

MORE ON MINE BELL SIGNS

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Here are two interesting mine bell signs, both made in 1917 by the Stonehouse Steel Sign Company in Denver. They are very similar in the signal codes, despite the mines being quite distant from each other.

The New Mexico State Code of Coal Mine Signals (left) is one of the simplest bell signs I have ever seen. I wonder if this simplicity was geared to the many non-English-speaking miners (mostly Indians and Hispanics) then employed in the New Mexico mines.

The Ohio State Code of Mine Bell Signals (right) has very similar codes, except that one or two rings or whistles meant different things depending on whether you were signaling from the top or the bottom of the shaft.

Mine bell signals are easy to photocopy on machines capable of reductions in size. Copy the sign in sections and make successive reductions of the copies until you have arrived at a

NEW MEXICO STATE CODE OF

COAL MINE SIGNALS

SLOPES. INCLINE PLANES. ETC.

1 RING or WHISTLE —HOIST

1 RING or WHISTLE —STOP
WHEN IN MOTION

2 RINGS or WHISTLES—BACK DOWN

3 RINGS or WHISTLES—BACK DOWN
SLOWLY

4 RINGS or WHISTLES —DANGER
HOIST SLOWLY

5 RINGS or WHISTLES —HOIST
INJURED MEN

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OHIO STATE CODE OF

MINE BELL SIGNALS

FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP

- 1 RING or WHISTLE**—One Ring or Whistle from the Bottom to the Top shall signify to Hoist Coal or the Empty Cage, and also to stop either when in motion.
- 2 RINGS or WHISTLES**—Two Rings or Whistles shall signify to Lower Cage.
- 3 RINGS or WHISTLES**—Three Rings or Whistles shall signify that Men are Coming Up; when return signal is received from the Engineer, men will get on the cage, and cager shall ring or whistle one to start.
- 4 RINGS or WHISTLES**—Four Rings or Whistles shall signify to hoist slowly, implying DANGER.
- 5 RINGS or WHISTLES**—Five Rings or Whistles shall signify ACCIDENT IN THE MINE and a call for a stretcher.

FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM

- 1 RING or WHISTLE**—One Ring or Whistle from Top to Bottom shall signify, ALL READY, get on cage.
- 2 RINGS or WHISTLES**—Two Rings or Whistles shall signify, send away empty cage.

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convenient size which can be cut and assembled. Send a copy to us and we'll publish it in the *MAC*.

Bob Otto of Lead, South Dakota, sent an answer to our question in *MAC* no. 7 (p. 29). A mine bell sign from the Adirondack mine in Mineville, New York, shows a code for "locating new marks." Bob explains what that means:

"I worked in the homestake mine here in Lead before transferring to their Exploration Division. The cages and skips there are hoisted and lowered on braided wire cables. The engineer who runs the hoist has a large wheel or disc in front of him that shows how much cable has been let out. On this wheel he marks the different stations and skip pockets so that he will know exactly where to stop the cages and skips. The cage man rides the cage down and may signal for it to stop at a new level. When the cage has stopped at the correct depth, he signals the hoist engineer (11 bells) to mark the new stop on his wheel or disc, thus 'locating a new mark.'"

LOCATING NEW MARKS

11 BELLS

AFTER CAGE OR SKIP HAS BEEN STOPPED AT PROPER LOCATION,
SIGNAL 11 BELLS.