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Mingo Messenger

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MINGO COUNTY • WEEKEND EDITION, MAY 15-17, 2020

50 CENTS

10 MEN KILLED AND OTHERS WOUNDED AT MATEWAN, W. VA.

Mayor, Seven Detectives and Two Miners Die in Battle Resulting From Union Troubles

Ten men were killed and others shot in a battle fought between members of the Baldwin-Felts Detective agency and miners of the P. M. C. and Stone Mountain Coal companies in the streets of Matewan, Mingo-co., Wednesday afternoon.

Included in the list of dead is Albert Felts, nationally known head of the detective agency which bears his name, and Cabell Testament, mayor of Matewan.

Six detectives in

addition to Felts were killed, and two miners.

The list of dead follows: Albert Felts, Cabell Testament, L. E. Felts, E. A., Powell, A. J. Booker, J. W. Ferguson, L. M. Brown, C. B. Cunningham, James Mullen, Patrick Kinsley, William Roher. The last four named were miners.

The more seriously wounded include Samuel Artis, James Chambers and Isaac Brewer.

While stories of how the shooting occurred

were widely divergent, one report last night was that the Baldwin-Felts men had been the victims of an ambush and that most of them fell in their tracks with but little chance to make a fight for their lives.

The detectives are said to have been on their way to the railroad station after evicting the household effects of a number of former employees of the P. M. C. Coal company from houses owned by the com-

ny. Local officials, this report said, apparently sympathized with the efforts which have been made for the unionization of the Norfolk & Western coal fields, and refused to serve the eviction warrants. The detectives then arrived for that purpose.

According to authorities the trouble started when a miner named Mullen approached Albert Felts and asked if he carried a warrant for his arrest.

Felts replied in the

affirmative, according to police, and was in the act of reading the warrant when Mullen shot and killed him.

Detective Ferguson, officers say, then killed Mullen, and the killing of Ferguson by an unidentified miner followed.

This, officers said, was the signal for a general fight, which resulted in the deaths of the other men.

The miners have been on a strike there

two weeks and the mines have been shut down.

Organizers are in there organizing a union and had stirred up much bad feeling.

Gov. Cornwell sent soldiers to Matewan immediately and quiet reigns to-day.

This story originally appeared in the Big Sandy News on May 21, 1920.

ACTION OF OUR CIRCUIT COURT

Our Circuit Court is engaged in an investigation of all the circumstances surrounding last Wednesday's tragedy at Matewan. Bench warrants have been issued for the following persons:

- Sid Hatfield, Chief of Police of Matewan.
- Reece Chambers, citizen.
- Billie Bowman, miner.
- Clare Overstreet, citizen.
- Doug Mounts, citizen.
- Isaac Brewer, miner.
- Charlie Kiser, miner.
- Hally Chambers, miner.
- Ezra Fry, organizer.
- N. H. Atwood, miner.

G. W. Anderson, J. R. Anderson, R. C. Buchanan, and John McDowell, detectives.

The detectives for whom warrants were issued will appear later in the week.

Those charged with shooting of the seven Baldwin-Felts men were brought into court yesterday. They waived examination and were bound over to await the action of the next Grand Jury. They were placed under bonds aggregating \$45,000, the same being furnished by citizens of Matewan.

It could not be learned from the Judge of the Court how soon these cases will come

up for trial. The judge was in Wyoming at the time the shooting took place, attending the regular term of court in that county, but he went to Matewan immediately, and made the investigation which resulted in the issuing of the above warrants.

The judge stated that he had not decided definitely as to the calling of a special grand jury, but he assured us that there would be the most thorough investigation, not only as to what happened on the day of the killing, but also of the incidents

ACTION continued on page 9



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WITH SEVERAL DETACHMENTS OF STATE CONSTABULARY ON SCENE SITUATION AT MATEWAN IS SAID TO BE WELL IN HAND

Fatalities Resulting From The Wholesale Shooting Late Wednesday Afternoon Now Known To Number Ten, With Eleventh Man Missing and Probably Dead.

WILD RUMORS OF FURTHER TROUBLE PROVE INCORRECT

No Efforts Have Been Made to Effect Any Arrests So Far as Can be Learned.

FIVE WOUNDED PERSONS EXPECTED TO RECOVER

Accounts of Shooting Are Given by Two Eye Witnesses, One Saying Everything Valuable Was Taken From Bodies, Which Were Riddled With Bullets After Falling.

