

Seven Killed, One Hurt by Avalon Blasts

(By United Press)

AVALON, Catalina Island, Nov. 12.—Seven workmen were burned to death and one other was injured seriously today in an explosion of 900 cans of blasting powder at a seashore rock quarry here.

The dead

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

In addition, John Halverson suffered third degree burns.

Paul was killed almost instantly when a spark, caused by a pickaxe striking a powder can, 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.

The men were employed on the Rohl-Connolly quarry.

Oscar Lawson, 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 here.

The workmen were employed in blasting rock for the new Los Angeles harbor breakwater, located on the mainland 26 miles across the channel.