

STREET CAR ACCIDENT HALF-DOZEN INJURED

Cut of Freight Cars Dashes Down Hill on West Side,

Striking Crowded Street Car and Injuring Many Passengers.

Several of Victims Removed to Hospitals—
Joseph Atcherson Run Over by Ambulance.

(The Ohio State Journal, October 1, 1902)

THE INJURED

John Heckert, Bucyrus, wrist cut, back sprained, internal injuries.

Mrs. A.H. Porter, Alexis, Ill., scalp wound and bruises.

Mrs. W.H. Ingram, 176 King avenue, cut on face, body bruised.

Gus Geminehart, Sullivant avenue, bruises.

Leo Geminehart, Sullivant avenue, bruises.

Edward L. Kraner, 151 Mulberry street, arm fractured and bruised.

Henry M. Curry, 480 Kimball street, bruises.

Joseph Atcherson, 75 West Long street, hp and back injured.

After a wild flight down a hillside on a slippery rail a West Broad street car dashed into the side of a rapidly moving cut of cars on the railroad switch crossing West Broad street to the grounds of the institution for the education of feeble-minded shortly after 5 o'clock Tuesday evening.

The car was wrecked, one end of it being reduced to kindling wood, and a half dozen or more passengers were injured, several severely, while all had a narrow escape from death. It will require an investigation to place the responsibility for the accident.

The car was a big double-truck one in charge of Conductor J.C. Burkett and Motorman J.E. McCarty. It had started east down the hill from the State hospital when the motorman discovered a cut of cars backing towards Broad street from the north. The cut was under considerable headway on account of the steep grade at the entrance to the institution grounds, and the street car and cut of freight cars were rapidly approaching each other at the crossing when the motorman discovered the impending danger.

Motorman Powerless.

The motorman made every effort to check the speed of his car, but its headway was so great and the rail being slippery, it was soon seen that the collision could not be avoided. The motorman reversed the motor and the speed was somewhat checked, but not sufficient to prevent the two coming together with a terrible crash. A car of coal which was at the head of the cut caught the end of the vestibule of the car and it was cut off from the platform as though it had been slice with a knife. The car was hurled from its trucks and the passengers were thrown about the car amid a shower of glass and splinters of wood.

Terrible Crash.

Motorman McCarty saved his life by a backward leap into the car as the coal car cut off the platform on which he had been standing.

All was confusion within the car when the passengers discovered the danger a moment before the crash came, but they were powerless to escape. When the crash came all was confusion and the flying glass and splinters added to the confusion and this was augmented by a dash of milk which was thrown over the car when the collision occurred. Gus and Leo Geminehart, two boys living on Sullivant avenue, were coming to the city with two gallons of milk and this was thrown about the car by the shock.

The crash attracted hundreds of people to the scene of the collision and they turned their attention to rendering assistance to the injured passengers on the car. It was found that cuts and bruises were the most serious injuries sustained and some of the passengers escaped with minor injuries.

Among the more seriously injured were Mrs. A.H. Porter of Alexis, Ill., who is visiting with her sister, Mrs. W.H. Ingram of 176 King avenue. Both women were in the car when the crash came and Mrs. Porter was badly cut by particles of glass and she was also injured about the head. The shock to her nervous system was also severe. Mrs. Ingram was also slightly bruised and cut. Mrs. L.O. Anderson, wife of the steward at the State hospital, was passing in her carriage at the time of the accident and she had the two women placed in her carriage and they were taken to the State hospital, where their injuries were dressed by Drs. G.T. Harding and A.F. Bradley. The physicians decided that the condition of Mrs. Porter was such that she should not be moved and arrangements were made to care for both women at the State hospital and both were still there under the physicians' care.

John W. Heckert of Bucyrus, a traveling salesman, who has been stopping at the Star hotel, was cut on the right hand and badly bruised about the head and back. It was at first feared that he had sustained internal injuries, but it is now believed that these fears were unfounded. He was removed to Mt. Carmel hospital by Fisher's ambulance. The other victims of the wreck were removed to their homes in private conveyances, or were able to proceed on another car. The motorman and conductor secured another car and continued with their work last evening.

Forty Miles an Hour.