The fatalities resulting from the wholesale shooting at Matewan, Mingo county, late Wednesday, afternoon are now known to number ten. The whereabouts of John McDowell, of Beckley, a member of the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency, who was in the party of detectives fired upon, is yet unknown. It is believed that McDowell was slain while attempting to swim the river in an effort to evade the armed party that laid down a heavy barrage of rifle and pistol fire. To the list of dead is added Cabell C. Testerman, mayor of Matewan, whose death occurred at a Welch hospital shortly after 11 o'clock Wednesday night. The revised list of dead follows:

ALBERT C. FELTS, Bluefield.

LEE C. FELTS, Bluefield.

C. B. CUNNINGHAM, Marionville, Pa.

A. J. BOOHER, Kingsport, Tenn.

J. W. FERGUSON, Princeton, W. Va.

E. C. POWELL, Marion, Va.

C. T. HIGGINS, Galax, Va.

CABELL C. TESTERMAN, mayor of Matewan.

IRA MULLENS, alleged agitator, Matewan.

PATRICK KINSLEY, boy (by-stander), Matewan.

The five wounded persons were said to be resting well and all will probably recover unless complications develop, according to a report received here late yesterday afternoon from the hospital at Welch. No statements as to the shooting could be obtained from the injured at Welch yesterday, advices stated, but a statement was obtained from G. W. Anderson, who came on into Bluefield from the scene of the affair Wednesday night.

Order was not restored into the town of Matewan until noon yesterday. Detachments of the state constabulary which were ordered to the scene late Wednes-

day night by Governor Cornwell did not arrive until late in the morning. The first detachments numbering around six men, reached Williamson about daybreak, but remained in that town until they had been reinforced. About noon twenty of the men and two officers entered the town of Matewan. Later in the day another detachment, numbering from thirty-five to forty men, arrived. The latest reports from Mingo county stated the situation was well in hand and the order was being preserved.

Advices stated that as far as could be learned no effort had been made to effect any arrests in connection with the tragic affair. Passengers arriving here yesterday morning on eastbound trains reported that fully fifty persons, armed with highpowered rifles and carrying them in the position of "ready," were seen in the streets of the town and along the platform of the Norfolk and Western station. Men carrying rifles and looking wildly through the coach windows and watching the vestibules of the cars were reported to have been seen patrolling an embankment along the side of the station tracks and watching the move of every passenger.

Many wild rumors of additional trouble in Mingo county were afloat here yesterday. The reports that the bodies of two more detectives had been found by members of the state constabulary, that two members of the state police had been killed, that another detective was shot and seriously wounded yesterday afternoon all proved incorrect. It is thought these stories developed from another shooting affray which took place at Lynn, eight miles east of Matewan, about noon. A native named "Bud" McCoy, who in no way was connected with the affair Wednesday at Matewan, was shot from ambush by unknown parties. McCoy was shot in the hips and was carried to Matewan yesterday afternoon,

placed aboard train No. 16 and brought to the hospital at Welch. It was reported that he was a special agent of Baldwin-Felts agency, but this was denied at the agency headquarters here last night. The man was not known by any members of the agency. McCoy lay for an hour in the road before he was found, and said he did not know for what reason he had been shot or have any idea as to who the parties were who shot him.

That Albert C. Felts, who was in charge of the detectives, fired the first shot and fatally wounded Mayor C. C. Testerman, was denied by every eye witness who has yet arrived in Bluefield from the scene of the shooting. In a statement issued from the headquarters of the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency it was charged that reports sent out from Matewan and printed in Thursday's morning papers were inspired by some of the striking miners or their sympathizers.

An eyewitness to the killings, who arrived here at an early hour yesterday morning furnished a dramatic account of the clash and stated that Albert Felts was hit by the first shot fired and fell in a cramped position on the ground. The detectives were shot down almost in an instant, and after falling to the ground they were riddled with bullets, according to the witness. One man with a pistol in each hand walked up to their dead bodies, he said, and emptied his pistols into them, and everything valuable was taken from their bodies, it was stated. The bodies lay in the street for an hour or more before the miners would allow persons to approach, it was declared.

