COLLINS' ORDEAL HOLDS NATION'S EYE

FATE BLOCKS PLANS OF MEN TO AID VICTIM

Heroism, Sacrifice of Many Workers Nullified By Workings of Nature; Country Is Aroused But Helpless.

TRAGEDY RULES OVER SECTION

Disorganization Seen As Big Factor In Making Work Ineffectual; Order Replaces Chaos Too Late.

By J. McK. R. REES.
(Staff Correspondent of The Courier-Journal.)

Cave City, Ky., Feb. 7.—"The Prisoner of Sand Cave," a tragedy in several acts, is being played near here. It is, in reality, not a new composition, but a revival.

Only the scene and the setting are new. The theme, the struggle between man and nature, is as old as the human race itself.

And Fate, the master playright, has used with undiminished effect familar elements of these dramas.

Nature, inexorable; Time, whose passage may not be halted or turned back; Courage, the will to do and dare; Anger, which warns reason and betrays right; Sacrifice, where service is rendered without thought of recompense; Ignorance, the enemy of progress; Idealism, the leaven of heroism; Opportunity, whose knock ignored is not repeated; Jealousy, a waster of strength, and Curosity and Greed, all these have had a part in the play.

Nation Is Audience.

The audience has grown to the size of the nation since Floyd Collins, cavern explorer by the double line of breeding and environment, entered Sand Cave January 30 and after reaching what he afterward described as the most wonderful underground chamber he ever had seen, became trapped when a huge boulder slipped down, clamping Collins' foot into a rock vise, formed by the stone above and a crevice below.

Since 17-year-old Jewell Estes discovered Collins' plight an increasing tenseness has been felt in that little wooded glade that spreads out saucer shape before the overhanging crag which shelters the entrance to Sand Cave.

And alternately high hopes have been lifted and black despair for the fate of "The Prisoner of Sand Cave" has raised its grim head as such indefatigible and inspired workers as Everett Maddox, John Geralds, "Casey" Jones, William Lenny, Edward Williams, Fire Lieutenant Robert Burdon and William Burke Miller, to the outside world reports on progress of rescue efforts.

United Action Missing.

For almost a week people rushed hither and thither; plans were suggested, some tried, some rejected; a provincialism made militant by the great inflow of "outsiders" who "didn't know nothin' about caves, anyway," stalked unchallenged.

And all this time a man was dying, dying with life a few steps from him because a few small stones refused to let go their hold on his ankle.

Cave City at first refused to believe in the drama that was being acted. Then knew Floyd Collins, knew his reputation as a cave explorer and felt sure that he would be free in a few hours. But the hours passed and Collins was still a prisoner. And then it was for the first time that he was really in danger.

John Geralds came out of the cavern with the report that Floyd was in a "pretty bad fix" and it was then that Cave City became aroused. For Geralds also has a name as an explorer and his judgment was respected.

At the mouth of the cave was a scene of the greatest turmoil. No one seemed to know who was in charge and everyone felt that he ought to have his plan tried out. Crews went in and came out. Some of them got to Collins and some didn't. Some of those who said that they had been to Collins with food and drink evidently had mistaken his position, because the bottles and sandwiches later were reported found in niches of the passageway.

Liquor On Hand.

To add to all this confusion there was an over-abundance of liquor on hand. The night was chilly and many felt the need of a drink to keep them warm.

John Geralds had been put in charge of the rescue work. This had been done because it was felt he knew more about the cave and had had more experience in underground work than anyone there. And John Geralds would brook no interference with his plans. His only aim seemed to be to get back to the man and get him out. He got back to him, but Collins stayed under ground.

The entrance of Sand Cave became a human bee-swarm. Everyone, it seemed was there, and everyone had some plan that he was sure would bring Collins out if it was tried—and everyone was insistent that his plan be tried.

This, probably, was the greatest factor in causing all offers of help to be turned down. Engineers came to the scene. They were told that they were not "cave men" and their help couldn't be used. Some of them returned to their homes. Others stayed on in hopes their plans might be given a try-out later.

Monday came and the condition was unchanged. By this time definite plans for rescue parties were being made from the outside. It was planned to send a party from Louisville with all necessary equipment.

The men at the cave were in a position where they did not know what to do. They had been in digging and trying everything that they knew to get Collins out. It had availed nothing. Collins was held just as fast as he was before he had been found. Worse, than that he was getting weaker and weaker. What was to be done? Let him stay there and die? The people at the cave felt that this would be the eventual ending, but they could not give up the battle while the prisoner was still alive.

