



Railroader Killed in Hilltop Wreck

Fireman Dies; Engineer Hurt

Two Engines and Four Cars Leave Rails.
VICTIMS FROM XENIA

Other Members of Double-Header Crew Escape.

(Columbus Evening Dispatch, January 7, 1941)

One trainman was killed and another was critically injured Tuesday noon when they leaped from the first engine of a double-header Pennsylvania passenger train as it jumped the track near the Harper road crossing of the railroad.

The accident occurred near the intersection of the Pennsylvania and New York Central tracks near McKinley Avenue.

Fireman W.B. Hanson, Xenia, was killed and Engineer Burt Van Cleve also of Xenia, was seriously injured when he apparently was pinned under the trucks of one of the cars.

No Cars Overturned

Had the two men stayed in their engine, they would have been safe, for while the two engines and four baggage cars left the tracks, they did not overturn, and no one was badly hurt in the other cars.

Fellow trainmen said they believed the two men jumped because they were afraid the engine the boiler.

Engineer G.R. Cooper, Xenia, and Firemen William R. Murray, 810 Leona Avenue, in the second engine held their posts and were uninjured.

Cooper and Murray and the trainmen in the baggage cars were shaken up as the double-header bumped approximately 100 feet up the track bed to a stop.

Murray, from the second engine, saw Hanson leap. He said the firemen head struck the tender and he apparently was killed instantly.

Slows for Crossing

The train headed into Columbus from St. Louis, had slowed down somewhat in approaching the crossing of the Big Four railroad tracks near the Harper road level crossing. A Big four train had just crossed the Pennsylvania tracks a few moments before the wreck.

Officials would not give any explanation for the derailing until after they had completed their investigation, but it was believed that the rain either hit an open switch or and open derail.

Contents of the baggage cars were tossed around violently by the accident. In one car a consignment of baby chicks was broken open and the chicks were fluttering all over the car.

A wreck train was immediately sent to the scene. The passenger trains had "jumped" away from the west-bound tracks which remained clear.
