

ROUGH GROUND TRAPS VICTIMS

Topography which compelled spectators to crowd closely around the scene of operations was a factor contributing to the heavy casualty list at the explosion Wednesday night at the Arrowhead Petroleum corporation's well near St. George. It was said Thursday by Salt Lake City residents familiar with the well.

The well is situated on a hillside, with the most favorable viewpoint on the uphill side. On this side, however, a steep bank in the rear prevented spectators from retiring to a greater distance, and a toolhouse at one side served further to restrict the viewpoint to a small area around the base of the derrick.

The history of the well, it was learned, has been one of bad luck, beginning with the ill-omened date of the beginning of operations. Drilling was started by Escalante Exploration, Inc., a Canadian corporation, on May 13, 1931. Since that time work has been delayed frequently by "fishing" for lost tools, flooding and cave-ins.

Once Suspended Work was suspended in January, 1932, at a depth of 3726 feet. In 1933 the management passed to the Arrowhead Petroleum corporation, organized by St. George men, with Charles D. Alsop as general manager, and work was resumed in August of that year. Mr. Alsop was killed in the explosion.

Lacking information as to the methods employed, Salt Lake City oil men hesitated to venture an opinion as to the specific cause of the tragedy. As death has overtaken the persons involved, it was said the exact cause probably never will be known.

The common method in "shooting" an oil well, it was explained, is to lower a bucket-like cartridge, or shell, filled with nitroglycerin. When this reaches its objective, the cartridge is automatically unhooked from its line, and the shot is exploded by a time bomb or by dropping a metal object, known in the industry as a "hell-diver," upon the nitroglycerin.

May Have Caused Friction As the well-casing has a diameter of 6 1/2 inches and some clearance must be allowed, it was believed that the cartridge used probably had a diameter of about five inches. It was said that the explosion might have been caused by the friction of the cartridge rubbing against the steel casing in its descent.

It was also considered possible that the cartridge containing the nitroglycerin might have been dropped or struck by some tool as it was being lowered into the hole, the shock causing the explosion.

One of Best PORTLAND, Ore., March 7 (AP)—Judge George N. Woodley thought he recognized a guide he and some other Portland anglers had engaged.



Scene of Fatal Explosion

HUNCH SAVES WELL DRILLER

By WALLACE BLAKE (The Well Driller Who Had a Hunch (As Told to The Telegram))

ST. GEORGE, Utah, March 7—I had a hunch last night when they were going to shoot the well. I didn't stay around. I guess it's a good thing or I wouldn't be alive now.

I don't know what caused me not to work last night. The men who were handling the powder (the nitroglycerin and TNT mixture) knew what they were doing.

But I just didn't want to be there. I tried to get some of the other men who were working to come away with me. But they wouldn't. Now some of them are dead or injured.

Stays on Job I asked Billy (Billy Maloney, killed), to come away with me. I talked to Sampson (one of the injured), but he decided to stay on the job. He was hurt—pretty badly.

My hunch wasn't the only one about that shot, I guess. Mike Erick, another worker at the well, quit his job last night because he didn't want to be around when they touched off that powder.

I wanted Ray (Ray Nelson, another victim), to leave, but he wouldn't. Despite my fear that there would be something wrong, I couldn't leave the place entirely.

I got in a car about 150 yards from the well and watched the boys make the final preparations for the blast. We had been waiting a long time for that well to come in, and something held me there despite my fear.

And I saw a sight that I never want to see again. Suddenly there was a flash of flame. There was a deafening explosion. The derrick caught fire.

I was smashed down into the car. The glass in the windows was broken. I could not hear. The blood rushed to my eyes.

As soon as I could I ran to the well. I saw Mrs. Snow (Mrs. Olive Break Snow, another of the victims). She was conscious, but dying.

We did everything we could. But it wasn't much—but carry the dead to St. George, eight miles north. We tried to find the bodies that were missing (those of Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Alsop, Mr. Maloney and Mr. Empey), but there wasn't much use hunting.

