

Cage Falls Hundreds of Feet After Long Cable Snaps.

Trapped in a steel cage, nine men were sent hurtling to their death at the bottom of a shaft when a hoist cable broke at the Morning mine at Mullan, Idaho, between midnight and 1 a. m. today.

Four of the nine were tentatively identified as:

Andrew Kese, 54, single, shoveler, Mullan.

Rex Mitheletta, 28, single, miner, Mullan.

Jerry Phelan, 28, married, timberman, Wallace. He had a four-year-old daughter.

Cleo Purcell, 28, married, miner, Mullan. He leaves two children, six and eight years old.

At 12:30 p. m. the Mullan News reported Louis Goff, 24, single, and August Siponan, 52, single, had been identified as victims. Goff is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Simeon F. Goff, E3206 Springfield, Spokane.

Horribly Mangled.

Positive identifications could not be made until after the entire night shift had been checked. The remaining bodies were crushed beyond recognition, and mine officials refused to give out more names until the shift roster had been checked again.

The tragedy, one of the worst in the history of mining operations in the Coeur d'Alene mining area, struck without warning while the night shift was leaving work shortly after midnight.

The men were being removed from the mine in a two-deck skip, or passenger elevator, in one of the four shafts entering the mine. Men had been taken aboard at the 3650, 3450 and 3250-foot levels, and the cage had stopped at the 3050-level for others when the accident occurred.

Lower Half Filled.

According to mine officials, the nine victims occupied the lower compartment. When the skip reached the 3050-level, it came to rest with the lower deck on a level with the platform. A signal was given to lower it so the upper section might be filled. It had come to a stop again, when the cable snapped, it was said.

The cable broke 1200 feet above the cage. Nearly three 5600 pounds—of steel cable crashed down upon the cage, wrecking the emergency mechanism, which, normally, would have halted it after a short drop.

Men, cage and cable fell into a twisted heap at the foot of the mine shaft, about 900 feet below the 3050-foot level.

It was necessary to use torches to cut away portions of the elevator and twisted wire before the bodies could be removed from the wreckage. All were terribly mangled.

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