Still No Settled Plan.

Even after all this time there had been no settled plan worked out. Men went in the cave and came out. They reported that Collins was still imprisoned there. That was all. They didn't know of anyway to get him out and felt that it was foolish for anyone who was not a "cave man" to speak with any degree of certainty on the subject.

Monday night all this turmoil reached its height. Men were becoming desperate. Collins had been in the cave now for over three days and still was not free. More than that, there was no immediate hope of getting him free.

No one seemed to know who was in charge. Everyone asked told what he was going to do. Besides this there were several in evidence at the cave who had evidently had a little too much to drink. They were in the way of those who did want to work.

Reporters from all over the country began coming into the little town. Among these was W. B. "Skeets" Miller from Louisville. He came down to the cave to cover the rescue work that was being done and it looked as though his assignment was going to be an easy one.

Found Rumors At Cave.

Skeets went out to the cave Monday morning. He had been up all the night before and he was feeling just a little tired. When he got there he found that it was almost as impossible to learn anything as it had been in town. Everybody was hearing rumors that the man was free or that the roof was caving in all the way along or a thousand and other things that people can hear under like circumstances.

He decided the best thing to do was to go into the cave himself to look things over. He went back to Collins and talked with him a few minutes. Then he came back out. But while he was in there something of the spirit of the Crusaders must have come into him.

He didn't get to go back into the cave until that afternoon, but this time he had a long talk with Collins and this time they former a tentative plan for the work.

"Kyroc" Workers Effective.

In the meantime crews from the Kentucky Rock Asphalt Company had been on the job and had done effective work in clearing out the passage and widening it in some places so that it was possible for others beside the very smallest men to get into the crevice.

Governor Fields had been appealed to and had sent word that anything the State had was at the disposal of the rescuers. Volunteer troops were rushed to the scene from Bowling Green, but their main work was to form lines to keep the crowds back. As yet no one with the authority of the State behind him had come to the scene to take charge of the work.

"Skeets" got little rest Monday night. Tuesday morning he went back into Cave City to get some clothes with the intention of getting Collins out "or staying there with him."

The boy could think of nothing else and, watching him, others began to feel some of his enthusiasm.

He was small and he was allowed to go into the crevice, although the men who had been there from the first shook their heads at what they termed the hopelessness of the task he had started on. Miller went into the cave with a crew of twelve, and wormed his way back to the imprisoned man.

He gave Collins a little whisky and told him that they were going to get him out in a little while. Collins was dubious. He was hungry and asked for something to eat. Miller removed the rock that had fallen around the prisoner's body since the last trip and backed out.

Collins More Cheerful.

He stayed on the outside long enough to rest and get warm. Then he went back in with the same crew. This time Collins was cheerful. He told Miller he believed he was going to come out. He explained how he was caught and did what he could to help.

But the cold and damp did their work. The men who were lying on their backs in the passage passing in tools and taking out the rock and dirt as it was loosened, were beginning to get numb.

An electric light had been installed at the imprisoned man's head and Miller and Collins were the most comfortable of the whole party.

In answer to the pleas of the men above Miller came out for the second time. This time he was sure that it was only a question of a few hours at the outside until Collins would be free. He walked up and down before the fire, impatient to start in again. He had then been without sleep for more than fifty hours and had made four trips to the end of the passage in the last twenty-four of these.

Believed Rescue Near.

Finally the word was given that everybody was ready to start again. Together they went into the opening that they had come to dread. This time they felt that they would bring Collins out with them. Everybody thought so. Even the little groups that were gathered around the fire grew still, feeling a climax was near.

This time Miller carried a quart of hot coffe in a thermos bottle in to Collins. This had to be placed above him and he drank it through a tube.

Then the real work of the rescue began. Miller went down head first over Collins' body to get as near as possible to the trap that was holding the imprisoned man.

He wanted to try to squeeze his head and shoulders into the narrow opening, but Collins would not consent to this, because, as he said, "they might be sending in for two of us if you do."

Finally he got one arm and shoulder between the overhanging rock and Collins' chest. Collins was able to get one hand down to his ankle and pull up some of the small stones around. Then Miller would take them up and pass them out to those beyond him.

Collins was buoyant. He believed Miller was going to take him out. He said so again and again.

