

## Freight Wreckage Cleared Danger of Explosion Past



An engine and 22 freight cars were derailed on 5/30/1951 when an axle on one of the cars burned off. The wreck was located on the New York Central right of way immediately south of the West Broad Street crossing.

The camera is looking east. The white house with the front porch is facing Derrer Road and can still be seen on Bing or Google maps.

Photo from the Alex Campbell Collection.

### [\(Columbus Evening Dispatch, May 31, 1951\)](#)

COLUMBUS, OHIO – After 19 tense hours, the wreckage of the \$60,000 New York Central Railroad freight derailment at the west city limits was cleared Thursday and the danger of an explosion declared past.

The wreck occurred at 5:00 a.m., Wednesday and among the 22 cars which jumped the track were four tankers filled with 38,000 gallons of gasoline. Nearby was a lumber yard and only 200 feet away were several huge gasoline storage tanks.

**Fumes filled the area and a spark could have set off an explosion, firemen said.**

Columbus fire companies, with foamite and water, stood by until 11:58 p.m., Wednesday.

The 22 cars of the Columbus bound freight jumped the rails and plowed into nine empty box cars on a siding south of Broad St. at the west limits of the city.

None of the crew members, all of whom were from Columbus, were injured.

Derailed were cars of shelled corn, two gondolas of electrodes, two cars of cement, a car filled with sashes and doors, a milk car, a car of soybeans, one of zinc oxide, two coal hoppers, three empty cars and four tank cars with the 38,000 gallons of gasoline.

**Oil distribution companies sent crews to the scene to pump gasoline from the leaking tankers.**

New York Central Railroad officials said traffic was restored at restricted speed over the line at 7:15 p.m. Thursday.

Members of the crew were Engineer James Howard, 938 S. High Street; Conductor J.F. Williams, 50 Larcomb Ave; Raymond McGhee, flagman, of 64 N. Roys Ave and John Bates, brakeman, of 166 E. Fifth Ave.

The freight train was en route to Columbus from Springfield.

**The nine box cars were on a siding at the West Side Lumber and Coal Co., Broad St. and the New York Central. Vernon D. Peterson, lumber firm manager, said there was minor damage to fences and one mill building.**

A burned-out axle on the ninth car behind the locomotive caused the wreck railroad officials said.

The \$60,000 estimate was unofficial, they pointed out, since they could not get into some of the cars to determine full extent of the damage.