Their claim that a few minutes before the shooting began there were not more than a dozen people in the streets beside the party of detectives, while at the report of the first shot fired fully a hundred armed persons ran into the streets and began firing, and in addition many

shots were fired from hillsides, house tops and upper stories, is pointed to by Baldwin-Felts operatives as an indication that the shooting was a prearranged affair. The first three men to fall were Albert and Lee Felts and C. E. Cunningham, the only members of the party who were armed, the operatives say. With the knowledge of the recent trouble between the detectives and the county officials of Mingo, they further assert, Albert Felts did not permit any of his party to carry pistols except those who were licensed. The party had carried rifles in the performance of their duty, but before going into Matewan proper these rifles were broken down and placed in cases. There were powder marks about Albert Felts' face which showed he had been shot from close range. He was shot three or four times.

G. W. Anderson, one of the four Baldwin-Felts detectives to make a sensational escape and who arrived here late Wednesday night with a bullet wound in his right shoulder, was seen at St. Luke's Hospital yesterday and gave out the following statement relating to the events from close range and participation of the affair.

"After making arrangements with the county authorities in a manner satisfactory to their wishes in the matter of issuing writs of eviction, and then finding the officers unwilling to perform their duty under the law, ten of our men proceeded to Matewan Wednesday morning, led by Albert and Lee Felts, to serve the papers. The evictions were peaceably accomplished and six families removed from houses desired by the Stone Mountain Coal Corporation for occupancy by new employees, the recent tenants having left their employ. At the request of one woman we assisted in moving her furniture to another house. Apparently everything was peacefully done in a lawful and satisfactory

manner in accomplishing the evictions and we went our way smiling and joking with friends there.

"We then went to the hotel for supper, and some of us having no pistol licenses, we all placed our rifles in suit cases. After supper we started to catch Norfolk and Western train No. 16. At the station Albert C. Felts was approached by a little short man I do not know. A small crowd gathered. Mr. Felts said: "Let's walk down this way." They went to a store door and Mr. Felts held a paper which he had taken from his pocket in both hands. He was facing the inside of the store. The little fellow stepped back inside and shots were fired from within at close range, striking Mr. Felts in the face. He crumpled over and fell instantly dead.

"Immediately shots came from many windows and doors and corners and the volleys continued for fifteen minutes. Undoubtedly over a hundred men were armed and shooting at the ten of us scattered about the station with no guns. My brother and I jumped a fence and ran into a vacant house which we found occupied by men with rifles and revolvers. I received my shoulder wounds there, but we managed to escape to the next house, where no one was at home. As the train pulled in we managed to escape in time to board the last car and were not again discovered.

"One of our men was not identified by the mob as he did not take supper with us, but with a crowd of onlookers witnessed the whole affair. He states that when the detectives were all dead or escaped the mob came out on the streets and continued firing at the bodies.

"There can be no doubt that the murders were well planned as orders were given by several men in an orderly manner, indicating that the riot was organized."

On the arrival here last night of T. L. Felts, chief of detectives, from

Williamson, who accompanied the bodies of his brothers, A. C. and L. C. Felts, and the remains of T. C. Higgins, he charged that all of the slain men had been found to have been wantonly mutilated and all jewelry and valuables stolen from them. On one of the men about thirty dollars was found, he said. It was known that Albert Felts had in addition to two valuable diamonds a purse of about \$800. His other brother was known to have had about \$300, Mr. Felts said. Mr. Higgins was chief of police at Galax, Va., but had been doing special work for the agency for many years. He had been a close friend of Albert and Lee Felts since boyhood days.

The remains of Detectives Cunningham, Booher, Ferguson and Powell will be brought to Bluefield this morning on passenger train No. 4. The body of Mr. Cunningham will be sent to Marienville, Pa., at the request of his sister, who resides there. Detective Ferguson's body will be taken to Princeton, and the remains of Detective Powell will be sent to Marion, Va. The remains of Detective Booher are to be interred at Kingsport, Tenn.

Yesterday the Pocahontas Coal Operators' Association met in this city and discussed the affair. They had before them several eye witnesses to the tragedy, who told of the events that took place as they had witnessed them. It was announced that they were not as yet ready to make any public statement.

R. C. Buchanan, who was probably the most highly honored hero from West Virginia during the world war, and who was one of the fortunate members of the Felts party to make his escape from the Matewan shooting, said yesterday that none of his many experiences at the front equalled that which he witnessed on last Wednesday afternoon.



