

Confusion preceded tragedy

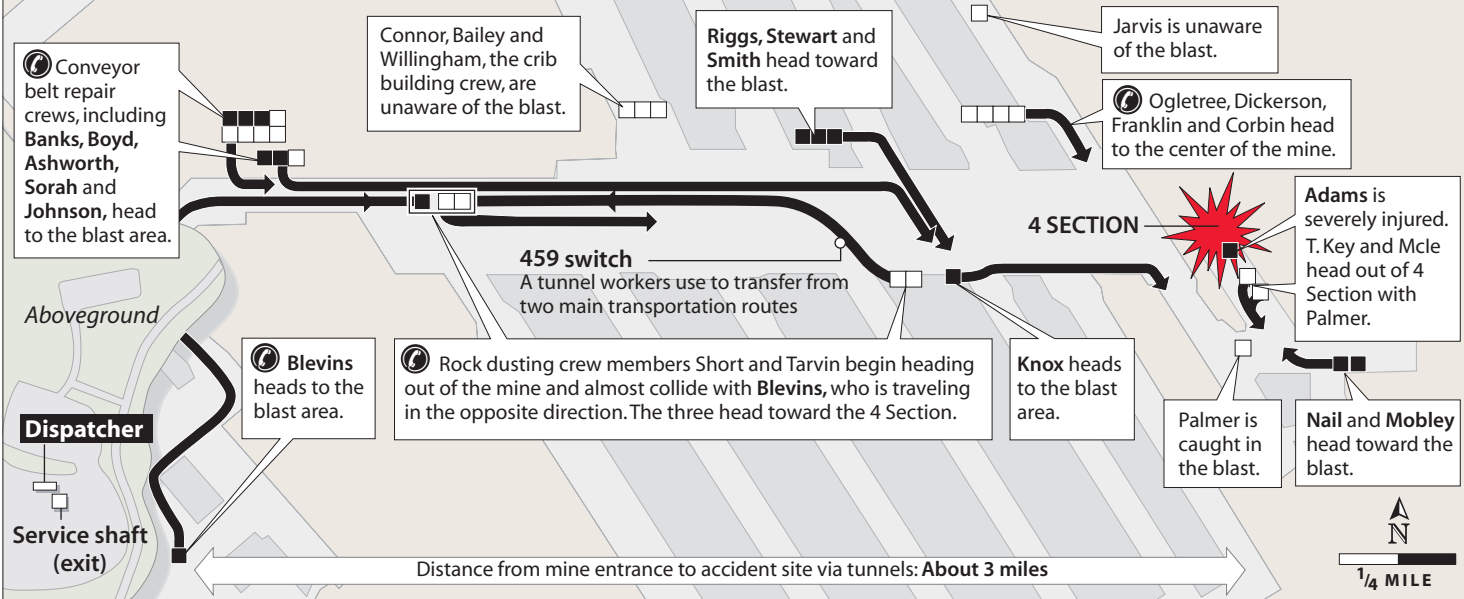
On Sept. 23, 2001, 32 miners were performing maintenance work at Jim Walter Resources No. 5 Mine when falling rock caused a spark that lit a pocket of methane gas. After receiving an initial report from workers near the explosion, aboveground dispatcher Harry House spoke with other workers spread through the mine. Based on the information from House and from each other, miners began moving either toward the explosion to help or away from the area, fearing a dangerous situation. A second, more intense blast 50 minutes later killed 13 miners.

According to surviving miners, company records and union documents, the following sequence plots the events.