The rescuers worked on heedless of time. They worked a little too long, in fact. The men in the passage began to complain of the cold and that they were getting numb. Miller told them to go on out and get warm and he would stay there with Collins. This suggestion was refused. The men in the crew declared they were going to stay in the passage as long as Miller did, but that they wished he would come on out.

Collins decided the matter. He told Miller that he had better go out and warm and rest up, because he had been in there too long already.

So Miller started out.

He asked Collins if he was hungry.

Says Hunger Appeased.

"No," replied the imprisoned man. "This is the first time I have been still since I have been in here."

He didn't know then that this was the last meal he probably ever would have.

"You go on out," he added, "and get rested up before you come back in, fellow, because I believe I'm coming out with you next time."

Miller started out. It was not long before he, too, realized that he had stayed in the passage too long. He found it was labor to crawl and he had to stop every few feet to rest.

At the "Squeeze" the supreme test came. Here it took all the strength of a well-rested man to negotiate the passage. Miller says he had about decided he was going to have to spend the rest of the night with Collins, but in a final burst of strength he made it. He half crawled and was half carried to the entrance.

There he collapsed. He was taken to a taxicab and rushed into Cave City. After an alcohol rub he was put to bed. A call came for him to go into the cave for the fourth time and he was going to get out of bed to go. But strict orders had been sent from Louisville to put Miller to bed and see that he stayed there—and in bed he stayed.

Planned to Use Torch.

The next morning he was as full of hope as ever. This time he was going to take an acetylene torch in with him and crack away a few inches of the overhanging rock so that he could get all the way down to Collins' foot.

When he got to the cave he found there had been another cave-in soon after he left and that he couldn't get within fifteen feet of Collins. This, surely, was a blow.

Skeets went back in the crevice to see how bad it was. He found that all that had been said was true. In fact, he went a little too far and was greeted with a shower of rock from the ceiling. This was enough. He talked a while to Collins and assured him that help would be there in a little while.

Collins told him that the fall had dislodged the boulder that was holding his foot and that he was free.

He said that he was hungry and asked for some food.

"You remember that bottle of milk I put up over your head last night," Miller told him. "Reach up and get it and that will keep you until we get in with help."

"I can't reach it," the imprisoned man said.

"Then you must not be free," Skeets told him.

"No, I don't guess I am," Collins said, and there was a hopeless tone in his voice which formed a saddening

(Continued on Page 8, Column 1.)

Miller Recounts Sand Cave Experiences

COLLINS' KIN HOLD TO HOPE

Father of Rock-vise Victim Keeps Long Vigil Bravely.

STEP-MOTHER FAINTS

Special to The Courier-Journal.

Cave City, Feb. 7.—Watching drearily while the teeth of the earth seem to be biting more and more firmly about Floyd Collins, his two brothers, Homer and Marshal, his father, step-mother and sister keep faith, though the neighbors deny gloomily that there is any longer faith to keep.

Homer Collins was the first person to reach Floyd down the narrow track. Homer and Marshal wriggled repeatedly down the crooked chimney that led to their brother's cell and fed him.

Although others claim to have gone to the trapped victim, but other and later visitors reported crevices not far down are stuffed with coffee, milk, potato and soup bottles. Three blankets and several pairs of gloves for which Collins had asked were rammed into a crack part way down the tunnel, it was discovered by a later explorer.

Outside the mouth of the cavern Floyd's father, Lee Collins, his legs crippled with rheumatism, stalks about in the muck and water, hobbling up to inquire wistfully of each rescue party that has returned.

When they shake their heads regretfully he stares a moment, then falls calmly aside to let them pass, his trust unruffled. Only once in an hour or so his hand quivers as he rubs it across his eyes, or plods back to stare at the soggy trough where the shovels are at work.

Floyd's step-mother, whom he calls affectionately Miss Nan, walked to the cave entrance in spite of a feeble heart. She collapsed when she peered down into the murk of the opening, and was carried away.

Homer Collins has not slept nor left the scene of the frantic digging since Monday. Marshall, equally indomitable, made the nerve-racking trip repeatedly until outside aid arrived, when he wilted with exhaustion, becoming almost an invalid. Marshall is employed in a Louisville factory and had come to Cave City to visit his family over the week-end.

SAND CAVE PRISONER



FLOYD COLLINS.

Stumbled On First Cave In Collins Farm

Was Companion of Edmund Turner, New York Terrain Student.