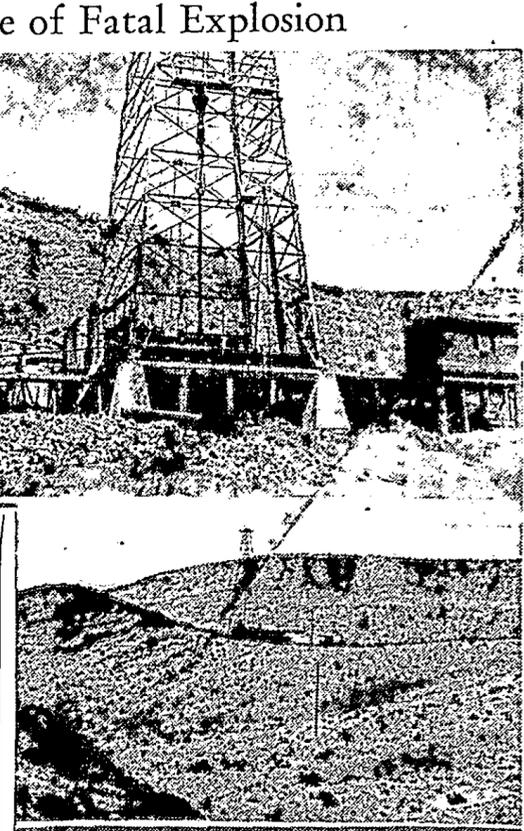
They were blown to bits. Insull Wins Point In State Theft Trial

CHICAGO, March 7 (UP)—Samuel Insull won a technical victory in his trial on embezzlement charges today while his attorneys laid the foundation for their defense with Insull himself as the principal witness.

Judge Cornelius J. Harrington, in the criminal courtroom where only four spectators gathered to watch the trial.

IT'S MIR-O-KLEER* HOSIERY... 1.00 up FIT-ALL-TOP* MIR-O-KLEER... 1.15 up ONLY KAYSER MAKES IT

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Upper, view of the Arrowhead Petroleum corporation's well near St. George, where ten persons were killed and four others injured by a premature explosion Wednesday night. The large number of casualties is partly attributed to the fact that a steep bank on the uphill side of the well restricted the area available as a viewpoint, compelling spectators to crowd closely around the derrick. Lower, view of adjacent territory, with the well in the background.

Blast Victim Obituaries

Joseph L. Empey Jr. Joseph L. Empey Jr., 47, was a son of Joseph L. Empey and Ovilla Liston Empey, pioneer residents of St. George, and prominent in L. D. S. church work.

The blast victim was born in St. George, May 5, 1887, and had lived there all his life. For the past 15 years he had worked for the Southern Utah Power and Light company as an electrician.

The death of Joseph Jr. is the first one in the Empey family. Surviving besides his parents and widow, Mrs. Mattie Foster Empey, are the following sons and daughters: Mrs. Naomi Nicholson, Helen, Beth, Max, Clark and Ella Empey, all of St. George, and three brothers, William Empey of St. George, Clifford Empey of Salt Lake City and Nelson A. Empey of St. George, and two sisters, Mrs. Bessie Law of Beaver and Mrs. Ovilla Daley of St. George.

Cail A. Nicholson Cail Adolph Nicholson, 22, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Nicholson of 616 South Seventh West street, was born in Salt Lake City, July 14, 1912. After attending grade schools he later graduated from the West high school in 1929. During 1933 and 1934 he served in C C C camps for a year.

Last October 13 Cail married Miss Naomi Empey, 18, daughter of another victim of the blast, Joseph Empey, an electrician. After their marriage the couple moved to St. George, where Cail assisted Mr. Empey in his work.

In addition to his parents and widow, Cail is survived by two sisters, Vera and Helen; a brother, Warren, and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Brox, all of Salt Lake City.

Joseph F. Kitterman Joseph F. Kitterman was born December 31, 1888, in Salina, Kan., a son of A. E. Kitterman of California and Mrs. Matilda Leighton Kitterman of Kansas.

He came to Utah with his parents when 14 years of age, first settling in Lehi. Mr. Kitterman entered the drug business there and had worked as a druggist in Salt Lake City and in various Idaho towns. He went to St. George more than a year ago.

Surviving, besides his parents, are his widow, Mrs. Elsie Taylor Kitterman, and three children, Stanford J. and Harold T. Kitterman of Salt Lake City, and Mrs. Maxine Kitterman Nelson of Salt Lake City, and two brothers, Elmer Kitterman of Rawlins, Wyo., and Roy Kitterman of Compton, Cal.

