

Disastrous Railway Wreck

One Freight Train Runs into Another West of the City

One Man fatally, and Several Others Severely injured Great Destruction of Property Cause of the Accident

(The Columbus Dispatch, Aug. 16 1889)

Probably the worst wreck which has occurred in the immediate vicinity of Columbus for many years was the one on the C., St. L., & P. road at 2:35 o'clock this morning, resulting from a "run-in" at "Two Mile Siding," just west of the city limits. A stock drover riding in one of the cabooses lies at St. Francis Hospital at the point of death; an engineer and fireman are injured and considerable rolling stock and freight damaged. The second section of freight train No. 52 was entering the city on the main track and stopped to switch some of the forward cars in the train onto the siding, leaving the rear portion of the train on the main track. The first section of freight train No. 42 following crashed into it, piling up engine and cars in the most promiscuous manner.

At the time of the accident there was a fog so heavy that the engineer and fireman of the first No. 43 did not see the tail-lights of the other train till they were within a few feet of it. They were so close that they even had no opportunity to jump. The engineer was Ed Stolz, residing at Bradford Junction, and the fireman John Gardner, residing in this city, at 620 Thorn street, near Jefferson avenue. The wonder is that they ever escaped alive. Both were thrown out (having no time to jump), the latter being found covered with wreckage alongside the engine. Stolz complains of injury to his head, right hip and knee, while Gardner has his lower limbs scaled, in addition to numerous cuts and bruises. They both showed nerve in walking away from the wreck to switch engines which conveyed them to the city. Stolz was taken home this afternoon.

The deplorable feature is the serious injury which befell James Mears, an elderly man residing at Steubenville, who was en route east with sheep from Indianapolis and asleep in the caboose. When the engine struck it, so much force was exerted that the gondola car ahead was pushed through it, and Mears, who was sleeping in one corner was thrown forty feet away from the demolished caboose. When found he complained of an injured neck but after his necktie and collar had been removed he said he was not hurt much. After the patrol wagon removed him to the hospital, however, it was seen that the injuries were more serious.

Dr. Hoover, the company's physician, stated this afternoon that he had not fully determined whether the man's neck is dislocated, but that there is no prospect of his recovery.

The wreckage presents a desolated picture. Engine No. 348, which was coming east, is now lying on the right side headed directly west, having turned completely around after colliding. In addition to the engine and wrecked caboose two gondolas were demolished, a Union Line refrigerator car was partially damaged, while a box car loaded with apples in barrels, following the engine was so completely demolished that on trace of it can be found. Not so the apples, however, as they are strewn all over the wrecked engine and piled two or three feet deep around it. Fireman Gardner, who was in some unaccountable manner thrown between the driving wheels as the engine went over, was found covered with apples. The barrels containing them were crushed into splinters and the apples so badly ground up that they appeared to have just gone through a cider press.

Train No. 1, leaving here at 5:30 a.m., was sent west over the Little Miami, via Dayton, but all the other trains were able to pass the wreck after the wrecking crew had cleared the sidetrack of debris. This was done quickly; and the work of clearing away the debris was expeditiously carried forward. The rule for trains standing on main track to have the rear end protected by a flagman placing a torpedo on the track some distance in the rear as a warning was not adhered to in this case, but it was stated that a brakeman had given notice at Hilliards to have the following train keep a lookout while approaching the siding. On whom the blame lies will be determined later, but as a result of some person's carelessness the company will certainly sustain a money loss, amounting to in the neighborhood of eight thousand dollars, aside from the far worse feature – that of personal injury resulting.

A reporter called at the residence of Fireman Gardner during the day and found him in bed and in a very bad condition. His injuries were found to consist of a bad gash in the head, another over the left eye, and cuts and bruises about the legs while his feet were badly scalded. He was delirious at times, but was able to talk some between these periods of aberration. He said that the fog was so dense that the forward train could not be seen. While the shock from the head injury was severe, there is every reason to believe the fireman will recover.

Columbus, OH Train Wreck, Aug 1889

A FREIGHT TRAIN WRECKED.

(The New York Times, Aug. 17 1889)

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Aug. 16. ---A freight wreck occurred on the Cincinnati, St. Louis and Pittsburg Road two miles west of here at 2:35 this morning. The first section of train No. 42 stopped to shift cars to a siding. The caboose and most of the cars composing the train were left standing on the main track. The second section ran into the caboose, wrecking five cars and the engine.

James Mears, stock dealer of Steubenville, was sleeping in the caboose, and is fatally injured, his neck being broken. Engineer Ed Stolz of Bradford and Fireman John Gardner of Columbus were slightly scalded and bruised. The company's loss will probably exceed \$8,000.

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