

**LIST OF FATAL ACCIDENTS WHICH OCCURRED IN THE
COAL MINES OF THE STATE OF COLORADO
DURING THE YEAR 1921**

January 7—MIKE PAVLETICH, Austrian, trackman, experience 7 years, age 28 years, widower, two children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Kebler No. 2 mine, Huerfano county, was crushed to death between a loaded car and roof of mine. Deceased had loaded his tools on top of a loaded car and was riding with the rope rider on the front end of this car. The driver, thinking the car would jump the track because the rope was catching on the fish plate bolt on side of track, jumped off to give bell signal to stop. In the meantime, deceased attempted to get off also, but at a point where the roof was low, which threw his body between the moving car and roof crushing him. It is against the rules at this mine for anyone to ride the trips except the rope rider. Had deceased observed this rule the accident would have been avoided.

January 8—JOHN DA ANDREA, Italian, machine miner, experience 40 years, age 63 years, married, no children, employed by the National Fuel Company at the Monarch No. 2 mine, Boulder county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was in the act of propping his working place when the rock fell from the roof. The place was well timbered and the accident is not charged to anyone, but was due to the inherent danger of the work.

January 12—MIKE H. KACHANER, Russian, miner, experience 6 years, age 28 years, single, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Cameron mine, Huerfano county. Deceased and his partner on entering their room tested the roof before starting to work and decided it was safe. After loading two cars deceased again tested the roof, telling his partner it was loose. They took down some of the rock and found it was too hard to get it all down, and decided they would consult the mine foreman. The partner went to the opposite side of the room to set a prop and deceased started to remove the rock taken down when a slab of rock gave way from a slip, falling on deceased and killing him instantly. Accident was due to faulty judgment, had the rock been taken down, the accident would have been avoided.

January 17—MATT LARSON, Austrian, rope rider, experience 8 years, age 37 years, single, employed by the Sunnyside Coal Mining Company at the Sunnyside mine, Huerfano county, was crushed to death between pillar and car. Deceased was riding on front end of a six car trip. The car attached to the

rope left the track on the short side of curve, on the same side was the passing room and bell wire. Deceased's light going out, he jumped off at the narrow side or opposite the side on which the derailed car was going. The latter passed him, but the other part of the trip remained on the track and he was rolled between it and the pillar for a distance of twenty feet. Deceased losing his light was the principal cause of the accident, as he was an experienced rope rider. The accident is classed as "Unavoidable."

February 5—JOHN RUSSELL, American (Colored), machine miner, experience 20 years, age 45 years, single, employed by the Temple Fuel Company at the Brodhead No. 9 mine, Las Animas county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was working single in an entry at a point which was being widened out for a cross cut. He had loaded a car and then went out and told a co-worker that he had a bad rock in his place. He was told to take it down or timber it. Sometime after, the rock was heard falling, and upon investigation, deceased was found with a broken neck under the rock. The entry was well timbered to a distance of $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the face. The latter was, however, 11 feet wide allowing too much open space between timbers and face. The accident could have been avoided had deceased taken the rock down.

February 10—JOE SACCOCI, Italian, machine miner, experience 12 years, age 32 years, married, one child, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Kebler No. 1 mine, Huerfano county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was going to remove a fall of rock which had occurred near the face of the back slope. He was advised to begin timbering at the outer edge of the fall to make the place safe as he advanced. Instead, he climbed at once to the top of the fall and was caught by a second fall which resulted in his death. Had deceased been careful, the accident would have been avoided.

February 12—EDWARD HAMIDY, Italian, hoistman, experience 2 years, age 21 years, single;

WEAVER SHARP, American, miner, experience 24 years, age 36 years, married, one child;

SAM PATRICK, American, miner, experience 22 years, age 35 years, married, three children;

CELESTIN TESTAS, French, shot firer, experience 19 years, age 31 years, married, two children; and

HY. WAGNER, American, shot firer, experience 28 years, age 60 years, single. He and the above men were employed by the Moffat Coal Company at the Oak Hills No. 2 mine, Routt county, were killed by a dust explosion caused by blown-out or overcharged shots. See full report.

