

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Administrator
Coal Mine Safety and Health

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
(UNDERGROUND COAL MINE)

MULTIPLE FATAL ROOF FALL ACCIDENT

Starpoint No. 1 Mine (ID No. 42-00170)
Plateau Mining Company
Wattis, Carbon County, Utah

August 24, 1979

by

Herschel H. Potter
Chief, Division of Safety

James D. Carter
Coal Mine Safety Specialist

Originating Office - Mine Safety and Health Administration
4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22203
Joseph O. Cook, Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
(UNDERGROUND COAL MINE)

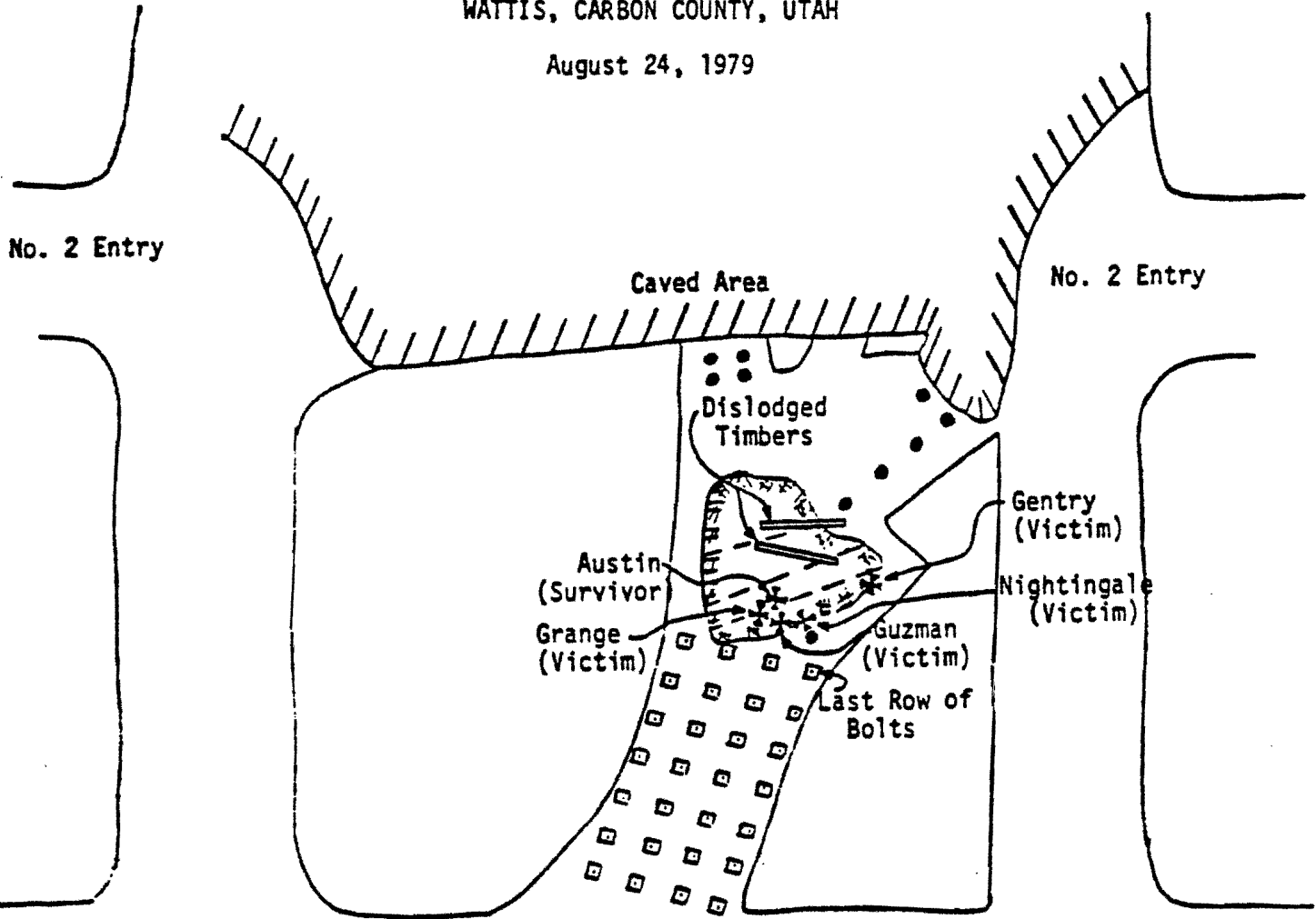
MULTIPLE FATAL ROOF FALL ACCIDENT

Starpoint No. 1 Mine (ID NO. 42-001/0)
Plateau Mining Company
Wattis, Carbon County, Utah

August 24, 1979

SKETCH OF MULTIPLE FATAL ROOF FALL ACCIDENT
 STARPOINT NO. 1 MINE (ID NO. 42-00170)
 PLATEAU MINING COMPANY
 WATTIS, CARBON COUNTY, UTAH





August 24, 1979



No. 3 Entry

Note: Development entries roof bolted as per plan

LEGEND

- Slips visible after accident
-  Roof fall perimeter
-  Perimeter of caved area
-  Roof bolts
-  Timbers set prior to accident

Scale: 1 inch = 20 feet

ABSTRACT OF INVESTIGATION

<p>Title of Investigation: Multiple Fatal Roof Fall Accident</p> <p>Report Release Date:</p> <p>Mine: Starpoint No. 1 Mine</p> <p>Mine I.D. Number: 42-00170</p> <p>Company: Plateau Mining Company</p> <p>Town, County, State: Wattis, Carbon County, UT</p> <p>Author(s): Herschel H. Potter James D. Carter</p>	<p align="center">Mine Information</p> <p>Daily Production..650.....</p> <p>Surface Employment..65.....</p> <p>Underground Employment..20.....</p> <p>Name of Coalbed..Wattis.....</p> <p>Thickness of Coalbed..8 foot average.....</p> <hr/> <p>Last Quarter Injury Incident Rate (HSAC) for:</p> <p>Industry..NFD.7.75.....</p> <p>This Operation..NFD.0.00.....</p> <p>Training Program Approved..03/16/79.....</p> <p>Mine Profile Rating 617. AS. of. 11/16/76.....</p>