Special to The Courier-Journal.

Cave City, Ky., Feb. 7.—Floyd Collins made his first cave discovery fifteen years ago when he was 20 years old. Since then he has spent most of his waking time prowling the interlacing tunnels that make a rockwork sponge of Central Kentucky.

He stumbled on his first cave on his own farm, a few miles from Cave City. It was a small one and of no great importance in a section where almost every brushheap hides the open lips of some subterranean channel.

Later Edmund Turner came from New York to study terrain and rock formations in the neighborhood and made his home with the Collins family. Turner was credited with discovering Great Onyx Cave. He spent a year in the mountains and during that time Floyd became his companion. Together they discovered Dorsey Dome Cave in 1912.

Five years later, December 17, 1917, Floyd came upon Crystal Cave.

It was on September 13 of that year that he noticed the depression that led to its discovery, and followed it into the channel for 100 yards. In December he followed air passages and broke into the main cavern.

He was so fascinated by the windings of his new cave that he stayed in it for eighteen hours, going in at 6 o'clock in the morning and crawling out at midnight on his hands and knees after his lard-oil torch had burned away.

He had been trying for two years to get the contract to explore the area where he is imprisoned. Four weeks ago he signed a contract with himself as half-owner and the other divided among three farmers whose land is tunneled by it.

He started his preparations at once and made preliminary explorations. Collins realized the danger he was running. He told neighborhood boys when he went in Friday morning, "well, if I don't come out you'll at least know where to find me."

Collins treated his explorations for new caves as recreation after the humdrum work of guiding tourist parties through beaten passageways, which has been his occupation much of the time.

He hoped some day to discover a cave which would be large enough to earn him an ample income on a part ownership basis. It was with this in mind that he undertook the pursuit of the new tunnel.

Woodchuck Led Collins To Great Crystal Cave

Search for Lost Trap Uncovered Clew to Majestic Cavern.

(From "Mammoth Cave and the Cave Region of Kentucky," by Helen I. Randolph. Copyright.)

The famous bear which sponsored Mammoth Cave found his peer in the more humble groundhog to whom grateful acknowledgements are given for the discovery of the Great Crystal Cave, located about five miles from Mammoth Cave on the Mammoth Cave and Munfordville Road, adjoining the links of the Bluegrass Country Club, and close to the entrance to Salts Cave.

A few years ago, Lee Collins of Edmonson and Hart Counties owned what is designated (by those who do not know the potential value of the cave region) as "a poor hill farm."

Mr. Collins was rearing a family of nine children in an old log house of the type built by Kentucky pioneers. He had difficulty in securing funds to buy the bare necessities of life, and in order to eke out an existence, he began trapping, as the cave region is, even at the present day, the home of many fur-bearing animals.

In looking over his traps one morning, Floyd Collins (a son of Lee), discovered that one he had placed in what is colloquially known as a "sink" had disappeared. Evidently some animal had been caught in the trap, and in its struggles had gone down through the "vent" in the sink, taking the trap down through the trail with it.

Here again luck played its ever-present part in the cave country. The disappearance of the trap furnished Mr. Collins with his first clue to the presence of a cave underlying his land.

But the mere surface indication of a cave does not give an idea of the gruelling labor that may lie between its first intimation and its final discovery. After weeks of labor—much of it dangerous in the extreme, as men have been killed in cave exploration work—Floyd Collins entered the ante-chamber of a cavern as beautiful as any known cavern in the world—the Great Crystal Cave.

Here, in a far corner of this chamber, which is 100 feet long and about thirty feet wide, with a ceiling as smooth as a concrete floor, he found the trap he had lost, and in its clutches was the torn foot of its groundhog discoverer. It is fair to assume that if any groundhog ever reappears in the cave region minus a foot he will be pensioned, and achieve immortality on every day in the year and not on February 2d alone.

In order to reach the portion of the Great Crystal Cave known as Grand Canyon Avenue, it was necessary to tunnel through stone ledges for about 150 feet, but once through the Grand Canyon Avenue one enters Nanny Ramsey's Flower Garden.

This homely designation touches a responsive chord in the heart of every man or woman who has ever cherished an old-fashioned flower garden. This flower garden is formed of the most exquisite and delicate of gypsum crystals, and is as dazzling in its white radiance as diamonds in sunlight.

Fairy Flower Garden.

