

SEVEN DIE OF BURNS

Seven dead, one near death and eight others still in the West Texas Clinic at Ranger was the result of a truck collision at Scenic Point or Thurber Hill, seven miles east of Ranger on the Bankhead highway, Saturday night.

The dead, all victims of a gasoline explosion at the scene of the wreck, are:

James Gollahon, 38, Carrollton.
James Gollahon, 15, son of the above.

Alvin Johnson, 29, Lewisville.
Nolan Johnson, 26, brother of the above.

Garland Branton, Eastland county treasurer.

Lester Barnes, Eastland bakery employe.

Ellis Granville, Ft. Worth negro.

Ray J. Ely, 43, of Abilene, a patient at the West Texas clinic, Ranger, is not expected to live.

Don Ervin, 19, former Ranger resident, is responding to treatment at the Ranger clinic and has a good chance to recover.

Seven others are still confined to the clinic, from burns, all of whom are expected to recover. They are:

Mrs. Tom Watt, 38, Ranger; her daughter, Miss Margaret Watt, 18; James Sanders, 24, Ranger; Herschel Ely 19, of Abilene, son of Roy Ely Abilene; J. L. Ervin, 21, brother of Don Ervin. The Ervins live in Dallas.

Kenneth R. Daffern 27, Abilene driver of a Greyhound bus, who stopped to render assistance in putting out the flaming wreckage, is in the Ranger city-county hospital with painful face, hands and shoulder burns.

Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Ramsey, Eastland, were treated for painful burns at the Payne hospital, Eastland.

Injured in the actual collision before the explosion were Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Odom of Rusk, their two children and W. H. Odom, brother of A. L. Odom.

Report of Witness.

B. A. Waggoner, Ft. Worth truck driver who was burned when he tore the flaming clothing off a man, gave this eye-witness account of the explosion which occurred after the fire had burned for an hour:

"It was like a flash of lightning," he said. "In less than a minute 15 or 20 persons were covered with fire that came around them. It was the burning gasoline.

"Those that it splashed upon started yelling and screaming and running. Other people had to chase them and throw them down to tear off their blazing clothes.

"The whole setup looked like it was timed. Those outside the circle where the fire fell just moved in on the people burning and grabbed them and went to work.

"I was about a yard inside the furthest reach of the fire. Not much of the gasoline hit me, I got most of my burns from putting out another fellow. I had to hold him down and tear his clothing off. It burned me on the hands, arms and back. I saw him yesterday in an Eastland hospital, and he didn't look as though he would last long.

"I was driving a load of paper from Ft. Worth to Lubbock when I came on the wreckage. It had been burning about an hour. The tires were gone from one truck and the driver or helper on the lumber truck whose axle broke, stopping him before the second truck collided, was on top of the lumber pile.

"He was working to save the load and I guess he and everybody else thought that all the gasoline had burned. But the big tank on the right side of the lumber truck was intact.

"Two Greyhound busses had stopped and their passengers and people from automobiles gathered around the fire. Some of us were helping get the Odom family from Rusk, who were hurt in the collision, into automobiles and taken to a hospital.

"Then the explosion came. "It was around 9:30 I guess. Afterward there was no one else around and I had to drive my truck to Lubbock after getting my burns treated. Then I got a man to drive me and took the truck to Ft. Worth."

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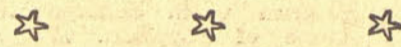
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