

17 Killed In Troop Train Wreck.

Jellico, Tenn, - AP - At least 17 persons, all but two of them soldiers, were killed last night when a troop train plunged into a 50-foot gorge of the Clear River 11 miles South of here.

DR. E. P. MUNCY, resident physician of Knoxville's General Hospital, said the death toll probably would exceed 40.

The locomotive and four cars were piled at the ravine's bottom, and a fifth hung over the precipitous edge, where it left the Louisville and Nashville railroad tracks.

One soldier, identified by Army Public Relations as Pvt. LEONARD BATTAG, of Evanston, Ill., was still pinned in the bottom of a wrecked car 12 hours after the crash, with four dead men piled on him. He regained consciousness and talked with rescuers as acetylene torches cut through twisted steel nearby.

The youth, in the Army only 13 days, asked a doctor if he was in a plane.

"It sure looks like it," he said. "This is a lot better hole than on that train." He is the son of MR. AND MRS. FRANK BATTAG of Evanston.

By noon six bodies had been brought to the government hospital at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and eight other bodies were reported on the way there. Army authorities at the hospital said that they had admitted 80 injury cases and had at least four more on the way and there were nine additional cases of soldiers given first aid treatment but not requiring hospitalization.

A partial death list released by the Army included the following enlisted men, with serial numbers but with home addresses still not known:

DONALD J. CLARK (35845018), WILLIAM M. GOREY (35845175), DALE MATTIX (35844937), W. H. McCHESNEY (35844928).

Among the injured were the following three railroad porters, all from Indianapolis: WILLIAM EUGENE McANULTY, SHERMAN COLLEY and THOMAS E. JONES, Extent of their injuries was not announced.

JOHN RUGGLES, in charge of the Knoxville office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said that possibilities of sabotage in connection with the wreck were being investigated.

Work of extricating the victims from the locomotive and five cars which tumbled down the steep 50-foot bank to the shallow stream was slow and unofficial estimate placed the casualties as high as 25 dead and 250 hurt.

The train was a special carrying only soldiers and the train crew.

An emergency train made up from the twelve cars which did not leave the track left this morning taking fifty of the injured to Lake City, Tenn., en route to the government hospital at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and at least thirty other

injured service men were sent to Oak Ridge Hospital in ambulances. State Guard Company C from Knoxville, commanded by Captain BEN SANDERS, joined military police in patrolling the wreck scene this morning as acetelyne[sic] torches were used to cut away portions of the cars and slings and pulleys were used to move the injured men up the bank. The kitchen and baggage cars of the southbound train, reported carrying more than 1,000 soldiers just out of basic training were burned. Express Agent C. L. ALLEY of Jellico said first rescues were made by nearby mountainfolk who tediously hoisted the injured by block and tackle slings up the shrubbery-lined gorge. Waiting ambulances rushed the injured to hospitals in Lake City, LaFollette and Jellico, and Corbin and Williamsburg, Ky.

Rescue Work.

Rescuers worked doggedly early today to free two soldiers trapped in one of the smashed coaches. Doctors gave blood plasma transfusions to one of them, pinned down in the gorge wreckage. Two others who had been trapped were extricated, one of them dead.

The fireman, identified at a Jellico hospital as J. W. TUMMINS, of Etowah, died in the institution several hours after he was hurled free of the wreckage. Capt. KILBURN BROWN, Army public relations officer, said identification of the dead was proceeding slowly. He explained most of the soldiers either had been in their berths at the time of the crash, or were in the wash rooms, preparing for bed. The crash tossed personal belongings together, and in some cases caused loss of identification tags.

A soldier, treated at Jellico Hospital, whose name was withheld, said the crash occurred "just after we finished chow," and said he thought the fire started in the train kitchen.

"I was in an upper berth," he said, "and was almost thrown out when we went around a curve. Just a moment later she banged off the track."

Jellico and LaFollette (Tenn.) Red Cross Chapters sent canteens to the wreck area to serve injured and rescue workers.

Reporter WILLARD YARBROUGH of the Knoxville Journal telephoned his paper what he counted seven dead when he climbed into the engine room and looked out. He said two more dead were lying in the stream, running two to four feet at the wreck scene.

Soldiers Hurt.

"One soldier pinned in the wreckage cried, 'Get me out of here or let me die right here'," YARBROUGH said. "Another soldier being carried across the

stream on a stretcher asked his rescuers to let him die right there." The engineer, identified by the railroad as JOHN C. ROLLINS, of Etowah, Tenn., was "somewhere beneath his engine," YARBROUGH said and the fireman was picked up from the spot to which he was hurled and brought to Jellico hospital.

Private WALLACE LEWIS of Canton, Ohio, a passenger on one of the cars hurled into the gorge, said, "I saw a big flash, and someone said, 'There's going to be a wreck.' There was. I crawled out of the car, fell into the shallow creek, and then stumbled out."

In this Cumberland Mountain section on the Kentucky-Tennessee line, the L. and N. tracks traverse numerous trestles over deep gorges and loop around hairpin turns.

Ten Army doctors and 12 Army ambulances were rushed to the scene from Clinton. They carried ample supplies of blood plasma.

Express Agent ALLEY, who said the train carried 1,000 soldiers, reported early today the cars remaining upright had been switched to another track and were proceeding to their destination.

Army Released Jellico Casualty List

July 6, 1944:

The dead:

RUSSELL J. ALQUIST, Paducah, Kentucky.

ROBERT H. BAIRD, Canton, Ohio.

LEONARD J. BETTAG, Evansville, Indiana.

CHARLES B. BOSWELL, Paducah, Kentucky.

CHARLES BRITZKE, LaPorte, Indiana.

JACK C. BROWN, Louisville, Ohio.

JAMES W. BUCHANAN, Buttonsville, West Virginia.

WILLIAM R. CATHEY, Paducah, Kentucky.

CHARLES T. CLAPP, Paducah, Kentucky.

DONALD J. CLARK, North Canton, Ohio.

JAMES N. CLARK, Paducah, Kentucky.

WAYNE E. CLEMMENS, Warren, Ohio.

ROBERT C. CLINGERMAN, Elkins, West Virginia.

RAYMOND COLE, Brazil, Indiana.

GEORGE E. EAVES, Orwell, Ohio.

WILLIAM N. GOREY, Pataskala, Ohio.

DONALD E. HILL, Canton, Ohio.

EUGENE L. HILTON, Menett, Missouri.

RAYMOND B. KIESLING, Canton, Ohio.
RAYMOND B. LILLIE, Warren, Ohio.
DON P. MASLINE, North Canton, Ohio.
DALE MATTIX, JR., Akron, Ohio.
WILLIAM E. McCHESNEY, Akron, Ohio.
RICHARD W. MILLER, Toledo, Ohio.
RAY W. PARKER, Trenton, Ohio.
AUSTIN E. PAUMIER, Louisville, Ohio.
HERBERT REICHLER, Bedford, Ohio.
JOSEPH G. SHIPBAUGH, Canton, Ohio.
JOHN R. WICKLINE, Orient, Ohio.
JOHN R. WISBERGER, Akron, Ohio.
RAY WOOD, JR., Kevin, Kentucky.
CLARENCE M. WRIGHT, Minerva, Ohio.
RAYMOND W. YAPP, Paducah, Kentucky.
HARGIS SALYER, Balyersville, Kentucky.
JOHN (LYLE) C. ROLLINS, engineer of train.
JOHN WILLIAM TUMMINS, fireman of train