February 25—ROBERT FALAGRADY, Italian, driver, experience 4 years, age 20 years, single, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Sopris mine, Las Animas county, came to his death by electrocution. Deceased in some way unknown, accidentally came into contact with a live trolley wire, at the man-trip station located on an entry off the main haulage road. According to evidence, the cut-off switch had been drawn and the power cut off from the man-trip station and he must have come in contact with the live wire at the outer edge of the cut-off switch. The latter had been tested for leakages and found in good condition. The man-trip station also was guarded for a distance of 500 feet. The accident is classed as unforeseen and unavoidable.

March 1—SCOTT MANLEY, American, assistant mine foreman, experience 15 years, age 38 years, married, one child, employed by the Canon-Reliance Coal Company, at the Canon mine, Fremont county, came to his death by electrocution. Deceased was making an examination of the return airway at a certain point, he encountered water standing several inches above the track. To keep out of it he walked on the rail but lost his footing. In an effort to save himself from falling, he accidentally caught hold of a live wire carrying a voltage of 440 A. C. The wire was insulated and showed no broken places. The accident was a misadventure and no one can be charged with its responsibility.

March 1—MANUEL CRUZ, Mexican, rope rider, experience 14 years, age 40 years, married, no children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Kebler No. 1 mine, Huerfano county, was killed by being squeezed between a car and rib. Deceased was riding up a panel having a ten per cent grade, when his cars were derailed on the narrow side and he was thrown between cars and rib, receiving such injuries that he died several hours later. A careful examination disclosed no cause for the derailment of the cars and it seems to have been a case of misadventure while deceased was performing his duties.

March 8—JAMES RICHARDSON, Scotch, motorman, experience 12 years, age 24 years, married, two children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Frederick mine, Las Animas county, came to his death by electrocution. Deceased was cleaning track and was in the act of changing a trolley pole when he came into contact with a live wire. The accident was unforeseen and unavoidable.

March 8—RAFAEL BERNANDEZ, Mexican, machine miner, experience one year, age 24 years, single, employed by the Victor-American Fuel Company at the Delagua mine, Las Animas county, was injured by a fall of rock on February 14th, and died from the effects of the injuries sustained, on the above

date. Deceased had removed coal with a pick from the face of his room and had exposed a slip running parallel with the face intersecting another slip running parallel with a pillar. The place was well timbered and deceased considered it safe and began loading a car when the rock gave way without any warning, forcing out prop and cross bar, and fell on him injuring him to such an extent that he died 22 days later. The accident was due to the inherent danger of the work and no one can be held responsible for it.

April 4—PETE KLIMO, Pole, pick miner, experience 7 years, age 33 years, single, employed by the Oakdale Coal Company at the Oakdale mine, Huerfano county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was drawing a pillar. He had set a prop and started to mine when suddenly a number of props gave way and rock and coal from an area 100 sq. ft. and 5 ft. thick fell. Deceased made an effort to escape but was caught by the edge of the fall and killed instantly. The accident was unforeseen and no one can be held responsible.

April 22—WILLIAM SOTIROPOULOS, Greek, pick miner, experience 8 years, age 56 years, married, four children, employed by the Victor-American Fuel Company at the Delagua mine, Las Animas county, was injured on the 3rd of April by a pit car running over him and died later on the above date. Deceased was riding the front end of a loaded car, which had been in his way and which he had intended to move only a short distance, when he reached the curve he tried to set the brake and in attempting this he fell forward on to the track and was run over by the car. Had deceased heeded the rules of the company which forbade employes, other than the drivers, riding cars, the accident in all probability would have been avoided.

April 27—PAUL MANDERICH, Austrian, pick miner, experience 21 years, age 38 years, married, two children, employed by the Victor-American Fuel Company at the Delagua mine, Las Animas county, was killed by a fall of rock. The accident happened at the face of a room which was well timbered. Deceased was working at the gob side of the room, and his partner in the cross cut. Without giving any warning, a large pot rock fell from the roof between the face and the last row of timbers, a distance of about 5½ feet. The rock was released by a slip which had not been visible to the men working under it. This accident was due to the inherent danger of the work and no one can be charged with its responsibility.

