and the bulb wore out in that, and we come out.

Q. Did you leave the flashlight in the hole?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did he say anything about any other way into the cave?

A. I asked him, and he says, "I worked my way in here when I come in, and I was coming back the same way I came in when I got hung." He says, "I had just climbed an eighty-foot cliff." He says, "If I had fallen back the other way, I would have dropped eighty feet." I asked him what was back there, and he says there was a pretty chamber back there, eighty feet long and twenty feet high, or vice versa.

Q. Did he describe it to you?

A. No, sir, he just said it was beautiful. Then he says, "I've got a pretty good nerve, haven't I, fellows?", talking to Maddox. He says, "I've got a pretty good nerve, haven't, I, fellow?" He says, "or I couldn't stand this." Maddox says, "You sure have." So he laughed just a little bit and says, "This is not hard on me like it is on you all." He says, "You now, in my own Crystal Cave I was hung up in it for twenty-four hours, and freed myself."

Q. What did he say about freeing himself from this place?

A. I asked him to describe to me how he was caught. He said his legs were crossed between the calf of the leg and the ankle, and his heels was caught. He said in scrambling around there this rock had dropped down and keyed his feet in.

Q. Was either foot free?

A. No, sir, not as he described it to me.

Q. Did he say it was impossible for him to get loose?

A. He said three different times he had the same as had it off himself. I asked him if he didn't think he could take a four foot bar and work it down between his feet, and an automobile jack, and he says, "Fellows, all I have to do is to move this rock three inches, and I can come out."

Roy Hyde, expert timber man and miner, also a preacher, from Drakesboro, Kentucky:

Q. Did you speak to the man in there?

A. Yes, sir, but he didn't answer me.

Q. Could you hear him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was he saying?

A. He was groaning. Just when he would breathe, he would groan.

Q. Were you within fifteen or twenty feet of him?

A. Some said I was eight feet from him. Some said three feet, and some said fifteen. I couldn't tell you.

Q. In your best judgment, it was something under fifteen feet?

A. Oh, yes, sir.

John I. Gerard, Bowling Green, Kentucky:

We had some warm milk to feed Collins, but he wouldn't drink it.

Q. That was about what time?

A. Well, we went in about two-fifteen and came out about, well, somewhere about four-forty, I imagine. Something like that.

THE PRESIDENT: That was early Wednesday morning, was it?

A. Yes, sir. Well, Collins wouldn't drink the milk, so this fellow Jones—that is who I thought he was—this fellow wanted to work. He wanted to do some work down there, but Collins wouldn't let him do any work at all.

THE RECORDER: What did he say to him?

A. He told him no, he couldn't do anything. This other fellow tried to slip in beside him, and Collins wouldn't let him. He would grab him with his arms. His arms were free, I know.

Q. Did you hear him talk?

A. Yes, sir, I heard him talk a number of times. So then Jones says, "All right," and he covered him up. Then Collins says, "Let the doctor come down here and put me to sleep and

cut my legs off and take me out of here." That was impracticable, and couldn't have been done, I am sure.

Q. Is there the body of a man in Sand Cave?

A. I am sure there is.

Q. Did you talk to him?

A. Yes, sir. I talked with him since the cave-in.

Milton D. "Casey" Jones:

Q. What did you feed him, Mr. Jones?

A. I fed him a bottle of coffee, and sent out and got a bottle of potato soup and a tablet.

Q. Did he take the tablet?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he eat the potato soup—drink it, rather?

A. He drank it, yes, sir.

Q. Did he drink the coffee?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you talk to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What conversation did you have with him?

A. Before I got to him, when I was in about what I judge to be twenty feet of him, I called to him, called him "Floyd."

Q. Did he answer to that name?

A. Yes, sir. When I got down there I asked him how come him in there, and he said he had gone down in the cave to see what he could find. He said he had found a cavern down there forty feet wide and eighty feet deep and about ninety feet long. That is the way he told me about it—the way I understood it, rather.

Q. What else did you say to him?

A. Then I asked him how was it, to his judgment, how was the best way we could get him out, and he didn't talk like he knew, much. He said that that was the only way he knew to get in there. I asked him about that, and asked him questions about his family, so I could tell whether I was talking to the right man or not.

Q. What did you ask him about his family?

A. I asked him what his father's name was.

Q. What did he say?

A. Lee. Lee Collins. I asked him how old he was, and he said, "Thirty-five." I asked him what kind of clothes he had on, and asked him if he had overalls on, and he said no, he did not. I said, "What have you got on?", and he said, "Just some old clothes," but I found out he did have overalls on.

Q. How was he dressed?



Capt. Alex M. Chaney, Recorder of the Court of Inquiry.

A. I couldn't tell, only when I started to pull him back so I could feed him, his arms was tied in there, and he couldn't get them out.

Q. Could he work his hands?

A. He could work them like that, but he couldn't work them sideways or longways like that.

Q. He could just work his fingers and wrists?

A. Yes, sir, just like that. I judge that is all he could work. I could tell that he was doing that much, anyway.

Q. How long did you talk to him?

A. They said I was in there two hours and fifteen minutes. I judge I was talking to him for something like an hour and forty-five minutes.

Q. And he told you he was a son of Lee Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you ask him what his name was?

A. No, sir. They had told me what his name was.

Q. But he answered when you called for him by that name, didn't he?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he tell you the names of his brothers?

A. Yes, sir, he told me he had one brother named Homer.

Q. Who was the man next to you?

A. I don't know. Will Douglas said he was the one that passed the coffee to me. He was from Glasgow. He was in the party when it started in.

Q. Did you make any examination as to the position his body was in, as to how it was hung? Describe, as best you can, his position there.

A. Well, when you come in there, going down to where he is laying, you come off like that, come down, and come down under here, like this, between four and six feet, and then he is laying back under a kind of ledge.

Q. With his head toward you?

A. Yes, sir, the way I went down—the only way anybody can go down in this place. It looks just like—well, just the same as a man being stuck down in a barrel just barely big enough for him to get in, with his hands down at his sides. He is laying kinder on his left side, with his body kind of twisted, and with his face to the left wall, going down.

Q. Could you get any idea from what you saw there and from other testimony as to how he was fastened in there?

A. Well, I have got an idea that his feet are fastened there. That is what he told me. He said when he come up

out of this cavern behind him he passed a rock, and when he crawled on up this rock, weighing about two hundred pounds, got him.

Q. Weighing about two hundred pounds?

A. Yes, sir. I judge from that that he saw one that he thought might fall, and judged that it was the one that did fall, because he couldn't see it from where he was lying.

Q. Some one said here that probably when he was about to get out of that cavern, when he had gotten to the position, approximately, that he is in now, he had tried to get some leverage to help himself out, and had pushed his heel against a rock to push himself out, and that this rock possibly fell under his feet and imprisoned them in that way. Is there any possibility of that?

A. It might be possible for it to have happened that way, but I can't say, because I couldn't see. I couldn't see any further than that.

Q. About to his elbows?

A. No, sir; about to the place where a person is generally vaccinated, in his arm.

CAPT. TOPMILLER: A few inches below the shoulder?

A. Yes, sir, five or six inches below the shoulder.

THE RECORDER: And you talked to him how long?

A. It didn't seem to me more than a half hour. People outside said two hours and fifteen minutes. I judge it took me seventeen minutes to get down there, and about eleven to get out. When I was going down there, I was studying about getting out. I was cold, too.

Q. Cold?

A. I started down with overalls and boots, rubber boots, and I had to pull them off.

Q. How were you dressed when you went in there?

A. I had on overalls and a pair of pants like this underneath, and boots on, rubber boots, and overalls and a sweater and a yarn shirt and underwear and a cap. I had to pull off my boots and overalls and sweater there and just go down with my pants and socks and shirt and cap, and my underwear.

Q. Do you believe he is getting up from there and going out through some other entrance, feeding himself, and moving back in there and taking the same position?

A. I do not; because if he ever gets out of there once he will never go back in there again.

Q. Do you think it would be possible for any living man, any overly intelligent man, or an experienced engineer, or a

contortionist, or anyone else, to be able to get his body in that same position, if he were going backwards and forwards, out of that hole and back in?

A. No, sir. I don't think so.

Q. Then your mind is fully made up that there is a man there, imprisoned in that cave, and that from what he has told you he is Floyd Collins?

A. Well, I know it for a fact. I had never seen Floyd Collins before, but that is what they told me and what he told me his name was, and I know there is a man in there.

Q. He told you his father's name was Lee Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

L. B. "Tennessee" Hooper, of Nashville:

Q. Isn't it a fact that on the report of this man Hester, the magistrate was preparing to hold an inquest on the body of Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir. They had already started that when I said I would go down.

Q. He had already started?

A. Yes, sir. He asked Hester to swear to it—he must have been under the impression that I wouldn't go—and he wouldn't swear that he was dead.

Marshall and Homer started crying around there, and pretty near everybody around there—I guess there was about a hundred and fifty there—they all started crying. I said, "I'm going to go back in that hole and see if he's dead." I tried to get somebody to go with me, and nobody would go. I kept asking them, and finally a boy named Horace Boatley, a boy that lives around here somewhere, said he would go, and a nigger said he would go. So this nigger gets started and gets to the mouth of the cave, and says, "White folks, I don't believe I'll go." So he turned around and come back and stood there at the mouth of the cave. I don't know whether he ever come out and said he went or not, but he didn't go. Horace told me he followed me to where you have to do this worming. Collins is about fifteen feet away. He stops right there, and I go on to this hole and ask Collins how he feels, and he says, "All right." I says, "Has Hester been down there?" and he says, "He stopped way back there and I just talked to him." I says, "What did you tell him?" and he says, "I told him I was hungry, and for him to bring me something to eat." I went back out and told that.

Q. He had already started to proceed with the inquest, had he?

A. Yes, sir. Well, I took this coffee down there and gave it to him by reaching down and finding his mouth with my thumb. He asked me to pull his shoulders over to where he could get over, get his head over from where it was against this rock. I pulled his head over, and it was just like a baby swallowing. He was that helpless, you know how they will swallow. Then I went out and stayed out then until probably ten or eleven o'clock, and went back in again and tried my best to get down in that hole where I could help him; where I could try to take some of the rocks from under him, but I found out that it was just impossible for me to do it. I couldn't do it.

Q. Mr. Hooper, how big a man are you? How much do you weigh?

A. A hundred and fifty-seven. I could get to this little place up here, but when it come to getting down in this same hole with him. I just couldn't get in that hole. He has got the hole stopped up until I just couldn't get in there on top of him.

Q. How has he got it stopped up? With his body?

A. Yes, sir, with his body; and it was impossible for me to crawl in there on top of him. I could feel him, of course, but I couldn't do him no good. I couldn't reach back far enough. I could only get to right about here on him. His hands are down.

Q. Before you start on that, let me ask you if you definitely asked Collins whether there was any other opening by which you could get in there to him.

A. Yes, sir. I asked him if there was any other opening, and he said there wasn't.

Q. He said there wasn't?

A. Yes, sir, that's what he told me.

Homer Collins, younger brother of Floyd Collins:

Q. When was the first time you went down in the hole to see your brother?

A. Well, I guess it was about five o'clock on Saturday evening.

Q. You and Logsdon went?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long did it take you to get back to your brother, Floyd?

A. Well, it was somewhere around—I guess it was thirty minutes.

Q. Had this man Logsdon been back in there before that trip?

A. He had been down in the hole, but he hadn't been back to him.

Q. How far back in there had he been before he made this trip?

A. I don't know. He had been part of the way back to him.

Q. Who went in front on this trip—you or this man Logsdon?

A. He tried to go. He slipped his clothes off all to his underwear, and tried to go that way. He was too large for the place. He come out and I stripped my clothes off to my underwear and went in and went clear to him. and Oscar then come next to me.

Q. Did you immediately go on to him, or did you stop just before?

A. I tried to go on to him, and I went to him.

Q. Did you go over into the cavern where his body is lying?

A. Yes, sir. I got clean over in there where he was; yes, sir.

Q. How were you able to get in there? How did you get in?

A. I scooted down with my feet first. I guess I got in about fifty different shapes. I had to turn all kinds of ways to get down in the place, you know. It was so small you didn't have any room.

Q. What was the first word that was spoken between you and your brother when you first got down there to him?

A. I don't remember what the first word was.

Q. How close did you get to him before you called to him?

A. I got in about twenty-five feet of him.

Q. Did you call to him?

A. Yes, sir, and he answered me.

Q. Did you call him by name?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did you call him?

A. I called him "Floyd."

Q. Did you always call him Floyd?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. He hadn't any nickname?

A. No, sir. No, he didn't have any nickname.

Q. And you called him by the name "Floyd?"

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he recognize your voice?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did he answer back?

A. He told me to come after him, and he cried, and said he was in there, and there was a rock on his foot and he couldn't get it out, and he wanted us to come in there and get him.

Q. And you went right on back to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When you got down there, what talk did you have with him?

A. I don't remember just what all I didn't say.

Q. Did you ask him how he got in there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did he say?

A. Said he came down that way. I asked if there was any other way I could come in, and he said no, that was the way he came in and it was the only way he could get out.

Q. Did you ask him whether or not he had explored around to see if there was any other opening to that cave?

A. No, sir, I did not.

Q. Did you ask him if there was any other opening?

A. Yes, sir, I asked him if there was any other opening, and he said there wasn't.

Q. Did he tell you how he went in?

A. Yes, sir. He said he come down that way.

Q. How far did he say he went in there?

A. He said he had been back in about a hundred yards, as I understood him to say.

Q. A hundred yards further back?

A. Yes, sir, and he said he went down a wall or a bluff down into a cavern about the size of the Grand Canyon in Crystal Cave. He said about as large as the Grand Canyon—he never spoke about Crystal Cave, but I knew what he meant.

Q. What size is the Grand Canyon in Crystal Cave?

A. I don't know, but I can guess at the height and width. I judge it to be about a hundred feet wide, and it is called two hundred feet high.

Q. How did he tell you he got caught?

A. He said he was climbing up the wall, and clumb around a bit in coming to the place, and when he was coming through this place there a rock fell down and caught his foot in a crevice.

Q. Did he tell you how it happened? Was he trying to push his way out, or anything?

A. No, sir, he didn't.

Q. Did he say he tried to push his way out and the rock fell on him?

A. He just said he was crawling up this place. He said he wasn't wedged nowhere, only his feet was caught.

Q. Could he move his hands?

A. Yes, sir, he could move his hand down his side; but I couldn't see his hand. It was dark. This rock come up to his shoulders, about so high. It looked like the ceiling. He had just crawled up from the cave. He could move his arm, and he could work with a crowbar, a small drill about twelve inches long.