<p>Originating Office - Mine Safety and Health Administration, Coal Mine Safety and Health, Office of the Administrator Address: 4015 Wilson Boulevard Arlington, Virginia 22203</p>	<p>Authority - This report is based on an investigation made pursuant to the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Public Law 91-173, as amended by Public Law 95-164)</p>

Abstract

On Friday, August 24, 1979, at 10:45 a.m., a fall of roof occurred in a pillar split on the 1st north section of the Starpoint No. 1 mine. The accident resulted in fatal injuries to William H. Gentry, Jr., section foreman, Michael S. Guzman, continuous mining machine helper, Tim L. Nightingale, roof bolting machine operator, Kerry Ray Grange, bratticeman, and serious injuries to Alan L. Austin, continuous mining machine operator. The roof fall occurred while preparing to install posts in a pillar split. The accident occurred because mine management failed to comply with the approved roof control plan.

Information for this report was compiled through a MSHA investigation that was started August 24, 1979

Company Officials:	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
President.....	Thomas F. Bajley.....	Drawer PMC, Price, Utah.. 84501.....
Superintendent.....	Floyd J. Tucker.....	Drawer PMC, Price, Utah.. 84501.....
Safety Director.....	Paul Kelly.....	Drawer PMC, Price, Utah.. 84501.....
Principle Officer - H&S	Ernal A. Shaw, Safety Manager,	Drawer PMC, Price, Utah.. 84501.....
Labor Organization.....	NONE.....	
Chairman - H&S Committee	Ernal A. Shaw.....	Drawer PMC, Price, Utah.. 84501.....

