

HEADLONG DOWN SHAFT FOURTEEN LOSE LIVES

Cage in Stratton's Independence Mine in Colorado Is Run Into Sheaves and Cable Parts.

ENGINEER MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TERRIBLE ACCIDENT

MAN AT THROTTLE SAID TO HAVE SENT CAR WITH ITS LOAD OF MINERS INTO TOP OF GALLOWS FRAME—POSSIBLE THAT INVESTIGATION WILL DEVELOP FACT THAT MACHINERY WAS DEFECTIVE—VICTIMS PROBABLY DEAD LONG BEFORE THEIR BODIES REACHED THE SUMP—ALL ARE STRIPPED OF THEIR CLOTHING BY RESISTANCE OF AIR—FEW ARE FORTUNATE TO CLING TO SUPPORTS AND THUS SAVE THEIR LIVES—FATAL MISHAP OCCURS WHILE MEN ARE BEING HOISTED TO THE SURFACE FROM LEVELS DEEP IN THE GROUND—SHEAVE WHEEL BREAKS UNDER TERRIFIC STRAIN PUT UPON IT BY THE REVOLVING DRUM OF THE ENGINE—LIST OF DEAD.

[By Associated Press.]

VICTOR, Colo., Jan. 26.—As a result of an accident which occurred about 3 o'clock this morning at the Stratton Independence mine located near the center of this city, fourteen men are dead and one other severely injured.

THE DEAD.

W. R. Frazier,
John Sebeck,
Joe Smitherum,
Edward Twiggen,
L. A. Wagoner,
H. A. Yeoman,
Edward Smith,
Joe Overy,

H. F. Brown,
W. B. Collins,
J. L. Steward,
Frank Cochran,
L. P. Jackson,
Harry Cogene.

THE INJURED.

James Bullbek, body bruised and scalp wounds.

In the main shaft of the mine sixteen men were being hoisted in the cage from the sixth, seventh and eighth levels. When the cage got to the surface in the shaft house the engineer, for some reason unexplained, was unable to stop the en-

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gine and the cage with its load of human freight was drawn up into the gallows frame, where it became lodged temporarily. The strain on the cable caused it to part, releasing the cage, which went down the shaft at a terrific momentum.

Two of the occupants of the cage, however, had become entangled with the timber rods near the top of the gallows frame and one of them, L. P. Jackson, was crushed to death by the sheave wheel falling upon him. The other, James Bullbek, had a marvelous escape from death, but received painful injuries. He was rescued from his position by men in the shaft house.

All Are Dead.

The shift boss and a number of miners later went down into the mine through another compartment of the shaft and found that the fourteen men who started with the cage on its wild flight of 1,500 feet to the bottom of the shaft were dead, their bodies being scattered at the stations at different points.

Their arms and bodies were mangled, their heads crushed and their clothing stripped from their bodies. From the 700-foot level to the bottom the shaft is spattered with blood, with here and there pieces of flesh clinging to projections. At the bottom of the shaft stands twenty-five feet of water and into this the cage plunged. Some of the men were carried with the cage into this sump.

Cannot Explain Accident.

Manager Thomas Cornish was prostrated by the news of the accident and is unable as yet to offer any explanation of the affair. A squad of military has taken charge of the property and citizens will not be allowed to enter the mine or shaft house until after a thorough examination of the machinery has been made by competent engineers.

Frank Gellese, the engineer in charge of the machinery when the accident occurred, surrendered himself to the military and was locked up in the bull pen. He would not express any opinion as to how the cage got beyond control. Gellese is a new comer in the district, but is said to have been strongly recommended as a competent engineer.

Nearly All Strangers.

Most of the victims of the disaster were strangers in the district, having come from the Coeur d'Alenes, the Lake Superior mines and other districts, to take the places of strikers in Cripple Creek.

The bodies buried under the cage at the bottom of the sump have not yet been recovered.

Nearly all the men killed leave widows and children. Harry Cogene had a wife and three children who are in Michigan. Edward Twiggen and Frank Cochran were from the Coeur d'Alenes.