Q. Could you tell whether or not it hurt him?

A. No, he never spoke about it hurting him. He was just worrying about being in there.

Q. Did he suggest to you how you could get him out?

A. He said, the third time I went in there, he said I could go up there and go down a hole and move some rock and work out a way to go down the other side of him and get at his feet and loosen the rock from his feet.

Q. He said for you to go down on the other side of him?

A. He said go up the pit, go back up on top of him and there was a hole there that had fell in about so large—six inches, I judge—that fell down through. He had loosened that up and it had fell down.

Q. Into the cavern behind him?

A. Yes, sir, it was over in front of him.

Q. Opposite from the way you went in, or straight back?

A. No, on the left side as I went down to him.

Q. Is that place you spoke of right at him, or further back?

A. Yes, sir, the place he said I could have went down if I could have worked my way out. It was dangerous, awful dangerous. I didn't dare work it out, for everything there was ready to come down in on me, if I had moved anything. It was falling all the time, big rocks.

Q. Homer, there has been some talk—there have been some newspaper reports, that your brother is not in that cave. Is he in there?

A. He sure is.

Q. You talked to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You had your hands on him?

A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir; I had my hands on him and touched him.

Q. Did you have a light with you when you were down there at him?

A. Yes, sir, I had a light. I always took a light with me.

Q. Could you see his face?

A. Yes, sir, of course, I could see his face. I absolutely did..

Q. And you say that you called him by the name of "Floyd?"

A. Yes, sir, I called him Floyd.

Q. And did he answer you when you called him by that name?

A. Yes, sir, he answered me and talked to me.

Q. And you say he asked you to help him to get out of there?

A. Yes, sir; he begged me to help him get out of there.

Q. How many times did you go down in there, Homer?

A. I went down there—well, four times, if I remember it right.

Q. And each of those three or four times, did you talk to him?

A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. I talked to him every trip I made.

Q. Did you recognize his voice as being that of your brother?

A. Yes, sir; I absolutely did recognize it.

Q. Did you see his face on each of those four trips you made?

A. Yes, sir, I saw his face. I fed him.

Roy B. Anderson, civil engineer and geologist:

A. I was back almost to the last final hole, that is, where Collins is himself. I have been within speaking distance of him, in an ordinary tone of voice.

Q. Within a few feet of him?

A. Yes. He was apparently right under me when I talked to him, as nearly as I could determine.

Q. You talked to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When?

A. The second day he was caught, right around nine o'clock in the evening.

Q. That was on Saturday?

A. It must have been. He got caught on Friday—yes, that must have been on Saturday.

Q. What conversation did you have with him?

A. I first tried to go down to him, and I didn't—wasn't

able to make it. I thought I couldn't, at any rate. I merely, when I talked to him, just tried to encourage him as much as I could. That was about all I could do. I also asked him particularly if there was another entrance by which he could be reached, as at that time there was a story going around that he had said we weren't coming in to him the right way, and he said very definitely, no, there was no other way; this was the only entrance he knew of, and this was the way he had come in there, and we were coming in the right way.

Q. He told you there was no other opening?

A. I don't know that he said there was no other opening, but he said, "That's the right way. I came that way. You are coming right."

Q. There isn't any doubt in your mind, is there, that there is a man entrapped in that hole?

A. No, sir; none whatever.

Q. You have seen him?

A. No, sir, but I have talked to him. I knew him before, and recognized his voice.

Q. You recognized the voice as the voice of Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you gone into any caves with him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And have you discussed various caves with him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you are acquainted sufficiently with his voice to have recognized it when you talked to him in this instance in which you were back to where he was?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And there is no possible doubt in your mind but what Floyd Collins is entombed in that hole?

A. None whatever.

Q. You have surveyed the conditions of this hole and the conditions of the others surrounding it. In your opinion, is Floyd Collins getting up from where he is and walking back and going out and feeding himself, and then getting back there in the same position?

A. No, sir; I don't believe it.

Q. In your mind, is that possible?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. You don't believe that it is possible. Do you believe that he is really entrapped and entombed?

A. I believe that. I have never actually seen him, but anyone that has been in the cave by himself, to the light, or

even in there by himself for any length of time, wouldn't believe that he would ever go back there and stay in there.

A. D. Manning, telegraph editor, the "Louisville Herald," and Special Correspondent at Sand Cave:

A. As I said, I have worked in many states, on many papers, and have been in many situations. I believe I speak for every newspaper man here—that is, here now—when I say that the military authorities here have been more courteous and more considerate, not only as to the newspaper men, but to others, of any I can recall in seventeen years' experience. I really believe that this is the best thing that could have happened toward prohibiting and keeping down any idle talk or rumors that may have developed. In this connection, the rumors that Collins wasn't in the cave, and that if he was in the cave he could go in and out at will, weren't general around here when I came down. All the rumors that I heard about his being free to move, or not being in the cave, I heard far away from the cave. At the time that I was down here, no one seemed to doubt that he was in the cave. How such a rumor could have circulated so far away from here, I don't know. When I was down at the scene, I don't believe I heard anybody suggest any doubt at all about his being in there.

Q. Mr. Manning, from your attendance at the cave and in Cave City, and your mingling and mixing with the people as a newspaper man, do you believe that there was anything that would cause a reasonable, ordinarily intelligent man, to believe that this was a hoax and not a true situation?

A. I really don't believe an idiot would hardly fall for such a yarn.

A. Blevins, Louisville, describing a trip he made into the passage after it had been blocked by falling rock:

A. I went down there and hollered at him. I hollered, "Hey, Collins!" And he says, "Here I am, down here; this is Floyd." He says, "Come and get me." I says, "We'll be down after you; just have courage." He says, "I'm all right. I'll be here waiting for you when you get here."

Q. That was Wednesday a week ago?

A. Yes, sir.

I was in the hole when Mr. Hyde came in, this miner. I went in there with him when he went in there.

Q. That was last Wednesday morning, or last Thursday morning?

A. That was last Thursday, Thursday night, I think it was.

Q. You were in there with him when he determined that it would be impossible to wood it up, I mean timber it up?

A. Yes, sir. I heard the boy then, at that time. Heard him groaning in there then.

Q. You say you heard the boy groaning?

A. Yes, sir, I heard him groaning the last time Mr. Hyde and I were in there.

J. Norman Parker, neighbor and friend of Collins:

Q. You are sure that you heard the voice of Floyd Collins down there?

A. I did.

Q. Did you ever talk with him any yourself?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you have any definite conversation with him down there?

A. I just asked him how we could get to him to get him out, and talked with him that way. He talked with as good sense as you are talking now, sir.. I talked with him for quite a little while.

Q. What did he say about that?

A. He said he was coming up out of the pit, and kicked a rock to make a hole a little larger so he could have a better way to go in and out, and it fell on him.

Q. Did he say he was fastened down there by that stone, or not?

A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, he said he was fastened.

Q. Did he tell you how long he had been fastened down there?

A. He said he didn't know exactly what time he got hung, but that he got hung while he was on his way out of this place.

Q. Did he ever tell you what time he had gone in there or not?

A. Yes, sir. He said he went in at ten o'clock Friday morning.

Q. Said he went in at ten o'clock Friday morning?

A. Yes, sir; or at least he said it was around ten o'clock.

Q. Did he ever tell you how long he had been working in there?

A. He said several hours. He didn't know exactly what time it was, but he thought it was late in the afternoon of Friday that the rock fell on him and he got hung up.

Q. Did he tell you whether or not he had built a fire in there?

A. No, sir. He didn't say anything about that,

Q. Did he say whether or not he had worked in that

hole any before that?

A. He said he had been working there about three weeks.

Q. Did he tell you how to come to him?

A. There was a question come up there. Some of us thought possibly we were on the wrong trip, as he said, he had told us, there was two routes, and for us to take the left hand route to get to him. I think he was mistaken about that, because he said there was a sack of sand on the other route, and told us not to take that one, but to come the other way. We found the sack of sand, but that would throw us to go down the right hand way.

Q. Where were those two passages? Were they near where the body lay?

A. No, they were some piece back from him.

Q. Back this way?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you both go into both of those places?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did both passages lead to the same place?

A. No, one passage ended up where he had been getting sand. He said he had got the sand to put in a bag and put his knees on when he was working.

Q. Is it a blind opening?

A. Yes, sir, just a short place. It wasn't as far as across this tent, or no further than that.

Q. On how many of your trips did you talk to Floyd?

A. I judge two thirds of them.

Q. And you made eighteen trips?

A. Yes, sir. Sometimes I would take the back position, near the entrance, on account of being so sore I couldn't crawl around much.

Q. Did you ever feed him?

A. No, sir. I have got to within about three feet of him.

Q. Did you see him?

A. I could feel him with my feet.

Q. You have touched him, and talked to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Jewel Estes, who first entered the passage after Floyd Collins was entrapped:

Q. When did you next see Floyd Collins?

A. I didn't see him any more.

Q. When did you learn that he was missing? How long after that?

A. Well, he should have come in that night, but he didn't

come.

Q. What did you do then? Anything?

A. I didn't do anything that night.

Q. What did you do the next morning?

A. I went down to B. Doyle's corner and got with him and we went down to the cave to see if we could find him.

Q. Well, just go ahead and tell what you did, in your own way.

A. We started in the cave. I was going first and he was following me. We come to this tight place, a very small place to go through, and he stopped and said he couldn't get through, and he helped me to get through it. Before I went through, though, I hollered. He had me, to holler and I couldn't hear him. I went on through the tight place and went about ten feet, and hollered, and he answered me. I hollered back and asked B. Doyle if that was him, and he said, "No." Then I called Floyd's name, and he says, "Come to me. I'm hung up." He said, "Bring me some tools." I asked what tools he wanted me to bring him, and he said a hammer and a drill. I asked him where it was. I couldn't hardly understand what he said, and he had to tell me three or four times before I understood him. He told me the hammer was outside and the drill was right there at the little sandy place. I told B. Doyle for him to go back out and get it, and I would wait there. He went back out and got it, and I started down to him. As I was going along I was talking to Floyd, and I asked him was he down in that pit. Before he went in the cave he had told me he had come to a big pit, and he was going in it that day. I asked him was he in the pit, and he said no, he was just out on top of the pit. I asked him could I get to him, and he guessed I could. He said he got through there, and I ought to. About that time he told me—no, I asked him was the rock on his body, and he said no. it just had his foot caught. Then he says, "I found a big cave, like that cave of ours." Then I asked him was he suffering, I asked him was he suffering, and he said he was cold and hungry. He said he had a chill and was about froze to death. Then by that time I got to the breakdown of the cave and told him I couldn't get any further and he told me I might be on the wrong route. I asked him was there another route, and he said right back at that little sandy place there, when he started, when he got to that place he started to go over the rock, and dug a few feet, and then decided, he would go back and go under that rock, and I told him that I had come under the rock, and he said, "Well, I



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don't see why you can't get to me." I couldn't hardly make him believe that that rock and dirt had fell in between me and him. I told him I couldn't do any good, though, and I would go out and get help. I asked him who he wanted me to get, and he said anybody ought to be willing to come. First he says, "Get Johnny Gerald and Douglas Caldwell," I says, "I don't know where they are at. I better get somebody closer that can come quicker" and he says, "Get Marshall Collins and Raymond Hunter and anybody else that will come"

Q. Did you find the hammer and drill where he said it was?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where did you find them?

A. I found the hammer—the hammer was on the outside. I didn't find it. B. Doyle went out and got it.

Q. Just outside the mouth of Sand Cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he have that hammer when he left your home that morning?

A. No, sir.

Q. Where did you find the drill?

A. Right there where I was at at the present time.

Q. Where was that?

A. Right there where I was at.

Q. In the cave?

A. Yes, sir. When I asked him what tools he wanted, right there.

Q. Had you ever seen that drill before?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where had you seen it?

A. When he started in that cave, along at the first.

Q. It was his drill, was it?

A. Yes, sir. I have seen all of his tools.

Q. Do you know Floyd Collins' voice?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You are satisfied that that was Floyd Collins that spoke to you in the cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And the reason that you went to the cave to look for him was because he had told you that he was going to a cave, and you knew that he was going to that particular cave?

A. I knew which cave he was working in. He told me he was going down to that cave.

Q. Have you ever seen him since?

A. No, sir.

Lt. Ben L. Wells, West Point Graduate and Professor of Mathematics in Ogden College, Bowling Green, Kentucky:

Q. Did you go in the cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you go to the man that was fastened in there?

A. I went to within six feet of him.

Q. Did you talk with him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Describe this cave there, and then tell the conversation that you had with this man.

A. Do you wish a detailed description of it, sir?

Q. Well, moderately so.

A. You crawl in and then drop through a crevice, and there is fairly good crouching room for about ten or fifteen feet, then there is crawling room for about twenty feet, and a fairly large chamber. Then you come to this very narrow crevice known as the squeeze. That squeeze is eighty-four feet from the entrance, and forty feet, vertical distance, from the entrance. After that you drop down into a little pit and go down a very narrow shaft at an angle of about forty-five degrees for a distance of about fifteen feet. You then drop off a little step to the right, where there is standing room, making a turn of almost a hundred and eighty degrees; then you have to crouch down and make a turn of ninety degrees, and go underneath the upper shaft. After that, you make another turn of almost ninety degrees and come to a shaft similar to the one above. The first time I went down, I went—going down this shaft you come to a flat rock. There is a crevice on the right hand side of the rock, and you go down in that crevice, and Collins is underneath the rock you land on. I went to the top of this rock and sat down. I sat there, not knowing what to do. I talked with him, and called him Collins, because I had heard that that was his name. He said he was hungry and cold, and wanted something to eat. While I was sitting there, someone else came around the corner and yelled down something like this: "Hello, Floyd! Do you know who this is?" And the man underneath appeared to recognize his voice, because he said, "Hello. Is that you, Johnny Gerald?" And the man above me said, "Yes, I've come to get you out." I changed places with this man, who I learned later was Johnny Gerald.

Q. What did you next do, Mr. Wells?

A. I followed Gerald's instructions. He began to clear out the passage, the space in this pit, in an effort to get down to the boy.

Q. At that time could you see the boy?

A. No, sir, I could not see him; not from my position.

Q. Describe the rock that you found that he was under?

A. That was what?

Q. Describe the rock or stone holding this man in the cave.

A. That rock will probably never be seen. You come down this shaft like this, and land on this table, this table being a rock about two feet wide and four or five or six feet the other way. You go down the crevice on this side, and Collins is underneath that rock. It is possible, by going down the crevice on this side, or it was at that time, by hearing Gerald's talk to Collins and hearing Collins' instructions to Gerald's, it was possible for Gerald's to reach down somewhere between his hips and his knees. He couldn't get to his feet. Edward Brenner, first man to reach Collins' body through the shaft:

Q. You have been digging in the shaft?

A. Yes. Me and Mr. Marshall been setting the timbers. I did do some digging, the first two, three days, besides setting the timbers, too.

