

# Who Blew Up the Independence Depot?

[The Appeal to Reason charges that the Mine Owners' association instigated the explosion, commanded its gun men and thugs to perpetrate the explosion, is the only body that benefited by the explosion, and is absolutely and solely responsible for the explosion.]

The Appeal challenges the Mine Owners' association, its members, agents, attorneys or newspapers, to refute the statements made in this pamphlet, which statements, if untrue, would subject the Appeal to a liability under the legal remedies for libel, the gravity of which it is fully sensible; and which, if true and unrefuted, should cause the FREE people of the sovereign state of Colorado to rise on election day and put down the prostituted powers of government that nurture and protect the Mine Owners' association, whose infamy is become a national shame.

Commenting upon the Labor Commissioner's Government Official Report relating to the Labor Disturbances in Colorado, Collier's Weekly, May 5th, said:

"The report of the department of commerce and labor on this case was extremely damaging to the mine owners, practically accusing them, not only of lawlessness, but of conspiracy to fasten a crime on labor leaders by perjured testimony."

BY GEORGE H. SHOAF.

Staff Correspondent Appeal to Reason.

**C**RIPPLE CREEK, COLO., May 17.—Intimately associated with the Steunenberg assassination, which occurred in Caldwell, Idaho, December 30, 1905, and inseparably connected with it so far as the guilt of the parties responsible for both outrages is concerned, is the terrible explosion of the Florence and Cripple Creek depot, which took place in the town of Independence, in the Cripple Creek district of Colorado, on the morning of June 6, 1904. Beyond the question of a doubt the persons who instigated the Independence depot explosion are also the parties who fathered the conspiracy to assassinate ex-Governor Frank Steunenberg, of Idaho. The same motives which impelled the one are likewise the motives which prompted the other. If it was to the in-

terest of the Western Federation of Miners to pull off the explosion, and it can be shown that they did it, then it was to the interest of that organization to remove Frank Steunenberg from the pathway of life, and its responsibility for that foul murder can be as easily established. *But if, on the other hand, it can be proved by incident and circumstance and argument and fact that the Mine Owners' association is directly and absolutely responsible for the Independence explosion, and that it alone was the gainer thereby, then it follows as the day the night that that infamous combination of red-handed buccaneers was the factor, and the only factor, responsible for the Idaho assassination.*

Reason as we may, it is impossible to escape this conclusion: *The men who hurled thirteen scab miners into eternity with dynamite from the platform of the Independence depot are the men who plotted and perpetrated the murder of ex-Governor Steunenberg.* The further I investigate into the circumstances surrounding each of these affairs the more firmly am I impressed with the truth of the proposition. It is not prejudice against the Mine Owners' association that provokes this statement; it is the facts of the situation as I find them.

To my mind the work of laying bare the conspiracy of the Independence explosion is just as important and necessary as getting at the truth of the Steunenberg affair. When the conspirators in the first outrage are uncovered and placed in the limelight it will be unnecessary to dig deeper to unearth the assassins of Steunenberg. Until within the last few weeks there has never been an effort made by anybody to find out and apprehend the men guilty of blowing up the Independence depot. Instead, it has been the steady and determined purpose of the Cripple Creek authorities to prevent an investigation into that outrage. And yet practically every person in the Cripple Creek district today knows and can name the parties who schemed the conspiracy and laid the trap that fired the dynamite!

It will be remembered by readers of this paper that I arrived in Cripple Creek, as special correspondent of the APPEAL TO REASON, on the identical morning of the depot explosion nearly two years ago. I was with Sherman Bell and his uniformed hirelings during the succeeding six weeks of mob law, terrorism and military deportations. In my articles in the APPEAL at that time it will be remembered that I charged the Mine Owners' association with the direct responsibility for that awful crime. And this charge was made in the face of the widely advertised statement of Sherman Bell when he announced:

*"I have undisputed evidence in my possession which will lead to the conviction of a number of union men for the murder of the non-union miners who were killed in the Independence explosion. We have between thirty-five and forty men in the bull-pen who will swing for this crime. We are only waiting to capture two or three more men before telling what our evidence is."*

Attention is here called to the significant fact that though

every union miner in the district was captured and thrown into the bull-pen, and that the state had at its command every resource with which to gather evidence to bring about the conviction of the suspects, yet, when the cases of the men came up for consideration every one of them were dismissed and the men given their liberty.

The day following the explosion the people of the district knew who was responsible for it, and in smothered tones and subdued accents named the Mine Owners' association as the guilty party. Today the people entertain the same opinions they held two years ago, though they are compelled to discuss the matter as clandestinely as they did when the district was under martial law.

