



Savernake Ammunition Sidings after the Explosin

## **Explosions All Through The Night**

### **7 Missing after Arms Mishap**

The Savernake Forest (Wilts) hamlet of Cadley was shaken throughout the night by continuous explosions at the ammunition siding where British soldiers were killed yesterday.

People at Marlborough, three miles away, watched vivid flashes which lit the sky at intervals until dawn.

Official figures of military casualties as a result of the explosion, given at 9.30 a.m. , were: killed 1; seriously injured 1, injured and in hospital 5, missing 7.

The following members of the Pioneer Corps are reported missing: Corporal T. S. Pickersgill, and Privates J. J. Fortnum, H. Stevenson, P. Whieldom and K. Wilson.

In addition to the soldiers killed or missing, some firemen were injured, one being in hospital at Salisbury with a fractured shoulder.

One of the heroes is George Rogerson, (20), staff sergeant in the R.A.O.C., who was directing the unloading of the ammunition. A Pioneer Corps private who was working under him said today: "He was fine. He refused to leave, but stayed behind until the last of our chaps was got away."

The first explosion was apparently caused by cartridges among truck loads of ammunition catching fire, and detonating land mines. Eight or 10 wagons were blown up, killing men who were unloading them on to a dump.

It was stated today that the ammunition was intended for "sinking," which means that it was to have been buried in a deep pit. Cases of cartridges, apparently, were having holes bored into them to admit damp, and it is thought that this boring started the fire.

### **Big Effort Today**

An all-out effort was made this morning to extinguish the still blazing ammunition. Fire sirens sounded at Marlborough and other towns and villages around, and every available fireman was taken to the scene.

Other railway carriages which might have become involved were moved as far as possible from the burning wreckage of those what blew up yesterday.

Cadley, with its dozen houses, had nearly every window blown out, and others were smashed at Marlborough. About 30 of the inhabitants of Cadley were evacuated to an Army camp, although the elderly parents of Mr. F. Burrige, both over 80, insisted on remaining.

An area of about nine square miles is still banned to traffic.

**Yorkshire Evening Post, Thursday 3 January 1946**