Q. Have you been in the shaft lately?

A. Why, I just got out this morning.

Q. Did you see the man that——

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is he entombed down there?

A. Yes, sir, I see him.

Q. Where is he located?

A. He is about twelve feet from the shaft, under a rock, as far as I could tell you. I saw him in there, but I haven't made no drawing of it.

Q. Describe the man you saw there. What kind of looking man was he?

A. Well, I tell you. His face is pretty sharp-pointed face, a square jaw. I am talking pretty blind, I know. I am raised blind. He has got a jaw like a bulldog, a fighting jaw; a sharp nose, a forehead fairly high. His eyes were sunk. I couldn't tell you what eyes he had.

Q. Was he dead or alive?

A. Dead. Just as dead as a man can be. Yes, he has gone.

Q. Was his mouth closed or open?

A. No, sir, his mouth was open.

Q. Did you notice whether or not any of his teeth had been worked on?

A. I didn't. I didn't pay any attention to it. I was the first man in there to give the statement he is dead. I said. "It will hurt you to go:" so the superintendent out there, and the damn doctor out there, give me permission to go in and make a statement to them. Well, the man's dead. He was dead, all right. There's no two ways about that.

Q. How close did you get to him?

A. How close did I get to him? I got right to him. I had his head in my arm—in my hand.

Q. Where was his head?

A. I didn't see no hat.

Q. You say you had his head in your hand.

A. Yes. I had my hands on his face, trying to find out if he was dead or alive.

Q. What did you find there around him?

A. I find an electric light on his head, right here. It was out of commission.

Q. Did you find any bottles or any food?

A. No, sir. I didn't look for it. My business was to find out if the man was still alive. That was all I was interested in.

Q. Did you notice the color of his hair?

A. Sir?

Q. Did you notice what color his hair was?

A. Yes. Black.

Q. What kind of clothing did he have on?

A. I tell you the God's truth. I didn't pay much attention. My intention was to find out if he was breathing. I felt his pulse. I felt his chin. I felt his mouth, his lips. I felt the back of his neck. I pulled on him, to find if he is dead or alive. I didn't pay much attention, but if I aint mistaken, he had a blue jumper, a blue coat or jumper on. I couldn't hold up my right hand and tell you that, though.

Q. Did you notice whether there was a blanket or anything wrapped around him?

A. There wasn't a thing wrapped around him, but under his shoulders was a sack or something, an old sack or an old blanket. I didn't have anything to see by but my miner's lamp and a flashlight.

Q. Which one of his hands did you have hold of, his right

hand or his left?

A. The left hand.

Q. Where was his left hand?

A. Under the rock.

Q. Tell just how this man was lying there. Was he lying down or standing up?

A. He was lying on a slope. His left hand was up under here, kind of on a slope, in that position. It didn't give me to feel his pulse, to find out if he is dead or alive. I had to turn the hand around.

Q. Was his hand cold or warm?

A. Colder than ice.

Q. Was his face cold?

A. Colder than ice. I grabbed him around the neck. I grabbed him back of the collar, and tried to pull him out a little.

Q. Could you move him at all?

A. No, sir; no, sir.

Everett L. Maddox, of Central City, Kentucky:

I went in some time Tuesday night, between nine and twelve o'clock. Something like that.

Q. How far did you go?

A. I went straight to Floyd Collins.

Q. Did you have any conversation with him?

A. I absolutely did.

Q. Tell the jury the entire conversation you had with him at that time, or at any time.

A. When I reached Floyd—well, before I reached him—I hollered at him. I says, "Hey!" just like that. He says, "What do you want?" I says, "How far is it down there to you?" He says, "Come on down to me and get me out of here." I says, "I'm coming, boy." He never said any more then till I got him. Then he says, "Won't you get me out of here?" I says, "I've come down to you, and now I'm going to try to get you out." I went to work and moved some rocks out from under his back. There was a quilt around him at that time. I moved those rocks out from under his back, and stuck this quilt down under him so the rock wouldn't hurt his back. He told me, "That gives me great ease; my back now don't hurt. I believe you can get me out of here." I says, "I'm going to do my best." He asked then where had Johnny Gerald's went to, and I said, "Johnny's gone home to take a rest." I says, "He'll be back after a while." I says, "I'll tell him you want him."

Q. Did you come out then, after that conversation?

A. Well, I can't think, but I believe I come out at that time, yes, sir.

Q. How close to him did you get?

A. I sat down right by his head, raised his head up, and put it on my lap.

Q. What kind of a light did you have?

A. Well, there was an electric light down part of the way to him when I went down, when I started down. I taken it on with me the rest of the way to him, and used it as the only light I had in there with me.

Q. Did you see his features?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Describe him to the jury.

A. Well, I could only see, I could only see about, Oh, I guess from along here up, outside of his arms from here up. On this arm I could see this much, but the other one was under the rock. This one here was down in under him like that. I taken his arms out from under him, pulled this arm up here like that, and got this one kind of doubled around so I could get it in this crevice, and pulled it around and got it up like that. Then I came out, at that time.

Q. Was this man alive at that time?

A. He absolutely was.

Q. When was the last time you saw him, or his body?

A. The last time I saw him was Wednesday morning.

Q. Now, was he still alive at that time.

A. Yes, sir, he was still alive at that time.

Q. Have you seen him since he died?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When did you see him?

A. I seen him today.

Q. Where was he?

A. In the same place he was when I first found him.

Q. Are you sure he was the same man?

A. The same man, absolutely. Because I discovered the gold tooth when I first went down in there. No, it was the second trip I discovered the tooth.

Q. How close did you get to him?

A. Today?

Q. Yes.

A. I got pretty close. Close enough to straighten his head up till they could get a picture of him.

Q. You say they took a picture of him?

A. Yes, sir. A camera man went down and taken a picture of him there.

Q. Was he warm or cold?

A. Oh, he was cold. Cold

Q. Did you feel his pulse?

A. I didn't feel his pulse. I just raised his head up and looked at his eyes, and I knew then there wasn't no use feeling his pulse

Q. What did you see that convinced you he was dead?

A. His eyes had done turned white. Out side of the blue part of his eyes, was just as white as could be.

Q. Did you have a good light down there with you at that time?

A. Yes, sir. You never asked me about the second time I went in. I would like to state something to you about that time.

Q. Now, did you wash this man's face today, Mr. Maddox?

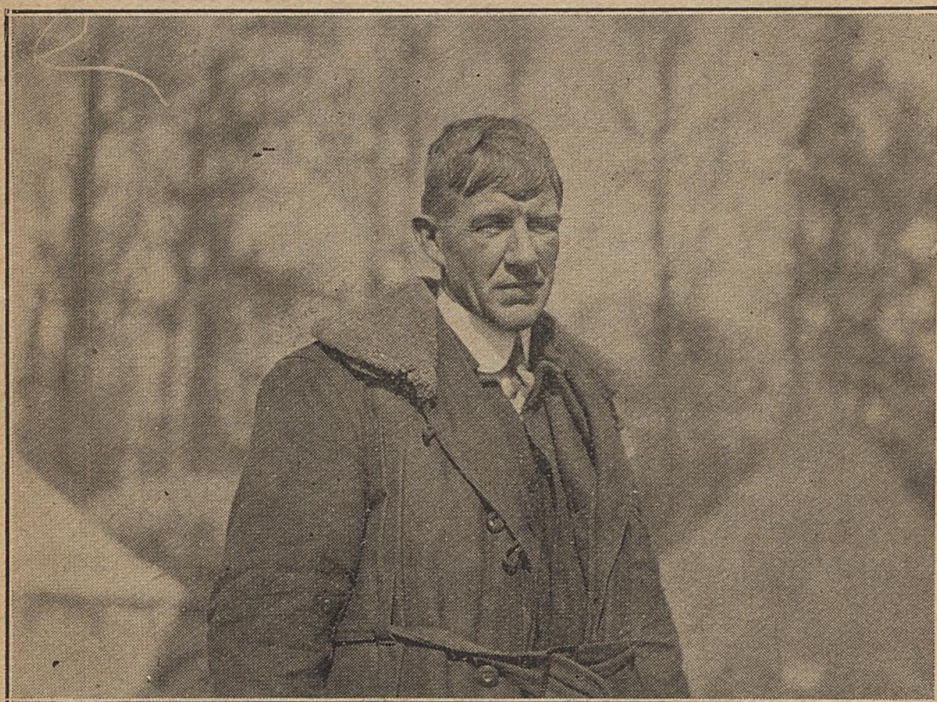
A. Yes, sir. I washed it the best I could. My hands was muddy and I couldn't do a very good job of it, but I did it the best I could.

Q. How was his position today compared with the way it was the last time you saw him when you went through Sand Cave, when he was alive? How was his position today compared with his position then.

A. He was in the same position, outside of he had slipped a little. It looked like he had shrunk down a little bit, I guess about three or four inches further down under the rock.

Q. Now, you want to tell something about the second time you went in there, do you?

A. Yes, sir. The second time I went in, the second time I went in I got to him and he called for something to eat. Well, they relayed a bottle of milk down to me and I give him this milk through a rubber hose. His face was against the wall, and I couldn't give it to him out of this long bottle. I just stuck that hose in his mouth and the other end in the bottle, and he drank the milk through that hose. I passed the bottle outside when he finished it. It passed the third man, and that is far as I know it went. Then I worked there a while and passed out I don't know how much rock I did pass out from him and around me, and I tried to pull him out by the shoulders, but I couldn't do it. I reached down just below his knee and got his pants leg and pulled on it, and tore his pant leg off him; tore it plumb in two. He said I was



Mr. H. T. Carmichael, production manager of the Kentucky Rock Asphalt Co., in charge of the sinking of the shaft.

hurting his foot; it made it get tighter. I decided then I couldn't do anything, but I worked then a right smart while, and decided that I couldn't do nothing, and I aimed to move this stone out that was between his back, the rock that was again his neck and the one he was under. I crawled back over here where there is a cavern like, I aimed to crawl over close enough to move those rock off his feet. He says, "I wouldn't bother that rock. You'll cause that rock to fall in and mash me."

Q. Was that opening that you looked down through, was it there, or who made it?

A. When?

Q. Where you looked down through there on him,

A. Today?

Q. Today, yes.

A. I made the opening myself, this morning.

Q. You made the opening?

A. Yes, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS: What did you have to remove to make this opening?

A. I didn't have very much of anything, only about eighteen inches of loose rock and gravel. The reason I knew this was here, I had been in it and seen this hole back there. I knew I could start in there and make a hole that you could get to him to see him by. I allowed maybe they could get into it to timber it, and get to his feet. After I seen that it was so dangerous, and seen that it was impossible for a man to get in there and work with the timbering, it was absolutely dangerous, and I was running a risk of my life. I didn't feel comfortable to stay in there and work, and I just went down there and straightened his head up where you could get a view of him to identify him by, and then I came out. Mr. Carmichael requested I should go down there and lead the committee in to identify him, one by one; show them how to get to him and see him.

H. T. Carmicheal, who superintended the digging of the shaft:

There was but one outlet to the shaft at that fifty-five foot point, and that was in the far left hand corner as you go towards the cave. Those boys here, these rugged miners here, opened up the heading at that point and followed the line of best material, regardless of the direction, at that time, which we had to do. We drove two feet in one direction, then about possibly eight feet in a direction at right angles to the two foot drift, but were not yet past the end of this falling

stuff. In fact, if we had come down at that point, the stuff, instead of going into the shaft, would have filled the hole that we would have dug there. It would have rolled down on us there. With the information at hand that we had on the levels, we knew that in this lateral heading we were a certain distance above an elevation on which Collins was supposed to be, so that our hope, after we got out of the shaft, was the same that we had in the shaft—to drive to a certain elevation. We followed this heading and stayed on this ledge, and couldn't get down under it. There was a pretty heavy ledge there. We were tied all the way down by reason of the fact that we were afraid to drill and shoot, which is the usual method whenever rock is encountered in shafts. Let me add right here that the whole depth of the tunnel, only one stick of powder was used, to my knowledge, and that was a stick seven-eighths of an inch in diameter, forty per cent gelatine, and it was used probably ten or fifteen feet from the surface, so that it could have had no possible effect upon any of our operations, even ten feet below it. After driving this heading, I think, a distance of about ten feet, we decided—we thought we were far enough back of this slide, back of the shaft wall—we decided to go on through this shelf of rock. This we did, and after going maybe two feet further, or a total of twelve or thirteen feet, from the point at which we left the shaft, breaking through this limestone ledge, we came, point-blank, into the original cavern, which had been the original way, means, of reaching Collins and something like eight feet, surface measurement, to him. We knew that we were in the old channel by reason of finding the electric light wires which had all the time led to his position, and on which was an electric light bulb, which we have reason to believe burned until a day or so ago, which possibly gave him some degree of warmth. We found the rope which some of the rescuing parties had tied around Collins and tried to pull him out by. We also found a three-eighths inch rope which I understood was one Collins used in his exploration work. We found empty bottles which evidently had had coffee, water and milk in them. We found some bottles which still had coffee in them, about ten feet away from Collins. We found all manner of tools, flashlights, and articles within from eight feet of him down to him.

Q. Did you at that time observe the cave-in in the old passage way?

A. You bet you, sir. That was the first thing I looked at. I looked for the old passage, and saw where it abruptly ended,

and it was just as tight as that wall is today, and still is. The only opening through there was that caused by the wire and the rope reaching under it there. I don't believe an angle worm could go through that place, as I saw it. As sorry as I was to note that it was shut off, it was somewhat gratifying to know that our theory was correct. Not only was there not any opening there, but it is in such soft material that I don't know any means of tunneling through it, because it had neither top nor bottom to it.

Q. Did you observe the size of the passage way leading from the point where you struck the old passage to where the body of Collins was lying?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. About what was the size of that?

A. It varied in size, sir, but it was approximately two or three feet, or something like that. A small hole that you could crawl through for a distance or maybe five or six feet, and then you came to this position that has been so well described where you go down there, you had to back down over a rock and then come back there, you had to back down under this way, and Collins was under this ledge there, lying across another rock, and in a crevice there.