Before coming to the district to engage in this recent investigation I stopped at Manitou, near Colorado Springs, to see E. L. McPartland, the brother of James McPartland, of the Pinkerton Detective agency. The Manitou brother is a shoemaker by trade and conducts a shop in the little mountain city. He resided in Victor nearly ten years prior to the introduction of martial law, and was among the several hundred miners deported to the plains of Kansas. He was running a shoe shop at the time of his arrest, and did most of the work for the Federation men.

"I was taken completely unawares when they came and got me," said Mr. McPartland, in discussing his arrest. "I was sitting in my shop soling a shoe, with my leather apron on, when James Warford, a customer, and several men with rifles, entered. I knew Warford very well and did not anticipate his actions. Quicker than a flash he crossed the room, and, seizing me by the shoulders, gave me a mighty lurch forward that threw me into the middle of the floor. At the same time he commanded me to get up and throw up my hands. Refusing, he and his companions jumped on me, whereupon they beat and kicked me almost into insensibility. After a while I was order up and away to the bull-pen. Because I persistently refused to hold my hands above my head I was struck over the back and shoulders with the club end of their guns with almost every step I took. The beating administered at that time affected my kidneys and I have never been the same man since.

"Not only was I deported, but the contents of my shop were destroyed and stolen. When I finally located in Manitou I had to replenish my stock anew and buy new tools. I have never been back to the district, but I am going to visit Canyon City in the near future. James Warford, the 'law-and-order' deputy who arrested me in that brutal manner, is now serving a life sentence in the penitentiary for murder, and I am going down there to take a look at him as he sits caged behind the bars."

"Mr. McPartland," I inquired, after the relation of his deportation experience, "do you believe that Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone had anything to do with the assassination of ex-Governor Steunenberg?"

"I do not," replied the shoemaker, with emphasis.

"Do you believe that they planned the Independence explosion?"

"I do not,"

"In the depth of your heart, who do you believe was responsible for that explosion?"

"Well, there were many involved," responded the brother of the celebrated Pinkerton chief, "but I can name you one man, who, if you can get him to talk, and he will tell you the truth, will put you next to all the inside facts of the affair."

"Who is that?" I inquired.

"Nelson Franklin, manager of the Eagle Sampler," he replied without hesitation.

Nelson Franklin, be it remembered, is a prominent member of the Mine Owners' association and an intimate friend of A. E. Carlton, the president of the organization.

Carrying the conversation further, I asked him all about his family, and particularly about his brother James. He said that he had not seen or communicated with the great Pinkerton for more than six years, and knew very little about him. With reference to Moyer and Haywood, he said:

"Haywood is a big-brained, great-hearted fellow and would no more stoop to crime than he would assault the citadel of heaven. Instead of being radical and ferocious, I always thought that Moyer was entirely too conservative. He used to exercise my patience by his appeals for peace and conservatism. I knew him well and he is not a man who would engage in assassinations and brute force. He was entirely too lenient to suit me, for I have always believed that had the Federation been more strenuous and acted with more promptitude and dispatch at certain moments during the strike it would have won the battle. Those men are not guilty of the crime with which they are charged."

In addition to the man named by Mr. McPartland, I am going to give the list of all the men—conspirators and executioners—who planned and pulled off the Independence explosion. Most of them were mentioned in the Appeal to Reason two years ago. They have been charged with that explosion repeatedly in my correspondence during the last two months. They are the men whom, by unanimous consent, the people of the district hold responsible for the crime. The stigma of that terrible holocaust of murder rests upon these men, and will continue to rest upon them in the public mind of the West until they have proven their innocence before the bar of justice.

"Had Colorado a state administration disposed to inquire into the Independence explosion," declared Attorney Frank J. Hangs, of Cripple Creek, "a half dozen or more of these men would be jailed immediately and hung for that crime. Were it possible to get a court to stick I would undertake, with the information now in my possession, to prosecute several big mining men in this district for the explosion. Murder will out, and some day somebody is going to squeal, and when that squeal comes there will be an explosion in this state beside which the Independence affair will sink into utter insignificance."

Here are the men responsible for the Independence explosion.

