

INSTANT DEATH TO TEN PEOPLE IN DIXIE OIL WELL EXPLOSION

Special to The Record

St. George—Grim tragedy stalked this community last night when a premature and unexplainable explosion at the Arrowhead Petroleum company oil well killed ten people and critically injured two others.

Those killed were:

Charles Allsop, president of the company; Mrs. Charles Allsop, Mrs. Joseph Snow, wife of a local attorney; Joseph Empey, and his son-in-law, Mr. Nicholson, Ray Nelson, Billy Maloney, and Miss Leah Cottam, all of St. George; Joseph Kitterman, of Salt Lake City, and Mr. Frickenger of Virgin, a powder man in charge of the proposed shooting of the well.

The injured were Miss Rosemond Snow, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Snow, and Swede Erickson, both of St. George. Miss Snow is reported to have had both eyes blown out, and a piece of steel five inches long is reported to have been removed from her hip. She is not expected to live. Erickson's chest was badly crushed, and a piece of steel is said to have passed through his body. His condition is also critical. Bert Covington is reported to have had both ear drums burst, but was otherwise uninjured.

All of the dead were killed instantly except Miss Cottam, and the bodies were said to have been so badly mutilated that identification was almost impossible. Miss Cottam died after reaching the hospital.

A crowd of about seventy people had gathered at the well where a blast was to have been set off in an attempt to bring in the well, and those close to the well when the explosion occurred were all injured or killed. The explosion occurred at about 10:30 p. m.

As near as can be determined there was about 850 pounds of nitro glycerine at the well, which was being loaded in torpedos preparatory to making the blast. Five of the torpedos had been loaded and hoisted into the air to a height of about sixty feet, and four more were to have been loaded. In some unaccountable way the five became ignited, blowing the derrick to bits and snuffing the life from ten people.

Swede Erickson is a brother-in-law of Clarence Miller of Cedar City, and Joseph Empey was an employee of the Southern Utah Power company in Cedar City for some time. All of the others are well known to many Cedar people.