Nanny Ramsey's Flower Garden, like many other avenues, grottoes and pendant draperies in the Great Crystal Cave, suggests an enchanted garden in some Arabian Nights tale. Here the white limestone rock has been converted through nature's magic into parterres of roses, opening daisies, sunflowers with rayed leaves, and the feathery chalices of the cactus. Chrysanthemums, and lilies bloom eternally in this realm, and the "Night Blooming Cereus opens securely her snowy cup."

The flowers in the Crystal Cave might have grown from "jeweled soil." In the Crystal Cave and in the Mammoth Onyx Cave and the Great Onyx Cave one is impressed everywhere with the evidence of DESIGN. Even the dullest minded cannot but wonder why in the cave region "the forms of earth's outer crust, her flowers, her fruits, the very heaven itself which spans her should be so wonderfully reproduced" unless it be by design.

As Bayard Taylor has said—"What law shapes the blossoms and the foliage of the vast crystalline gardens? What power is it that lies behind the mere chemistry of nature, impregnating her atoms with such subtle laws of symmetry? What but the Divine will, which first gave her being, and which is never weary of multiplying for man the lessons of infinite wisdom?"

It is not too much to say that the religious beliefs of every human being viewing the cave region are revivified. Billy Sunday has expressed very clearly his own emotions, following a limited glimpse of the cave region, when he said—"I felt smaller today than I ever did in my life for I've just returned from exploring caverns that God has scooped out underneath the green hills of Kentucky. There is only one word in the language to describe Mammoth Cave—and that is 'Mammoth.'

"If a man is inclined to have an exalted opinion of himself, just let him wander for a while through the vaulted grottoes and the silent abysses of Mammoth Cave, and I'll guarantee that he will come out into the sunlight again feeling like a small piece of nothing dropped by mistake into the infinite. The cave is staggering—it is an emotional knockout."

Visitors to the Crystal Cave also find their imagination stimulated by the fanciful formations, which suggest all the animals of the jungle, and the birds of the air.

One might be wandering on the bottom of the ocean if the coral, and seaweed and fishes which have been carved out in this cave could be taken as evidence. Neptune's Throne, and the Tritons of the famous fountain facing the Library of Congress find their counterparts in the Crystal Cave. For 1,000 feet there is a tunnel driven through solid beds of ochre and river sand. The course of this passageway is vaulted by a crystallized ceiling, and the walls are studded with crystals, sparkling like frost in the moonlight.

An unusual and arresting feature of the Great Crystal Cave is its multi-covered formation.

SLIM HOPE HELD FOR TRAPPED MAN

Frantic Efforts of Individual Rescuers Were Without Avail.

MANY TOOLS REACH SCENE

By POWELL LEE
Staff Correspondent of The Courier-Journal

Cave City, Ky., Feb. 7.—Floyd Collins, a stalwart young Kentuckian, adventuresome in spirit and daring in exploration, went into Sand Cave eight days ago prospecting for a new show place in this cave country. It was not his first trip into the small sinkhole opening at the bottom of a series of limestone ledges where the drainage from an over-the-hill spring poured down.

He did not change his shoes for the soft soled exploring kind specially selected and kept by him for such work, but instead went on down the water crevice determined to go further that day than he had ever been before.

He went further than he had even expected, but when he found himself in a close place down in the rocks, Nature took a hand and tumbled a rock shift across his left ankle.

A prisoner in the clutches of the cave he meant to conquer, he shouted for help. He whistled and pleaded. The first day his strength was used up in a good measure, but he was not exhausted.

No Alarm Spread.

No word of alarm was spread because it was not unnatural for Collins to go in caves and stay during long periods.

January 31, Jewell Estes, 17-year-old lad at whose home Collins lived, grew anxious and went to the cave. He crawled into the mouth and shouted for Collins. He received no answer and went on as far as he could and yelled at the top of his voice. Faintly from a level almost underneath him Estes heard Collins' pleading for some one to come to him. Collins wanted his brothers, Marshall Collins and Homer Collins, to help get his foot lose.

Young Estes ran to the house and summoned help.

The brothers came and Homer tried to get Floyd out. He tried several times, and once Homer, clad only in his underclothing, worked desperately to reach down to Floyd's feet to loosen the one that was caught.

Best Efforts Fail.

His frantic efforts brought no result and the alarm was spread in the cave country to send help to try to get Floyd Collins out of the water hole.

