

Locomotive Derailed Blocks 5th Ave. Traffic



500-TON BARRIER – This Pennsylvania railroad Locomotive, weighting 500 tons, jumped its track at the 5th Avenue crossing early Friday and blocked auto traffic about five hours while repairs were made to the crossing. – (Dispatch Staff Photo)

[\(Columbus Evening Dispatch, September 23, 1957\)](#)

A huge Pennsylvania Railroad locomotive jumped its track early Friday and closed the 5th Avenue crossing to auto traffic about five hours while repairs were made.

One set of rails and adjoining sections of the macadam roadway were torn up and relaid by railroad workmen after the 500-ton engine slid off the rails, farthest east of six sets of track, about 6:45 a.m.

Heavy auto traffic carrying workers to industrial plants was snarled for about a half-hour, police said, but flowed smoothly after being rerouted via St. Clair, Gibbard and Joyce Avenues.

EIGHT DRIVER wheels and four smaller ones on the huge steam engine left the track. The engine, pulling a tender, was headed north from the St. Clair engine house to the Gorgan yards north of 5th Avenue. It stopped astraddle the street level crossing.

Yardmaster Robert Early of the Gorgan yards said a split rail may have caused derailment, but investigators at the scene said a faulty switch may have been responsible.

THOMAS GRUBER, 815 E. 4th Avenue, was engineer. The locomotive was pulled back onto the track about two hours after derailment by a double unit diesel engine. A steel form known as a rerailer or “frog”, was put down to guide the wheels back onto the rails.

Railroad traffic was not interrupted on other tracks.