

## 15 Die in Flames As Bus Is Wrecked North of Bloomington

10 of Charred Bodies Still Unidentified;  
12 Injured as Vehicle Hits Abutment

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driver said. "It swerved and I tried to straighten it up. But I couldn't do it."

The big bus smashed into the north end of the bridge, chipping out a triangular block of concrete as big as a house door.

The bus exploded into flames as it careened on across the bridge, streaking a trail of flaming gasoline behind it.

It continued about 50 feet and then skidded another 60 feet before overturning onto its left side on the east side of the road.

Huge volleys of flame shot forth and screaming passengers, their bodies wreathed in fire, tried to fight their way out of windows of the upturned side.

An eyewitness description of the tragic after-events came from Mr. and Mrs. Everett Miles, living on a farm about 100 yards from the scene of the crash.

"We heard the crash," Mrs. Dorothy Miles related. "Everett and I looked out and saw three men come out of the end window."

"The bus was burning and there was a streak of flames down the highway in back of it, clear back to the north end of the bridge."

"By that time one of the men got to the barnyard and he asked us to call for help."

"Everett ran to the scene to help. I called the sheriff, then the hospital and Day Funeral Home to send out ambulances."

### White-Hot Skeleton of Steel

With the rescue vehicles came a fire-pumper with 500 gallons of water. The flames were extinguished but the white-hot skeleton of steel kept rescue workers from helping persons trapped inside.

Bloomington firemen James Murphy and George Wampler joined the rescue crews to assist the injured and lay out the dead, after they manned the pumper to extinguish the fire.

The driver of the bus played a heroic part in rescuing passengers, state patrolmen said. They said he repeatedly went back into the flaming holocaust to drag out passengers through windows and emergency exits.

### Tosses Child to Safety

As he came out on his next to last trip Mrs. Lucille Melton, Mt. Vernon, screamed to him that she had left her daughter, Judith Ann, in the bus. Driver Crammer fought his way back in, found the child and tossed her into the arms of her mother. The little girl suffered a broken nose, bumping a window frame as the driver threw her out.

Wells W. Richardson, 19, Evansville, was en route home after attending a tennis tournament at Elkhart.

"I was dozing when all of a sudden I heard a big crash," he said. "The next thing I knew I was on my back. A man broke out a back window and I dove through flames myself to get out."

By that time the whole bus was on fire. I saw lots of bodies just before I went out the window, but there wasn't time to help them. I had to dive through flames myself to get out."

### Escape Through Holes

Deputy Sheriff Fred Mills said about half the survivors got out of the bus through a hole in the windshield directly in front of the steering wheel. Others fled through the hole kicked in the rear window by Edgar Davis, 43, of Indianapolis.

Mayor Thomas L. Lemon of Bloomington hurried to the scene to help direct rescue work.

Bloomington Hospital called out its personnel and set up emergency wards to care for the injured.

Highway 37, on which the crash occurred, is a two-lane pavement which winds and curves through the hills of Southern Indiana. However, the accident happened on a straightaway, fairly level stretch that dips into a shallow valley, crosses the 35-foot-long bridge and then rises over a low hill.

The driver of the bus was a 22-year-old Navy veteran who had been employed with Greyhound the past six months. He resides at 1112 Hoyt Ave. with his wife of 15 months, Louise Crammer.

His wife, informed of the tragedy this morning, said the Greyhound company had told her only that her husband was detained in Bloomington because of an accident. He had been on the Bloomington run the past three months, she said.

### Report Hunt Got \$86,000 Hotel Fee

WASHINGTON, Aug. 10 (UPI)—Senate investigators reported today that "Five Per Center" James V. Hunt got an \$86,000 fee for helping former owners buy back for \$635,000 a Long Island hotel they had sold to the Navy for \$1,300,000.

Mr. Hunt was put onto the deal by Albert W. Lewitt, secretary of then Sen. Albert W. Hawkes (R. N. J.), but under sharp questioning Mr. Lewitt steadfastly denied suggestions that he got a \$5000 fee of his own.

The story, told by a Senate investigating committee official, disclosed that the purchasers sent Mr. Hunt a \$5000 down payment for his services while he was a \$50-a-day consultant to the War Assets Administration. WAA is the federal agency which disposes of surplus government property.