May 5—J. A. CHAVEZ, Mexican, pick miner, experience 27 years, married, ten children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Ideal mine, Huerfano county, was injured Jan. 5th, by a fall of rock and died on the above date. On the day of the accident deceased had gone into his room

to work, his lamp went out and while filling it with carbide, a prism shaped rock fell out of the room neck, striking him and breaking his back, which, with other internal injuries, resulted in his death four months later.

May 23—BALDOMANIO LOPEZ, Mexican, pick miner, experience 3 years, single, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Pictou mine, Huerfano county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased and his partner had been working on a stump of coal 8 ft. wide by 8 ft. long between the outby cross cut and the open space where the pillar had been extracted. After they had loaded the coal which they had mined, they began removing their tools from the face preparing to leave the mine. While thus engaged, the remaining stump gave way, causing the coal and drawslate to fall on deceased, killing him instantly. The accident might have been avoided had the mine foreman visited the place earlier in the day and warned the men, or had the men realized the danger of a small stump of coal left under the above mentioned conditions.

June 3—LUCIANO D'ORAZIE, Italian, pick miner, experience 7 months, age 24 years, married, no children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Berwind mine, Las Animas county, was killed by a fall of bony and coal. Deceased and his partner were working in a room off a blind entry, the former had set a prop and was in the act of setting another when bony and coal gave way from an invisible slip, **falling on deceased** and killing him almost instantly. The place was well timbered and the accident was due to the inherent danger of the work.

June 6—MIKE OSPENKO, Russian, pick miner, experience 8 years, age 21 years, single, employed by the Moffat Coal Company at the Oak Hills No. 2 mine, Routt county, was killed by a fall of rock. The accident was due to a loose rock left in the roof after a fall had occurred and which either should have been taken down or properly timbered. As there was plenty of timber at hand and the condition of the roof was visible, the accident is charged to deceased's own negligence in not properly protecting himself.

June 15—JOHN DENNY, Macedonian, pick miner, experience not given, age 37 years, single, employed by the Amalgamated Development Corporation, at the Elk Creek mine. Routt county, came to his death by being pulled by a derailed push car, about a mile and one-half from the mine. Deceased and a gang of men were employed in re-enforcing with rock a bridge that was endangered by high waters. He was riding the car which was loaded with rock and pulled by a locomotive. The car was going down grade at a low rate of speed when the car jumped the track, pulling him under it for forty feet when the engine stopped. He was found in a serious con-

dition and died four hours later. There was no obstruction on the track and the accident cannot be accounted for. It was unforeseen and unavoidable.

June 20—JOE CHEPIRIO, Italian, machine miner, experience 6 years, age 32 years, married, no children, employed by the Mutual Coal Company at the Mutual mine, Huerfano county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was working in an entry preparing to load coal. Upon examining his roof, he asked the rope rider to bring him a cross bar, stating that he would not load coal until he had put up the timber. It is not usual at this mine to set cross bars in the entries, but they are kept in a convenient place so that the rope rider can get them in a short time when needed. In this instance the storage place was about 500 feet from the working face. The place was full of loose coal being all shot down, and in order to set the prop, it was necessary to move the coal. When the rope rider returned he found deceased lying dead under a large rock. The accident was unavoidable as deceased must have thought that the rock was too large to take down and therefore, was moving the coal in order to set the prop.

June 25—ALBERT SALAS, Mexican, trapper, experience 18 months, age 18 years, single, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Cameron mine, Huerfano county, came to his death by being crushed between a car and a rib. Deceased was trapping on the main slope and stated to his brothers before he died that he did not hear the trip of 21 empty cars coming in time to have the door open. In his haste and excitement he tried to open the door, but hearing the trip close behind him, he left the door and made a dash for the safety hole about 14 feet from the door when it is open. Before he could reach the shelter hole, the trip went through the door carrying it along and derailing 13 cars, scattering them in all directions, one of them caught him and fastened him to the rib of the shelter hole, crushing him so seriously that he died a few minutes after reaching the hospital in Pueblo, four hours after the accident occurred. Deceased was performing his duties and the accident was due to the inherent danger of the work.

