

"If the Pleasant Valley colliery was really free from fire damp it may be revealed later that the explosion was due to the firing of the coal dust through the indiscreet handling of lights or the reckless use of powder. Miners grow careless, almost to recklessness in their operations if they become impressed with the belief that the ground is safe and comparatively free from the greater perils incident to the business of mining. But there was another danger menacing the miners employed in the Pleasant valley colliery which might have been avoided. Mine Number Four is said to have been used as a powder magazine, and the levels of that mine communicated with others on the vein. One survivor intimates that the explosion was in the direction of the magazine. This fact seems to imply that it was the powder stored in the underground magazine which exploded and that the coal dust in the air of the drifts was ignited by it. Clearly, then, the disaster comes under the head of those which could with ordinary care and rational regulations have been prevented. If so, some one in authority is criminally responsible for the catastrophe and should be held accountable for it."

Excerpt from John W. Dilley's "The Scofield Mine Disaster" (page 193)