







Shown above is the back side of the original photo post card depicting the awful tragedy that happened to a Kansas family.

The real picture on the front shows about twenty men standing and sitting in front of what appears to be the mouth of an incline or tunnel. There are beds in the foreground, no doubt meaning that the men had been working around the clock attempting a mine rescue. By the looks of their clothes, miner's hats and wolf safety lamps, I would guess the year to be between 1907 and 1920. Note that none of the miners are using any open flame lights, only safety lamps, which suggests the mine incurred an explosion rather than a cave in.

I have to estimate the year because the postal cancellation on the back side of the card shows only the city, state, month, and day. The year cannot be made out. What can be identified on the postal cancellation is "Fairmont, W. VA., Dec. 12. 2 P.M." The fact that the back side of the card has room for correspondence means it has to be after 1907. Before that you were only aloud to write on the front, thus leaving the back for the address only.

The writing on the back describes a very sad happening:

*We have got the boys out. Got Lesley last night and Loney to day. Baured Lesley at Clarksburg to day. And will take Loney to Interprise tomorrow. They have recovered about half of the men. It was awful out here. Yours in sorrow Seabert Spragg.*

At the top of the card it reads;

*This is a picture of the pit mouth at no. 8 where the boys worked good by to one and all.*

The card was mailed to Mr. Sherman Spragg of Clayton, Norton Co., Kansas.

I am not familiar with the mining towns of West Virginia, though I'm sure there are a number of our readers who are, and might be able to find a newspaper article on some micro film in one of their libraries. I'm sure our readers, along with the MAC staff, will be very interested in what turns up about this very sorrowful, but interesting part of our mining past.