

PASSENGER TRAIN WRECKED, COLUMBUS PEOPLE INJURED

CARELESSNESS GIVEN AS CAUSE OF A SMASH-UP IN LOCAL YARDS

Norfolk & Western Switching Engine Gets onto the C., A. & C. Main Track – Outgoing Train Crashes into It at High Rate of Speed.

(Columbus Dispatch, July 25, 1903)

THE INJURED.

A. Rellick, conductor, Indianola Place, chest injured. Internal injuries, body bruised.

W.H. Carr, news agent, 623 Kerr street, scalp wounds.

W.T. Wharry, traveling man, Westerville, throat badly injured; loss of speech.

Mrs. J.G. Sheppard, passenger, 456 Lexington avenue, cut above mouth.

Mrs. W.C. Sheppard, 273 Garfield avenue, passenger, body badly bruised.

John Reinhart, engineer, C. A. & C., Lincoln street, right hand broken and bruised.

Grand Church, Cleveland, postal clerk, arm sprained.

David Wilgemot, baggage master, 113 East Goodale street, back sprained, right leg injured.

Carelessness on the part of the crew of a Norfolk & Western yard engine is assigned as the cause of a collision shortly after 7 o'clock Saturday morning in the Pennsylvania yards just east of the St. Clair avenue viaduct, which injured a number of people, and caused considerable damage.

Passenger train No. 535, on the C., A. & C. which left the Union station at 7:00 collided with a switch engine of the Norfolk & Western, at the point mentioned, and it was through the bravery of the engineer on the passenger train that lives were not sacrificed.

As it was, not a passenger on the train escaped from the effect of the collision. The conductor of the passenger train was badly injured, suffering more than any of the others, while the crew on the switch engine escaped uninjured.

The passenger train was running 35 miles an hour, when the collision occurred.

NOT A WORD OF WARNING

was given the engineer on the passenger train, and the Norfolk & Western switch engine, with a work train, backed down on the main track, just east of the St. Clair avenue viaduct, directly into the fast running train. When the engineer of the passenger train saw that a collision was inevitable, he, with his fireman, stuck to their posts. The engine was reversed just before the pilot struck the tender of the switcher and the impact from the shock is what caused the injuries to the train crew and the passengers.

The passenger train was just getting on a good headway of steam, being close to the eastern end of the yards. It was running on the main track, and the N. & W. switch engine had no right on that track, according to the claims of the yard men about the point where the collision took place.

The engineer was prepared to jump when the collision came, and expected to see his engine climb the tender of the one which it struck. Instead, however, the huge piece of machinery

QUIVERED PERCEPTIBLY

for an instant, then settled back on the track with a shock. The reverse was on full, and as soon as the forward motion was impeded, the train gave a lurch backward and was stopped.

The switch engine, as far as could be learned, suffered but little damage. The tender was somewhat bruised from the force of the collision, and officials of the N. & W. road were chary about giving out any information concerning the collision

On the other hand, the C., A. & C. people, and those who witnessed the collision, say that no signals whatever were given by the switch engine, and some of the yard men wondered what right the engine had on the main track, especially as all switches had been set for the C., A. & C. train.

The conductor of the train, A. Rellick, was in the middle coach of the train when the collision occurred, and was thrown violently forward, striking the door of the coach at the front end. He was about half way down the aisle when the two engines came together.

CONDUCTOR'S STORY.

Didn't Know What Had Happened Until Picked Up from the Floor.

Conductor Rellick, who was probable the worst injured in the collision, stated that he was about the center of the middle coach of the train when the collision occurred.

"I knew something had happened," he said, "but I did not know what it was until I was picked up from the floor of the coach, near the door."

The conductor was just in the act of punching a Cleveland ticket when he took his sudden trip forward. He struck the front door of the coach and landed in a heap on the floor. Passengers in this coach stated that they expected to find his neck broken, as he was limp and apparently lifeless when they approached him. The breath had been knocked from his body, and he was picked up and placed on one of the seats.

In a short while he recovered sufficiently to ask what had happened, and then stated that he felt awful bad and suffered pains in the chest.

He said he could not describe his experience, as he absolutely knew nothing after the first jar until he had recovered his breath a few minutes later.

He was made comfortable upon cushions in the baggage car until the arrival of a physician. Later he was taken back to the station on the same train, and from there removed to his home in Indianola Summit addition in the city ambulance.

LOST HIS SPEECH.

Westerville Traveling Man Suffers a Peculiar Mishap.

W.T. Wharry, of Westerville traveling representative for the Barnhart Bros. & Spindler type foundry was in the rear coach when the collision occurred.

He was enroute to his home in Westerville for a visit to his parents and was in one of the double seats.

The force of the collision threw him forward and his neck struck the back of the seat in front of him. The shock almost rendered him unconscious and resulted almost in the total loss of his voice.

When he recovered from the shock he attempted to speak and found that he could not articulate even in a whisper. The experience frightened him somewhat until informed by the physician that he would recover in a few days.

Several other passengers in the coach suffered a similar injury but none were as serious as that of Mr. Wharry. A few minutes after the accident his throat began to swell perceptibly. The physician states that the temporary loss of speech usually follows a sudden blow on the throat at the larynx caused by inflammation.

NEWS AGENT

Turns Several Somersaults and Alights Upon His Head.

W.H. Carr the news butcher on the train was in the rear coach when the collision occurred and had a most exciting experience.