Q. Now, Mr. Carmicheal, what caused you to abandon the rescue of this man?

A. What caused me to abandon it?

Q. Yes, sir.

A. At what time, sir?

Q. I mean today.

A. Today?

Q. Yes, sir.

A. Because I felt, on my own knowledge and experience in such matters, and I had this opinion verified by a dozen or more men thoroughly familiar with conditions there and whom I knew by reason of their experience were qualified to judge, that any further attempt to take the body from its present position would most probably result in the death of one or more of the rescuing party, and though the Lord knows I wanted to take that fellow out of there, and would take any risk to do it—everyone of us took our lives in our hands at all periods we were in that shaft or heading after last night. I felt that the means of doing it would not justify the end, and after consulting all concerned including the family and every authority and everyone there whom we thought had any interest in the matter, we decided that rather than jeopardize the

life of a living man, we had better leave Floyd Collins rest where he was.

Q. It is your judgment, then, that it would have been a very dangerous project or proposition?

A. I, personally, couldn't have gone down there and attempted to take him out myself, and I wouldn't ask any of these men or recommend that they should do something that I personally wouldn't do— whether I had the power to order them to do it or not. I did not have the power to order them, but if I had the power to order them I certainly would not have done it.

Q. What was the principal reason, the cause of this place being so dangerous, Mr. Carmichael?

A. It was the worst trap, in the way of a roof and two sides—certainly one side—the whole roof and one side, that I ever saw. The wonder is that it would hang there as long as it did. We know that it was moving. I heard a man who had been in there a week before, through the old channel, that came to it last night and hardly recognized the place. It had been working, as they say. I knew that right above it, possibly fifteen feet above, that that shaft was failing; that the formation of it was slipping on account of all that rotten muck falling in there, and that the general tendency was to bring more weight on that already overburdened roof above Collins Rocks that it would be necessary to take out to make an opening at that point large enough to even attempt to go down there and get Collins out of there the movement of any one of two or three of them that I know of would bring the whole roof down. We might have stood off and taken a pole and poked at them, but we would have in that way lost the only means that we would have ever had of identifying him. We were going to do one or two things. We were determined to bring Floyd Collins out of there, or in some way definitely prove to the world that after this two week's fight we had found him, and stop some of these damnable stories that it was a hoax.

Q. Do you feel like you have fully established that fact?

A. Absolutely so, beyond any question of a doubt. Here is another one of our Heaven-sent blessings. The position of Floyd Collins last night, and the means of reaching him, were such that there were only a few men in all of our organization that, by reason of physical size or something of the sort, could reach him. To reach him last night you had to slide down an angle of about forty-five degrees, through a very narrow pas-

sage, and literally hang by your toes, or have a man tie a rope around your feet, and go on down over a ledge like that, and go back under there and butt heads with him. That was the only way of reaching him; something to that effect. It was about that sort of a condition. We worked down in there last night, Marshall and Brenner and Blevins and several others of these faithful ones, trying to devise some means of bringing him out. We were still fully determined to bring him out. We were about at our rope's end when our young friend Maddox said when he had been up under where Collins was before, he had noticed up above him a little cavity, indicating that by driving a hole through this wall vertically at a point just a couple of feet to the left of where we were then going to Collins, that perhaps you could get a new entry which would eventually lead to Collins' feet. It sounded good, but, as optimistic as Maddox was, nobody agreed with him very much, but we were willing to let him try it. I stayed down there with them a while, but I was right tired. I think I stayed only until about four this morning. I knocked off early, and left those four boys, with the understanding that Maddox was working under the guardianship of the other three. He was to have his head, and to work his own way but the minute that these other three doubted that—felt that he was going into too great a hazard, they were to call him off and he was to agree to go out. That is the way I left them. I didn't leave them until they promised me that. I had reached nearly the end of my physical endurance, and could not stay out there and watch them. I understand that they worked on that way until about six or seven o'clock, and that though Maddox didn't get down to Collins' feet by driving this tunnel and making this new entrance to the left of the one which we had down before, he did open the way to a positive identification of Collins, which would never have been made had he not done this. I don't believe we could have found in this county, or in any of the adjoining counties, or any county in this state or in any other state eight or ten men such as quickly qualified, or could have qualified, to go down there and examine this man through that other—the old entry, and make a positive identification of him. So this young fellow over here, by sticking it out and trying to reach his feet missed his goal, but made this identification possible by giving an entirely new angle on the head of Collins and making it very, very much simpler to see him than it had been before. I worked my way through this new opening he has made, and succeeded in getting a mighty good slant at

Collins. I can see that he was lying, I think, I don't know, possibly on his left side. I believe it was his left side, apparently between a couple of rocks, with his face down in the mud, and the upper side of his face pretty dirty. He was certainly in no shape for identification when I first saw him. If he had been one of you gentlemen whom I know well, I couldn't have identified him. We needed something else, so I called Maddox again. I said, "Maddox, can you go down and get hold of this fellow and turn him around so that his face will be toward the opening, and prop him up a little, so that we can more easily identify him?" As usual—"Yes, sir." He goes down and he props him up, and we give him a handkerchief and clean water and get him to wash his face off, so that Floyd Collins now—and I am fairly convinced that it is Floyd Collins—looks straight up at you as you put your face in this new hole that Maddox has made, and you get to this shoulder, as it were, leading to this view of Collins, and it is not at all dangerous, except for the fact that the roof might fall on you. It is not hard to get in there. Any of you gentlemen could get in. Then I had the stage set for a positive identification, even to the point that if we wanted to we could take a picture, which we did. One of these official photographers took it. Then we go up here and see the coroner and suggest that we get a jury just as quickly as we can, if possible composed of men familiar with the cave and cave work, and also of those who knew Floyd Collins well. The coroner did his job admirably, and picked just the set of men that I wanted to see him select. They are substantial men, of cave experience and unquestioned integrity, to a man. He first takes John Gerald down, who is particularly well qualified for the work by reason of the fact that he knew the old channel and every angle of the tunnel. Knowing how ticklish the ground was, and that it was not at all desirable to have many people down there at once, for fear that the jar and people walking around in the tunnel might bring the roof down, I arranged it so that our friend Maddox again would be on the receiving line at the foot of the shaft, and we sent the jurors down, one by one, through the whole six—I think it was six—and the coroner himself. As each man came out of the shaft—and they averaged being in there from five to eight minutes, I think it was, and no one was limited; he had his own time to look at Collins and the nature of the ground—as each one came out, I asked him three questions, I think it was, just as he went by, not officially, but just for my own information: Were you in the cave? Yes,

• sir. Did you see anyone? Yes, sir. Who was it? Floyd Collins. Is he dead? Yes, sir. Can you get him out or suggest any way of getting him out? No, nor nobody else. Following these men—I am a little bit ahead of my story. Before that, before the jurors came, I had the engineers, Anderson and Ford, and the timber men, Marshall and old Mike and the rest of them, I think all of those fellows, go and look at this fellow, whoever he was, Flyod Collins, so that if necessary they could corroborate the testimony of the jurors, so that now I think we have at least twelve men who looked at the man in the tunnel, six or eight of whom, or maybe eight or ten, know him to be Collins, and the others have definite information which, if they are allowed to describe it, I believe will convince the friends and neighbors of Collins that the man they saw is Floyd Collins. After this, we brought down the doctors and several other officials, and anyone who had any business down there. I suppose fifteen or twenty people looked him over; all of them men who were interested, and several in an official capacity. I am a little bit ahead of the story again. Last night it was thought, before we knew all the conditions in the tunnel around Collins' body, that perhaps we could amputate one of his legs and thus take him from the tunnel. With that end in view, we took several doctors down and had them look at it, and they didn't think it was practicable to get to him to do it, and I didn't either, because I didn't see anything that could be cut off of him, by reason of his position, other than his head or arm. He was entirely covered up everywhere else. So that was not practicable.

Q. You feel, then, that you, together with the others interested, have adopted the only and the best course, by leaving the body in the cave and closing the entrance?

A. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, and I also feel fully qualified to make that statement, and to back it up anywhere. If I didn't feel that way, sir, I would never have quit and never have listened to anybody that wanted to adopt that plan, because we hadn't quit fighting at all.

Q. In fact, that plan has been endorsed almost unanimously, perhaps unanimously, by everybody interested, hasn't it?

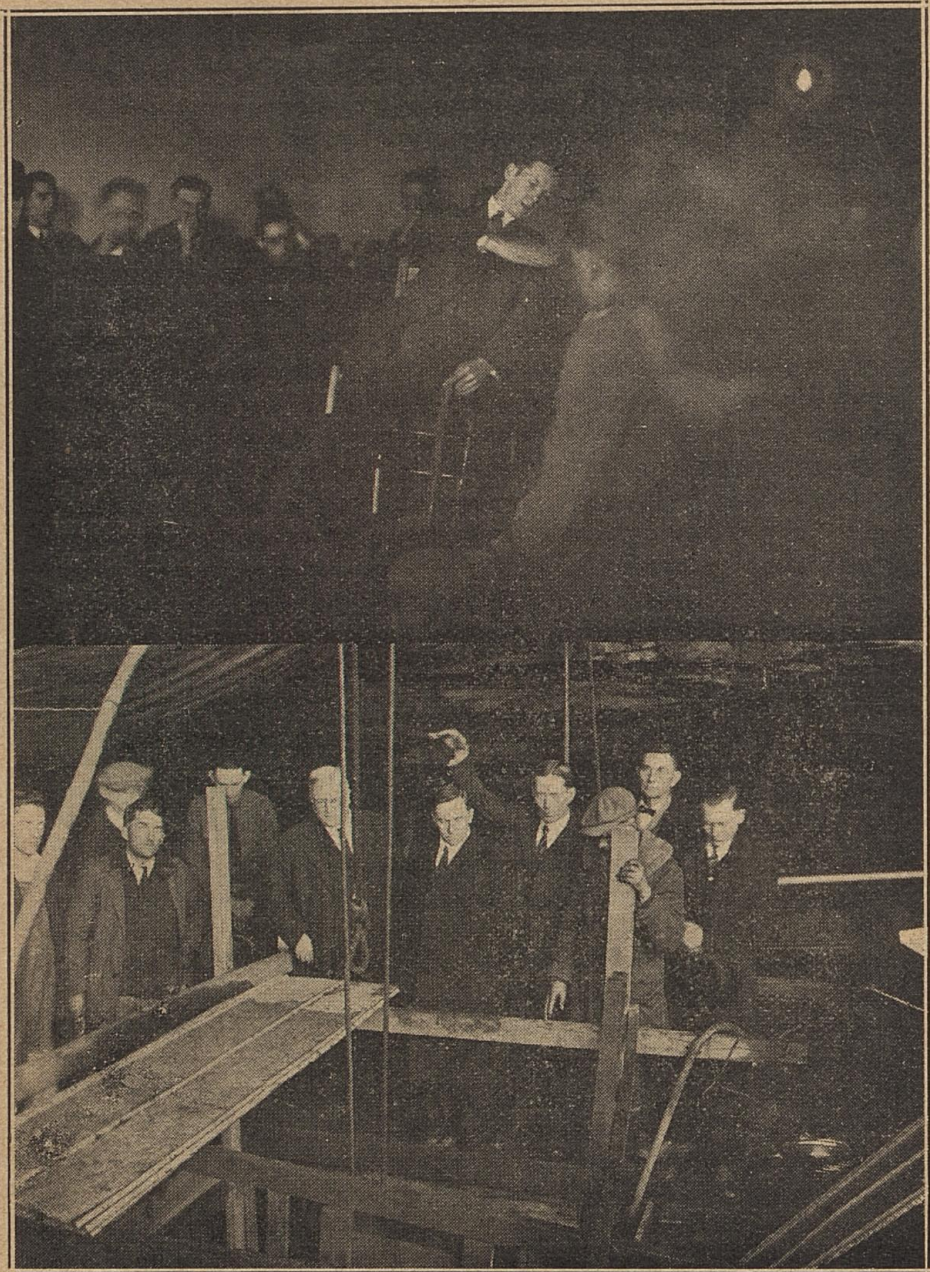
A. To my knowledge, unanimously.

Q. By the family?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. All the relatives?

A. Yes, sir, all that I have seen, sir. I have heard nothing



Upper—Miller Illustrates Collins' position.
Lower—Prayers at the mouth of the shaft.

but the highest praise.

CAPTAIN CHANEY: Did you state that you saw Collins?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, I saw him, and would be glad to state what I saw. I will tell you what I saw when I did see him. I went down there and got to within two or three feet of him—that is as far as I could get through this new opening, right down this way, and I called to one of the boys behind me to put down just what I said. I couldn't write it myself, in the position that I was in. I will read you just what I said, if you will have it.

Q. What did you write?

A. This was at nine-thirty this morning. The man I saw in the hole through this opening described, at nine-thirty this morning, seemed to have on a blue jumper, a blue jacket, a blue denim jacket, which was buttoned closely around his neck, and it was plain to see that there was something else wrapped around him, evidently put there for his protection, which I understood was either bags or a blanket or something. He had a growth of beard only a very small fraction of an inch long, which indicated that he ordinarily wore neither mustache nor beard, but that he had been without shaving for several days. He had a gold tooth on the right side, upper, an upper tooth. This tooth right here (indicating) had a gold cap on it. His mouth was about an inch open, so that these teeth were easily seen. The lower teeth I never did get a good shot at, but it seemed that he did have a row of lower teeth. I have understood from one of the boys, in fact, from our friend Maddox here, that they were rather poor, but he seemed to me to have a row of lower teeth. He seemed to have dark hair. It was pretty hard to tell the color there, though we had an electric light globe like that one, in that lamp, that swung right over him. It's pretty hard to tell the color of a man's hair under those conditions, but it was dark hair, perhaps inclined to be a little auburn. I don't know about that, but I am sure it was rather dark hair. His right eye was open. I wouldn't attempt to tell the color of it, though I believe it was possibly blue or gray—I don't know which. His left eye, the eyelid was only half over it, and it showed only the white of the eyeball. He was lying at this time on the back of his head, with his face up, so that he could be seen. Before we had him set for this inspection he was half buried in the mud and showed only the profile; but at this time he showed the full face.

J. Norman Parker, telling of his trip into the shaft as a mem-

ber of the coroner's jury:

Q. Where is your home, Mr. Parker? Where do you live?

A. I live about three miles out on the Mammoth Cave Road.

Q. You have testified before this Court of Inquiry, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir, I have testified before; the other day.

Q. Since that time, has the body of Floyd Collins been found?

A. Yes, sir, his body has been found since then.

Q. How long have you been a resident of this County, Mr. Parker?

A. About—Oh, I guess thirty-five years or longer.

Q. Were you acquainted with Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir, I was acquainted with him. I knew him very well.