Commentary

On Friday, August 24, 1979, at 7:15 a.m., a production crew under the supervision of William H. Gentry, Jr., section foreman, entered the Starpoint No. 1 mine and proceeded to the 1st north section. After examining the working places, mining was started to complete a split in a pillar located between the No. 2 and No. 3 entries. The pillar split had been developed for a distance of about 50 feet by crews on previous shifts; however, only two mining cycles or approximately 30 feet had been supported with roof bolts.

The day shift crew advanced the split through the pillar to the caved area. Penetration to the caved area was made first on the left side of the split. Two more openings were mined to the caved area and a partial cut taken from the right side of the split. The testimony of witnesses was conflicting as to the sequence of cuts subsequent to the first cut; however, the testimony was consistent that mining was performed in by the partial cut on the right side of the split thereby exposing miners in a pillar split 30 feet in width.

Four breaker posts were set in the first opening to the caved area on the left side and other timbers were installed in the opening on the right side of the split.

After the last cut was mined, Gentry decided to reposition some of the timbers already in place and set additional timbers. The continuous miner was withdrawn to a location immediately out by the last row of roof bolts. Gentry instructed Bill Simpson, general laborer, to measure the mining height and cut timbers to the proper length for installation. Simpson made one measurement and left the working place. Shortly thereafter he heard the roof fall. Simpson and Robert Blackburn, shuttle car operators, rushed to the fall area. Upon observing men under the fall of roof, they summoned help from other mine personnel to recover the victims. Michael S. Guzman, continuous mining machine helper, Tim L. Nightingale, roof bolting machine operator, Kerry Ray Grange, bratticeman, and Gentry were fatally injured by the falling roof. Alan L. Austin, continuous miner operator was seriously injured.

Discussion and Evaluation

The investigation revealed the following factors relevant to the occurrence of the accident:

1. The regular crew members involved in the accident normally worked in the 1st west section of the Starpoint No. 2 mine. It is not uncommon for management to transfer crews temporarily or permanently from the Starpoint No. 2 mine to the Starpoint No. 1 mine and vice versa.
2. The belt conveyor haulage system serving the 1st west section of the Starpoint No. 2 mine became inoperable at about 11 p.m. on Thursday, August 23, 1979. At about 6 a.m. on Friday, August 24, 1979, William Snyder, general mine foreman, consulted with the third and day shift general shift foremen and decided to send Gentry's crew to the 1st north section of the Starpoint No. 1 mine. The crew entered the mine at 7:15 a.m. and reached the section at about 7:30 a.m.

3. The 1st west section was advancing and the 1st north section was retreating. The two mines have identical approved roof control plans. Starpoint No. 1 mine is in the Wattis coalbed and Starpoint No. 2 mine is in the Hiawatha coalbed.
4. The split in the pillar had been advanced about 20 feet beyond the last row of the roof bolts by the evening shift crew on August 23, 1979, but roof bolts were not installed in the newly exposed roof. The day shift crew under the supervision of Gentry did not install roof bolts prior to advancing the split. This required that the cab of the continuous mining machine be advanced about 15 feet inby the last row of roof bolts to penetrate the caved area.
5. The fall was approximately 18 feet by 18 feet by 16 inches and apparently 2 posts had been installed in the fall area prior to the accident.
6. The investigation did not reveal the reasons Gentry directed or permitted the cab of the continuous mining machine to be advanced inby the last row of roof bolts in violation of the approved roof control plan.

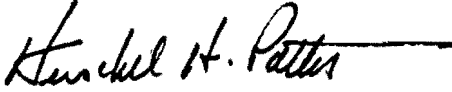
Findings of Fact

1. A pillar of coal located between the No. 2 and 3 entries of 1st north section had been split and the cab of the continuous mining machine had been advanced at least 15 feet beyond the last row of roof bolts, a violation of Section 75.200, Title 30, Code of Federal Regulations.
2. The method of mining being followed in the 1st north section exposed the miners to unusual dangers from roof falls caused by faulty pillar recovery methods. The split being mined between the No. 2 and 3 entries was measured to be approximately 30 feet in width, and the cut sequence was not in accordance with the approved roof control plan in that the lifts had been mined into the gob from cutting sequence No. 3 permitting a width of about 47 feet, a violation of Section 75.200, Title 30, Code of Federal Regulations.
3. Turn posts were not installed leading to a pillar split in a pillar between No. 2 and 3 entries as required by the approved roof control plan, a violation of Section 75.200, Title 30, Code of Federal Regulations.