Con them well. Let their names sink into the inner consciousness of every member of the working class:

- A. E. CARLTON, president of the Mine Owners' association, and principal owner of the Findley and Shurtloff mines.
- NELSON FRANKLIN, manager of the Eagle Sampler.
- A. T. HOLMAN, superintendent of the Golden Cycle.
- W. M. BAINBRIDGE, superintendent of the El Paso.
- L. E. HILL, secretary of the Golden Cycle.
- C. C. HAMLIN, former secretary of the Mine Owners' association and now district attorney.
- S. D. CRUMP, retaining attorney of the Mine Owners' association.
- GENERAL FRANK M. REARDON, postmaster of Victor.
- H. L. SHEPPERD, mine broker in Cripple Creek.
- EDWARD BELL, sheriff of the district.
- E. C. NEWCOMB, cashier of the First National Bank.
- HARRY MOORE, captain of militia, and Victor groceryman.
- C. H. McKinney, Tom Brown, K. C. Sterling, D. C. Scott, Tom Underwood, Al Bemore, Kid Waters, Frank Vanneck, L. S. Moore, James A. Warford and Jack Allen.

These last eleven men were hired thugs and gun men, had prison records, and acted as detectives and spies for the Mine Owners' association. Kid Waters died recently under suspicious circumstances; McKinney and Sterling have disappeared mysteriously from the district; Jack Allen, it is said, is lying somewhere at the bottom of some deserted mine shaft; Frank Vanneck, upon being pardoned by ex-Governor Peabody, was given a job of guard at the El Paso mine, where he can be found today; James A. Warford is serving a life sentence for murder in Canyon City; Tom Brown should be serving a similar sentence for the same crime, but instead is running a saloon in Goldfield; L. S. Moore, who served fourteen years for raping a fourteen-year-old girl, was paroled for participating in the Independence explosion and is now conducting a saloon in Denver; Tom Underwood, who disappeared from Cripple Creek shortly after the explosion, returned recently, when notified that the coast was clear, and is now deputy under Sheriff Bell; Al Bemore, to whose house the blood-hounds ran after leaving the scene of the explosion, and D. C. Scott, are still living in the district, the proteges of the Mine Owners' association.

Besides these men, there are several others commonly associated with them and who are believed to have guilty knowledge of the crime, as follows: Governor A. E. McDonald, ex-Governor James Peabody, Pinkerton Detective James McPartland, Adjutant General Bulkeley Wells, former Adjutant General Sherman Bell, and Floyd Thompson, present secretary of the Mine Owners' association.

Though the story of the explosion has been told many times in the Appeal to Reason and through the Socialist press, still, for the sake of clearness, I shall risk a brief repetition. It is important that

all the incidents of the affair, and the circumstances surrounding it, be thoroughly grasped and understood in order that the responsibility for the crime can be definitely fixed. When all the known facts of the case are laid before the reader it will not be difficult to trace the explosion to its source.

At 2:27 o'clock on the morning of June 6, 1904, while train No. 21, of the F. & C. C. Railway company, was pulling into the station at Independence a terrific explosion occurred beneath the platform, blowing it to pieces and instantly killing thirteen non-union miners who were standing on it waiting to board the approaching train. James Dooner, engineer, and H. H. Abrams, fireman, occupied the cab, with E. G. Weston, conductor, and H. H. Stevenson, brakeman, in charge of the train. There was just one passenger aboard when the explosion occurred—E. G. Cleverdon, a miner, who got on the train at Vista Grande.

When asked to tell what he knew about the explosion Engineer James Dooner said:

"I left Cripple Creek at 1:30 a. m., Monday, to go to Vista Grande. Arrived at Vista Grande and picked one man up at the station there, and didn't make another stop until about 75 feet from the platform at Independence. Before we made that stop, 125 or 130 feet from the depot, the explosion took place. I was slowing up at the time to make the stop. We stopped about 75 feet from the depot and some men ran up and informed us that the depot was blown up. We lit some torches and asked some of the men to go down and see what the trouble was. We went down and found some debris on the track, and one dead body. We removed that to one side. We picked up what wounded men we could find, and went to the Victor depot. We got a telephone message there that there were some more wounded men—four of them. The dispatcher gave orders to go back to Independence and get these wounded men. We took the coroner up there and several officers of the law, I think. We got one wounded man there, and picked up the dead—thirteen in all—and returned to Victor; stayed about thirty minutes and then came to Cripple Creek."

When asked why he came to a stop 75 feet from the platform Mr. Dooner said:

"The fireman told me that there was something wrong, and I was about stopped anyway. I saw the flash of the explosion, and so loud was the sound that I thought it was a powder house or magazine. About the time I was ready to stop some one signaled the fireman to stop. At that moment the explosion occurred. The men who came running to the engine I judge were miners working on the Findley mine."