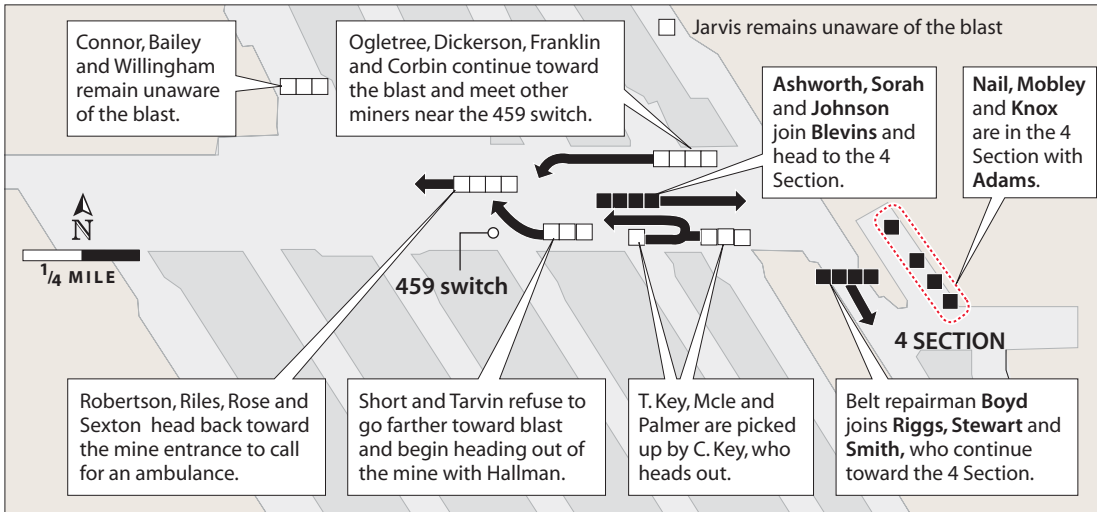
KEY: □ Miners who survived (below) ■ Miners who were killed (Names in bold) ➔ Miners' movements 📞 Communication with dispatcher

Miners who survived: Al Bailey, Thomas Connor, M. Corbin, Jimmy Dickerson, Benny Franklin, Billy Hallman, Randy Jarvis, Chris Key, Tony Key, Mike Mcle, Charlie Ogletree, Skip Palmer, Vonnie Lee Riles, Gene Robertson, Ricky Rose, Stuart Sexton, Jerry Short, Robert Tarvin, Lonnie Willingham

🔴 FIRST EXPLOSION (About 5:15 p.m.)

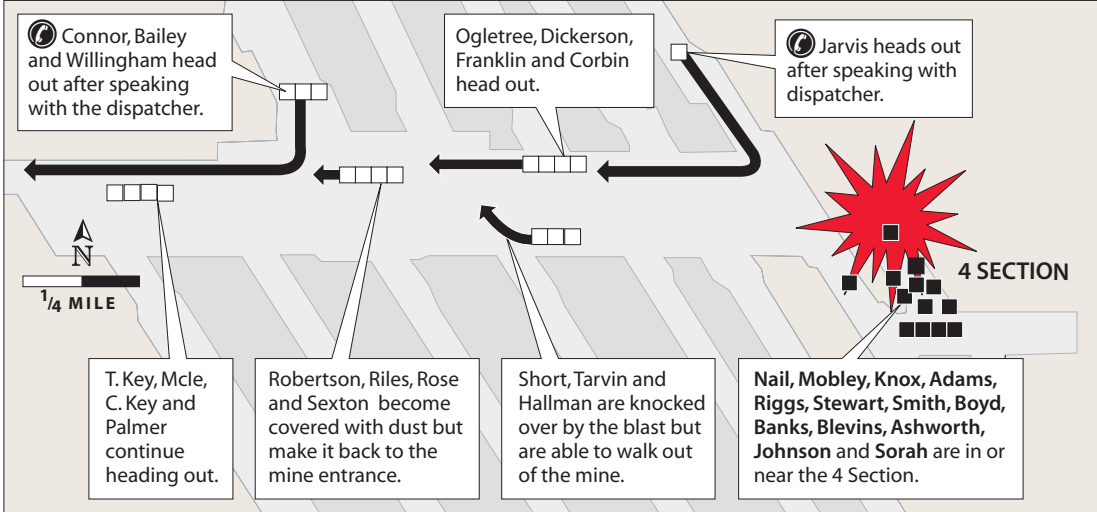


BETWEEN EXPLOSIONS



Note: Banks' whereabouts could not be determined from available records and interviews

🔴 SECOND EXPLOSION (About 6:05 p.m.)



Sources: Interviews with miners, company records, union documents

Chicago Tribune/Max Rust and Phil Geib