Miss Leah Cottam Miss Leah Cottam, 23, was a daughter of Heber Cottam and Asenath Jarvis Cottam of St. George. She had many friends in Salt Lake City and some time ago visited her grandmother, Mrs. Elizabeth Cottam of 319 North Sixth West street.

She was born in St. George January 8, 1912, the oldest of eight children. Surviving, besides her parents, are the following brothers and sisters: Alma Cottam, a student at the Brigham Young university; Iris, Jean, Elizabeth, Lester, Calvin and Ellen Rae Cottam, all of St. George.

Olive Bleak Snow Mrs. Olive Bleak Snow, 62, was the wife of Joseph Snow, former Washington county Democratic committee man and former state representative. She was born November 29, 1872, in

St. George, a daughter of James G. and Jane Thompson Bleak. She was the mother of Rosamond Snow, 23, who was critically injured in the blast.

Mrs. Snow had been prominent in L. D. S. church activities many years and was well known in Salt Lake City. Besides her husband and aged mother, Mrs. Snow is survived by the following children: Rex Snow of Salt Lake City; Glen Snow of Parowan; Grant Snow of Overton, Nev.; and Mrs. Inez Snow Moody of Delta. The following brothers and sisters survive: Samuel Bleak of St. George; Wilford Bleak of Los Angeles; Lewis Bleak of Riverside, Cal.; Mrs. Rose Bleak Ramsey of St. George; Mrs. William Peckel of Los Angeles, and Mrs. Jane B. Nelson of St. George.

Miss Rosamond Snow is a native of St. George and was working as secretary of the Arrowhead Petroleum corporation when she was injured.

Mrs. Mabel Boyce Alsop Mrs. Alsop was born in Wetmore, Kan., April 29, 1888. She spent her youth in her native state and later moved to Long Beach, Cal., where she met and married Charles D. Alsop, September 11, 1911.

With her husband she came to St. George about 12 years ago. A woman of pleasing personality, Mrs. Alsop was active in women's affairs of the city. Among her survivors is a brother, Albert Boyce of Fort Bragg, Cal.

PALMER TELLS ABOUT KILLINGS

SULPHUR SPRINGS, Texas, March 7—With even his juvenile common law wife deserting him, James Clinton Palmer, 35-year-old sheepherder, who orally admitted the killing of two Utah stockmen, stood alone today, accused of three murders.

The first slaying he must answer for is that of Dillard Garrett, Oklahoman, whose skeleton, identified by officers, was found 15 miles north of Sulphur Springs.

Sheriff Palmer's own story will be found on Page 10.

Lucille, held as a material witness, denied she was Palmer's wife and accused him of slaying her father.

"I am going to kill him (Palmer) just like he killed my daddy. I am not through with Palmer."

The girl, dressed in overalls and looking her age of 14 years, said she had not seen her father since she left Sulphur Springs nearly a year ago in company with Palmer.

"I had accused Palmer of killing daddy, but he denied it," she said, "asked him if he ever killed anyone, because I knew if I could get him to admit it that I would know he killed daddy."

She declared she hated "to see Shumway killed," because "he was a nice kid."

The argument with Oliver started, Palmer said, when he tried to "chase me off" a section of land where his sheep grazed.

Two Men Meet "I tried to keep from killing Oliver," said Palmer. "I met him in John's canyon. He was driving my sheep away and told me, 'If they can't run you out, we'll haul you out.'"

"I ran 75 yards before Bill Oliver fired the first shot. Shumway fired the second shot at me. I turned and emptied my pistol and ran and got my hip pocket rifle and shot and killed Oliver."

"I never saw Oliver fall off his horse, for it turned and ran. Later the horse returned without Oliver. I unsaddled his horse because I felt sorry for the horse—but not for him. I hauled Shumway about six or seven miles and then dumped him out. I went and got my wife. I thought I was doing right."

Lucille, in another jail cell, told a conflicting story of the slayings. She said Palmer killed Oliver in John's canyon, but did not slay Shumway until the next day.

She said her life with Palmer, since her father disappeared, had been "terrible."