E. G. Weston, conductor, in telling the story, said:

"I was due at Independence at 2:27 on the suburban train that brings the miners from that locality, and when we were somewhere in the neighborhood of 125 or 130 feet from the depot I heard an explosion. It knocked me off my seat, and I supposed it was a powder house or magazine or something of the kind. First

I heard rock coming down on the cars, and then I heard something softer. After everything settled I went out and met the engineer between the tank of the engine and the head car, and I asked: 'Jimmie, what is the trouble?' He said: 'They've blowed up the depot.' I said: 'You don't mean to tell me that they have blowed up the depot with all those men on there?' 'That is just what they have done,' he replied.

"Well, we started out with torches and lanterns, and the sight we saw was something terrible."

Questioned in detail, Mr. Weston was asked:

"Does the railroad company ever keep any explosives around the depot?"

"No, that depot had no station agent, and was practically dismantled."

"So the explosive must have been placed beneath the platform by outside parties?"

"Well, it looked that way."

"No one had access to the depot so they could store anything there?"

"No."

"They could not store anything in the basement?"

"There was no basement; it was open ground under the platform."

"Was it light at the time of the explosion?"

"It was very dark."

"Was it customary for persons to loaf around the depot at night?"

"I never saw men standing around there at night."

"Just miners rushing down to catch the train?"

"The miners come down on the run and most always stand there a moment merely, but this night they were late, and only part of them got down."

"Ordinarily, how many men do you take on there, on this particular train?"

"We have been getting for Cripple Creek from fifteen to seventeen men; for Victor from twenty-four to twenty-seven; and for Goldfield from four to seven. They vary, you understand, on account of sickness, change-shifts, etc."

"Do you mean that all these men got on at Independence, so that ordinarily you might expect there would be fifty or more men waiting there to take the train?"

"Yes; some of them were late; I have already told you that I went up to the Findley mine, called up my superior officer, told him of the accident and when I got back the men were still coming down from the mine."

The information obtained from the fireman and brakeman was practically the same given by the engineer and conductor.

When day dawned it was discovered that the powder charge causing the explosion had been fired by a revolver, to the trigger of which a wire was attached. This wire ran away from the plat-

form down a side-track about 250 feet to the Delmonico dump. Here, the end of the wire was found tied to a chair round. In precipitating the explosion the chair round was grasped and jerked. This pulled the wire which fired the revolver at the other end. The exploded pistol set off the giant powder.

E. G. Cleverdon, the passenger, was the man who found the wire and the chair round. In telling of the find he said:

"I live in Independence, and was about ready to get off the train when the explosion occurred. After viewing the horrible scene I went to my cabin. After a bit my brother and I went to the place of the explosion again. My brother said: 'Let's look around and see if we can't find some cause of the explosion.' We looked around. We went down to where the switch went back to the Delmonico, and there we found a wire. At the end of the wire was attached a chair leg. There was quite a heavy frost on the ground, and beyond the chair leg I saw tracks. There were several of them, and they could have been made before the explosion. In fact, I am inclined to think they were. Later the dogs took those same tracks, but when we wanted to follow them we were prevented by the men on guard. The tracks led off into softer ground, but they wouldn't let anybody in."

Frank N. Wilson, a miner, who lived near the scene of the explosion, in response to questions, said:

"I went downtown after the explosion, and there were two men and four boys looking at a pistol. I took it in my hands and saw that only one shot had been recently fired. I put it in my pocket and started away from the boy who found it, but, seeing the kid look disappointed, I gave him a dime and told him to go buy some candy. I brought the pistol to Victor and gave it to Mr. Holman, superintendent of the Golden Cycle. This was the pistol that exploded the powder."

"What time of day was it when you first saw the wire?"

"I was standing below the depot when they called: 'Come down here.' Mr. Holman and I and Mr. Waldron, of the Last Dollar mine, went down to the wire. The sun was just rising at the time. Mr. Holman, Mr. Waldron and others had their guns and they acted as guards. It was not long before Mr. Killam and Mr. Carlton joined them, and then we could not do much investigating."

"Who was this man Killam?"

"He was the shift boss on the Findley."

"Did you see any union men around the explosion that night, or early the next morning?"

"No."