July 7—G. A. HAMPTON, American, pick miner, experience 5 years, employed by the Triangle Coal Company at the Black Hawk mine, La Plata county, came to his death by a fall of rock. Deceased had left his assigned working place and entered the adjoining old workings, where he was caught by a fall of rock which resulted in his death. These old workings had been reported as "dangerous," but the company failed to post up the danger sign as required by law. Also there was no certified mine foreman employed to see that the mine was operated in accordance with the law. Therefore, the responsibility of the accident is charged to the company for failure

to fence off the dangerous place and for failure to engage the services of a certified mine foreman, and also for the impracticable method by which the mine was worked.

August 3—JOSEPH SWINEBERGER, German, machine miner, experience 30 years, age 49 years, married, three children, employed by the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company at the Vulcan mine, Boulder county, was injured by a fall of rock on July 29th, 1921, and died on the above date. Deceased was injured by a rock which fell between face and inside cross bar 5½ feet from face when he was preparing to set a prop. Testimony showed that deceased was a very competent miner and always willing to obey orders given pertaining to safety. The accident is classed as unavoidable.

August 9—PETE SONEFF, Bulgarian, pick miner, experience 8 years, age 36 years, married, no children, employed by the Victor-American Fuel Company at the Pinnacle mine, Routt county, was killed by a fall of rock. A large rock was hanging almost across the track in a room and supported by one prop set near the edge, while the roof surrounding it had fallen away, leaving the rock practically unsupported. Deceased was riding the rear end of a loaded car that he was letting down from the face and the vibration of the moving cars dislodged the rock. The responsibility is charged to the officials of the mine who had overlooked the rock, showing that their examinations were not thorough. The rest of the room was well propped and there were plenty of extra props on hand.

August 9—BUYRIL WINDSOR, American, engineer, experience none, age 19 years, single, employed by the Black Hawk Coal Company at the Primrose mine, Las Animas county, came to his death by electrocution. Deceased was an outside electrical hoisting engineer. According to the testimony given, he entered the mine entrance at his lunch hour, and placed himself close to the electric wires, taking hold of one and received the shock that killed him. Upon examination, it was found that the insulation was bared the distance of one and one-half inch on the side next the timber and was invisible and hard to detect. The accident is classed as unavoidable.

August 10—TONY KOMAR, Austrian, machine miner, experience 4 years, age 36 years, married, two children, employed by the Victor-American Fuel Company at the Radiant mine, Fremont county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was loading coal on an entry. A slip running diagonally across the entry released a rock which had been examined previous to the accident and was considered safe. The top being full of slips and very wet made the roof conditions very uncertain, therefore, the accident was unforeseen and unavoidable.

September 1—HERBERT V. FACKLER, American, machine miner, experience two weeks, age 32 years, married, one child,

employed by the Boulder Black Diamond Coal Company at the Black Diamond mine, Boulder county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was working with F. W. Fedder, father-in-law of deceased, who is a practical miner. They were loading coal when a large pot fell from the roof on deceased causing his death a short time afterward. The rock was surrounded on three sides by a smooth slip and broke off three feet from the face. The place was fairly well timbered and F. W. Fedder stated that he had tested the roof just prior to the accident and had considered it safe to work under. The accident was unavoidable and can be charged to no one.

September 14—K. TODOROFF, Bulgarian, pick miner, experience 10 years, age 36 years, married, two children, employed by the Colorado & Utah Coal Company at the Harris mine, Routt county, was killed by a fall of coal. According to evidence, deceased was responsible for the accident, having been warned that the coal he was mining was loose. The night previous he had fired two shots in the coal which did not bring it down, merely loosening it. Had he taken the precaution to either sprag it or take it down before he started to undercut it, the accident would have been avoided.