Q. How long had you known him?

A. I had known him for years. As long as his life, or practically so. I have known him ever since we were children.

Q. Have you seen the body of Floyd Collins today, Mr. Parker?

A. Yes, sir, I have.

Q. Where did you see his body?

A. In the sand break out in a cave they call Sand Cave.

Q. At the foot of the shaft where the rescue party were working?

A. It was just off from the foot of the shaft, about fifteen feet. It was off from the foot of the shaft in a heading.

Q. Did you see him several days ago, before his death?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see him then in the same place you saw him today?

A. Yes, sir, in the very same place.

Q. Was his body in the same position this morning as it was when you saw it several days ago, or not?

A. The body was, but the head was turned a little bit different from what it was when I saw it before.

Q. Do you think that was caused by death?

A. I don't know. It may have been, or it may have been caused—it may have been moved by someone. His face was washed clean when I saw it today.

Q. Had other people been down there before you had?

A. That's what they said; yes, sir.

Q. What time was the shaft sunk to such an extent that his body was reached?

A. Something like yesterday at two-forty-three.

Q. When you saw him today, was his face washed?

A. Yes, sir. He looked very natural.

Q. Did you recognize him as being Floyd Collins?

A. I did.

Q. Was he living or dead?

A. Dead.

Q. Did you observe the condition of the ways by which his body could have been brought out?

A. Well, the way it is there now, it's so much more dangerous there now than it was when we used to crawl in the crawl-way to him. I would think it would be suicide for a man to go down and try to get him out.

THE PRESIDENT: You have no doubt but that the body was that of Floyd Collins?

A. It is absolutely Floyd Collins.

Q. Were you a member of the coroner's jury that held an inquest over his body today?

A. Yes, sir.

LT. COL. STITES: Did it seem that the roof had slipped in some way since the last time you were down there?

A. It had slipped a great deal; yes, sir.

Wallace Page, a member of the coroner's jury:

THE RECORDER: What is your name?

A. Wallace Page.

Q. Were you on the coroner's jury that held an inquest over the body of Floyd Collins this date?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where do you live?

A. Glasgow, Kentucky.

Q. Did you know Floyd?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long had you known him?

A. Ever since 1918.

Q. Did you see his body today?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where?

A. In that cave out here.

Q. Where the rescuers have been at work?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you take a good view of him?

A. I got a good look at him; yes, sir.

Q. Who was it?

A. Floyd Collins.

Q. Was he living or dead?

A. He is dead.

Q. Do you think it is practicable for his body to be taken out of that cave?

A. I don't see how it could be got out. I don't see how he even got in there.

Ish Lancaster, a member of the coroner's jury:

THE RECORDER: What is your name?

A. Ish Lancaster.

Q. How long have you lived here in this community?

A. Well, I have been living in Barren County practically all of my life, except when I would be away, you know, when I was away. I have been living in this county all my life.

Q. How old are you, Mr. Lancaster?

A. I am thirty-eight years of age.

Q. Did you know Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long had you known him?

A. Ever since July, 1914.

Q. Did you know him well, or not?

A. Yes, sir, I reckon you could say I knew him well.

Q. Did you see Floyd Collins today?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where?

A. In what they call Sand Cave, where the rescue workers have been at work out here.

Q. Did you go down into the shaft and crawl back there to where you could see him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was that Floyd Collins that you viewed back there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is he living or dead?

A. He is dead.

Q. You knew him well enough that you are certain of your identification?

A. Yes, sir.

LT. COL. STITES: Do you know of any practicable way that his body could be removed from where you saw it?

A. None whatever, from what I could see.

Q. Would you have been willing to try to get it out?

A. No, sir.

Q. Would you have advised anybody else to try it?

A. No, sir.

Q. Would there have been any danger in it?

A. Yes, sir. It is nothing but a death trap.

Q. Had you been in there to Floyd Collins before?

A. Well, on Sunday night after—well, Sunday morning, rather, I went there Saturday night a little after dark and got there a little after dark of the morning that he was reported as being fastened in the cave. They tell me that I couldn't get to him, because I am pretty large. About two or two-thirty was my first trip in the cave, Sunday morning. I got back in four feet of him, which was as far as I could ever go, four to six feet. That was as far as I could ever go in this cave. Going in this place you went down this way, over a rock, and in under to where you could see his head. I couldn't get down around that corkscrew of a place.

Q. Did you talk to him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know his voice?

A. Yes, sir, I recognized his voice. I says, "Is this Floyd Collins? Is that who this is?" and he says, "Yes." This was the second time I was down. The first time I didn't talk to him any. I found that there was another man between me, as far as he could go, and his brother Homer was in front of him. I was third man. Homer went down and fed him, and we passed him the food that came in. I helped pull out some rock. I saw at once that it was a dangerous place. It was nothing but a death trap to go in there that way, but regardless of that I went in it to try to rescue the boy, save his life. Life would only put me in such a place—I mean to save a man's life. I went in about eight-thirty, after the photographers had taken notes for the papers in Louisville.

Q. Today?

A. No, that first Sunday following his getting hung in the cave. I believe that was the last day of January.

Q. And you talked to him?

A. I talked to him.

Q. And recognized his voice?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You know where he was located?

A. Yes, sir, but I couldn't see where he was located.

Q. You could hear him there?

A. Yes, sir. It sounded just like to me that he was at my feet here. It sounded like he was in here right under me. He says, "Ish, I can see your feet." He called me by

name. I says, "Floyd, do you know who this is?" and he says, "Yes." He says, "It's Ish Lancaster."

Q. Where you saw his body this morning, there this morning, is it in the same location as it was on that date you talked to him.

A. According to the way that the rescuers went into this old passage way where the light was and the rope here, his body evidently is in the same place. It might have slipped a little from what some has told me for I could only see about this much of him—from there up.

LT. COL. STITES: Is that channel more or less dangerous today than it was when you were in there on these trips?

A. Absolutely.

THE PRESIDENT: More or less?

A. More dangerous.

LT. COL. STITES: You say you wouldn't advise anybody—

A. I wouldn't advise anybody to go in there to him.

Q. Did you care, yourself, to go in there to him?

A. I absolutely would not go in there no more.

Claude D. Monroe, a member of the coroner's jury:

Q. What is your age, Mr. Monroe?

A. I am thirty-three years old.

Q. Where do you live?

A. About four miles out on the Mammoth Cave road, out there.

Q. Out in the same neighborhood that Floyd Collins lived in?

A. Yes, sir, in the same general neighborhood.

Q. How long had you known Floyd? Did you know him?

A. Yes, sir. I have known him practically all my life. I have known him, I guess, ever since I can remember, practically.

Q. You were well acquainted with him and with his features?

A. Yes, sir, I was very well acquainted with him; yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you ever go to school with him?

A. No, sir; but I have caved with him. I dug a tunnel in his cave a thousand feet. In his own cave, him and his father's.

THE RECORDER: Were you on the coroner's jury today that held an inquest over the body of Floyd Collins, Mr. Monroe?

A. Yes, sir, I was on the jury.

Q. Did you view his body down there?

A. Yes, sir. In Sand Cave, as they call it, down at the bottom of the tunnel out of the bottom of the shaft down there.

Q. Had you been in through the passage that he went in through?

A. I had been in a part of the way; not all the way, though.

Q. You had never been all of the way back to where he was hung?

A. No, sir. I had been to what they call the squeeze. That was as far as I went. I never did get clear back to where he was.

Q. Had you talked to him in there?

A. No, sir; I didn't talk to him. I never talked to him.

Q. And you say you saw him there today?

A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. Was he living or dead?

A. He was dead.

Q. Was it the body of Floyd Collins that you saw there today?

A. It was.

Q. Have you any doubt about it?

A. Not a bit in the world.

Q. You went down the shaft that has been dug out there, and then crawled back through a lateral passage, to where you could see him?

A. I did, through a small tunnel.

Q. Could see his face plainly, or not?

A. Yes, sir; just as plain as yours.

Q. How close were you to him?

A. I judge about that far (indicating).

Q. Two and a half feet, about that?

A. Something like that.

THE PRESIDENT: Was there an electric light over his face?

A. Yes, sir. It was no trouble in the world to see him.

THE RECORDER: Was his face clean?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. It had been washed just before you went in there hadn't it?

A. I guess it was. His face was clean. I am satisfied it had been washed; yes, sir.

Q. Do you have any doubt about who that was?

A. No, sir, I do not.



Above—Reporters receiving official bulletin.
Below—A party enters the tunnel. The tiny aperture is just beyond the lighted lantern.

Q. Could you suggest any way by which his body could be brought out of there?

A. There is not any way. I will say that no man living can go down there and take his body out of there. I have caved enough to be where I believe that. I say that a man can go down there and in fifteen minutes he can kill a dozen men.

Q. You think it would be wrong for any more attempts to be made to bring the body out?

A. Without you wanted to kill somebody, it would be. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you think it is better, as he is dead, not to make any more attempts, as it would be probably the cause of losing the lives of others?

A. I do.

Thomas L. Gorby, a member of the coroner's jury:

Q. Did you know Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How long had you known him?

A. I have known him about six years.

Q. Were you on the coroner's jury today that held an inquest over his body?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you view his body?

A. I did.

Q. How did you get to the body to see it?

A. By going down this shaft and crawling out through a tunnel and through a crevice and there was his body.

Q. Did you recognize him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. It was the body of Floyd Collins?

A. Floyd Collins; yes, sir.

Q. Was he living or dead?

A. Dead.

Q. Could you suggest any way, Mr. Gorby, by which that body could be brought out?

A. I could not.

THE RECORDER: Do you have any cave experience?

A. Yes, sir, I have quite a bit.

Q. You mean you are what is known as a "caver?"

A. I have done lots of underground work in these caves out through here, working for the owners. Several years ago. I don't think there is any way he could ever be gotten out of there in the shape he's in, and considering the looseness of

the rocks about there.

THE RECORDER: you have heard the engineers describe the condition of the tunnel, have you not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And it is your opinion that it would be unsafe and unwise to make any further attempt for the rescue of the body?

A. Yes, sir, I do. I don't believe even now that that tunnel's open the full way through.

Johnny Gerald, describing his trip into the shaft as a member of the coroner's jury:

THE RECORDER: Your name is Johnny Gerald?

A. Yes, sir, it is.

Q. You have testified before this court before, haven't you?

A. Yes, sir, I have. I testified the other day here.

Q. Since that time, has there been any change in conditions?

A. Yes, sir, quite a lot of change. You mean at the cave?

Q. Yes, at the cave where Floyd Collins body is entombed.

A. Oh, yes, sir. Been a change in both of them.

Q. Were you on the coroner's jury which held an inquest over the body of Floyd Collins today?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you view his body today, Mr. Gerald, or not?

A. Yes, sir, I viewed his face, yes, sir. Part of his body.

Q. How long had you known Floyd Collins, Mr. Gerald?

A. I had known Floyd practically all my life.

Q. Are you an experienced cave man, or not?

A. I have had a right smart experience with caves, yes, sir.

Q. You have heard the five men testify that have preceded you, who were on that coroner's jury with you. Are all of these men experienced men along that line, or not?

A. Yes, sir, they are.

THE PRESIDENT: Are they experienced cave men?

A. Yes, sir,

THE RECORDER: Was Floyd Collins dead or alive when you visited him today?

A. He was dead.

Q. When was the last time you had seen him?

A. Well, it was Monday morning—no, Tuesday morning, two weeks ago, about five o'clock.

Q. Did you at that time crawl back through the tunnel.

down through the tunnel? The shaft wasn't dug at that time, was it?

A. No, sir, no, sir.

Q. The body, as you saw it today, was it in the same position as when you last saw it?

A. Practically so. The only difference was that the face was turned up. I understand Mr. Maddox did this to him, turned his face up so he could see it.

Q. You have no doubt that the man you viewed was Floyd Collins?

A. No, not a bit.

Q. You have no doubt that he was entombed there in that cave, have you?

A. No, sir; not a bit in the world.

Q. Have you any suggestion to make as to how his body could be brought out?

A. No, sir, I haven't any. I don't think there is any hope of it.

Q. Just tell the Court, in your own words, what you think about the possibility as to whether or not he should be left where he is, or whether or not you think an attempt should be made to get him out.

A. I think it is just too dangerous to undertake to bring him out. I don't think there is a chance of getting him out at all. I don't see as it could do him any good now. I think the best thing to do is to leave him there. I would be afraid it would kill other people; that would be my judgment about it. I don't think any person has any chance to get him out of there under any conditions.

Q. Do you think it would endanger the lives of others?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Would you want to go back in there?

A. No, sir. I was glad to get out of there today. I was tickled when I got out of that hole.

Q. You feel that you and all the other people who have been working out there have done everything within your power to rescue him?

A. Yes, sir, I do.

LT. COL. STITES: Was the location and the method of reaching the location where Floyd is lying more or less dangerous today than the other times?

A. More; considerably more.

Q. Had there been any apparent sliding of the roof, or anything?

A. There had been a lot of changes; yes, sir. This passage way had entirely closed up. There was no opening at all going back up the way we came down. There was possibly that much room between the ceiling and the rock that had fallen.

Q. Even after the cave-in there, there had been considerable change in it?

A. Yes, sir; yes, sir. I left it after the cave-in Thursday morning, about possibly, two o'clock. I suppose it would be a week ago. That was the last time I saw the opening after the break-down.

Q. You feel that any further work in there in the neighborhood of Collin's body would be highly dangerous?

A. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. You wouldn't advise anybody to work in there?

A. No, sir.

Q. You wouldn't go yourself?

A. I wouldn't go, and I would advise them to stay out.

Magistrate T. C. Turner, acting coroner of Barren County:

THE RECORDER: What is your name?

A. T. C. Turner.

Q. You are magistrate in the magisterial district in which Cave City and Sand Cave are located, are you not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You have testified in this court of inquiry before this, haven't you, Squire?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What change has there been in the situation of the rescue of Floyd Collins since you testified before?

A. Well, since I first testified, they have proceeded to finished sinking a shaft down and tunneling back to his body.

Q. The last time you testified it was believed that Floyd was alive, was it not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What is his condition now?

A. He is dead.

Q. Have you a coroner in Barren County?

A. No, sir.

Q. Because of that fact, you, as magistrate of this district, act as coronor?

A. Yes, sir. I acted as coroner in this district; my district.

Q. As such, did you impanel, qualify and swear a jury today to hold an inquest over the body of Floyd Collins?

A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. Did that jury view the body of Floyd Collins, Squire?

A. Yes, sir. I didn't much want to go, but I wouldn't ask them to do a thing that I wouldn't do myself. That is why I went.

Q. Squire Turner, how long have you known Floyd Collins?

A. Well, I have known him for five or six years, I guess.

Q. Today, when you saw him, was he living or dead?

A. He was dead.

Q. Have you any plan to suggest as to how the body of Floyd Collins could be brought out of the place where it now rests?