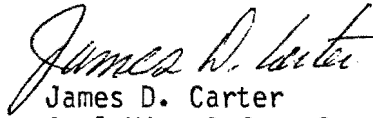
Conclusion

The accident occurred because management failed to comply with the approved roof control plan. A factor contributing to the occurrence of the accident was faulty pillar recovery methods.

Respectfully submitted,

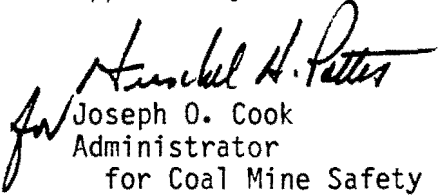


Herschel H. Potter
Chief, Division of Safety



James D. Carter
Coal Mine Safety Specialist

Approved by:



for Joseph O. Cook
Administrator
for Coal Mine Safety and Health

APPENDIX

List of persons furnishing information and/or present during the investigation

Plateau Mining Company Officials

Floyd J. Tucker	General Superintendent
William Snyder	Mine Superintendent
Ernal A. Shaw	Safety Manager
Richard Tucker	Safety Director
William R. Skaggs	Face Boss
Gary McDonald	Preshift Examiner

Plateau Mining Company Employees

William H. Simpson	Laborer
Robert L. Blackburn	Shuttle Car Operator
Marvin Stansfield	Shuttle Car Operator

State Industrial Commission of Utah

Frank E. Ularick	State Mine Inspector
William R. Cave	State Mine Inspector

United States Geological Survey

Stephen Falk
Jerry Hernandez

Mine Safety and Health Administration

Herschel H. Potter	Chief, Division of Safety, CMS&H
Fred W. Tatton, Jr.	Coal Mine Inspection Supervisor
John S. Miller	Supervisory Mining Engineer (Roof Control)
John M. DeMichiei	Coal Mine Safety Specialist
Gene B. Fuller	Coal Mine Safety Specialist
James D. Carter	Coal Mine Safety Specialist
Alexander Kendzerski	Coal Mine Inspector
William G. Denning	Civil Engineer

DATA SHEET

Victim Data

Name William Gentry Sex M SSN [REDACTED]

Age 27 Job Classification Section Foreman Experience at this
Classification 8 Months Total Mining Experience 4 Years 10 Months

What activity was being performed at time of accident? Setting Timber

Victim's experience at this activity 4 Years 10 Months Was victim trained in this
task? Yes

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident) Date Received

<u>Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident)</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
<u>Hazard Recognition</u> <u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u> <u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u> <u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u> <u>Electrical Hazards</u> <u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u> <u>Explosives</u> <u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

Supervisor Data (Supervisor of Victim)

Name Mervin R. Cook Certified: Yes No

Experience as Supervisor 7 Years Total Mining Experience 11 Years

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received Date Received

<u>Health and Safety Courses/Training Received</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
<u>Hazard Recognition</u> <u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u> <u>Health</u>	<u>08/08/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u> <u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>	<u>08/08/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u> <u>Electrical Hazards</u> <u>First Aid</u>	<u>08/08/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u> <u>Explosives</u> <u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>08/08/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

When was the supervisor last present at accident scene prior to the accident? _____

_____ What did he do when he was there? _____

When was he last in contact with the victim? _____

Did he issue instructions relative to the accident? _____

Was he aware of or did he express an awareness of any unsafe practice or condition? _____

Was he involved in any activity other than supervision? _____

DATA SHEET

Victim Data

Name Michael S. Guzman Sex M SSN [REDACTED]