When the two trains came together, he made a leap in the air, from the impact, and turned over several times. He did not alight at exactly the same spot upon which he was previously standing, but came down upon a seat arm, head-first, several feet away.

An examination disclosed that he had received two scalp wounds, neither of which are serious. Both are painful, however, and bled profusely.

Dr. S.O. Griffin, who was called to the scene immediately after the collision, attended to his injury, and also looked after the others who were injured.

NEW TRAIN MADE UP.

Belated Passengers Renew Their Journeys Later in the Morning.

The train which was in the collision was brought back to the Union station about 7:45 o'clock. The engine which started out with its load of human freight was damaged to such an extent that a new one had to be substituted. The pilot was completely torn from the engine, and the headlight and the forward part of the boiler casing were also badly damaged.

Another engine was procured and backed the three coaches into the Union station. Another train was made up from this point, and about 9 o'clock it pulled out for a second run to Cleveland and intervening points.

Those members of the N. G. N. Camping club who were on the train concluded to continue on their journey, so as not to cause alarm to friends who are already in camp. Dr. F.S. Lott, of this city, is with the camping party near Mt. Vernon, and will look after their injuries in the camp.

Another conductor was sent for, and with the new engine crew, took charge of the train. The damaged engine was sent to the Pennsylvania shops for repair. The coaches were not damaged any extend, but will be thoroughly examined before being put back into service.

PAINTER'S ARM BROKEN.

Engine That Caused Wreck Picking Up Painting Outfit.

It is understood that Norfolk & Western 242 was pulling a work train and was engaged in getting out the painting outfit.

It had picked up three house cars from a spur near the scene of the wreck just before the collision.

The regular crew in charge of the work train is John Blaney, engineer and Ben Pratt, conductor.

About an hour after the collision a painter, whose first name is Jesse, sought surgical aid down town. He had one arm broken and had been violently jolted.

NOT ONE ESCAPED.

Every Person on the Train Suffered From the Shock.

Not a person on the train escaped from the effect of the collision. Grant Church, the postal clerk, whose home is in Cleveland, had begun the work of distributing the mail when the shock came. He was thrown forward, and his arm struck one of the sack hangers in the car, badly bruising that member. He was able to continue on the new train.

David Wilgemot, the baggage master of the train, who lives at 118 East Goodale street, was thrown against the front of his car and his back injured.

The injured news agent insisted on staying with his train. He said when the shock came, and he went into the air, his pocket book and keys were lost. Part of the money was regained but he could not find his keys. He wanted to make the trip and try and make up for the money he lost.

The rear coach, it is claimed, got the impact from the collision, as there was not a passenger but felt the effect of the shock.

The engineer, John Reinhart, of Lincoln street, suffered a broken right hand, which got caught when he reversed the lever. The fireman, O.N. Royer, also felt the effect of the sudden jar.

CAMPING PARTY

Was En Route to Mt. Vernon to Spend Their Vacation - Were From Columbus.

In the rear coach of the train, which was made up of a combination baggage and mail car and two passenger coaches, were the members of a Columbus camping party, en route to Mt. Vernon.

In the party were Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Sheppard, Mr. and Mrs. James G. Sheppard, Mrs. W.F. Shough, Mr. William Sheppard, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. George M. Smith, of Mt. Vernon; Misses Annie Sheppard, Ray Louterbach, Helen Sheppard and Masters Arthur and Howard Sheppard.

The party were on route to the camp of the N. G. N. club, on Oak Farm, near Mt. Vernon.

Mrs. W.C. Sheppard, of 273 Garfield avenue, and Mrs. J.C. Sheppard, of 456 Lexington avenue, were both badly bruised. The latter was thrown forward in her seat and her face struck the back of the seat directly in front. Her lips were badly cut and her face swollen from the effects of bruises. Mrs. W.C. Sheppard suffered also from the shock.

Others in the party were more or less bruised by being thrown forward.

CRASH UNAVOIDABLE.

Fireman Royer Describes the Collision – N. & W. displayed No Flag.

O.N. Royer, fireman on C., A. & C. engine 962, which was pulling passenger train 535, tells a thrilling story of the wreck. He was violently jolted, but sustained no serious injuries.

“We were steaming out at rapid rate when I saw an engine standing some distance ahead of us. It was reversed and was apparently standing in a spur.

“No flag was out and that, together with the appearance of the engine, convinced me at first sight that it was out of the way.

“The next glance showed me my error, for we had by that time got far enough into the curve to see that the engine was in the main track and bound to hit us unless a miracle happened.

"I yelled to John (the engineer) and simultaneously I felt him apply the air. We had sighted the danger at the same time. He put on every pound of air and followed that by instantly reversing the engine

"I felt her working backward at a furious rate, but the heavy load behind us and the momentum gained, carried us forward in spite of everything we could do.

"THE CRASH CAME

while the engineer had his hand at the throttle, the impact being so violent as to crush several fingers of his right hand."

Shortly after the smash-up Mr. Reinhart, the engineer, quit the scene to have his hurts attended to and his version of the accident was not obtained.

A large crowd of railroad men quickly congregated about the scene of the wreck and the occurrence was at once the only subject of conversation.

It was the opinion of these men generally that the switch engine had no business standing in the main track without a flag.

Why it was there without a flag has not been explained. Norfolk & Western local officials refuse to make any statement, declining to discuss the matter on the ground that their rules do not permit them to give out information on such matters or to make a statement of facts for publication.

They even declined to state who was in charge of the work train to which the engine that caused the collision was attached.