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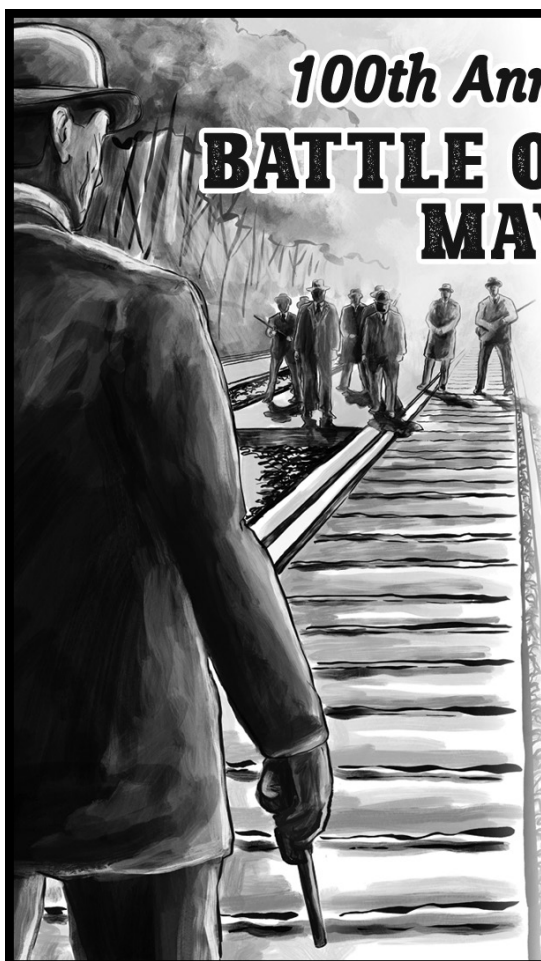
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A Terrible Calamity Brings Instant Death.

Seven Baldwin-Felts Detectives Killed on the Spot.

Mayor of Matewan, C.C. Testerman, Killed and Others.

The dead:
C.C. Testerman, Mayor of Matewan.
Bob Mullins, Miner.
Tot Tinsley, Miner.
Albert Felts and Lee Felts, brothers of Thomas Felts, of the detective firm of Baldwin-Felts Company.
C.T. Higgins, same, agency.
A.J. Boorher, same.
E.O. Powell, same.
J.W. Ferguson, same.
Wounded Citizens:
Sam Arters,
Isaac Brewer,
Will Reyer,
James Chambers and
Bill Bowman.

Consternation was created in the minds of all our people yesterday evening by a telephone message from Matewan that Mayor Testerman, Albert Felts, and perhaps many others had been shot in the streets of the city shortly after four o'clock.

Telephone communication with Matewan became impossible, and rumors of general shooting and rioting spread like wildfire. Sheriff G.T. Blankenship quickly gathered a small company of deputies and was able to catch No. 16, which brought him to the scene very shortly after the shooting occurred.

Sheriff Blankenship was followed to Matewan in an hour or two by several automobile loads of deputies who had been mustered by Deputy Sheriff Tony Webb.

Strictly accurate reports of just what took place are not now available. It is probable that the true details will never be known, for from the firing of the first shot the confusion was so great and excitement so general that even those who witnessed the tragedy are at a loss to describe it.

According to citizens who were present, the detectives were awaiting the arrival of the No. 16 on which they intended leaving town. Mayor Testerman was talking to Detective Albert Felts about the release of Policeman Hatfield, who was alleged to be in the custody of the detectives. A crowd had congregated about the situation and in the street across the railroad. The first shot was fired without warning, and the shooting instantly became general. Mayor Testerman and Mr. Felts were the first to fall, and the seven Baldwin-Felts men were shot as they tried to make their escape, according to onlookers. The twelve or fifteen detectives, it is said, fled toward the river and some of them succeeded in crossing to the Kentucky side. According to one report one of the detectives was shot while attempting to swim the river. Two of the detectives are said to have run to the tunnel just below Matewan and flagged No. 16, when the train came through a half hour later, and secured the protection of Sheriff Blankenship until the train left Matewan. These two men, and according to most reports, all the other detectives have now left this section and proceeded to Bluefield. It is said that all the detectives but one have now been accounted for. It is thought that this man may be one some observers say was shot in the river.