The countryside farmers then tried the rescue and after two more days came the word from the mouth of the cave that Floyd was still a prisoner. The outside world, and especially Kentucky, suddenly realized that a man, human, alive and breathing, was caught in the most peculiar way a human could be trapped.

Scientific help from the outside and suggestions began to pour in. William Miller, a newspaperman sent on the assignment to learn for The Courier-Journal first hand just what the situation was, crawled back into the cave, talked with the prisoner and administered to him. Food was passed to Miller and Homer Collins and at different times they fed the entombed explorer.

Nature Held On.

Another day and scientists, engineers, surveyors, stonemen, and in fact every occupation almost in the category of professions was represented at the scene.

Drills, dynamos, tractors, hoists, mud buckets, timber, tents, supplies and implements of every description were forwarded to the sinkhole in the wilderness, six miles from the nearest railroad, in a veritable sea of mud.

The fight is on and Collins' chances of getting out alive are practically the same as those of a pedestrian struck by lightning, which sometimes does happen.

NERVE-TRYING TRIPS DOWN TO COLLINS TOLD

Young Reporter Details His Part In Futile Attempts to Free Victim From Natural Trap Under Ground.

PLACING OF LIGHT EXPLAINED

"Skeets" Tells of Placing Lamp Around Man's Neck On Leaving Him When Hopes Were Still High.

By WILLIAM BURKE MILLER.
Staff Correspondent for The Courier-Journal.

Sand Cave, Cave City, Ky., Feb. 7.—When I received an assignment to go to Sand Cave Sunday night, three days after Floyd Collins was trapped, I thought I would be back in Louisville the next day. Instead, I have seen a week pass and have seen man after man risk his life cheerfully in an effort to take Collins from the clutch of a huge rock and a crevice. All have failed. Many have reached Collins, but none could help him.

As soon as I reached Cave City I heard many rumors, but no two alike. It bewildered me and, after an hour or so, I was certain of one thing only—that Collins was in the cave.

Heard Strange Stories.

During the taxicab ride to the cave I turned over in my mind what I heard in town. I heard strange stories of the cave itself and it wasn't long before I reached it.

I saw a rescue party come out. I listened while the men told of the trip inside. I tried to imagine what it was like and, finally, I got up enough nerve to ask to go back. I received permission and started in on my first trip at 10 o'clock Monday morning.

The experience was one I shall never forget. The narrow passageway sapped my strength the first few minutes. The jagged rocks, the small space, the dirty cold water cut and bruised and numbed my body. I reached, in time, a compartment larger than the remainder of the cave. I stopped for a breathing spell before continuing.

At the end of an unusually narrow pass I found Collins. He seemed to be semi-conscious. He would speak only a few words, so I did not press him then to tell me how he was trapped. It was 11:15 o'clock when I returned to the cave entrance.

Must Be Some Way.

Surely, I thought, something can be done for this man. There must be some way to get him out, some way to free his foot from the trap. I obtained permission to re-enter the cave and, at 5:30 o'clock, started back with Lieut. Robert Burdon of the Louisville Fire Department and Homer Collins, brother of Floyd. This time I took food with me. The prisoner's face was covered by a small piece of oilcloth, placed there by his brother to protect him from the constantly dripping water from above. I lifted it.

"Put it back," he asked. "The water, it hurts."

Before attempting to do more I fed Collins and gave him hot coffee to drink. In a little while I gave him a drink of whisky.

It helped him immediately. Then a few minutes later, I got from him the story of how he was trapped.

Collins had started out Friday morning to explore Sand Cave. He entered safely and found a cavern more beautiful than any he had ever seen before.

But he did not find any exit for

COLLINS FOUND FAITH IN CAVE

Ordeal of Imprisonment Brings Entrapped Man To Prayer.

Special to The Courier-Journal.

Cave City, Ky., Feb. 7.—The story of Floyd Collins' imprisonment in Sand Cave is incomplete without a chapter to tell of how "the faith that moves mountains" came to the man held in the jaws of the rock trap. Lee Collins, Floyd's father and an anxious watcher at the mouth of Sand Cave, furnished the background for the story.

Floyd, his father said, was not religious as a boy and a young man, a fact that caused great worry to his mother. Finally the mother of the young cave explorer and his brothers and sisters, came to the end of her span. On her death bed, the father said, she begged Floyd to accept the Word and affiliate with some church.