A. None whatever. I don't believe it can be done. I don't believe it can be done without the loss of a life or more lives. I looked at it good and examined it thoroughly while I was down there, because I didn't want the boys to quit the job if I had thought there was any way to get him out. I wanted to see if there was anything that I might suggest that would help out.

Q. You have talked to a great many of the rescuers, haven't you?

A. I certainly have. I have talked to numbers of them.

Q. What was their opinion about getting his body out of there?

A. Well, their opinion was about the same as mine; that it would be impossible to get his body out of there.

Q. What do you think, then, is the best thing to be done?

A. I think the best thing to do is to do what they have done; just quit work and close up the mouth of the cave, the tunnel.

Q. And let that be his grave?

A. Let that be his grave; yes, sir.

Q. Have funeral services been held?

A. Yes, sir.

A. When were they held?

A. They were held sometime near two or two-thirty o'clock this afternoon.

Q. Where?

A. On the bluff up over the cave, kind of.

H. B. Henretta, of Kyrock, Kentucky:

Q. You have been in that shaft from time to time since it was begun, have you not?

A. Yes, sir. I set the first ring of timbers, or helped set

them.

Q. Do you believe that it was practicable to do anything further down there?

A. No, sir.

Q. Explain to the Court why you think that.

A. Everything was loose, working. The whole hill in there is working. A timber man, I stood behind him yesterday in the tunnel just above where they go down to Floyd and we timbered up and wedged a big rock up tight with an eight or ten pound hammer, and this morning Mr Carmichael and I went down, and I felt this rock right above, that wedge there right above your head, and you could pick this wedge right out from between the timbers and the rock, so I knew the bottom had got down from that rock. I examined the tunnel good this morning, and you could see around the boulders, see the clay leaving the boulders.

Q. Have you had any information within the last few minutes relative to whether or not there has been any change since you left there?

A. No, sir, I have not.

Q. Do you think it is possible to bring his body out of there?

A. No, sir I think it is suicide.

Q. Having been on the job here all this time, and having had years of experience in mining and construction work, it is your opinion that it would be suicide to make any further attempt to remove the body of Floyd Collins?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Have you any further plans by which you think his body could be removed?

A. No, sir, not in the way conditions are out there now, sir, for the whole hill is moving.

Q. It would be your advice, then, that his body should be left where it is?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And that this cave or this hole where he was trapped should be his grave? Is that your idea about the thing?

A. Yes, sir, and I don't think anybody else should be allowed to go in the hole, for the simple reason that it is sinking. One side of it, one side of the shaft, seems to be sitting straight, and the other side of it is dropping down, and after it drops so far the timbers will kick, and the whole thing will close up.

LT. COL. STITES: Is that the shaft or the lateral tunnel?

A. Yes, sir. That is the whole thing. The whole thing will close up. The shaft is the one that is sinking, the side of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the lateral tunnel sinking too?

A. Yes, sir, the tunnel was sinking when I was down there.

Q. Was it in the tunnel where this wedge had given way?

A. Yes, sir, but our timber in the shaft, on the side next to the back, has fell at least eight inches below the side next to the hill and where we are working.

Q. When did that occur? When did that fall take place?

A. It has been working just slowly all along. I have been noticing it for several days, but I knew then that it wasn't dangerous yet. I have been noticing my timbers every time I would go up and down in the bucket. It was getting worse since Sunday night. It was about an eight inch drop. I didn't put a level on it, but I believe, just judging with my eyes, I would call it an eight inch drop, and it was still dropping.

LT. COL. STITES: You feel, then, that the timbers there in that shaft are ultimately going to give way, do you?

A. Yes, sir, due to the fact that they haven't any foundation to set on. One side appears to be fairly solid, and the other side is weak, and that has a tendency to let one side down, and when it gets so far down, it is bound to kick. The floor of the shaft is dropping away from the timbers, and the whole thing must be dropping to let the thing down like it is doing. We have seven by nine posts under our timber work in the bottom of the shaft.

THE RECORDER: You have had a great deal of experience in timbering, have you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you have expert workers on this timbering job?

A. We had good timber men.

Q. In your opinion, was that a good timber job?

A. The shaft was a fine timber job. There's no doubt about that.

Q. The trouble of the shaft, as you have described it, then, was not caused by the fact that it was not an expert job of timbering, but it has been caused by the moving of the earth? Is that correct?

A. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: How much has it moved today? Someone stated a while ago that the ground around it had fallen.

A. You couldn't notice how much the ground had dropped. It is just simply that the whole thing is cracked all the way around, I would say an inch crack.

Q. Around the shaft?

A. No, clear around the whole circle, clean around there

Why The National Guard Was Necessary

William Burke Miller:

At the time I got there they seemed to have pushed the people further back, and to have put up this barricade.

Q. Did the guards appear to have things under control?

A. Yes, sir. We had to get new passes.

Q. You had to get new passes?

A. Yes, sir. They had tightened up right away.

Q. When did the National Guard troops arrive?

A. The first bunch arrived Tuesday night, while I was beginning to take this four inch jack down there. I remember it was Lieutenant —— the bunch from Smith's Grove.

Q. Lieutenant Cross?

A. Yes, sir and his men.

Q. What was the condition of the crowds before the arrival of the troops?

A. Well, a lot of people were standing around on that ledge, and a good many people were down in the ravine. The tents had been erected I think. There were good many people there: not a large crowd, but, I should say, several hundred.

Q. You stated that only a few people were there when you first arrived.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have there been crowds of people out there at any time since that time?

A. Steadily growing crowds; yes, sir.

Q. Were you out there Sunday?

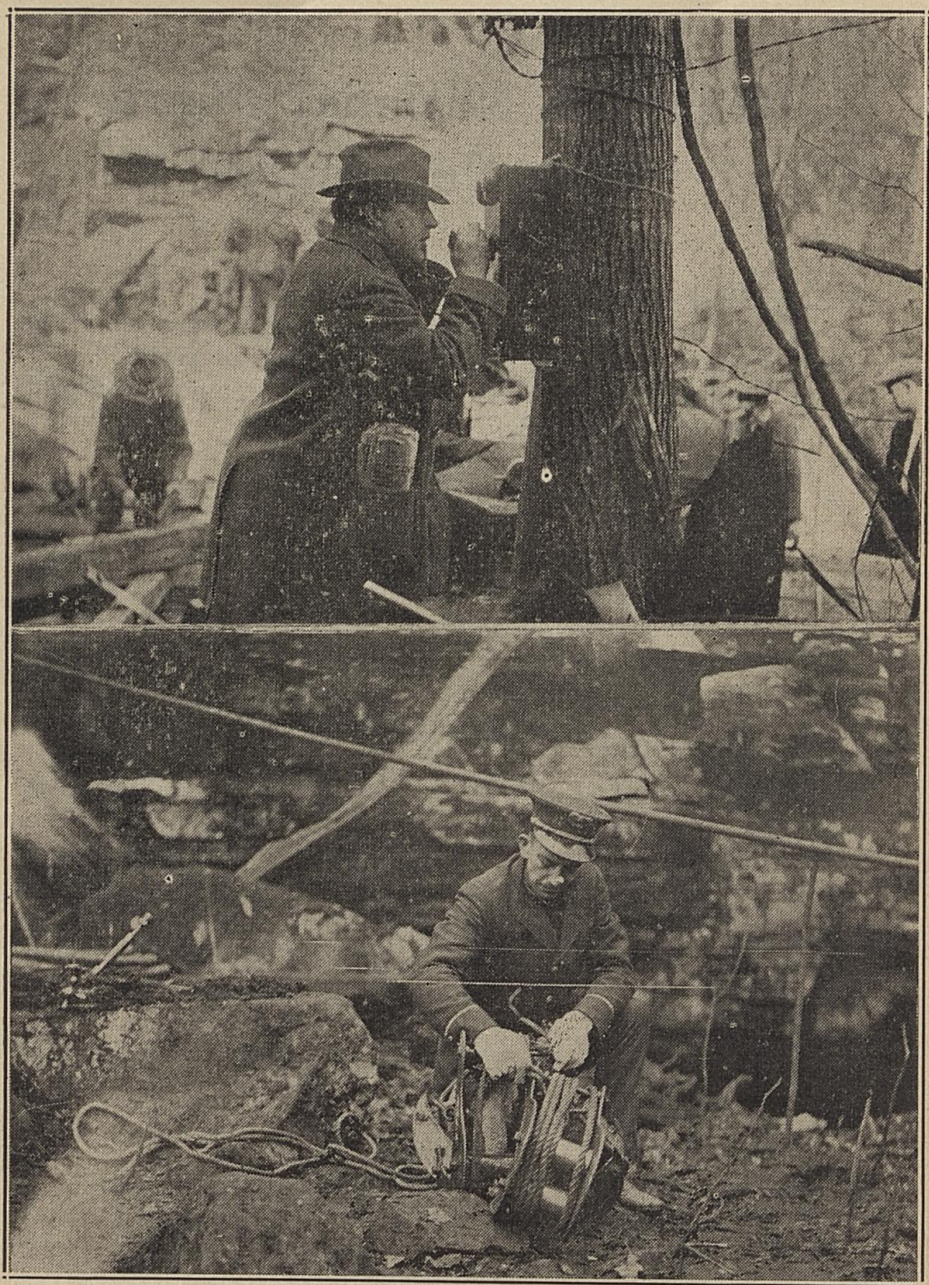
A. Yes, sir, Sunday afternoon about four o'clock.

Q. How many people, approximately, do you think there were there then?

A. I should say at least seven thousand were there, crowding all over the grounds. Before you got there you had to walk nearly a mile between rows of cars jammed across the road in double line.

M. E. S. Posey:

Q. What official position do you hold in the State of Kentucky, Mr. Posey?



Above—General Denhardt telephones news of Collins' discovery. A few newspaper men remain in the "Bullpen" behind the tree.

Below—Lt. Robert Burdon, of the Louisville Fire Department.

A. Executive Secretary to the Highway Commission.

Q. Have you been out at the Sand Cave?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When did you go there, Mr. Posey?

A. I arrived there Wednesday afternoon at two-eleven and got out to the cave, I imagine, about three-thirty.

Q. Have you been there continuously since that time?

A. Practically so, yes, sir.

Q. You came here at the request of the Governor?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mr. Posey, what conditions did you find when you arrived at Sand Cave?

A. Well, when I first arrived, there was considerable crowd there, and there didn't seem to be much organization as to who was going in, or when they were going in, and there was quite a lot of confusion in regard to the carrying on of the work. No one seemed to want to take the responsibility of ordering anyone out the cave or organizing the forces at all.

Q. What time did the troops arrive?

A. When I got here, they were here.

Q. They were out there then?

A. Yes, sir. They were already there.

Q. When did General Denhardt arrive on the scene?

A. General Denhardt arrived that night, or in the early morning, Thursday morning. I imagine it must have been about three-thirty; somewhere about that.

Q. Have the troops been on duty there since that time?

A. Absolutely; yes, sir.

Q. Describe to the Court the conditions of things there, relative to law and order, and the general scheme and progress of the work of rescue.

A. Well, when I arrived the troops seemed to have the crowd under control. There wasn't any confusion whatsoever down where the work was going on due to the crowds, and they were keeping the crowd away from under the cliff so as to enable the men who were performing the rescue work to perform their duties without interference.

Q. Has it continued that way?

A. Absolutely; yes, sir.

Q. Have the workmen been able to perform their duties down there without interference?

A. Yes, sir; absolutely.

Columbus Doyle, Baptist minister, and resident of Sand Cave community:

THE PRESIDENT: Why did you not go back before that time?

A. I was afraid to.

Q. Were there any threats against anyone?

A. No, sir, not any threats against anyone, but the general order around there wasn't pleasant to me, and I didn't go back.

THE RECORDER: When was the next time you did go back?

A. On Friday, after that Monday.

Q. When you were there Monday you say there wasn't very good order?

A. No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Was there any organization or any head to the work?

A. No, sir, there didn't seem to be.

THE RECORDER: On Friday when you arrived the second time, was there order?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Had the National Guard troops arrived at that time?

A. Yes, sir, I think they had. I am sure they had.

Q. Did they have charge of law enforcement there?

A. Yes, sir; they seemed to have.

Q. Were they keeping good order?

A. Yes, sir. I had no fears at all. I went on to work with perfect peace.

Q. You were at the mouth of the cave there, where they were at work, were you?

A. Yes, sir. I was helping.

Q. Were the troops keeping out the people that shouldn't be in there, and was order being kept there?

A. I seen no hindrance at all from any confusion.

Q. There was no hindrance from confusion?

A. No, sir.

Q. Was there a large crowd there Sunday?

A. Some estimate it at forty or fifty thousand.

Q. While that large crowd was there were you down there where the work was proceeding?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was it quiet?

A. We had perfect protection. We wouldn't have had if it hadn't been for the troops.

Q. You had never seen as large a crowd together in one place before, had you?

A. No, sir, and never seen folks so enthused to get down in that hole. They had to keep putting fences up and pushing them back. I believe you seen that, didn't you, Judge? There was good order, though, as far as I knew.

THE RECORDER: What do you think was needed there more than anything else?

A. I thought they needed order more than anything else.

LT. SOL. STITES: On that Monday, was there any moonshine being drunk out there?

A. I seen what the boys called a "dead soldier". That was all I seen.

Q. What do you mean by a "dead soldier"?

A. An empty bottle.

Q. Did you see any signs of people having been drinking?

A. Well, people act so funny you can't tell when it's due to drinking.

THE PRESIDENT: Your best judgement is that they were drinking?

A. Yes, sir.

J. O. Horning, County Agricultural Agent, Barren County, Kentucky:

Q. When did you arrive at Sand Cave, Mr. Horning?

A. About two-thirty on Monday. Monday a week ago.

Q. I want to ask you first, was anyone in charge there at that time?

A. I don't think so.

Q. What was the condition? Were they organized, or were they working at random, or were they being advised by any particular person that was in charge?

A. I couldn't find any head to it at all. I asked if there was any leadership, but I couldn't find anybody that understood or knew whether there was or not. It seemed that the men outside that hadn't gone in the cave did not feel that they wanted to take the responsibility of advising the men who had been in the hole what to do. According to general statements, there had been a good many in the hole. They didn't have any head. There was general confusion. The general confusion was getting worse and worse. I asked the magistrate, I said, "Mr. Turner, it looks like there ought to be some head out here. This ought to be taken over some way so we could have concerted action." I don't know his reply but I believe the substance of it was this: That inasmuch as he didn't know the situation in the ground and didn't understand it, that although it was in his magisterial district he

didn't feel like taking hold and saying what should be done." A little time passed and I said, "Squire, if you will call the crowd down here and ask if there are any men here who will pledge their honor that they haven't had any whiskey today, I will go down with them, but I won't go down with anybody that has had a drink. Squire Turner called out and four or five men volunteered and they said they had not had any whiskey that day.