Such, in brief, is the story of the Independence explosion. From the evidence submitted the coroner's jury, selected by A. E. Carlton and Nelson Franklin, brought in the following verdict:

"We.....the jury, find that said explosion was exploded by an infernal machine purposely and



wilfully set and discharged by some person or persons to your jury unknown for the purpose of wilfully and maliciously and feloniously killing and murdering said persons and others, that said crime is one of similar crimes designed and committed in the Cripple Creek district during the past few months, and perpetrated for the purpose of killing non-union miners, and thereby preventing them from working, and that said crimes are the result of a conspiracy entered into by certain members of the Western Federation of Miners, and known, incited and furthered by the officers of that organization.”

At this point it were well to relate the events which occurred later on the day of the explosion. They will serve to throw light upon the remarkable verdict herewith quoted. It will be seen that the explosion was pulled off as a preliminary to the greater events that were to follow.

Within an hour after the explosion the vicinity entirely surrounding the depot was placed under guard and patrolled by minions in the employ of the Mine Owners' association. Before 10 o'clock the "inner circle" of the Mine Owners' association had deposed the regularly constituted officers of the law, under pain of instant death, and had installed henchmen of its own selection in the places made vacant. It was then that Edward Bell sprang into the breach by accepting the office of sheriff. The city marshal was compelled to surrender his authority to another. The coroner of the district was given the alternative of resigning or being hung. Thus in the twinkling of an eye the Mine Owners' association had effected a sweeping change in the personnel of the police force and constabulary of the district—not sparing even the coroner's office.

Upon completing this work the mob surged to a vacant lot in the center of the town of Victor, where, it was announced, Secretary C. C. Hamlin would address the citizens of the district upon the issues of the day. This vacant lot was directly in front of the Miners' Union hall, and not very far from Rubles Armory, where Captain Moore was stationed with a company of militia. Inside the Union hall were gathered most of the union miners of the district, awaiting the action of the mob without. Hamlin began his speech, and, after progressing a few sentences—in which an inflammatory appeal was made for the blood of the union men inside the hall—some one in the crowd gave a shout, which was immediately answered with a shot. This was the signal for a perfect fusillade of bullets. Many union men were shot down in cold blood in the streets, after which the militia stormed the hall. Several hundred shots were fired into the hall point blank, the result of which laid out many of the refugees in the agony of death.

In the afternoon of the same day Sherman Bell arrived from Denver with the state troops and declared the district under martial law. That very morning the supreme court of the state, from its throne in Denver, handed down a decision in the Moyer case that is the most far-reaching in its effects that the history of

jurisprudence is yet acquainted with. The decision in effect gives to the governor of the state absolute power over the life and death of any citizen or citizens in any county of the state—the circumstances under which he might exercise this power to be determined exclusively by himself. All that the governor has to do to bring into action this imperial power is to declare any county under martial law, throw the state troops therein, and consummate his mighty will. In an opinion, separate from this decision, and rendered recently, Chief Justice Gabbert explains why the governor should be given this power. *His contention is that the union and industrial conditions of the country make it imperative that capital should defend itself by empowering its political executives with the authority this decision grants them!* This decision gives to the governor of Colorado a power in time of peace Lincoln never possessed in time of war! By reason of this decision Governor McDonald today possesses a power that Charles I. was beheaded for attempting to usurp!

Following the storming of the Miners' hall and the assassination of several union miners, commenced the rounding up of all the union men of the district. In a few days, with the help of the militia and bands of armed thugs recently released from the penitentiary, the Mine Owners' association had arrested and deported every union miner and every man suspected of having union sympathies. The sweep was clean. Not one union man was left. The Western Federation was not defeated or destroyed—it was deported bodily from the district.

This was the grand climax toward which the Mine Owners' association had been working many months. The train wrecking episode, the Vindicator explosion, the Sun and Moon transformer outrage, and the many other minor incidents were but preliminary steps to the Independence explosion, the Victor riot, and the ultimate deportation of the Western Federation. The Independence explosion itself was precipitated to make conditions that would warrant and excuse the deportations. The explosion was also pulled off to enable the people of Colorado to swallow the marvelously unprecedented decision that was handed down by the supreme court the morning of the same day.

*The Independence explosion, therefore, accomplished three results, every one of which were vitally favorable to the Mine Owners' association. It brought the troops to the district; warranted the decision of the supreme court; and excused the deportation of the Western Federation of Miners.*

*Wherein was the Western Federation benefited by any of these results? Let the Mine Owners' association come out in the open light of day and show cause why the Western Federation of Miners should break its back and bring forth this infamous supreme court decision by planning and executing the Independence depot explosion. The Western Federation of Miners challenges an investigation of the explosion and dares the Mine Owners' association to come*

*into court and try to prove that the men and mine owners named in this article are guiltless of the crime.*

Most of the incidents preceding and succeeding the explosions are familiar to the readers of the Appeal, but so necessary is it that they should be fully understood that I am going to recount them. It is the minor events and suspicious circumstances that, when woven together, constitute the chain of evidence that points to the Mine Owners' association as the factor responsible for the explosion. If Mr. Carlton and Mr. Franklin and Mr. Hamlin and the rest of the "inner circle" desire to dispel this evidence and refute the charge let them submit the Independence depot explosion to a thorough investigation.

