

FIVE DIE IN ENGLISH CROSSING CRASH

GRANTSBURG CAR STRUCK BY FREIGHT

Three Other Members of
Party, Injured, Expected
To Recover in New
Albany Hospital

WRECK OCCURS AT
MAIN ST. CROSSING

Signal Bell Is Apparently
Unheard By Driver of
Closed Car--Bad Curve
In Track Also Blamed.

Five persons died of fractured skulls and three were seriously injured Saturday night when a fast freight special struck a Ford sedan at the railroad crossing in English. The crash occurred at 10:10 p.m. as out-of-town people were leaving after attending a moving picture show in the local theater.

The car contained Mr. and Mrs. Parker and their two children; Miss Roberson and her nephew, Bethel, son of Alfred Roberson; Mrs. Lone and Kenneth Ferguson, daughter and son of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Ferguson, all of near Grantsburg.

The dead are:

Rudolph Parker, 41 years old.
Mrs. Artie Parker, his wife, 31.
Eunice Parker, their daughter, 7.
Mrs. Curtis Lone, 21.
Miss Bessie Roberson, 44.

The injured are:

Bethel Roberson, 7, cut on scalp and face.

Lura Frances Parker, 14, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Parker, cut scalp and dislocated left hip.

Kenneth Ferguson, 16, brother

Gobbel Hospital Proves Its Worth

In the crisis Saturday night, the private hospital erected by Drs. F. R. and N. E. Gobbel last fall, in connection with their offices, proved its worth to the community.

Perhaps only once in the course of many years—perhaps in several lifetimes—would the need of such accommodations be urgent; no one knew whether the town of English would ever require on short notice the use of a modern operating room. In the past, the office rooms of local physicians have been amply large for emergency cases; and hospitals at New Albany and Louisville have been close enough that, with railway transportation, cases requiring surgical operations could be given proper care.

But no one can foresee the future. If we are wise, we can profit by our experience—if wiser, by the experiences of others.

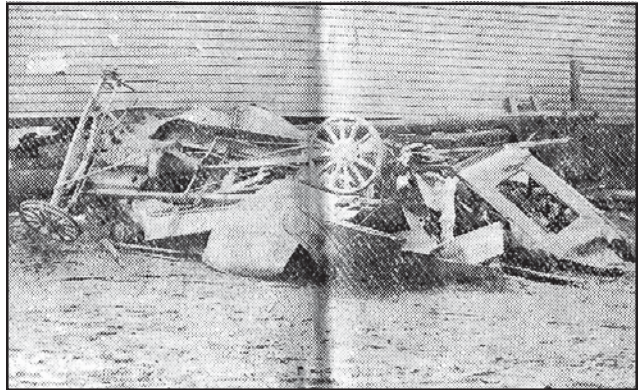
It is a credit to the progressive spirit and foresight of the Drs. Gobbel that their establishment was ready when the need was besetting.

of Mrs. Lone, fractured jaw, possibly fractured skull, laceration of abdomen and right knee.

The first carried to the hospital was Bethel Roberson, Dr. N. E. Gobbel said. Then followed Lura Parker, Mrs. Lone, Miss Roberson, and Eunice Parker. Kenneth Ferguson was then taken from Dr. Hammond's office, and Mr. and Mrs. Parker from the depot.

Miss Roberson died en route, he said, Mrs. Lone lived about 20 minutes after arrival. Mrs. Parker lived about 45 or 50 minutes, and her husband died at 12:30 a.m. The Parker child lived until about 1:00 a.m.

Two cars carrying people from the picture theater, about 100 yards from the crossing on Main street,



VIEW OF WRECKED CAR

View of the wrecked car after it had been removed from the side-track by section hands and carried to the side of Main street by the English mill warehouse. Rims and tires remaining had been removed.

had crossed the track before the car driven by Mr. Parker. About a dozen others going in the same direction were following. Other members of the family of J. B. Ferguson, were in a car close behind.

