

Grinnell Herald-Register

A NEWSPAPER FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

GRINNELL, POWESHIEK COUNTY, IOWA, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1950.

8:17 Rocket Hits Grinnell School Bus

Bus Wrecked, Two Killed, Others Hurt

Bus Had Just Begun Route When Struck At Turner Crossing

As the Herald-Register went to press, Shelvey Hay, sister of Jerry Hay, who was killed in the school bus accident this morning died at Community hospital.

Denny Gaines, driver of the bus, is reported to have several fractured ribs, though results of the x-rays are not yet available. His condition is reported as fair. Shirley Taylor has a fractured right leg and her condition is reported as pretty good, though a complete report is not available.

The east-bound Rock Island Rocket this morning struck and completely demolished a Grinnell school bus as it made its rounds through the Turner neighborhood approximately 4 miles west of Grinnell. One youngster is dead as a result of the accident, and three other passengers and the driver are hospitalized with injuries received in the crash.

Jerry Hay, 8, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay of 914 Pearl St., was pronounced dead on arrival at Community hospital. With his sister, Shelvey, 12, who was injured in the crash, he has been staying at the home of his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Vern Millgate on Highway 6 since his mother was taken to a hospital in Des Moines Feb. 13. They have been riding the bus since that time. Mr. Hay works for the Maytag company in Newton.

Also hospitalized as a result of the accident are Shirley Taylor, 15, daughter of Mrs. Leland Taylor; Denny Gaines, 22, driver of the bus, a student at Grinnell college, and Joyce Weidendorf, daughter of Otto Weidendorf.

Occurred at 8:10 A. M.

The accident occurred about 8:10 a. m. as the train approached Grinnell for a scheduled 8:17 a. m. stop. The bus had just left Highway 6 and was approaching the Turner crossing from the north. The crossing is about half a mile south of the highway.

The crossing is approached down a comparatively steep incline with visibility of the tracks limited by a steep bluff at the right. The gravel road is packed with snow as the result of the storm last week. The bus was carried about 50 feet by the impact before being thrown off the rightofway.

Rubber boots, tennis shoes, school books and a package to be mailed littered the scene of the accident. The wheels of the bus were thrown about 50 feet, and the door was found in a pasture on the opposite side of the railroad from the bus.

Hear Impact

Residents of the neighborhood report hearing the impact of the crash from their homes as much as a half a mile or more from the scene.

Joyce Weidendorf was found staggering back up the hill by

School Bus - -

(Continued from page 1)

Richard Rogers, the first motorist to approach the scene of the accident. She was bleeding badly but at St. Francis hospital was not thought to be critically injured. More information was not disclosed.

The remainder of the accident victims were loaded into the Rocket and brought to the Rock Island depot in Grinnell where they were met by ambulances and taken to Community hospital.

14 Ride Normally

At the office of Superintendent of schools B. C. Holmes it was reported that if all the children ride, the bus carries a load of 14. However, Gaines had just begun to pick up his passengers when the accident occurred.

The bus leaves Grinnell on Highway 6, picks up the Weidendorf girl at Hilltop, and goes next to the Taylor home. It continues its route through the Westfield neighborhood and returns to the school on Highway 146, reaching the school between 8:30 and 9 a. m., depending on the condition of the roads.

Gaines began driving for the independent school district last fall. He is married and Mrs. Gaines works at the Farmers' Mutual Reinsurance company. Three other Grinnell college students also drive school busses.



GRINNELL SCHOOL BUS DEMOLISHED: Pictured are two views of the wreckage of a Grinnell school bus after it was struck by an east-bound rocket this morning. The accident occurred at the Turner crossing approximately four miles west of Grinnell. Just starting on its rounds of picking up students, the bus was occupied by four youngsters when the crash occurred. One of the students was killed in the mishap while the other three and the driver were injured.