Age 31 Job Classification Continuous Miner Helper Experience at this

Classification 5 Years Total Mining Experience 9 Years

What activity was being performed at time of accident? Setting Timber

Victim's experience at this activity 9 Years Was victim trained in this

task? Yes

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident) Date Received

<u>Hazard Recognition</u>	<u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u>	<u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>		<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u>	<u>Electrical Hazards</u>	<u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u>	<u>Explosives</u>	<u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

Supervisor Data (Supervisor of Victim)

Name William H. Gentry Certified: Yes No

Experience as Supervisor 8 Months Total Mining Experience 4 Years 10 Months

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received Date Received

<u>Hazard Recognition</u>	<u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u>	<u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>		<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u>	<u>Electrical Hazards</u>	<u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u>	<u>Explosives</u>	<u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

When was the supervisor last present at accident scene prior to the accident? _____

_____ What did he do when he was there? _____

When was he last in contact with the victim? _____

Did he issue instructions relative to the accident? _____

Was he aware of or did he express an awareness of any unsafe practice or condition? _____

Was he involved in any activity other than supervision? _____

DATA SHEET

Victim Data

Name Tim L. Nightingale Sex M SSN [REDACTED]

Age 20 Job Classification Roof Bolter Experience at this

Classification 5 Months Total Mining Experience 1 Year 6 Months

What activity was being performed at time of accident? Setting Timber

Victim's experience at this activity 1 Year 6 Months Was victim trained in this task? Yes

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident) Date Received

<u>Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident)</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
<u>Hazard Recognition</u> <u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u> <u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u> <u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u> <u>Electrical Hazards</u> <u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u> <u>Explosives</u> <u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

Supervisor Data (Supervisor of Victim)

Name William H. Gentry Certified: Yes No

Experience as Supervisor 8 Months Total Mining Experience 4 Years 10 Months

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received Date Received

<u>Health and Safety Courses/Training Received</u>	<u>Date Received</u>
<u>Hazard Recognition</u> <u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u> <u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u> <u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u> <u>Electrical Hazards</u> <u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u> <u>Explosives</u> <u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

When was the supervisor last present at accident scene prior to the accident? _____

What did he do when he was there? _____

When was he last in contact with the victim? _____

Did he issue instructions relative to the accident? _____

Was he aware of or did he express an awareness of any unsafe practice or condition? _____

Was he involved in any activity other than supervision? _____

DATA SHEET

Victim Data

Name Kerry Ray Grange Sex M SSN [REDACTED]

Age 30 Job Classification Brattice Man Experience at this
Classification 2 Years Total Mining Experience 4 Years 1 Month

What activity was being performed at time of accident? Setting Timber

Victim's experience at this activity 4 Years 1 Month Was victim trained in this
task? Yes

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (Related to Accident) Date Received

<u>Hazard Recognition</u>	<u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u>	<u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>		<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u>	<u>Electrical Hazards</u>	<u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u>	<u>Explosives</u>	<u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

Supervisor Data (Supervisor of Victim)

Name William H. Gentry Certified: Yes No

Experience as Supervisor 8 Months Total Mining Experience 4 Years 10 Months

Health and Safety Courses/Training Received Date Received

<u>Hazard Recognition</u>	<u>H&S Aspects of Tasks Assigned</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Self-Rescue & Respiratory Devices</u>	<u>Transport & Communication Systems</u>		<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Roof/Ground Control & Ventilation</u>	<u>Electrical Hazards</u>	<u>First Aid</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>
<u>Mine Gases</u>	<u>Explosives</u>	<u>Prevention of Accidents</u>	<u>06/14/79</u>

(All above Annual Refresher)

When was the supervisor last present at accident scene prior to the accident? _____

_____ What did he do when he was there? _____

When was he last in contact with the victim? _____

Did he issue instructions relative to the accident? _____

Was he aware of or did he express an awareness of any unsafe practice or condition? _____

Was he involved in any activity other than supervision? _____