Shouted Warning.

Arthur Byrd, who attempted to warn the driver as the car crossed the bridge before ascending the grade at the crossing, ran uptown when he realized the car was doomed and called for help. Several had, after the show, lingered in the drug stores and restaurants, and a large number gathered.

The freight, which was long and had been traveling at a high rate of speed to gather momentum for the steep grade west of town, stopped as soon as possible, the engine about a dozen box car lengths past the crossing, and the underneath of the cars were examined to make sure no one was dragging. The train thus blocked the way to the injured ones, who were on the south side of the main track, and the people who gathered were on the north side.

Climb Between Cars.

Several among the first to arrive

MORE On Back

Crossing Victims Now Total Eight

The five deaths Saturday night brought the total up to eight of mortality by trains striking persons within the English corporation, three having been killed in previous accidents since the railway was built.

Thomas B. Cummins was killed about 21 years ago while standing between the crossings where Main street and Water streets are crossed by the track. He was watching a runaway team and was struck by a passenger flyer as he stood on the end of a tie outside the main track.

Joe Miller, an old soldier of the Civil war, was killed 8 years ago while walking at the Main street crossing.

Harrison Sarles was struck by a freight about noon February 4, 1922, while driving a log wagon. The horses were said to have become unmanageable.

Talk of watchmen at the crossing followed each of the previous deaths. Warning bells were installed, which have not had the effect of a man standing on the crossing with a stop sign. Boy Scouts stationed at the tracks during last year's reunion were obeyed in some close places.

climbed between the cars and began carrying the injured away. Kenneth Ferguson was passed under the cars and taken to the office of Dr. G. B. Hammond. After the cars were uncoupled, bystanders removed Mr. and Mrs. Parker to the railway station and rest to the private hospital of Drs. F. R. and N. E. Gobbel, where others were soon afterward taken. Dr. F. G. Hammond, dentist, and Dr. C. D. Luckett assisted, and a number of townspeople lent aid.

The rooms and corridors of the hospital were filled for a time with spectators, who were sent to the waiting room by Sheriff Owen S. Johnson at the request of the physicians.

Kenneth Ferguson recovered consciousness soon after he was taken to the hospital from Dr. Hammond's office, and after his wounds were dressed he was able to tell what he remembered of the accident, in spite of his broken lower jaw.

Tells of Wreck.

"I guess I'm mighty lucky," he said; "Dolph drove the car onto the track, and then it seems he tried to back out when he saw the train coming. Then he shot it ahead."

When asked if he remembered his father and others who had spoken to him earlier in the night, he assented. But he did not remember having been taken to the offices.

"I thought I was dreaming, and tried to wake up, but I couldn't. Then when I saw doctors and everybody I knew I must have been hurt."

He asked if the car had been hurt, and about the others, but Jerry Moore, to whom he was talking, eased the boy's mind by saying everything was all right and that he was hurt worse than the others.

The others, after regaining consciousness, said they could remember nothing about it save seeing the train and the light from the headlight, Mrs. Mayme Moss said. Mrs. Moss and Mrs. Mae Bird acted as nurses Saturday night until relieved.

Details of Injuries.

Kenneth Ferguson—fractured right side of the lower jaw; frac-

tured skull on the right side which the x-ray revealed to be only the outer table, with no apparent pressure on the brain; cut on the right side of the abdomen requiring 4 stitches; laceration on the outer side of the left knee requiring 12 stitches to close; cut on right hand and middle finger, requiring 5 stitches; abrasions of left hip and thigh; marked abrasion on left side of head and face. The abraded spots were full of cinders, having been caused by sliding along the roadbed.

Lura Francis Parker—Cut in the midline of scalp (from middle of forehead straight back toward crown) 4 1/2 inches long, requiring 14 stitches; scalp torn loose from skull a distance of 2 to 2 1/2 inches on each side of the cut; impacted fracture of left hip, caused by fall; both legs badly bruised and abraded by cinders.