Sheriff Blankenship is now on the scene, and reports that there have been no further disturbances of any importance.

Passenger trains were notified to run through Matewan without stopping last night, but the city is now quiet and train will stop as usual today.

The Baldwin-Felts men are said to have come to Matewan for the purpose of evicting from company houses miners who had joined the United Mine Workers of America. It is stated on good authority, however, that proper warrants for the evictions had not been issued by the civil authorities.

Last night Matewan was a seething mass of humanity bearing firearms. This morning it is quiet, with but few people on the streets.

Several members of the state constabulary have arrived in Williamson this morning, and it is said that by tonight about forty of them will be here.

The bodies of the seven detectives who were killed were brought to Williamson last evening on No. 1, and taken to the Ball Morgue for autopsy and embalming.

The wounded were taken to a hospital at Welch.

Originally appeared in the Williamson News on Thursday, May 20, 1920.

MATEWAN REPORTS SHOOTING OF ONE MAN FROM AMBUSH

Rumors of Killing of Two McCoy Brothers at Sprigg Cannot be Confirmed.

WHO FIRED FIRST SHOT MAY NEVER BE KNOWN

River Being Dragged for Body of Dead Detective – Trains Again Stopping, After Being Hurried Through Wednesday Night – Sale of Cartridges Forbidden by Governor.

Matewan, W. Va., May 20-- The shooting of a man from ambush near Lynn, Mingo county three miles from here, was the chief development today in the situation in this region, following yesterday's shooting here which resulted in ten or more persons being killed or wounded. Bud McCoy, a mine guard, was the man wounded near Lynn. Rumors were current here tonight that two McCoy brothers had been slain at Sprigg, but there was no confirmation of this.

Belief that it will never be known who fired the first shot in the battle which resulted in the death of eleven men at Matewan yesterday was expressed here today, but all reports agree that it was fired either by Albert Felts, head of the detectives, by Mayor Cabell Testerman, or by Sid Hatfield, chief of police. The three men were standing in the middle of the street near the Norfolk and Western station discussing service

AMBUSH continued on page 9

DETECTIVE SENDS TELEGRAPH

The following telegraph appeared in area papers in May 1920.

The transmission was sent by T.L. Felt, general manager of Baldwin-Felt Detectives, Inc. The telegraph was sent to US Senator Kenyon and West Virginia Governor Cornwell in response to deaths of seven detectives and three Matewan men during a battle.

TELEGRAPH

TO: US SENATOR KENYON AND WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR CORNWELL

"On my return here from attending the funeral of my two brothers, who were murdered in the Matewan tragedy on Wednesday, May 19th, I was shown several press dispatches from John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America and other officials of his organization on the subject of this tragedy, requesting the Government to make an investigation of this affair and events leading up to it.

"The statements made in these telegrams are an insult to the intelligent law-abiding people of this State, and his purpose could only have been to influence public opinion in behalf of those responsible for this crime.

"There were no disturbances in these coal fields until two months ago when Lewis emissaries were sent into Mingo County and started their agitation in an effort to organize these fields.

"The miners and their families, throughout the entire Norfolk and Western fields were living in peace and happiness and enjoying as great prosperity as any coal field in the United States; and it was the Bolshevistic teachings of these emissaries which resulted in our men being wantonly and maliciously murdered through one of the foulest plots that ever disgraced a State.

"Not being satisfied with murder, the helpless bodies of their victims were shot, maltreated, and robbed as they lay on the ground. In their greed for plunder, they even stole the Masonic Shriners' pin from the lapel of my brother's coat.

"The attempt on the part of the United Mine Workers to organize these fields was not unexpected, since it was demonstrated during the coal strike of last winter that the non-union fields were able to prevent the country from freezing and made it impossible for the mine workers' organization to place the people of the entire nation at their mercy? their HTHT HT HT HT T mercy.

"We resent the cowardly libel given to the press of Mingo county and the Matewan police in which they charged that Albert Felts, one of the murdered men, started the trouble by firing a shot through his coat pocket into the body of Mayor Testerman.

"Albert Felts' dead body as well as the other men were left lying in the streets at Matewan within a stone's throw of the home of Sheriff Blankenship and if he had wanted the truth, an explanation of Albert Felts' coat would have shown that no shot had been fired through his pocket, or any other indications in support of the libelous statement which was given to the press.