*They have been in possession of the district since that occurrence, dominate its affairs absolutely, and can either institute or admit an investigation any time they see fit. If they resent the accusations continually made against them let them sue the Appeal for libel, and that will open up the whole affair. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN INVESTIGATION INTO THIS EXPLOSION BY ANYBODY, AND THE ONE BODY OF MEN WHICH HAS BLOCKED AND PREVENTED AN INVESTIGATION IS THE MINE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION.*

The first thing done after the explosion was to guard the immediate neighborhood with tools of the Mine Owners' association. Instead of sending for Dick Carr's blood-hounds near by—blood-hounds that were recognized as the best in the state, and always used in other crimes—the dogs at Canon City were telephoned for. By the time these dogs arrived the scent was cold.

*But despite this unwarranted delay the dogs readily took the trail and bounded off in the direction of Al Bemore's cabin. Here they entered the open door and smelled around the house. Their next move was to make for the Vindicator powder house. At this point Mr. Holman ordered the dogs called off, and they were not put on the trail again. Al Bemore was a professional gun man in the employ of the Mine Owners' association, and was very loud in denouncing the Western Federation as guilty of exploding the depot. He was likewise active in raiding union homes and assaulting the wives of union men.*

Later in the day Harry McGary, director of the Golden Cycle, in response to a question, vehemently announced that the perpetrators of the explosion would never be discovered. When Edward Holland, one of the men injured in the explosion, asked Nelson Franklin why the Mine Owners' association did not emulate the Western Federation of Miners by offering a reward for the capture of the dynamiters, he replied that it might prompt dirty work on the part of the detectives—that the detectives might spring a trap by which innocent men would be hung for the crime. *The Western Federation of Miners offered a \$5,000 reward for the capture of the Independence assassins; the Mine owners' association offered not a red cent.*

Early in the morning, when the news of the explosion was com-

municated throughout the district, General Frank M. Reardon was overheard to excitedly exclaim to several of his pals:

*"Good God, we did not mean to kill anybody!"*

Since then General Reardon has been under constant surveillance by the Mine Owners' association, and, to strengthen his nerves, he has been given practically everything in the district he has asked for. From the expression uttered by General Reardon many have inferred that murder was not intended when the depot was blown up.

*This opinion was given further weight when it was discovered that A. E. Carlton, the night of the explosion, telephoned to the manager of the Shurtloff mine to hold his men back a few minutes before releasing them for their run to the fated depot, but that he failed to make telephone connection with the Findley mine. It will be remembered that it was the men from the Findley mine who met their death at the platform, and that the Shurtloff miners were late in arriving. The Shurtloff miners, themselves, noted the order to stay back at the time it was given and were unable to account for it. It was this arbitrary delay that saved their lives.*

Others in the district, however, hold to the opinion that murder was intended in the explosion. They argue that fake wrecks and bloodless explosions had been tried repeatedly and that they had failed to precipitate the conditions necessary to deport the union miners. Some awful calamity was necessary to meet the purpose of the Mine Owners' association.

"Well, at least this latest outrage will be investigated and taken into court", remarked a certain citizen to K. C. Sterling, shortly after the explosion.

"Like hell we will take this into court"! exclaimed Sterling, with a burst of anger.

Sterling is suspected of being the man who stood on the hillside to give the signal of the train's approach. His partner, C. H. McKinney, is the man whom every one in the district accused of pulling the wire that fired the revolver. They were both detectives and gun men employed by the Mine Owners' association, both cohabited with the same woman, and both have mysteriously disappeared. The woman in question was slain in Pueblo in the summer of 1904, and it is popularly supposed that she was killed because she knew too much about the true facts of the explosion.

