

# The Bricklayers Accident

Dear Sir:

I am writing in response to your request for additional information. In block number 3 of the accident reporting form, I put "poor planning" as the cause of my accident. You said in your letter that I should explain more fully, and I trust that the following details will be sufficient.

I am a bricklayer by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working along on the roof of a new six-story building. When I completed my work, I discovered that I had about 500 pounds of brick left over. Rather than carry the bricks down by hand, I decided to lower them in a barrel by using a pulley, which fortunately was attached to the side of the building, at the sixth floor.

Securing the rope at ground level, I went up to the roof, swung the barrel out, and loaded the brick into it. Then I went back to the ground and untied the rope, holding it tightly to insure a slow decent of the 500 pounds of bricks. You will note in block no. 11 of the accident reporting form that I weigh 135 pounds.

Due to my surprise at being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rather rapid rate up the side of the building.

In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming down. This explains the fractured skull and broken collarbone. Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley.

Fortunately, by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope in spite of my pain. At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of bricks hit the ground, and the bottom fell out of the barrel. Devoid of the weight of the bricks, the barrel now weighed approximately 50 pounds.

I refer you again to my weight in block No. 11. As you might imagine, I began a rapid decent down the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming up at an equally impressive speed. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, and the lacerations of my legs and lower body.

The encounter with the barrel slowed my enough to lessen my injuries when I fell into the pile of bricks and, fortunately, only three vertebrae were cracked.

I am sorry to report, however, that as I lay there on the bricks - in pain, unable to stand, and watching the empty barrel six stories above me - I again lost my presence of mind –

I LET GO OF THE ROPE....."