Q. What is your opinion as to the reason for the confusion that existed out there in the early days of the rescue?

A. I don't think there was any particular reason. I believe everybody was just in a state of disturbance, and all stirred up. I believe they intended to do what they thought was the right thing. I believe it was just an unfortunate situation that couldn't be helped, unless somebody would step in with the power from above, with absolute authority to say just what should be done. That was the only way around it.

Q. Did that occur?

A. Not until it was taken over by the state forces, that I know of.

Q. When it was taken over by the state forces, the representatives of the Governor, and by the military authorities, was order secured there?

A. It seemed to establish order and concerted action immediately, yes, sir.

Q. As a citizen and employee of Barren County, and one interested in its welfare, do you believe that it was the proper step that the Governor of Kentucky should have sent his personal representatives and the military forces of the state to Sand Cave?

A. I do, by all means.

Q. Is it your opinion, as a citizen of this county and from the experience that you had in being at the cave, that the proper and best methods are being pursued for the rescue of Floyd Collins?

A. It is; yes, sir.

Lee Collins, father of Floyd Collins:

Q. Was there a good deal of disorder out at the cave the first few days?

A. A right smart.

Q. What do you think was the cause of that?

A. I think there was a little too much drinking the first night I stayed on the ground.

Q. Do you know who was doing that drinking?



"Floyd Collins is Dead!" Brenner seated at shaft mouth. Behind him is Lee Collins. Carmichael stands at extreme right.

A. No, sir, I don't.

Q. Do you know the name of any person who was doing any of that drinking?

A. No, sir.

Q. Are you satisfied that every thing is being done that is possible?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. To save your boy?

A. I think so. I think God Almighty has conducted that whole work, clear through, and I think all of them have co-operated together, and that they went in there and done everything that they could. That is my thoughts about it.

Q. You say you noticed a good deal of disorder out there in the beginning. Have you noticed any disorder there since the troops arrived?

A. No, sir, I have not. Everything has been calm. Down in this pit, I have been up on the hill a lot of the time, and everything has been mighty quiet and peaceable.

Q. Are you satisfied with the order that has been kept by the troops since their arrival?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see any change, Mr. Collins, after their arrival, for good?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Have you seen any signs of drinking or any disorder out there since?

A. I haven't seen any signs of any disorder or smelled any spirits out there at all since they arrived; no, sir.

Q. Do you think the proper course was taken by the Governor of Kentucky when he sent the troops here, and his representatives?

A. Yes, sir. I think he was absolutely right. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. Mr. Collins, what do you think of Mr. Carmichael and his work?

A. I think he is a perfect gentleman and I think he understands his work. I think he is a man that undertsands his work perfectly. I have set there and watched them in the pit, and they seem to be just all working like clockwork. They don't get in each other's way with the pick nor the hammer, and they seem to be just all working.

Q. You heard what was said by the people who would go in the hole and come out, and you heard what was being said by other people around there. Do you think it was proper that the shaft should be sunk, and the work put into that,

instead of the old way?

A. Yes, sir, I do. I certainly do.

City Marshall Hanson, of Cave City:

Then we worked on as we had been working there from Saturday afternoon until Tuesday noon, the best I remember, with practically the same kind of a proposition before us that we had to start with, and with nothing done, really, to relieve the man. About all the local strength was discouraged, and every effort we had made had been of no value.

The question had come up, and I thought it was about time for the Governor or someone to wire authority to designate a man to come and take charge, and have engineers come and make a survey and consider the advisability of sinking a shaft. So, an Evening Post reporter Mr. Nichols, and a bunch of us other citizens, that were over there, considered that. Mr. Nichols wrote a telegram to the Governor and I told him to bring it to Mr. Caldwell, the Chairman of the Trustees, the mayor of the town here, and if he approved it, to sign my name to it and wire it to Governor Fields. The following day Captain Topmiller, with his men, arrived on the scene—that night, really.

CAPT. TOPMILLER: You were out at the cave frequently, were you not, Mr. Hanson, before the troops had arrived?

A. Yes, sir. I had been there several days before they came.

Q. Did you see any disorder out there of any kind?

A. Yes, sir. I saw some disorder out there. Yes, sir.

Q. Has that disorder ceased since the arrival of the troops?

A. It has.

Q. Do you consider that the proper measures have been taken to insure the continued safety of both the workmen who are engaged in the rescue and of the people coming out there to visit the cave?

A. Absolutely, I do.

Q. In regard to this question, are you thoroughly convinced that every effort had been made to rescue him before the shaft was sunk?

A. Yes, sir. I think all had been done that could be done.

Q. And are you convinced that the only way to rescue him was through a shaft?

A. Yes, sir. I am, absolutely.

Q. And that the sinking of the shaft is in competent hands?

A. Absolutely.

LT. COL. STITES: On Sunday and Monday, a week ago, and on Tuesday, were there large crowds in the vicinity of the entrance of the cave?

A. Yes, sir, pretty good crowds.

Q. Were these crowds organized or disorganized?

A. Well, they were disorganized, in a sense.

Q. Was it possible to have any organized handling of that crowd under the conditions?

A. Captain, you realize that under the conditions out there, no ordinary person desires to assume the responsibility of a man's life, under those kind of conditions, unless he knows that his efforts will be successful. I didn't see any way of any one man or any two or three men taking absolute charge of that situation there and controlling it.

Q. Do you think it was a proper move for the Governor to order the military forces in there to protect the workers and to preserve order?

A. Yes, sir. I don't believe it would have ever been possible to recover that man without them.

Q. Did you think there should be a change of the plan of the work?

A. Yes, sir. I think I said to some of the men on the outside that if there was any other opening, any other way to get in there now was the time to get at it, because I didn't think they would ever get him out through the natural tunnel.

Q. Was the work organized or disorganized?

A. It was absolutely unorganized. The space all under the cliff was crowded full of people, and just like in all other cases of exciting circumstances, there was a number of them that you couldn't do anything with. I tried to get them to get out from under the cliff, and was utterly unable to make them move.

Q. Have you been out there recently?

A. Yes, sir, I have been out there almost every day. The next time was Wednesday morning.

Q. What condition did you find then?

A. Wednesday morning I found things very much the same. That was before the military took authority. Since then everything has been absolutely orderly. There has been no disorder at all.

Q. Do you think it proper and necessary that the Governor of Kentucky should have sent the National Guard to the scene of the rescue of this man?

A. If they ever intended to recover even the body of the man, I think it is absolutely essential.

D. E. Bennett, Chief of Police, Drakesboro, Kentucky:

A. Well, from Mr. Hyde's statement to us in this conference, I knew it was a matter of impossibility to rescue this man through the regular channel. I was satisfied that it was a matter of impossibility, because I was satisfied with Mr. Hydes judgment. We then decided that the only practical way to get him out would be to sink a shaft.

Q. You are a practical miner, are you not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mr. Hyde and others detailed to you the conditions in that cave?

A. Yes, sir; they did.

Q. And from that you made up your judgement?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And that judgement was——

A. That it would take a shaft. We went into a conference with General Denhardt, myself, Mr. Posey, Professor Funkhouser, and perhaps another one or two.

THE PRESIDENT: Major Cherry?

A. Yes, sir; he was there, yes, sir. Immediately Major Cherry and myself were dispatched to Cave City to interview Mr Carmichael and to see about getting machinery. I remember that the general instructions were to get everything that would facilitate the sinking of the shaft. It was only a matter of a few minutes until machinery was started out there.

LT. COL. STITES: Mr Bennett, did you observe the order that was being maintained out there?

A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. Was that good or bad?

A. It was good. It was good. Everything was all right.

Q. Did you see any signs of drinking out there?

A No, sir. Oh, we heard rumors when we first got there that there had been drinking out there, but nobody was drinking down there when we were there.

Q. Nobody was drinking at that time?

A. Nobody; no, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That is a rumor that you heard with reference to the time before the troops got there?

A. Yes, sir. I would naturally notice drinking, if it was there. That is my business, to look after drinking, you know. That's part of the way I make a living—catching drunks.

T.C. Turner, magistrate of the district in which Sand Cave is located:

Q. Was there a good deal of drinking on Monday night?

A. I don't know whether it was Sunday or Monday night.

Q. When did the troops arrive there, Mr. Turner?

A. I think it was Tuesday.

Q. You have been out there a good deal since that time, have you not?

A. All the time, up till Sunday, you might say. I would only just run in town and go right back.

Q. Were you there last Sunday?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What size crowd was there last Sunday?

A. I don't know, but I judge there was thirty or forty thousand people out there. I don't know the exact number. I am just giving a rough guess.

Q. How was that crowd handled?

A. I never saw anybody that looked like they had any whiskey, and I was through a good big part of that crowd.

Q. Were they orderly, or not?

A. They certainly was.

Q. Were the men who were down in the mouth of the cave working protected from the bystanders and sightseers?

A. They certainly was.

Q. It was difficult for the people to get through the lines, wasn't it?

A. I couldn't get my wife through them.

Q. What manner of work has been done by the troops?

A. Well, the troops, they have done a whole lot. I don't think the situation could have been handled without the troops. Well, the crowds that's been out there, they kept the crowds back away from the working people, so they could work. If they hadn't been there, progress could not have gone on, like it has, in my opinion.

Q. As an official of this county, do you or not think that the Governor of Kentucky acted wisely when he sent to the scene of the rescue of Floyd Collins the troops and his representatives?

A. I certainly do. I was mighty proud to see them.

Q. What in your opinion would have been the condition of things there on Sunday if it hadn't been for the presence of the troops?

A. Well, it would have stopped the work entirely, because the local men could not have kept the crowds back out of the

way.

Roy B. Anderson:

Q. What, in your opinion, has been the efficiency of the troops in the discharge of their duties?

A. Well, they have brought order out of more or less disorder in the beginning. In the beginning there was no one in actual charge; that is, with authority. There was hardly anyone that could be obtained to take that responsibility, to decide upon any definite step to be taken. It was mostly a case of volunteers doing what they could. With the coming of the representatives of the state, why, then more efficient methods were taken, and a better check on things all around was begun.

Q. You think they secured an organization out of chaos?

A. Yes, sir, that is my opinion.

A. D. Manning, Telegraph Editor of the Louisville Herald.

A. It was disorganized, the first time I went out there. I went back to Louisville at the time, and told my employers if the troops didn't come down the situation would probably result in actual combat, and possible bloodshed.

Q. In addition to that, what would have been the condition of the rescue work?

A. It would have been impossible to carry it on. It was practically impossible at that time.

Q. Have you been out at Sand Hole since the arrival of the troops out there?

A. Yes, sir I have.

Q. What conditions prevailed out there after their arrival?

A. The troops had been there, I suppose, a couple of days before I returned. I found order where chaos had reigned before. The work was going ahead night and day for the rescue of Collins. There was absolutely no disorder of any kind. There was thorough system among the officials.

Q. Has there been co-operation between all the forces that are at work out there?

A. Absolutely, sir. There has been no dissension of any kind among the workers or among the authorities, as far as I can see. They seem to be working with one aim, and that is to sink this shaft and at the same time without making any great show about it. They don't seem to be playing upstage, like I have seen other things handled.

William S. Howland, Nashville, Tennessee:

A. My first trip to the cave was about seven o'clock Monday morning. I went out with a representative of the Louis-

ville Post, who is not here now. I found a large crowd of men there, possibly seventy-five or a hundred men. It was raining very hard. The place was slippery and muddy and cold, and all conditions were against good rescue work on the outside. I found men standing around in small groups; talking about it. There was a group of men down around the mouth of the cave, numbers of whom were all begrimed with mud, as if they had been in the cave. While I was there, Mr. Miller, of the Louisville Courier-Journal, arrived and went down in the cave at the head of a party. I didn't stay there till he got out. As the situation appeared to me, the work was disorganized, and there was a great deal of talking and not very much doing. The crowd appeared to be somewhat mystified as to what methods were best. They were talking at that time about this air drill which was expected that afternoon from Louisville. They hoped that by using it they would be able to do something. I saw people there with bottles of milk and sandwiches and such stuff to take down. I went in the hole a short way myself. Of course, I didn't go far enough to be able to tell what conditions where Collins is were. I went down, I should say, possibly fifty or seventy-five feet. I went through the first narrow place where you have to turn sidewise to get through. Being unused to caves, it looked to me like a hard place to get the man out of, because of the narrowness of the place and the obstructing rocks. I didn't see at that time how it would be possible to take the body out of there of a man unable to help himself, because of the necessity of squeezing around these rocks. At that time the rescue work seemed to be going along in a haphazard fashion. Mr. Clay Turner and Mr. Oscar Hanson were both out there and appeared to have a sort of general direction of things. Some of the people would resort to them as to authority. Among others I saw that day out there were Mr. Oscar Logsdon and a man whom I was told was Johnny Gerald. As a matter of fact, I never talked to Gerald myself, because the man who was working with me talked to him and communicated with me over the telephone. I did see him out there several times with a working suit on and a lamp, as if he had been or was going into the cavern. The whole thing seemed to be sort of marking time waiting for the arrival of this drill. The work was disorganized, and the opinion was that they would get him out as soon as they got the drill. I heard numbers of people say they would go down and get him out. Among others, I saw Mr. Hooper from Nashville, who told me that he had been down to Collins and talked with him and fed him the previous afternoon, so he told me. A

man named Hester had come out saying that Collins was dead, and Hooper went down afterward and found out that Collins was alive, and talked to him. I also saw Homer and Marshall Collins out there, dressed in working clothes, and saw Homer go down in the cave at least twice during that day and night, and also saw Marshall talking by the cave entrance. I talked with Homer several times, and he told me he had been down in and had talked to his brother and had taken him food, and that they hoped to get him out. That is just about a general survey of what I saw during the day. The weather was bad. It was terribly rainy and cold, and the men who went down apparently suffered very much from cold. Upon coming out they would be shaking and shivering there. All the equipment they had there then was a big coffee pot on a little campfire down at the cave mouth.

Q. What date did those conditions of organization change?

A. The conditions started to change with the arrival of the troops. As I remember it, the troops arrived Wednesday. With the arrival of the troops, it appeared to me that was needed. In fact, I talked that first day with Mr. Nichols, of the Louisville Post, and we both said that the best thing to do would be call up the Governor and ask that he send somebody to take charge.

