

TWO RUNAWAY CARS CAUSE A BAD WRECK CRASH INTO A PAN HANDLE FREIGHT AT UNION DEPOT

Brakes on Hopper Cars Would Not Work and Brakeman Helpless

HE YELLED FOR HELP

Seven Cars in Train Are Smashed, and Heavy Hoppers Derailed

(Columbus Dispatch – Sunday, February 25, 1906)

Screaming at the top of his voice for help, a B. & O. brakeman rode through the railroad yards from the east at 9:15 Saturday night, toward the Union station, on the front end of two heavily loaded runaway hopper cars, containing coal. The brakes would not work and the brakeman had no means of preventing a wreck which he knew must occur, but no assistance came in spite of his continued appeal and a moment later the cars sideswiped a heavy Pan Handle freight train pulling out on the Cincinnati division.

CRASHED INTO FREIGHT.

The wreck occurred just outside the Union station, and seven cars of merchandise were ripped open, one was badly smashed, the runaway hopper cars were derailed, and the tracks in that particular part of the yards were most effectually blocked. The Pan Handle wrecking crew and equipment were called out, and the work of clearing away the wreckage occupied the greater part of the night.

When the brakeman saw that the wreck was unavoidable, he jumped from his dangerous position into a pile of cinders, and escaped unhurt. His name could not be learned. He was a member of one of the B. & O. yard crews, and was in charge of the heavy hopper cars which were cast loose in the work of shifting going on in the upper yards. When he attempted to set the brakes as the cars approached their destination he found that they would not work, and became alarmed at once. The speed increased by gravity, and while the cars did not move with great rapidity, they were dangerous because of their heavy loads.

WRECK CREW AT WORK.

Just as the curve behind the station was reached, the Pan Handle freight pulled across the track of the runaways and the crash followed. Because of the great weight of the hoppers, considerable difficulty was experienced by the wrecking crew in replacing them upon the rails. The extra freight was delayed for hours.