AL NEWSPAPER OF CITY OF GRINNELL AND POWESHIEK

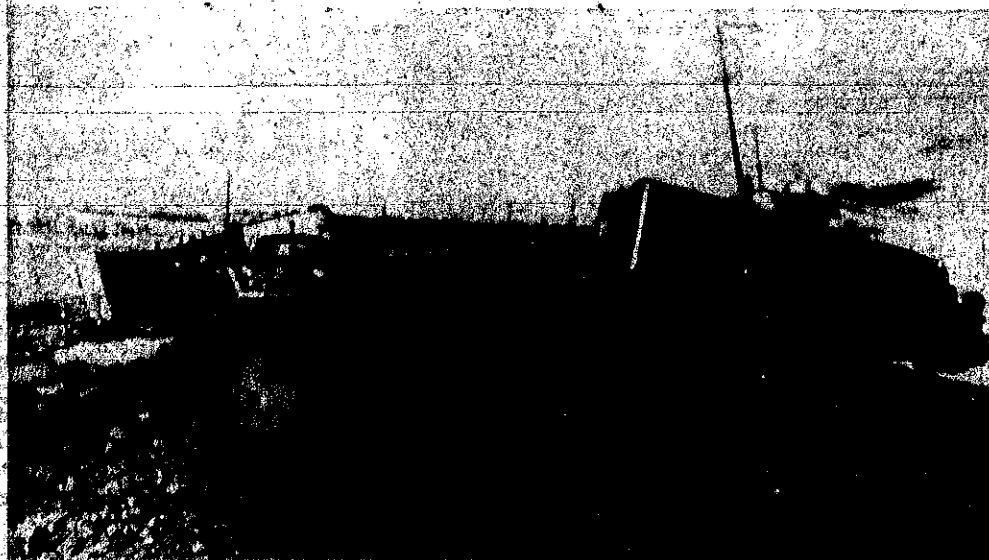
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A NEWSPAPER FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

ND YEAR GRINNELL, POWESHIEK COUNTY, IOWA, THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 1950

No Charges In Monday's Bus Accident

Jasper Officials Say
No Indication Of
Negligence Present



SCENE OF FATAL WRECK: Scattered wreckage of the head-on collision of two semi-trailers, about 9 miles west of Grinnell is visible on both sides of Highway 6 in the above view looking west on the accident scene. The west-bound Merchants trailer is off the highway to the left of the picture while the Millard trailer lies toppled over on the north side of the road. The tractor which was pulling the Merchants trailer west is visible on the right hand edge of the picture near the east-bound trailer. Not visible in the picture is the Millard tractor which lies behind the trailer on the north side of the road. In foreground to the left, note guard rails ripped up. The accident occurred almost directly behind the spot where the Millard trailer is lying, west of the spot where guard rails were torn up.

Jasper Officials Say No Indication Of Negligence Present

There will be no formal investigation or inquest following Monday's tragic school bus accident at the Turner crossing. Jasper County Attorney Arnold Myra of Colfax announced yesterday.

An informal investigation conducted Monday at the scene of the accident by Jasper County Sheriff Ray Barber of Newton established that there is no basis for criminal charges, so no further action will be taken. The accident occurred just across the county line in Jasper county.

Denny Gaines, driver of the bus, had told officers that as he approached the Turner crossing with his partially-loaded bus, he heard the 8:17 a. m. Rocket coming down the tracks from the west. Unable to stop because of a steep incline and packed snow on the road, he speeded up, hoping to get across before the train reached the crossing. He did not have time to get the bus completely over the tracks, however, and it was struck in the rear section.

Funeral Services

Funeral services for Jerry Lee Hay, 10, and Shelly Jean Hay, 12, son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay, who met death in the accident, were held this afternoon at the Smith funeral home. Elder Fred Phipps of the Primitive Baptist church in LeGrand officiated.

Miss Lois Huff was organist for the services and vocalists were Doris Parker and Josephine Ballard. Bearers were Robert Arthur, Kenneth Arthur, Keith Arthur, Ward Arthur, Bill Hay and Lavell Riggs. Flower bearers were Hannah Gate, Karen Harrison and Delene McDonald. Interment was in Hazelwood cemetery.

Condition Fair

The condition of Gaines, and Shirley Taylor, one of the passengers, is still described as fair at Community hospital where both were taken following the crash. Both passed their worst day yesterday, but are reported to be holding their own today.

At St. Francis hospital, Joyce Weidendorf, who was also injured in the crash, is reported to be getting along quite well.

The task of removing the demolished bus from the Rock Island railroad right-of-way where it was thrown after it was struck by the eastbound Rocket was completed Monday afternoon. It was necessary to cut the cumbersome vehicle in half with acetylene torches before it could be moved. The wreckage was brought to Grinnell.