Shortly after that James Warford and Tom Brown were ordered by their bosses, Harry McGary, L. E. Hill and A. T. Holman, to "get" this man Miller. They "got" Miller and Ike Lebo in front of an election booth in Goldfield Mrs. Miller was less than 120 feet away at the time of the shooting. Warford killed one of the men and Brown killed the other. The victims were given no opportunity to defend themselves. Warford was sentenced to a life term in the penitentiary for the performance, while Brown was released unconditionally. District Judge Seeds repeatedly ordered District Attorney Hamlin to file information papers against Brown charging him with murder, but this Hamlin refuses to do. Brown is a weaker man than Warford and Hamlin is afraid the man would

squeal were the charges preferred. He is today running a saloon in Goldfield, and his experience of late is one prolonged debauch. Less than a month ago he was heard to say that he could make the Mine Owners' association pay him \$80,000 any day he desired. It is predicted by people in the district that unless Brown ceases bragging about the Independence affair he will come up missing some bright morning. Warford is taking his imprisonment lightly, as he declares that the Mine Owners' association has promised to secure him a pardon in the near future.

That Chris Miller was in possession of evidence implicating members of the Mine Owners' association is further known from the fact that four days after his incarceration in the pull-pen Sherman Bell came to him with a ticket for Denver, released him, gave him expense money and told him to henceforth keep away from the district. Instead of obeying, Miller returned at the expiration of thirty days, and the first opportunity that presented itself he was killed. When James Warford was given the life sentence, despite the backing of the mine owners, Carlton was overheard to say that the jury should have been sent to the penitentiary instead of Warford.

Now, the situation as it existed prior to the explosion will be reviewed. It was well known that the mine owners were depressed because of their inability to crush the union and win the strike. Federation men were triumphant and joyful. They were expecting that the Mine Owners' association would capitulate almost any day. The union men were receiving their strike benefits regularly, and all the previous outrages, admittedly instigated and committed by the Mine Owners' association, totally failed to disrupt the union or stop the strike. Peace reigned throughout the district and an order had been issued for the withdrawal of the remaining troops. The mine owners saw that unless something desperate were done they would be compelled to submit to the Western Federation.

As has been asked heretofore, Of what benefit would it be to the union to perpetrate such an outrage as the Independent explosion? To ask that question is to answer it. There could be absolutely no benefit to the union. On the other hand, it was vitally necessary to the Mine Owners' association that some terrible catastrophe should occur.

In his latter-day confessions Harry Orchard declares that he is the man who touched off the explosion. He claims that he and Mr. Neville left Independence the night of the explosion in a light spring wagon headed toward Colorado Springs. He says that in the middle of the night he left his companion on the pretext of returning for his pistol, and that he went direct to Independence, blew up the depot, and ran back to the wagon. It happens, however, that these two men were accompanied on this nocturnal journey by the young son of Mr. Neville. This young man, upon hearing of the Orchard confession, gave it the lie direct by stating that he slept very little that night and that he is positive Harry Orchard never left the camp. He made this statement several weeks ago to certain

people in Cripple Creek, and shortly afterwards disappeared. His friends are anxious to discover his whereabouts. It is now believed by Cripple Creek residents that the young man has met foul play at the hands of the Mine Owners' association.

It is not impossible that Orchard was implicated in the Independence outrage, but it is unlikely. Sheriff Bell, after the Steunenberg assassination, announced that he knew all along that Harry Orchard was the man who pulled the wire and that he was hot on his trail at the time of the arrest. It is strange that Bell did not go to Denver during the summer of 1904 and get his man; Orchard hung around Federation headquarters several weeks after the deportations and could have been apprehended very easily. I believe in view of all the facts in the case, that Orchard was a Pinkerton in the employ of McPartland and the Mine Owners' association, but that he was reserved for work other than the Independence affair. The nature of the explosion, the situation of the scene, and the amount of powder necessitated the implication of several men—and the men who carried the powder from the Vindicator magazine, placed it under the platform and touched it off, are C. H. McKinney, K. C. Sterling, Frank Vanneck, L. S. Moore, Al Bemore, D. C. Scott, James A. Warford, Tom Brown, Tom Underwood, Jack Allen and Kid Waters. These men were seen the night before in and around the saloons of Goldfield and Independence. They acted and drank like they were preparing for some extraordinary piece of work. Investigation fails to disclose that they ever went to their homes that night to retire for rest and sleep. They were on the scene of the explosion shortly after it occurred, loudly denouncing the union miners as the men responsible for the deed. They were placed to guard the premises by A. E. Carlton and his fellow conspirators, and they were acknowledged gun men in the steady employ of the Mine Owners' association.

Some of these men are dead, some are missing, and some are alive. *If the live ones desire to take this matter into court to remove the stigma of this charge let them proceed.*

With the relation of the foregoing facts and circumstances a few pertinent questions might not be entirely out of place at this time.

