

M/NM FATAL

REPORT OF A HOISTING ACCIDENT AT BUTTE SUPERIOR MINE
BUTTE, MONTANA
SEPT. 3, 1911 - 6 KILLED

It was customary at this mine for the station tender to collect the dull drill steel on the various levels about 15 minutes before the end of the shift and have it hoisted through the Black Rock Shaft to the surface in what was called the "drill boat." Only the station tenders were allowed to ride with this steel, but on the night of the accident five men, desirous of getting out early, took the chance of quitting shortly before the end of the shift to ride up with the steel.

The cage started at the 1,300 level, where drill steel was loaded, and one victim got on there. At the 1,200 level station two more men got on, and two others at the 900 level. When the cage left the 900 level it contained about 250 pieces of steel in the drill boat and six men, including the cage tender. The cage was so crowded that the station tender, who stayed behind, had trouble in closing the cage gate.

It is not known exactly what happened; either the drill steel got disarranged or, more probably, one of the men got caught by a wall plate of the shaft timbering; at any rate, both steel and men were dragged from the upper deck of the cage where they were riding. The hoisting engineer felt a slight tremor in the rope and stopped the hoist, which was running slowly because of hoisting drill steel. One of the men was found on the lower deck of the cage and the other five in the shaft sump; all six were dead.