

Workers Trapped in Blaze

Eighth Man Suffers Critical Hurts in Quarry Tragedy

Medical Aid Sent to Island by Airplane

Flames from the explosion of 7500 pounds of blasting powder at the rock quarry at the southern end of Catalina Island yesterday burned seven men to death and critically injured another workman.

Because the powder was in the open and did not explode with great detonation, the death toll was not greater, quarry men said.

What ignited the powder was a mystery but the sudden flash of the explosive was seen two miles away.

Victims Listed.

The dead:

Marion Paul, 23; Kenneth Ernest Smith, 23; Angel Hernandez, 37; Herman Bermudes, 37; Pepter Hansen, 38; Russell Lauders and Manuel Flores, 20, all of Avalon.

In addition John Halverson suffered third degree burns.

Paul was killed almost instantly when a spark touched off the powder as the workmen were transferring it from cans to sacks for blasting purposes.

Smith died in a hospital an hour later, and then one by one the others succumbed to the burns despite the efforts of a corps of doctors and nurses rushed by amphibian plane from Wilmington, across the channel on the mainland.

Foreman Proves Hero.

The men were employed on the Rohl-Connolly Quarry.

Oscar Larson, foreman of the crew, leaped into the ocean to extinguish his burning clothing. He swam back and beat out the burning clothes of half a dozen workmen, saving many from possibly fatal injuries.

The blast was heard in all parts of the island, and in a few minutes the wives of the workmen were hysterically crowding into the rock pit, aiding in rescue work. A Red Cross emergency crew responded to the alarm and carried many of the men to Avalon Hospital.

The workmen were employed in blasting rock for the new Long Beach-Los Angeles harbor breakwater unit located on the mainland twenty-two miles across the channel.

Inquest Scheduled.

The bodies of Paul and Smith were taken to the mainland last night and transported to the Ivy Overholtzer Mortuary in Los Angeles.

An inquest was scheduled for 2 P. M. tomorrow either at Avalon or at the Hall of Justice in Los Angeles.