

# “MY SWEETHEART IS A MULE IN THE MINES”

Copper is all around us in pots and pans, pipes, and electrical wiring. Mining brought thousands of miners and laborers to the Arizona Territory from far away—not only from other parts of the United States, but also from Mexico, European countries, and China. Barbers, doctors, teachers, merchants, and just about anyone else you can imagine came out to work in mining towns, too.

We can use primary sources to learn more about what mining was like in the Arizona Territory and the early years of statehood.

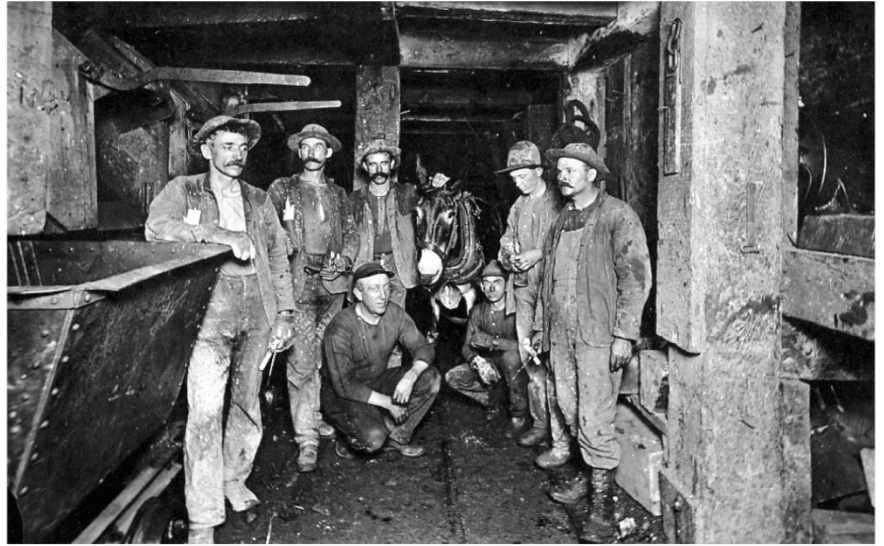
A **primary source** gives an eyewitness account or firsthand evidence about a person, event, place, or thing.



*Primary Source #1:*

Photograph of miners posing with a mule in the Southwest Mine, circa 1915

Courtesy of the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum



1. Meet the photo. Quickly scan the photograph. What do you notice first?

2. Observe its parts. Describe the people and objects you see.

PEOPLE AND ANIMALS	OBJECTS

3. Try to make sense of it. Why do you think there is a mule in the photo? What did the mule do in the mine?

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4. Use it as historical evidence. What did you find out from this photo that you might not learn anywhere else?

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Primary Source #2:  
Newspaper article from the *Bisbee Daily Review*, June 6, 1910, page 5  
Arizona Memory Project

A runaway above ground is hard enough upon the nerves of the person behind the speeding animal. The feelings of a person being run away with through the dark drifts of a mine may well be imagined by anyone who has had the above ground experience, yet they may be at a loss to conjure the terrors of the situation. This was what happened to Albert [not Alfred!] Fassel employed as a mule driver at the Hoatson shaft of the S. & P. company Wednesday night. Fassel escaped with nothing worse than a bad scare and a bruised right arm.

While driving through the drifts upon which he operated his ore haul, riding in one of the string of empty cars which the mule was drawing, the animal became suddenly frightened and before the driver could more than utter "whoa" was away at full speed. The violent rush of air extinguished the candle carried by Fassel and he was left in the darkness to rush madly into he knew not what danger.

The mule finally stopped of its own accord as it was running upgrade and the drag of the cars proved too much of a task for one of even his stubborn temperament. In spite of jostling from side to side and hitting only the high places the entire string of cars kept the track.

**TRUE or FALSE?**

If the statement is false, correct it to make it true.

1. Albert Fassel was severely injured, but he wasn't afraid.
2. The mineshaft was well-lit with bright electric lights.
3. The mule stopped running because it was going uphill and got tired.

Mules are very strong and smart, and they can even have a sense of humor, but sometimes they get scared, as this one did in 1910! How do you imagine Albert felt while being pulled through the dark mineshaft by a runaway mule?

Pretend you are Albert and write a letter to your parents and sisters back in Texas, describing the experience in your own words.

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