

PLANE EXPLODES

3 Survive Crash In Wooded Area Below Jackson

By TINY OVERALL

Four men were killed last night when an Army C-119 "flying boxcar" apparently exploded in mid-air five air miles southwest of here over the Parksburg community.

Three others parachuted to safety after being blown from the plane, and although dazed, managed to pull the ripcord. They were treated for shock and minor injuries after being taken to Jackson-Madison County Hospital in Griffin Funeral Home ambulances.

The giant plane was from Sewart Air Base at Smyrna, Tenn., and was reported on a routine flight en route to Oklahoma City.

Two of the dead crewmen were identified by Sewart officials as Captain Kenneth W. Christenson, Watertown, Mass., and First Lt. Stanley L. Michelson, Nashville.

The Sewart Post Information office said the other two dead were servicemen hitchhikers with no military connection to Sewart Air Base and that their identification would have to come from other military sources.

The four bodies were at Smith Funeral Home and were to be removed to Smyrna today.

Survivors were identified as Capt. Russell D. Brewington, the pilot, of Nashville; Elmer Horvath, radio operator, of Toledo, Ohio; and Joseph W. Diondo, crew chief of Buffalo, N. Y.

The violence of the explosion spread wreckage over a wide wooded area where an intensive search ended last night at 12:45 when the last body was found.

Tennessee highway patrolmen; local units of the National Guard under command of Lt. Col. Mason Brown and hundreds of citizens equipped with flashlights and lanterns scoured the countryside in a drizzling rain.

Bits of the plane were spread over an area approximately a mile square.

One of the bodies was found near the wreckage. The others were widely scattered.

National guardsmen today had thrown up a road block into the area to keep hundreds of curious away until after an army investigation.

Captain Brewington said he didn't know exactly what happened. "Suddenly I found myself in midair and pulled my ripcord," he added.

Another survivor was reported to have said he was in the next compartment to the pilot when the explosion came and the next thing he knew he had regained consciousness in a pool of water on the ground. Pulling the rip-

cord must have been instinctive, he said.

Howard E. Johnson, who lives near the scene, said he heard the plane explode "just like a big clap of thunder."

Howard said he didn't hear the plane hit "but I heard screaming just a few minutes later. I started out to see what I could find when I saw two of the men coming down in parachutes and ran to help them," he added.

Walter Wilson, on whose property the plane crashed, said he was first to reach Captain Brewington. "He had a deep gash on his head and was in a dazed condition," Wilson said. Brewington reportedly called his commanding officer at Sewart before being taken to the hospital. He expressed surprise that there were any other survivors.

The flying boxcar was reportedly at about 8,000 feet over the overcast and on the Memphis-Nashville leg of the CAA Radio Range.

The fuselage, or body of the plane, was almost beyond recognition and lay several hundred feet from one of the engines, partially embedded from the impact. Searchers reported bits of wreckage over an area of about 40 acres.

General Sam Wallace of Nashville was reported in Jackson on a routine inspection at the National Guard Armory where a drill was being conducted when notification came that the crash had occurred.

The General put the headquarters, medical and service companies of the 117 infantry, Tennessee National Guard on a volunteer basis to assist in the search. The men were said to have volunteered to a man. Lt. Colonel Mason Brown was in command and was commended today by Gen. Wallace for "the efficient manner in which he handled the job."

State Planners Name Assistant Director



The army plane which wreckage was spread and drizzling rain.

g Rain Drought

57 inches of rainfall The bureau said less most Eastern Tennessee parched land soaked to germinate seeds.

Tennessee came in for a rain but much more was needed to help the suffering burley and tobacco and corn.

rainfall recorded in Parksburg yesterday was on an 0.8 fell in a brief shower in a month of May was one of the driest in the latter history of this section of the West Tennessee Experiment Station.

State Agriculture Experiment Station said "will come through

County Agent Tom d. pastures had been severely and he believed would now germinate in most areas. Mr. Jones said the rain was definitely a "drought breaker" and would be needed before any germination could be con-

dition which had gotten some

Jackson TN