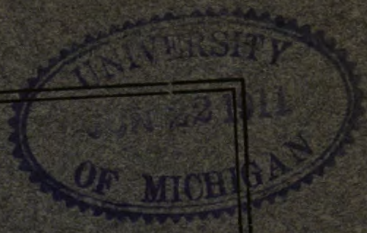


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BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

Inspector of Coal Mines

OF THE

STATE OF MONTANA

FOR THE YEARS 1909-10

Joseph B. McDermott, Inspector

JANUARY 1, 1911

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING COMPANY, HELENA, MONTANA



In submitting the report of this Department of the State Government we feel considerably elated over the increased production of coal, in our Montana mines, over any corresponding period of time in the history of coal mining in the state.

The Production for 1909 period and 1910 period, from Oct. 31, of 1908 to Oct. 31, 1910, was—5,511,925 tons of coal.

The greatest production reported previously was during our Fiscal Years 1907 and 1908, when the production was reported at 4,008,911 tons an increase in production the two last years over the two preceding years of 1,503,014 tons or 37 per cent increase; the development and equipment in and around the coal properties have kept pace with increased production, but the accident list grows no less, tis true the figures will show that during 1907 and 1908 period, that each 160,356 tons of coal produced, cost one life; that each 38,547 tons of coal produced there was a serious accident, and in 1909 and 1910 period there was produced for each life lost, 190,066 tons of coal; for each serious accident, 48,341 tons, but the rate killed and injured, per thousand employed, is no less and in fact for fatal accidents, greater.

A serious disaster occurred in one of our mines, November 20, 1908, in which Nine men lost their lives and several more had very narrow margin in getting to the surface with theirs; a wooden crib, put in for support of the roof at 3rd East entry by some means was set on fire, the slope was downcast for the air current and in a very short time the mine was filled with smoke and men warned to get out of the mine, nine were lost; several more overcome by the gases generated by the burning wood; this mine No. 2 of the N. W. I. Co., Red Lodge, Carbon County, was connected to No. 4 slope by rock tunnel, also with No. 1½ vein with an incline tunnel, the men rescued were brought out by one or the other openings.

The origin of the fire remains a mystery although evidence at the Coroner's Inquest, which lasted two days, was offered showing there were seven persons at or near the crib that was the cause of the disaster, within one half hour of the time that the alarm was given to get out of the mine.

Herbert Sands being asked at the inquest: "How long it had been since he left the crib until he got back there and

found the crib on fire?", answered "I should judge, between 6 or 7 minutes just long enough to go up to the top and bring an empty trip back."

That the mine at the time was not satisfactory to the inspector—ventilation of No. 2—nor to the General Superintendent C. C. Andersen who was making efforts to re-arrange the ventilation of that mine and in 2 or 3 days more would have moved No. 2 fan to the top of the inclined tunnel on No. 1½ vein and then the results of a fire in that mine would be a different story.

The Inspector is of the opinion that some one carelessly changing a cotton or something of that kind unconsciously set fire to the crib that caused so much havoc and nothing good would come of acknowledging it at this time.

The sensational story of the fire sent broadcast at the time of a fire that had been walled up in that mine for several years, was to say the least ill-advised—the fire walled up is in No. 4 vein, is under control as well as it is possible to have such things and there is some 200 feet of Rock between the veins and the fire is the lower strata of the two.

Without attempting to flatter we say that under the present management things look different around the property of the N. W. I. Co., since the management changed hands. Read the story of improvements under the head of improvements in and around mines.

This disaster added 21 to our accident list.

**Victims of the Red Lodge Mine Disaster  
11/20/1908**

Date	Name	Age	Mine	
1908NOV20	BESSOLA, BATTISTO	18	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	GASPER, SAM	21	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	JOKELA, ANDREW G	34	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	KERANEN, ANDREW	27	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	MATTSON, JOHN H	40	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	NEIMA, VICTOR	28	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	SINKO, JACK	30	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	STURRONIS, TONEY	28	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	YANKOWSKI, FRANK	29	RED LODGE	Fatal
1908NOV20	DEAN, EDWARD		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	ELICH, JOHN	23	RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	FLAHERTY, JOHN		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	HAGGERTY, WILLIAM		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	HUTA, MATT.		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	JONES, SAM		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	KEMP, ALBERT		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	MAKI, OSCAR H		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	RANAGAN, JOHN		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV20	SANDEEN, JOHN		RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV30	ALANKO, JACK	33	RED LODGE	Nonfatal
1908NOV30	TUSKA, WALLA	22	RED LODGE	Nonfatal