September 24—LAWRENCE McHUGH, Irish, machine miner, experience 35 years, age 63 years, married, nine children, employed by the Big Four Coal and Coke Company at the Centennial mine, Boulder county, was injured while working in his room by a piece of coal sluffing from a rib which fell on him and resulted in his death on the above date. On account of roof conditions at this mine coal sluffs from the sides. When the accident occurred, deceased was making a cap piece standing on the road thirty feet from the face. Although props are set along the sides of the road, no timbers had been put at the place where this piece of coal sluffed. Had this been done the accident would have been avoided.

October 7—ANGELO FABRIZIO, Italian, weigh boss, experience three years, married, three children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, at the Coal Creek mine, Fremont county, came to his death by electrocution. Deceased was in his office taking a burnt-out globe from a socket, to replace it by a new one. In order to reach it easily he climbed on to an iron pipe which was used as a speaking tube between his office and the engine room; in doing so he touched the brass bracket, and caused a current to form which struck him. The accident was unforeseen and therefore unavoidable.

October 14—JAMES H. HICKS, Colored, pick miner, experience 26 years, age 37 years, married, three children, employed by the Temple Fuel Company at the Brodhead No. 9 mine, Las Animas county, was killed by a fall of rock while extracting chain pillars. An invisible slip had been released and while the place was well timbered, the rock was so heavy that it gave

way, breaking the timbers and falling on deceased and killing him instantly. The fire boss had examined the place on his second visit on the day shift and did not discover any noticeable sign of danger. However, the place was worked only on night shifts, and extracting chain pillars in most cases is very hazardous, therefore, it is possible that had a mine foreman been employed for the night shift, the accident might have been avoided.

October 19—CLARENCE FRONK, American, machine runner, experience 23 years, age 43 years, married, two children, employed by the Boulder Valley Coal Company at the Boulder Valley mine, Weld county, was injured on October 11th, by a fall of rock and died on the above date. Deceased was under-mining coal with a puncher machine when a large piece of rock fell on him. He stated fifteen minutes after the accident that he was aware that the rock was loose and that he had tried to take it down, but failing, continued to work under it. Had he put a prop under it to make it safe it is possible the accident might have been avoided.

October 25—ALBERT POHNL, German, machine miner, experience 16 years, age 45 years, single, employed by the Moffat Coal Company at the Oak Hills mine, Routt county, was killed by a fall of rock. A shot in deceased's room the night before had knocked out two props, leaving a space of 25 feet from the face unprotected. It appears deceased had discovered that the rock was loose and was in the act of taking it down, when it fell on him, killing him instantly. The fire boss' book showed that he had reported the dangerous condition of this place. Therefore, the accident cannot be charged to anyone. The deceased was endeavoring to pull the rock down, and in case of failure, there were plenty of props close at hand.

October 29—ALBERT OAKS, American, laborer, no experience in coal mining, age 49 years, married, one child, employed by the Colorado & Utah Coal Company at the Harris mine, Routt county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased was working for a contractor who had charge of concreting the slope. The roof of the slope is fairly good and well timbered, but at the point where the accident occurred, it showed several offsets or edges, and it was from one of these that the rock fell. The accident was unforeseen and unavoidable.

November 1—JOSEPH DRATTER, Austrian, trackman, experience 25 years, age 41 years, single, employed by the Oakdale Coal Company at the Oakdale mine, Huerfano county, came to his death by a fall of top coal. Deceased was assisting the pillar boss in taking down loose coal at an intersection of two entries. Empty cars were set under this coal for the purpose of catching it as it fell. The pillar boss inquired of deceased if he were in the clear of the falling coal and upon his assur-

ance that he was, he placed a bar over the top of the coal and pulled it down. There was more of a fall than they expected and it caught deceased who was standing about two and one-half feet away from the car. The responsibility of this accident is charged to both pillar boss and deceased. They did not take the proper safeguards.

