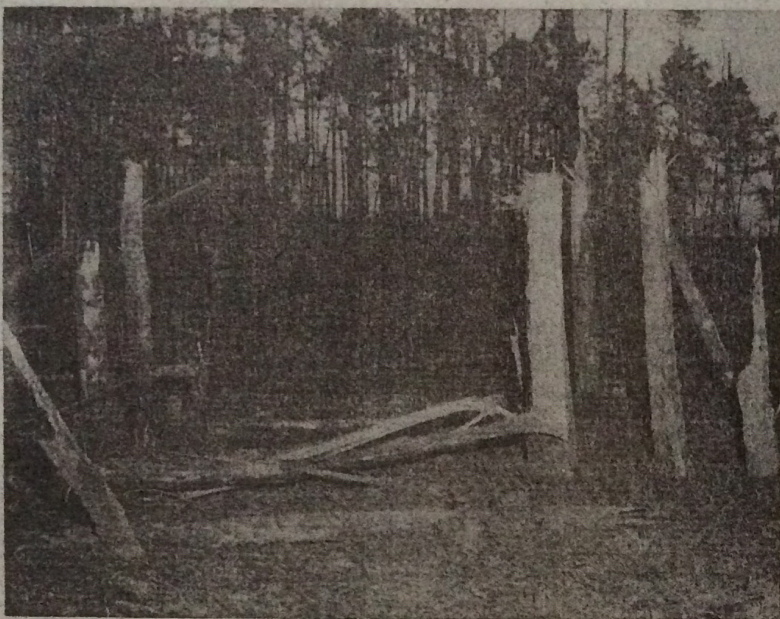


It Was a 'Bad Day at Mars Bluff'



REMAINS OF PINES — These stubbles were all that were left in a pine thicket located a few yards from the crater caused by the unarmed nuclear weapon which exploded in the Mars Bluff community yesterday afternoon. (Morning News photo by Kirkland)



BROKEN BENCHES — Damage resulting from the impact of an unarmed atomic nuclear bomb included these broken benches, shattered windows and torn down blind at Mission Church in the Mars Bluff area. (Morning News photo by Kirkland)

For Walter Gregg, A Rough Afternoon

ROBERT MCHUGH

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It was a quiet afternoon.

Walter Gregg was using it to fix a bench in an improvised work shop in the garage about 50 feet to the rear of his frame house in the Mars Bluff community, some 10 miles east of Florence.

Overhead the lazy drone of an airplane engine could be heard. It grew louder, Gregg observed, as he worked.

"Must be flying pretty low," he mused.

Nearby his three children played with a cousin. Inside his wife was sewing. A quiet afternoon.

Then suddenly a deafening explosion rent the air, a vast crater pitted in the garden, mud flew, the house collapsed and beams from the garage roof fell around him.

The airplane had dropped a bomb.

"Daddy, daddy, what happened?" Gregg heard his six-year-old son Walter Jr., cry.

"I don't know, sonny. I think an airplane exploded," said Gregg.

"It must have been a minute before the air cleared from the dust and I could see," he told The Associated Press in an interview

from McLeod infirmary here.

"I looked around and my living house was gone. It was falling all to pieces. The garage started to fall apart too. I got out of there.

"I saw that the kids were all right, and my wife, too. I shut off the electricity and the gas so there wouldn't be any more explosions.

"That bomb or whatever it was landed about 100 yards from the house right in the garden. It left a hole about 40 feet in diameter and I don't know how deep.

"My wife has a bad cut over her ear. They're sewing her up now. My niece, Ella, had a pretty bad cut on her forehead.

"You should see the car. It was parked in front about 30 feet from where I was working. The glass is gone, the hood is gone, the top is bent.

"A piece of timber from the garage hit me in the ribs . . . on the right side. I guess it didn't bust anything. I don't know.

"Where are we going to stay tonight? I just don't know. Maybe right here in the hospital. We're all pretty badly shaken up. I guess this would be the best place for all of us."

Six Injured

Continued from Page 1

ing from the Air Force for specialists to stay away from the area because of potential radio-activity which in turn touched off wide spread rumors of radiation fall out.

SEVERAL RESIDENTS of the community described the clouds arising from the blast as mushroom-shape, adding to the radiation fear.

A team of Air Force radiation specialists checked the area carefully last night and declared it free of any radio activity.

The Air Force said the nuclear bomb was complete except for the warhead.

The incident immediately touched off inquiries on both in the United States and England and the Strategic Air Command headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, took over all information releases.

About 7:45 p. m., some four hours after the blast, SAC headquarters confirmed that a Hunter Air Force Base (Savannah, Ga.) B47 had accidentally jettisoned an "unarmed nuclear weapon five miles east of Florence."

Capt. James Brady, SAC public information officer in Omaha indicated a "potential danger. . . of possible contamination of a small area of the high explosive charge completely destroys the weapon."

Apparently it didn't. The explosion came from TNT in the bomb, which left the Gregg home a cracked shell.

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GREGG WAS fixing a bench in a garage workshop and said he heard the plane. Suddenly a deafening explosion rent the air, mud flew, and his house started collapsing.

Gregg thought first an airplane had exploded. He began collecting his family. They had multiple scratches and cuts but only Ella Davies, the cousin, was cut seriously enough to require hospitalization.

She was retained last night at McLeods, where Mrs. Dorothy Lloyd, supervisor, said the child was given a thorough bath "as precaution" against radioactivity.

The Greggs were staying in a private home at Mars Bluff and friends would not disclose their whereabouts until morning. Mrs. Gregg they explained, was greatly unnerved by the shock and was under sedation.

Gregg talked freely with news- At the blast scene Highway Pa-