Shumway "Was Nice" "I think Mr. Oliver was perfectly right in trying to keep Palmer's sheep out of John's canyon, although I didn't mind to see him get killed because he was old. I did hate to see Shumway killed. He was a nice kid."

When told that Palmer said he killed Oliver and Shumway to "protect my wife," Lucille said:

"They never did anything to me. Mr. Oliver didn't say a word to me on the day of the killing."

Sheriff Reneau said a quick trial for Palmer on the Garrett indictment would be sought. Garrett disappeared in March, 1934, and never was seen again. The skeleton, lying in a ravine, was found by hunters.

Lucille said she had not seen her father since she left Sulphur Springs nearly a year ago in company with Palmer. She said Palmer told her they would meet her father in New Mexico and later in Utah, but she had not seen him since the March night, in 1934, he left here in company with Palmer.

Sheriff Reneau, Judge Charles D. Berry and District Attorney Henry E. Pharr conferred today concerning plans for the trial of Palmer. They indicated the case would be transferred to Hunt county for trial. Court convenes in Hunt county March 11 for a nine-week term.

Sheriff Reneau said he expected federal authorities to investigate possible Dyer and Mann act violations. Palmer was suspected of committing.

Special to The Telegram MONTICELLO, Utah, March 7—Harry Goulding, Navajo Indian reservation trader to whom James Cecil Palmer, 37, is said to have confessed the slayings of William E. Oliver, 70, and Norris Shumway, 24, will be brought here for questioning.

County Attorney Donald Adams of San Juan county today was awaiting the return of District Attorney F. W. Keller from Goulding's remote trading post. Mr. Keller went there yesterday to question Goulding.

St. George Oil Well Blast Strikes Death

was on the surface of the ground and not confined to any portion of the well.

Property Loss Set at \$125,000 Property of the oil company, valued at \$125,000, was completely destroyed. More than 1500 pounds of powder stored near by did not explode, but burned.

The place where the persons died when the explosive that man devised as a servant, but which becomes a death-dealing force when it turns on him, is expected to reveal little evidence that may fix the cause of the explosion.

The oil derrick is a mass of twisted timbers. They are burned and scorched by the fire that followed the explosion. The surface of the ground is scarred and torn. Here and there are flecks of blood.

More than 50 persons were near the well when the explosive was packed into the sharp-nosed, torpedo-shaped steel shell in which it was to be lowered to the bottom of the well. They had come to witness the work that was hoped would bring wealth.

But the "black-gold" did not gush from its prehistoric place. Death came instead.

In Tight Circle The spectators were packed in a tight circle near the well. In the flickering lights of the derrick they watched the workmen, headed by Mr. Alsop, lift the torpedo and attach it to a slim steel cable that would be unwound and lower the explosive into the well.

Suddenly there was a low rumbling as the cable was paid out slowly. Flames shot from the steel well casing.

Men and women were hurled backward. Tops of cars were ripped off by the unseen force of the exploding chemical.

Screams of injured persons, groans of dying, lent their tones to the symphony of death of those who were killed instantly. The earth continued to rumble for a moment that survivors said seemed a year.

Sudden Silence Then there was a sudden silence. The place where the well had been was a gaping hole in the ground. Flames wildly lit the way for survivors, stunned, shocked by the coming of death.

Cars which were not partially destroyed by the blast rushed the survivors and the dead to the St. George hospital. It was there that Miss Cottam died today.

There have been many attempts to find oil in this region. It is said here that when Brigham Young first visited the community he predicted that some day St. George would be the greatest city in Utah.

The land below the surface held oil, Brigham Young believed, according to old timers of St. George.

Depend on Land The prophecy of the Mormon leader was the inspiration for many attempts to tap the stores of "black gold" far below the surface and bring riches to the community that had no payrolls from modernized industry, that depended for its wealth upon the product of the land.

But it seemed that fate would not permit the wealth below the ground to be tapped—to replace the fruits of the land on which the people walked.

Equipment Lost Wells would cave in. Drilling bits would be lost. Companies undertaking the production would no longer finance the undertakings.

But the people persisted. And death claimed 10 of their number as they thought that they were

about to witness the end of the long quest for oil.

Some of those killed were stockholders in the company which was driving the well where the explosion occurred. Others were employees. It is said that Mr. Alsop had put his entire savings into the enterprise.