### Posse of 100 Tracks Illinois 'Monster'

GOOSEVILLE, Ill., Aug. 10 (UPI)—A band of 100 of this area's bravest men cleaned and oiled their shotguns today, preparing to track down and kill the "monster of Gooseville."

The men, most of them from neighboring Bethalto, said they were determined to rid the Indian Creek countryside of the "terrifying beast" which they claimed had killed livestock.

Billy Ellerbrook . . . His elderly parents were the first known dead.

## White Sheets Tell Story of Bus Tragedy

### Crash Victims Pending Identification In Bloomington

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the knee. Still other limbs had shrunk to the size of fingers.

Two Children Removed

Six bodies were first removed from the wreckage and taken into town in four ambulances. The first four victims appeared to be a woman and the sixth a child.

Another body of a child was removed later. Both children appeared to be about 8 or 9 years

The bodies were placed on stretchers covered by oil cloth or rubber blankets.

Belongings of the victims that could be recovered were placed beside the bodies so as to facilitate identification.

On the melted top of the bus lay a Schick razor, its yellow plastic handle blackened by fire.

A pair of shorts burned almost to the last thread were beside it.

Clothing Found

Clothing found included a half melted yellow T-shirt, a ladies' white blouse with the laundry mark PACER 5926 L and other scraps which officials said probably were too burned to help in identification.

By 7 a. m. a large crowd of curious seekers had flocked to the scene. Mortuary attaches said that none appeared to be relatives of the victims.

All were being ordered back to make room for ambulances.

State police were on the scene directing traffic. One lane of Ind. 37, the west side of the road, was kept open. Traffic was ordered to drive slow past the wreckage, then to speed up. No cars were allowed to stop.

Witnesses said the bus wreckage which had become a funeral pyre was tangled and molten. "It looked just like cobwebs," one said.

Seven-year-old David Flack,

3437 N. Illinois St., was in serious condition in General Hospital to day after police said he ran into the side of a car driven by Charlotte E. Grier, of 7210 N. Pennsylvania St. yesterday in the 3300 block of N. Meridian St.

A truck-automobile collision at 38th St. and Post Rd. today sent truck driver Charles Delelio of R. R. 11 and automobile passenger Albert Hackney of 706 E. 12th St. to General Hospital.

Mr. Delelio received a possible fracture and Mr. Hackney a hip injury. Woodrow W. Weagley of Muncie, driver of the automobile, was uninjured.

Ronnie Jackson, 5½ years old, was in good condition in Methodist Hospital today after he fell from the back of a truck in the 600 block N. Oxford St. yesterday. Truck driver Wilbur Salts, of 236 Eastern Ave., was arrested on a charge of failure to have a driver's license.

William M. Spiegel, 58, of 748 Union St., was treated and sent home from General Hospital last night after he was struck by a truck at Meridian and South Sts. He suffered cuts on his hand, knee and forehead.

Clyde W. Terry, 23, of 1131 S. Bradley Ave., was fined \$50 and costs in Municipal Court 3 today. Police said he uprooted six rows of corn with his motorcycle yesterday at 3750 Prospect St. after he collided with a car at Sherman Drive and Prospect St.

Terry was arrested on a charge of operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. He was tried in General Hospital.

## 13 Injured In 8 Traffic Accidents Here

### Boy Runs Into Side Of Car; Truck-Car Crash Hurts Two

Thirteen persons were injured in eight separate traffic accidents in and around Indianapolis yesterday and today.

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## ICC Officials Join In Crash Probe

### Mechanics to Scan Charred Wreckage

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for all stops along the winding Road 37, one of the state's dead.

State police said troopers regularly watched buses for compliance with the 30-mile-an-hour speed limit in Indiana. In 1948 40 bus drivers were arrested and 24 warned by patrolmen for speeding.

Worst bus crash on record in Indiana before today happened Feb. 17, 1947, when 13 railroad section workers were killed near Michigan City when their bus was struck by an electric train.

Another Great Lakes Greyhound bus was involved July 3 in a

crash which killed three occupants of a car near Glenna Valley on Road 37.

As he locked the truck door, two men stepped from a car and approached him. One held a pistol, Mr. Mayberry said, and the other took the billfold from his pocket. After removing the money, Mr. Mayberry stated, the man returned the purse, and left the scene in the car.

Gordon Mayberry, 28, the buyer, told police he parked his truck in the 300 block S. East St., after arriving here to make purchases at the South Side Market.

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