"We welcome a fair and impartial investigation by the State or the United States authorities, and will willingly give them any information at our command bearing on this situation, because neither the murdered men, nor any other member of our organization, have ever defied the United States Government, or placed the organization above the law, as did Mr. Lewis and his organization.

T. L. FELTS,
"GENERAL MANAGER,
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STATE TROOPERS SUPERVISE BURIAL OF TWO VICTIMS

Will also be Detailed to Attend Funeral of Late Mayor of Matewan Today.

COL. ARNOLD DOESN'T FEAR RECURRENCE OF DISORDERS

Prosecutor Bronson Starts Investigation of Shooting but No Date for Inquest Has Been Set – Evidence Secured Will be Placed Before Circuit Judge Damron at Williamson

Matewan, May 21. – Two of the victims of Wednesday's battle here between private detectives and citizens, in which ten persons were killed a number wounded, were buried in the Matewan Cemetery today.

Forty state troopers, detailed by Commander Jackson S. Arnold, Supervised the funeral services and burials.

The bodies interred were those of Robert Mullens, a miner, and "Tot" Tinsley, son of a miner. Services were conducted in the two homes, and when the funeral parties started for the cemetery, headed by troopers, several hundred townfolks, including the families of miners and others, followed the caskets to the graves. The troopers had no trouble controlling the crowd at the cemetery, and after the burials the people returned quietly to their homes.

Colonel Arnold in speaking of the situation, said the town was "very quiet" tonight and that while many "startling rumors" were being circulated, he did not believe there would be a recurrence of the disorders.

The 100 armed deputy sheriffs, sent here early Thursday morning, were withdrawn today, leaving the state police to guard the city and patrol the surrounding district.

While no date for an inquest has been set. Prosecuting Attorney Bronson, of Mingo County, today started an investigation of the shooting. He announced that the evidence secured would be placed

before Circuit Judge Damron at Williamson, Monday, and that the question of holding certain persons for action of the grand jury would be left in the hands of the jurist.

Colonel Arnold announced tonight that the man arrested yesterday in connection with mysterious shooting from ambush at Lynn, near here, had been taken before a justice today and fined \$50 and sentenced to serve six months in jail. He was found guilty of having had in his possession a revolver, in violation of the state law. "Bud" McCoy, who is in a Welch hospital at Welch will be tried on a "gun toting" charge as soon as he recovers, the colonel said.

Colonel Arnold declared tonight that he had the names of twelve persons who were implicated in Wednesday's battle, but he had not ordered their arrests because of the funerals today. He said the names included five Baldwin-Felts detectives, and expressed the belief that it would not be necessary to arrest the twelve, because he thought they would voluntarily appear at the inquiry at Williamson Monday.

State troopers will be detailed to attend the funeral here tomorrow of Mayor Cabell Terterman, who was killed in the fighting Wednesday.

Originally Appeared in Bluefield Dailey Telegraph on Saturday, May 22, 1920.

AMBUSH *continued from page 7*

of a warrant on Hatfield which Felts was attempting to serve. Miners and union organizers crowded both sides of the streets, watching the group in the center, while the detectives, who either had wrapped their rifles in paper or broken them and packed them in suitcases, stood waiting for their chief to finish his conference. Suddenly four shots rang out in quick succession. Both Felts and Testerman fell, the former killed instantly and the latter wounded so badly that he died at the state hospital at Welch a few hours later.

Bodies of three detectives were taken from Williamson to Bluefield this afternoon.

Sixteen members of the state constabulary arrived in Matewan this morning. Part were sent to Lynn, following the shooting of McCoy.

The river at Matewan is being dragged for the body of the missing detective. Bodies of the dead men lay in the streets until arrival of Mayor W. O. Porter, of Williamson, at 7:30 p. m., when they were removed.

Trains are again stopping at Matewan, after being hurried through last night. Early today sale of cartridges here was forbidden on order of the governor.

Charleston, W. Va., May 20 -- Quiet prevails in the town of Matewan tonight, following last night's battle between citizens and detectives which resulted in the death of ten men and five wounded.

The only disturbance today was at Lynn three miles from Matewan, where three mine guards were shot at, and one slightly wounded in the leg, one fled and one was arrested by the sheriff and brought to Williamson jail charged with carrying a pistol without license.