The well was ready to be shot, Mr. Alsop told friends in St. George yesterday. The drilling tools had been withdrawn from the casing. He invited some of his friends to come to the well site and witness the result of the attempt to loosen the oil-bearing sands over a wide underground radius.

Spectators Tense As the spectators crowded near the well, anxious for the explosive containing torpedo to be lowered to the bottom of the well, and the weight dropped on it, they were tense with anticipation.

Funeral services for Miss Cottam will be conducted at 2 p. m. Friday afternoon from the L. D. S. South ward of the St. George stake. Bishop Harold S. Snow, also the justice of the peace, will preside.

Body Sent to Lehi The body of Mr. Kitterman was sent this afternoon to Lehi, where funeral services will be conducted. Mr. Flickinger will be buried Friday morning from the morgue here. He has a record of many years in the oil fields of California and worked for some time in the Virgin oil country of Utah. His wife was in Virgin, Utah, today. He had two children.

Three children, the eldest about 20 and the youngest 6, were orphaned by the tragedy. They were James, 20, Virginia, 16, and Dora, 6, children of Mr. and Mrs. Alsop.

The little girls were bewildered today. "I don't know what they are going to do with mother and dad," one of them said tearfully. Others who survive Mr. Alsop are Wilson Alsop of New York and Athelred Alsop of Georgia, brothers, and several sisters.

Numbed and Shocked The girls today could not tell of their parents' relatives. They were numbed and shocked by the tragedy that took their mother and father.

Survivors of Mrs. Alsop include a brother, Albert Boyce of Fort Bragg, Cal.

Experienced Driller Mr. Flickinger was an experienced oil driller who had worked in the Virgin oil fields of southern Utah. He had been employed on the Arrowhead well for some time. It is not definitely known here whether he has

a wife and family. Mr. Kitterman, the Salt Lake City man who was killed, is survived by his widow, Mrs. Elsie Taylor Kitterman, and three children, Stanford J., Harold T. and Mrs. Maxine Kitterman Neslen, all of Salt Lake City, Elmer Kitterman, a brother, is a resident of Rawlins, Wyo., and another brother, Roy Kitterman, lives at Compton, Cal.

His mother and sister survive Billy Maloney, who worked at the well and invested some of his savings in the enterprise. They are Mrs. Vivien Maloney and his sister, Emma.

Mr. Nelson is survived by his mother, Mrs. S. Nelson of St. George, his twin brother, Ray Nelson of Las Vegas, Nev.; a sister, Mrs. Frank Milne of St. George; another brother, Miles, 18, and a 10-year-old sister, Evelyn.

Double Toll The tragedy took a double toll in the family of Joseph Empey Jr. He and his son-in-law, Mr. Nicholson, were killed.

Mr. Empey is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mattie Foster Empey; his daughter, Mrs. Naomi Empey Nicholson, whom Call Nicholson, former Salt Lake City resident and Max Empey, year ago, and Clark and Max Empey, sons, and two daughters, Beth, Helen and Ella. All are residents of St. George.

Relatives in Salt Lake Mr. Nicholson is survived by his widow, two sisters, Vera and Helena; a brother, Warren; his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Nicholson, 616 South Seventh West street, Salt Lake City, and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Brox of Salt Lake City.

One of the oldest pioneers of the region died in the blast of death. It was Mrs. Olive Bleak Snow, wife of Joseph S. Snow, prominent in St. George civic affairs.

Her survivors, besides her husband, are Rex Snow, a son, in California; Grant B. Snow, principal of a school at Parowan, Utah; Glen Snow of Overton, Nev.; and Inez Snow Moody of Delta, Utah.

Rosamond Snow, her daughter, was injured in the explosion and for a time was not expected to live.

Does your little girl look like Shirley Temple?



Watch for the great contest announcement in Friday night and Saturday morning papers!

ZCMI

Two-Day Sale Friday and Saturday Only 100 Hart Schaffner & Marx Topcoats and Overcoats \$35, \$40 and \$45 Values \$26 Here is an opportunity that is most timely—the weather calls for warm clothing. Here is a chance to buy at a real money saving. Arthur Frank 208-210 South Main Street