It is claimed by some that the cut of cars was running 40 miles an hour when it crashed into the vestibule of the street car. The train crew is said to have paid no attention to the street car

or the injured passengers but ran the cut into the institution grounds with our stopping to learn the result of the collision. The engine was a Pennsylvania one and the switch on which the accident occurred is one which extends from the tracks of the Cincinnati division of the Panhandle across the grounds of the State hospital and through the grounds of the institution for the education of feeble-minded youth. This switch also connects with the track of the Columbus, London and Springfield road on Sullivan avenue.

Another Accident.

Another accident resulted indirectly from the collision on West Broad street. As Fisher's ambulance crossed Gay at High street Joseph Atcherson, aged 60, of 75 West Long street was knocked down and badly bruised about the hips and back. He claims the ambulance struck him. According to another account of his accident it is said that when he started to cross High street, as the ambulance passed, a large dog which was running with the ambulance ran between Atcherson's legs and threw him down.

KRANER AND CURRY'S ESCAPE

Edward L. Kraner, residing at 151 Mulberry street, and employed in the local offices of the Prudential Insurance company, was badly injured, but in the excitement after the collision did not know the extent of his injuries. Today he is confined to his home nursing painful wounds.

Mr. Kraner was seated inside the car conversing with Henry M. Curry, a special policeman residing at 480 Kimball street just before the crash came. Both saw the impending danger and made a bolt for the rear door. Mr. Kraner jumped, and this was the last he knew until he was lifted from the perilous position under the car. How he ever got there he does not know, but when he regained his senses he was laying under the car his head near the wheels and about one foot from the moving steam cars. The motor car gave a few jerks, he says, and he had to crawl along to keep from having his head crushed by the wheels.

After being taken out he kept moving about the wreckage and did not notice any pain. When the first car came into the city he, with Mr. Curry who was also badly bruised, boarded it. Arriving home Mr. Kraner began to suffer pain and Dr. Overly was summoned. An examination developed that the former had sustained a severe fracture of the left elbow, a badly sprained hip and shoulder and he was otherwise bruised. Grease from the car wheels was smeared all over Mr. Kraner's head and face, showing how close he was to being run over.

Mr. Curry had been on the West side to serve a legal paper and Mr. Kraner had been making some collections for the Prudential company.

MUST OBEY THE LAW

As a result of the accident the city authorities will probably request the street railway company to hereafter observe the provisions of the law relative to grade crossings.

The attention of the law department was called to the following provision of the law Wednesday morning:

Sec. 3443-6. Whenever the tracks of any street railroad in this state cross the tracks of any steam railway at grade, the street railway company operating said line of cars shall cause their street cars to come to a full stop not nearer than ten feet nor further than fifty feet from the crossing, and before proceeding to cross said steam railway tracks shall cause some person in their employ to go ahead of said car or cars and ascertain if the way is clear and free from danger for the passage of said street cars, and said street railroad cars shall not proceed until signaled so to do by such person so employed as aforesaid, or said way is clear for their passage over said tracks

A penalty of \$100 to be imposed on the motorman and conductor for failure to obey the law is provided, and the company is made liable for injuries from accident to persons riding on the cars in case of disobedience to the law. The law has never been observed at the imbecile asylum switch crossing.

HISTORY OF DANGEROUS CROSSING

A mistaken idea seems to prevail relative to the manner in which authority to construct the grade crossing was obtained. The public is generally of the impression that the city council passed an ordinance granting the P., C., C. & St. L. R. R. Co. the right to cross the street at grade with certain restrictions to safeguard the public from such accidents as happened Tuesday evening. This is a mistake. No such ordinance was ever passed by council. The records at the city clerk's office show that on March 15, 1897, the late Dr. Rowles at the time a member of council from the Eleventh ward, introduced an ordinance in council authorizing the railroad company to construct the switch over West Broad Street for the purpose of switching cars loaded with coal and other supplies to the Imbecile asylum. The ordinance was read the second time and referred to the committee on railroads and viaducts.

When the West Side citizens, headed by D.J. Clahane, Chris Ross and others visited the council chamber in large numbers and fought the ordinance so successfully that it was never passed.

The company then undertook to steal a march on the city by laying the track across the street under cover of darkness. Former Director of Public Safety W.H. Williams sent two patrol wagons loads of police to the scene and stopped the work. The company then brought suit to enjoin the city from interfering with the work and obtained a decision to the effect that the city had no right to interfere, because the state, which had contracted with the railway company to pay for the switch, owned the property at the point on both sides of the street and controlled the street under the old national road law. That is the history of how the crossing was put down.