Ben L. Wells, Professor of mathematics, Ogden College, Bowling Green, Kentucky:

Q. Have the National Guard troops been on duty?

A. They have. They were on duty when I arrived, Wednesday.

Q. What has been the nature of their work?

A. Keeping the crowd back at a safe distance, and permitting the workmen to do their work unmolested.

Q. Has that work been done effectively?

A. It seems to me they have done it very effectively.

Q. In your opinion, would it have been possible for crowds such as were here on last Sunday and on many other days, to have been handled without the assistance of the state?

A. I do not see how they could have been handled without military assistance, and the state was the logical one to handle it.

Mr. H. T. Carmichael:

Q. When did the troops arrive there, Mr. Carmichael?

A. My recollection is, Wednesday, February fourth.

Q. Did the troops render any assistance?

A. I don't see how we could possibly have conducted the work without them.

Are The Kentucky Caves Safe?

Lee Collins, father of Floyd Collins:

THE RECORDER: Mr Collins, how long have you known that this Sand Cave was there, or this hole, where Floyd Collins is now fastened?

A. Well, I have knowed there was a breakdown there for a long time. I used to have to come by it going to Monroe's Mill, on Green River, when I first came from Logan County up here. We had to come there to mill, and the old road passed right there by this breakdown. So I have known it for about fifty years.

Q. Do you know of any other person that has gone in there?

A. No, sir. I learned that Mr. William O'Neal tried to prospect here for a cave some time ago.

Q. Beause of the fact that Sand Cave is in the condition it is in, that is no reason why other caves should not be safe, like your Crystal Cave, and others, is it?

A. No, sir.

Q. It is a different formation, and everything, is it not?

A. Yes, sir. You understand that Floyd, when he opened the Crystal Cave, had to go right down through the sandstone. We had to clear away and take the hole hill side away. After he did that he got through there. The level strata of the limestone of the ceiling are solid rocks. That kind are perfectly safe.

THE PRESIDENT: There is no danger to anyone going in Crystal Cave, is there?

A. No, sir

Q. Or Mammoth Cave, or Colossal Caverns, or any of them?

A. No, sir. Them's all solid limestone caves.

THE RECORDER: Did you have to dig down through this loose stuff to get into Crystal Cave?

A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, just as accident would have it, from a ground hog's trap. We were first searching for the trap in this hole. We went on down, and just moved the hillside back to where the walls and ceiling come just as level as this room, a cavern twenty-five feet wide and about eight feet to the ceiling.

John I. Gerard:

CAPT. TOPMILLER: You have been into that cave several times, haven't you, John?

A. Yes, sir. I have been in there over thirty hours.

Q. Did you notice the formation on the outside?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. In your opinion, how was that cave formed?

A. Well, I don't know so much about geology, at all.

Q. I will ask you this question, then. From the indications on the outside, and from what you saw on the inside, were there any uniform strata there?

A. I have been through, I guess, every route of Mammoth Cave, and I don't believe I have ever seen any other cave or any other place like this. I have been through some of these caves at home—I've been through Wright's cave quite a distance, eight miles or more, and I have never seen any place like this Sand Cave. I've been in Curd's Cave at home, and Wright's Cave, and some of the others, and I have never seen anything like this place.

Q. In your opinion as an engineer, and from your observation of Mammoth Cave and Onyx Cave and Crystal Cave and the various other caves in this community, are they safe or not?

A. They are. Mr. Anderson told me the night we went and inspected these other caves that there were not but two caves in this country that they had ever had any accidents in, and that was when they were first opening them up. Like Mr. Collins said the other day they had to move the whole side of the hill away when they were opening up Crystal Cave, to get into it.

THE PRESIDENT: Then you think all these other caves are thoroughly safe?

A. Yes, sir.

THE RECORDER: That is because of the fact that they have the proper support and most of them have limestone roofs and walls?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And a cave of that kind is safe, is it?

A. I think it is, Mr. Anderson showed me how sandstone would act in a place like that, under pressure, by taking two piece of sandstone and showing me how you could just grind the corners off of them with each other. Limestone won't do that.

Q. Limestone makes a safe roof?

A. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: As safe as a stone house?

A. As safe as a stone house; yes sir.

Homer Collins, brother of Floyd Collins:

Q. Have you been in a good many caves?

A. Yes, sir. I guess I have been in about all the caves in this part of the country.

Q. You understand them? You have studied them and watched their formation, have you not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Would you attempt to explore a cave with the same formation that this one has?

A. I wouldn't go down where he has went, no, sir, for no kind of money.

Roy B. Anderson, geologist:

THE RECORDER: Give your full name to the stenographer, please.

A. Roy B. Anderson.

Q. What is your business or your profession, Mr. Anderson?

A. I am a geologist, employed by the Louisville Gas & Electric Co.

Q. Of what college or colleges are you a graduate?

A. I am a graduate of Penn State—Pennsylvania State College.

Q. Have you had experience as an engineer?

A. I have.

Q. The last six or eight months, what has been the nature of your duties, Mr. Anderson?

A. I have been investigating a problem that has included surveying and mapping, taking levels in the caves throughout this part of the country, and studying the caves in general.

Q. For what purpose were you doing this?

A. The problem was to determine whether or not the dam in Green River would have any possibility of bypassing water through the caves: and with that in mind we have had to make a very thorough investigation of the caves.

Q. Have you been through the caves in this vicinity?

A. I have.

Q. Approximately how many?

A. I have been through Crystal Cave, Salts Cave, Colossal Cavern, and several levels in Onyx Cave, and numerous trips through Mammoth.

THE PRESIDENT: How many trips?

A. Numerous trips in Mammoth Cave.



THE CORONER'S JURY (Seated)

THE RECORDER: How long have you been doing that sort of work?

A. We started about the middle of August, this year.

Q. What other experience have you had, Mr. Anderson, in the surveying and geological work?

A. We of course had field work with instruments in school, and since that time I have had charge of several parties that have done mapping, plane table and also base line work with a transit on topographic surveys, and some topographical work as well as the surveying down here in the caves.

Q. You are well acquainted with the structures of the caves in this vicinity?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What structure composes the walls and ceilings of the other caves you have visited in this community?

A. The caves that really are caves have solid walls and ceilings.

Q. All of these prominent caves that you have mentioned have that structure, have they not?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Solid limestone ceilings and walls?

A. Yes, sir.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You have been in this Sand hole death trap cave, have you not?

A. I have, sir.

Q. Do you consider that a cave?

A. No, sir, It is not a cave. It is merely a hole that has probably been made largely by Collins himself through a breakdown. He no doubt made that the same as the corkscrew through Mammoth cave, this passage through broken rock.

Q. What do you think caused that passage way?

A. In this particular cave?

Q. Yes.

A. Well, I believe that he removed material and made a lead, possibly, through it. There may have been some few openings that he had to start with, and he took the line of least resistance and removed rocks to enable him to go through. It is not made by water. It is not a water-cut passage.

Q. It is not a watercourse?

A. No, sir.

Q. You think possibly that that is a fall-in there?

A. There was at one time an opening there, a cavity which has fallen in from the roof, and possibly from the sides, too.

Q. You don't believe that Collins actually worked out this passage entirely, do you?

A. I don't know. There is no doubt that there were some holes that he could get through without taking material out of them, but in quite a few he must have had to take out rock or dirt before he could get through—had to make an opening in some places, you know.

Q. You don't consider the fact, do you, that a man was hung or entrapped in this hole or passage, that that would be any criterion to the fact that the other caves in this community are dangerous?

A. No, sir. Oh, no, I don't think so.

Q. It is your opinion that these other caves that you have mentioned, and that you have been in, are perfectly safe, is it?

A. They are absolutely safe; yes, sir.

Q. There is no doubt about their being safe at all, in your mind?

A. None whatever; no, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you examined to see whether they are safe?

A. Well, yes; I have been in nearly all of them; most of them.

THE RECORDER: In making your surveys and taking their levels?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is it your opinion, from your experience and your training, that any rumors that the caves are not safe, are not true?

A. Yes, sir. I believe that they are perfectly safe.

Q. Are you fully convinced of that fact, Mr. Anderson?

A. Absolutely convinced of it; yes, sir.

Q. And that this hole in which Floyd Collins is fastened is not, in any right sense of this word, a cave at all?

A. No, sir. As far as the distance from the entrance to Collins is concerned, it is not a cave.

Q. Isn't it your opinion that the name that has been given it, that is, "Sand Cave," is a misnomer?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And that it should have been called by some other name than by the name of "cave?"

PRESIDENT: Such as "Sand Hole"?

A. Yes, sir. That is my opinion.

THE RECORDER: Describe, Mr. Anderson, in your own way, the formation of this passage way.

A. This passage way. The first part of it, right at the en-



Upper—The funeral service begins. Floyd Collins' body relinquished to nature.

Lower—View of Sand Cave. Under the tarpaulin in the upper left, is the hole through which Collins entered.

trance, has a sideway that is apparently like a wall, or has the same appearance as the wall of a cave or a pit, it would be hard to say which that is, or a mere crevice. From there on to what has been termed the "Squeeze," it is broken limestone rock, that are leaning one against the other, holding themselves up. To the squeeze it is not especially dangerous. From the squeeze on I have always considered it a very dangerous place, for the reason that from there on you get more sandstone rock mixed in with the limestone, and quite a little loose sand, clay and pebbles. When you get into sandstone rock or loose sand is when you really get into danger, for the reason that limestone will not jam up, or will, rather, hold, even when it crushes, while sandstone can be disturbed by a very small movement, and will pour in when it once gets started, and there is no warning to it, and no stopping it. Sandstone in this country has practically caused most of the accidents that have been met with in exploring caves. Some of them have been fatal, and others haven't been.

THE PRESIDENT: That occurs in the early exploration of caves?

A. Well, throughout the explorations. They opened an entrance to Salts Cave and one man was killed by a sandstone slide-in. It is very hard to hold. Once it starts, it is very hard to stop. There have been other instances of the same kind. Every one in this vicinity has a great deal of respect for sandstone, and will never fool around it if they can possibly avoid it.

J. Norman Parker:

Q. You are acquainted with these rock formations in this community.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Describe to the Court, as well as you can, the formation of this place, from the entrance to the place where he is hung.

A. It is all of sandstone and limestone, broken, crumbled rock mixed with dirt and sand. It is a fall-in. It is a break. There is no ceiling overhead to protect anyone going through it at all.

Q. In your opinion, Mr. Parker, is it or not dangerous?

A. It is dangerous. It is very dangerous; yes, sir.

Q. If you were to designate that place by any definite name, would you call it a cave, or what would you call it?

A. Well, I would just call it what it is, a sandstone breakdown.

Q. Is there any semblance to a cave connected with this

place?

A. None whatever; only the break indicates a cave, because I have helped open up three caves in my life, and we opened up every one of those caves in a break. It shows there is a cave there.

Q. Don't you think it is the wrong impression to convey when the people in general and the papers speak of this incident, and say that Floyd Collins is entrapped in a cave?

A. There is absolutely no cave about it. It is nothing but just a sandstone break. While he told me that he had found a wonderful cave on beyond, a large and beautiful cavern, he is not in a cave.

Q. And as far as anyone has been able to determine so far, this place here where he is ought not to be known as a cave, ought it?

A. No, sir. No, sir. Not until it is opened up.

THE PRESIDENT: None of the other caves in this vicinity are dangerous, are they?

A. Well, not so dangerous. Of course, sometimes they happen to sprained ankles, and things like that, in going through them.

Q. There is no danger in any of them of a cave-in, is there?

A. I never heard of it, in my experience here.

Q. Mammoth Cave is safe?

A. Beg pardon.

Q. Mammoth Cave is safe, isn't it.

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Onyx?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Crystal?

A. Yes, sir, all of them. Diamond, I am secretary of the Diamond Caverns myself.

Q. Name all the safe caves that you know.

A. Diamond Onyx Cave, of Hart County, which is on the Dixie Highway two miles north of Horse Cave, the Wonderland Caves, three miles west of Cave City, the New Entrance to Mammoth Cave, the Mammoth Cave, Crystal Cave, Onyx Cave, Dorsey's Cave, Diamond Caverns, Colossal Caverns, and all of the caves that are open to the public in this section.

Q. All of this sandstone has been removed from all of them, has it?

A. No, sir. They have from forty-five to eighty-five feet of sandstone on top of the limestone in this section. Where

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you don't see any breaks, where it is a level cave, it is perfectly safe, because you are under limestone in all these caves. All of them are in limestone. You won't find any cave in sandstone, because the water don't cut sandstone. Water cuts away the limestone. That's the way they are made.

Q. Caves cannot, then, be formed in sandstone?

A. No, sir. It will always crumble and close up.

Edward Estes:

Q. Are you acquainted with the other caves in this community, Mr. Estes?

A. Yes, sir, I have did a lot of caving, I guess. I guess I have caved some eight or ten years myself. All I did though, was just for the formations, to sell them for souvenirs.

Q. Mr. Estes, from your experience with caves, what is your opinion as to whether or not the other caves in this community which are open to the public are safe or not?

A. I would consider them safe. I have went in the New Entrance to Mammoth, the old Mammoth Cave, Great Onyx Cave, and Great Crystal Cave, and I have been in, I guess, some fifty or seventy-five more caves.

Q. They are all perfectly safe, in your opinion

A. Yes, sir. But all of these caves where they first started, on the top of the hill is sand rock. You have to go down there quite a ways to the limestone. You will notice that at the mouth of this cave here the limestone stands up to your waist, waist high and higher, at this one.

Q. Is it necessary for a cave to have that limestone roof?

A. Yes, sir, it is. Certainly it is.

Q. Before they are safe?

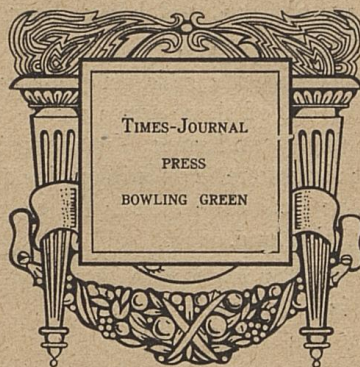
A. Yes, sir. That is why I advised him to follow the line of the roof on down, and angle down, instead of going back under this break down. I advised him, to follow the roof, even if he had to do a little more digging, because that would be perfectly safe.

Q. You advised him to dig directly under the roof?

A. Yes, sir. That's what I advised him to do.

Q. And that way, you would have considered the thing safe?

A. Yes, sir, and that was my advice to him, in digging in here. Instead of going under the breakdown, I told him to go down under the roof. He told me he wouldn't go back under the breakdown exactly, but that he was going to follow the wall down.



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