

21 January 1971

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Identify Victim Of Mysterious Auto Blast

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (AP) — The charred body of a man found in the wreckage of an auto that exploded on Interstate 59 north of here positively was identified today by the highway patrol as Carl E. Berry Jr., a Hattiesburg attorney.

Officers said a witness told them he was following an auto about six miles north of Ellisville on Interstate 59 late yesterday when the interior of the car in front of him burst into flames following an explosion.

The patrol said the vehicle, identified as belonging to Berry, then left the highway and slammed into a culvert. The body in the car was burned beyond recognition. They said Berry's wife informed officers her husband had telephoned from Laurel and told her he was returning home that afternoon following a meeting with other attorneys.

A full-scale investigation has been launched to determine what caused the explosion and fire, officers said.

Berry, 59, served at one time as Hattiesburg prosecutor.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 1971

Bomb Team Probes Death Of Attorney

LAUREL, Miss. (AP) — A team of Army demolition experts and the state fire marshal's office joined investigators today in efforts to determine the source of an explosion and fire which killed a Hattiesburg attorney as he drove along Interstate 59 in Jones County.

J. T. Thomas, chief investigator for the Mississippi Highway Patrol, said both the fire marshal's office and the demolition team from Camp Shelby were checking the wreckage for possible leads.

The charred body of Carl E.

Berry Jr., 51, was found in the wreckage of his car on Interstate 59 near Ellisville Wednesday afternoon. His wife said he was returning home from a meeting with other attorneys.

Witnesses told officers they heard the explosion and saw the interior of Berry's car enveloped in flames before the vehicle left the interstate and slammed into a culvert.

"So far we have found nothing to indicate the cause of the incendiary-type explosion which occurred inside Berry's car," Thomas said. "We sent

some seat covering and padding to the state crime lab for analysis."

Coroner C. B. Ellzey of Jones County said he witnessed the autopsy performed on Berry's body late yesterday and the autopsy showed the attorney died of burns suffered in the fire.

Berry, who practiced mostly criminal law, was a former city attorney at Hattiesburg.

CITIES MERGE

Hollywood became a part of Los Angeles city in 1910.