A correct list of the dead follows:

Albert C. Felts, Lee Felts, J. W. Ferguson, A. J. Booker, O. E. Powell, C. B. Cunningham, C. T. Higgins, all members of the Baldwin-Felts agency; Mayor Cabell Testerman; Robert Mullens, miner, and "Tot" Tinsley, a miner's son.

John McDowell, a detective, during the shooting ran across a bridge, was struck by a bullet, and fell into the river. He has not been heard of since. Some believe he was drowned and others think that he escaped into Kentucky. The detective agency is unable to account for him.

Two other detectives swam the Tug River, were fired at, but were seen to escape and climb the bank on the opposite side.

Miners' headquarters here received reports that order prevailed at Matewan tonight. Their officials were given assurances from the state police that no Baldwin-Felts men would be permitted to come into Mingo county.

The state police from Beckley, about sixteen in number, arrived at the Tug river district at noon, under the command of Captain G. C. Rippetoe.

Other members of the state police left this evening on the Virginian, under command of Captain Thomas W. Norton, who has been stationed at Elkins. This makes a total of about forty-five who will be at Matewan tomorrow.

Until noon, the streets were patrolled by a hundred or more heavily armed men, deputized by Sheriff Blankenship early this morning.

Assurance was given the sheriff that the Baldwin-Felts men would not attempt to enter the town, when Thomas Felts called the officer from Bluefield and requested that some action be taken by authorities to investigate the shooting.

The several hundred armed miners told newspaper men who ventured to the town the story of the shooting. They declared that Albert Felts, approached Mayor Testerman with a warrant for the arrest of the town marshal, Sidney Hatfield, charged with interfering with one of the Baldwin-Felts men while they were arresting a union mine organizer.

President C. F. Keeney, of district 17, United Mine Workers of America, today sent messages to President Wilson and Attorney General Palmer protesting against the "existence of a regime of gunmen and thugs in certain sections of the state," and the inactivity of the state and federal officials regarding the matter.

ACTION *continued from page 1*

leading up to the tragedy.

The judge further stated that a policy of absolute fairness and impartially will be observed in every detail of the trial of these cases. He urges that publicity and discussion of the matter be reduced to an absolute minimum. There will be no bias or prejudice on either side. It is the part of good citizenship to suspend judgement for the present and permit the law to take its course.

From what we know of Judge Damron, we feel that justice will be his aim in all the intricacies of this deplorable and deadly shooting affray. He will give every detail connected with the tragedy the deepest thought and most impartial consideration, without the latest prejudice to any of the parties involved. It is his greatest desire, he informs us, to vindicate law and order in our midst and to preserve peace to our people.

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A TRIBUTE TO THE BATTLE OF MATEWAN 100TH ANNIVERSARY MAY 19, 1920 – MAY 19, 2020



Photo by Kenneth King

You can see it in his flinty gaze, the way he stares into the photographer's lens. His eyes—and his sinewy grip on the gun—tell us that this man will fight like there's nothing left to lose. But the truth is that he has everything to lose. And everything to win—for his family, for Appalachia and for coal miners everywhere in the world.

This man is our grandfather, or one of many mining grandfathers. We may not know their names, nor recognize their faces in ancient grainy photographs. But we will remember them and their sacrifices when these names are said aloud: Ludlow. Blair Mountain. Harlan. Evarts. Matewan.

They were men who loved what the mountains offered them—singing in the autumn, the first sarvis blooms of spring, the quiet of the hunt and the voices in rocky streams. The blazing stars of a winter night.

But they labored—and died—for the black rock hidden underneath the soft folds of the hills.

Most were family men who dreamt of time enough to spend with growing children and of security enough to clothe and feed them. At Christmas, they wished for a little extra to stuff a stocking or buy a gift for a wife who, from dawn to dusk, fought the coal dust that settled on every surface of the company house.

For themselves, our grandfathers asked only for a safe place to work, a couple of days off a week, and a living wage in exchange for the sixteen tons they gave the company every day. They sought no favors, only what was fair. Many paid the ultimate price.

We remember these proud men—our grandfathers—and the sacrifices they made so that coal mining communities today might enjoy the freedoms they could not. On this, the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Matewan, we salute all the heroic coal miners who fought for basic rights and fair treatment, in Appalachia and around the world.

By: *L. M. Sutter**

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