The son, however, secure in the strength of his youth, was not convinced, his father said, and declined to accede to his mother's last wish.

But the ordeal of a living entombment far down in the twisted passage of Sand Cave, his foot clamped securely in a rock vise devised by nature, and heroic efforts of blood relatives, friends of his youth and brave volunteers brought home the lesson of faith and belief in a divine power.

As the weary hours wore slowly away he learned to pray; a prayer to Him for assistance and deliverance and a prayer of humble trust in His divine wisdom.

Floyd Collins from his prison chamber prayed for freedom, for strength to bear the burden, but he realized escape was not assured and he also prayed:

"But if my death in Sand Cave be Thy will, Thy will be done."

back in the underground passageways. He was coming out and had climbed safely from a deep compartment when, in squeezing between two large rocks, he dislodged a large stone. It pinned his left foot to a natural crevice.

Called for Help.

All during the first day and night Collins called at the top of his voice, hoping against hope that someone would hear and knowing full well that his hopes were in vain. Twenty-four hours passed before Collins heard someone calling. But this caller couldn't get to him and went for a second man. This one reached him and saw how Collins was caught.

From that time on man after man went down that narrow passageway, each determined to come out with the prisoner and each coming out with the same story. Hope sometimes times when one would come out reporting release was near. Hope fled, again, when another would shake his head.

Tuesday morning I interviewed Lee Collins, the father, and the prisoner's two brothers, Homer and Marshall. I told them what I had found and what chances I thought the victim had. At 5:30 o'clock in the afternoon I returned inside the cave to feed Floyd.

His spirits were high. He was confident, then that efforts to save him would succeed. He seemed to feel that he was not to die just yet but he was ready.

Since then I have kept that Floyd Collins seldom passed. Perhaps, after lying down there with him, feeding him, pulling at him, chewing at rocks around him, I heard him say prayers more beautiful than any I had heard before.

Each prayer, I know came from his heart. Perhaps Floyd Collins had never prayed before, but he knew how, he knew how to plead with his God.

Went In Three Times.

Three times in succession I went in of the head of crews. Lieutenant Burdon was in each party. The men with me worked until it was almost beyond endurance to remain inside.

Many of them were far worse off than I. Many of them were constantly being bruised by some falling rock, or lying in icy water.

Collins was unusually optimistic when I left him. He thought then that the narrow would see him free.

Before taking leave of him I placed around his neck, under his collar, a wire, at the end of which was an electric light. I placed the globe at his neck where it would help keep him warm. I arranged the blankets around him, placed these by his brother, and promised him I'd be back.

It was 2 o'clock Wednesday morning when I arrived at the mouth of the cavern, from where I was taken to a hotel.

While lying in bed I told myself that I could get Collins out if I could obtain a torch and burn a larger opening. It the two stones immediately above him which prevented me from reaching down to his foot.

Already I had reached to his shin and, on one trip, he was able to help me by shoving rocks to within my reach. At 10 o'clock I was rested sufficiently to return to the cave.

Told of Cave-In.

I was informed that part of the passage-way between Collins and the entrance had collapsed, and I found this to be true when I went inside. I returned to the surface and, after a short rest, started back with a field telephone.

On this trip I was going too fast and came unexpectedly on the cave-in. As a result quite a bit of rock and dirt fell on my feet, but I squirmed back over and through it.

Crew after crew went in to clear the way so I went back to the hotel at Cave City. The work of clearing out the tunnel was unfinished when I returned to the cave at 7 o'clock at night and volunteered to aid.

Other plans had been made, however, and I was told that it would be early morning before I could enter. Several other crews were ahead of me, I found, with the result that I spent most of the time at the entrance.

Finally one crew came out about midnight and reported another cave-in, more serious than any other, and said it would be impossible to save Collins in this manner.

It seemed dark for Collins, then. I seemed certain that the foundations on which his hopes were based soon would be in ashes. I knew Collins had not been fed since early Wednesday morning, when I carried food to him, and I began to fear.

I knew a bottle of milk was at his head, but I knew he could not reach it without aid. I feared for him, but there was nothing to do—nothing but an organized effort.

This soon was to occur. Before long Lieut. Gov. H. H. Denhardt was in command and then, for the first time, the work went ahead on carefully laid plans, where before plans were picked at random.

It will not be long, now, before Floyd Collins will be taken from the trap. But whether he will be dead or alive only the future can tell.

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