Why were union miners conspicuously absent from the scene of the explosion, both on the day preceding and day succeeding the affair?

Why were the thugs and gun men so conspicuously present, and what prompted them to proclaim the guilt of the members of the Western Federation?

How came President Carlton and his fellow mine owners to get so quickly to the depot, and why were they so careful to see that the place was properly guarded?

Why were not Dick Carr's blood-hounds used, and why were the Canon City dogs called off when they persisted in staying around Al Bemore's cabin and around the Vindicator powder house?

What was the motive behind Carlton's telephone message to his manager at the Shurtloff mine?

Why were the gun men congregated in the saloons in Goldfield the night of the explosion?

Why did Harry McGary vehemently announce that the perpetrators of the explosion would never be discovered?

Why was Nelson Franklin afraid to offer a reward for the apprehension of the dynamitards?

How came General Reardon to express himself so passionately when he heard of the explosion?

Why were the regularly elected law officers of the district deposed and tools of the Mine Owners' association given their places?

Why was the regular coronor unseated for another man?

In the face of the evidence introduced why did the subsidized jury return such an adroitly worded verdict as was rendered at the inquest?

Wasn't that verdict framed up for the sole purpose of misleading the public and prejudicing the people of the district against the Western Federation of Miners?

Why did the Western Federation of Miners offer a \$5,000 reward for the apprehension of the man or men responsible for the explosion, and the Mine Owners' association advertise no reward?

Why were the union men, and every person who doubted that it was union men who precipitated the explosion, deported from the district?

Why were Moyer, Haywood and the members of the Executive Board arrested and placed under a \$10,000 bond each, charged with instigating the Victor riot, when neither of the arrested men were within a hundred miles of the place?

Was not this grand-stand, wholesale arrest made purely for the purpose of discrediting the organization before the people of the United States?

Why were the cases of these men subsequently nolle prossed and never brought to trial?

Why did not Sherman Bell produce the evidence he boasted would swing between thirty-five and forty union miners for the Independence horror?

Why were the cases of these men nolle prossed and never brought to trial?

Why has the Mine Owners' association sedulously and consistently prevented a trial of any kind that might lead to an investigation of the explosion?

Why has the Mine Owners' association blocked all inquiries into the details of that explosion, and to the present moment successfully prevented an investigation?

Why have several of the weaker and more pliable thugs and gun men disappeared and been murdered?

Why did Judge Huff refuse to permit Kid Waters to make a statement before he died of dropsy?

Why does an investigator take his life in his hands when he

goes into the Cripple Creek district to try to get at the facts of the explosion?

**BECAUSE THE MINE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION INSTIGATED THE EXPLOSION, COMMANDED ITS GUN MEN AND THUGS TO PERPETRATE THE EXPLOSION, IS THE ONLY BODY THAT BNEFITED BY THE EXPLOSION, AND IS ABSOLUTELY AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXPLOSION.**

"Seek whom the crime will benefit", is the old French maxim, "and you have discovered the perpetrators of that crime".

Now, will it be doubted that men who would deliberately murder thirteen scab miners to drive unionism out of the Cripple Creek district would hesitate to assassinate, or order the assassination of, ex-Governor Steunenberg, particularly if thereby it were thought that the act would result in the disruption and destruction of the Western Federation of Miners?

But the destruction of the Western Federation of Miners is not the only motive behind the Steunenberg assassination. *The very lives of the men whom I charge with the rresponsibility of the Independence explosion depended upon that assassination, or upon some other crime equally as infamous.* The lives of these men depend upon their preventing an investigation into the explosion. Were the republican party defeated in Colorado, and a governor elected pledged to investigate the Independence outrage, A. E. Carlton and his associates would be compelled to either stand trial for the crime, or else escape and wander over the face of the earth refugees from justice. Frank Steunenberg was murdered to furnish an issue with which the republican politicians might go before the people this fall. They expect to hang Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone for the crime and then point to themselves as paragons of political purity and virtue and ask of the people a re-election.

*Only recently a prominent state politician, whose office is in the state capitol building in Denver, told me that more than one republican politician of Colorado informed him, and emphasized the necessity of the fact, that Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone must be convicted of the Steunenberg assassination, at all costs, if the republican party is to win the election this fall.*

Such are the reasons, upon investigation, why I believe that the Mine Owners' association is responsible for the Independence explosion, and why I believe the "inner circle" of the organization is also responsible for the Steunenberg assassination. The men who perpetrated the first committed the second, and, with the Federation of Miners, I defy the red-handed combination to come into a fair and impartial court and meet the charge!