November 14—NICANOR SAID, Mexican, pick miner, experience 6 years, age 25 years, single, employed by Robt. Caddell at the Estella Mae mine, Huerfano county, was killed by a fall of rock. Deceased and his partner were engaged in taking off the outby corner of a cross cut in order to lay a long switch. After the coal had been taken down two temporary props were set under the exposed drawslate so that the coal could be loaded out to make room for permanent cross bars which could then be set with safety. Considering the temporary props safe until the coal was out of the way, they began to load coal, when the drawslate suddenly gave way, throwing out the props and letting the rock fall on deceased, killing him instantly. The accident was unforeseen and therefore unavoidable.

November 21—JIM COLLETTI, Italian, machine miner, experience 8 years, age 34 years, single, employed by the Routt Pinnacle Coal Company at the Routt Pinnacle mine, Routt county, was injured by a fall of rock on the 14th of November and died from the effects of the injury sustained on the above date. The accident occurred at the face of a room where the coal had been cut the night before. The foreman in visiting the place in the morning noticed that a rock in the roof was loose and instructed deceased to prop it, apparently it was not loose enough to pull down. The roof is of soapstone and very treacherous, but the deceased being a practical miner, should have tested it before trying to set a prop. He neglected to examine the roof and while setting a prop it fell on him. The cause of the accident may be charged to the carelessness of deceased.

November 29—WM. K. COOLIDGE, American, employed to feed coal crusher, experience 15 months, age 46 years, married and two children, employed by the Crested Butte Anthracite M. Company at the Smith-Anthracite mine, Gunnison county, came to his death by being crushed between car and car door. The accident occurred at the lower terminus of the gravity plane where the car dumped the coal while the door of same was held open by hooks attached to a bar. It is the custom when the car enters the gravity plane to hoist a flag indicating that it was not ready to be pulled up by the drum runner. Evidently there was no flag hoisted and consequently the car was pulled up and deceased was caught between it and the door and crushed to death. The accident was due to some mischance and no one is charged with its responsibility.

November 29—ORESTE STENECK, Austrian, pick miner, experience 17 years, age 34 years, married, two children, employed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at the Frederick mine, Las Animas county, was killed by being run over by a motor. Deceased and two other men had taken a motor from the mine entrance to ride to their work. After traveling a short distance, the motor arced and flashed a flame enveloping it and caused deceased, who was driving it, to fall in front of the motor and was run over. Mine officials claim that deceased had no permission to take the motor, but his partner stated that deceased told him he had. At any rate the motor should not have been driven except by a regular motorman.

December 12—ANTON KROPROSHEK, Austrian, miner, experience 8 years, age 36 years, married, no children, employed by the Utah Fuel Company at the Somerset mine, Gunnison county, was injured by a fall of coal on November 12th, and died on the above date. Deceased was working in a pillar room. He had finished loading a car and went to the face, bumping it with his pick, in doing so he released a slip and coal fell, which struck him and resulted in injuries so serious that he died from the effects of them a month later. The accident was a misadventure, and no one can be blamed for same.

December 13—G. E. DUNN, Supt., American, mine superintendent, experience 2 years, age 38 years, married, one child;

EUGENE F. BOVIE, Sr., American, laborer, age 55 years, married, two children;

EUGENE F. BOVIE, Jr., American, pick miner, age 25 years, single;

WILLIAM JONES, Welsh, pick miner, age 40 years, married, two children;

LOUIS GOLOB, Austrian, pick miner, age 32 years, single, and

LOUIS DORIGATTI, Austrian, pick miner, age 42 years, married, four children, all employed by the Collieries Company at the Satanic mine, Jefferson county, came to their deaths by being overcome by fumes generated by a mine fire. (See special report.)

December 18—ALFREDI PERNA, Italian, machine miner, experience 14 months, age 21 years, single, employed by the Big Four Coal and Coke Company at the Centennial mine, Boulder county, was injured by a fall of rock on December 14th, and died on the above date. Deceased was shoveling coal cuttings away from the machine puncher when a piece of coal and rock, weighing about 500 pounds, fell from the face, striking him. The accident was due to absence of proper spragging and the mine management is to blame for not enforcing this precaution.