Bethel Roberson—Scalp cut along the mid-line, 4 inches, 12 stitches; scalp torn loose from skull 1 1/2 inches on either side of cut; marked abrasion on left side of the face, scalp, and left hand; left hand lacerated.

Injuries causing the deaths were: Mrs. Parker, fractured skull and internal injuries; Miss Roberson, open fracture of head, skull crushed; Mrs. Lone, fractured skull, open wound in the abdomen; Eunice Parker, head crushed; Mrs. Parker, fractured skull and internal injuries.

Southern Railway surgeons were notified and sent word to Dr. Gobbel to give first aid if the injured could not be sent to the city hospital. . . .

Car Demolished.

The car, a late 1925 model Ford sedan, was completely demolished. The chassis was thrown a few feet onto the passing track, the first of three tracks south of the main. Head and tail lights remained on for hours. A front wheel was still revolving when the first people crossed the track after the train had been cut. Glass from the windshield and windows was broken into small bits which covered the surrounding ground. Slats from the top were broken into short pieces

and scattered. The top broke loose and landed 75 feet west of the crossing between the main and passing tracks.

When first found, the bodies of the occupants of the car were found on both sides and between the rails of the passing track close to the spot where the top landed. Two were entangled in the debris, and Bethel Roberson was found sitting under a box car on the side track, crying.

The engineer seemed to have applied the air brakes as soon as he sensed the danger, as the long heavy train was brought to a halt with the caboose in the cut east of the depot, and the engine opposite the English park.

Crossing Dangerous.

The crossing has long been recognized as being dangerous. Four tracks cross the road, and the approach from the west is blocked from view on the north by a restaurant building and usually blocked on the south by a string of boxcars on the siding.

On the east, the direction from which the train came, there is a sharp curve beginning in the cut east of the depot, and sight and sound obstructed by the hill in which the cut has been made.

Bell Warning Unheeded.

A signal bell in front of the restaurant was ringing at the time, but it is thought that, in the closed car with its crowded occupants who might have been talking, the bell was not heard. Steam or dust may have caused the driver to confuse the light of the locomotive's headlight, which witnesses said was full on the sedan when it drove onto the track, with street or automobile lights.

The bodies of the dead were taken care of by Undertaker John T. Adkins, who, with the assistance of Archie Sloan, worked the rest of the night. The remains were removed from the undertaking room Sunday evening and taken to the homes of relatives near Grantsburg.

MILLTOWN

Grant Wyman, of Batman Ridge, was in town Friday.

TASWELL MAN ATTACKED BY UNKNOWN THUG

Albert Nash, who has been pushing the investigation of the robbery of his store, was given a blow Saturday night by an unknown assailant, causing him to stagger several feet before falling. An attempt by men in Nash's store to find the person was fruitless.

The blow was given with a smooth object and took effect on the back of Mr. Nash's neck, too low to touch the skull. He had gone out to get a bucket of coal shortly after the evening train had gone, and returned in a dazed condition saying that he had been struck, persons who were in the store said.

Officers at English were notified Saturday night, and trainmen were asked to be on the lookout for anyone attempting to board trains on the hill between English and Taswell.

Marengo Local News

Otho Jackson, superintendent of the Tomato Product company here, attended the Canners' Convention at Louisville and returned with expressions of commendation for the different exhibits and demonstrations giving on the canning industry. Mr. Jackson says that while in the convention he was informed that Marengo has the largest tomato pulp manufacturing plant in the United States.

Henry Thompson purchased the grocery store and fixtures of Ernie Spencer and took over the business Monday.

Charles Pierson, employe of the shirt factory here is working in the M. Fine shirt factory at New Albany during the illness of his wife.

A re-construction of the original page of the *Crawford County Democrat* of Thursday, Feb. 4, 1926 using the lead story of the car wreck. See the microfilm of the original page in the Crawford County Library.
Larry M. Burmeister