

M/NM FATAL

1906 - 0005

REPORT OF A HOISTING ACCIDENT
AT THE ROLLING MILL MINE
SEPTEMBER 20, 1907 - MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN
10 MEN KILLED

September 20, 1907: Rolling mill mine, Negaunee, Michigan;
10 killed

(From files of the Daily Mining Journal, Marquette, Michigan)

Nine miners were killed instantly and a tenth man died later of injuries suffered when a loaded cage dropped from surface to the bottom, a distance of 662 feet. Seven other miners suffered serious injuries.

The cage was resting on chairs at the collar when the signal to lower was given. As was the usual custom, the hoist operator first raised the cage to release the chairs, and immediately after the cage dropped as if in a free fall. When the engineer realized that the cage was dropping out of control, he used all his strength to tighten a manually-operated brake wheel. Another employee in the hoist room stated he saw sparks flying from the brake drum, so he "threw on the hoisting gear." The rope broke at the drum and fell on the smashed cage. It was reported that the hoist continued to revolve at a terrific speed after the rope had left the drum.

ACCIDENTS IN MARQUETTE COUNTY MINES--In Marquette county, Michigan, during the year ending Sept. 30, and average number of 6744 men were employed in 40 mines, one quarry, two explorations, and about 20 drill operations. There were 37 fatal accidents in the year, one to every 189 men, a greater proportion than at any previous time in that county. This increase was due largely to the deaths of 10 men at the Rolling Mill mine, caused by the fall of the skip from the surface to the bottom, about 700 ft. The cause of this accident has not been determined and doubtless never will be.

Among the other causes of death, falls of ground were responsible for 10 fatalities; blasting 4; jumping moving cage, 2; falling down ladder-way, 2; being caught with cars, 2; and other causes resulted in one death each.

It is claimed that, a side from the accident at the Rolling Mill mine, the other deaths were caused largely through the carelessness of the men themselves or their comrades. Scarcity of labor has compelled the employment of more inexperienced men than in former years and this is thought to account for many of the accidents.