

HEAD-END COLLISION

Four People Severely Hurt on the C., L. & S. Road

Brakes Refused to Work

Manager Fisher's Statement.

(Columbus Dispatch, November 4, 1901)

THE INJURED

JOHN DAUBER, living on Mock Road, Severe concussions and bruises.

MISS IOLA ROMOSIER, 163 North Fourth Street, spine badly injured.

DAVID NELSON, colored. Thorne street. Right leg broken.

FRED BRUNDIGE, conductor, 43 West Long Street, left ankle fractured.

AARON WILEY, 116 East Town street, hands and arms bruised.

JOHN A. ELLIS, 843 Sullivan avenue, face cut.

As a result of a head-end collision on the western division of the Columbus, London & Springfield Interurban railroad Sunday afternoon four people were rather seriously injured and several others painfully bruised.

The accident occurred about half a mile east of Rome, on what is known as the off-division of the Columbus London & Springfield electric line. John Dauber, a dairyman living on the Mock road half a mile west of the city limits was the most seriously injured. For some time, it was thought he would die from concussion of the brain. His condition is steadily improving and there are hopes of his recovery. He is now at the Grant hospital, under the attention of Dr. Baldwin and Dr. Norris.

Miss Lola Romosier, of 163 North Fourth street, was rather seriously injured, having sustained a badly injured spine. Davie Nelson, colored, living on Thorne street, was also injured having his right leg broken between the knee and ankle. Conductor Brundige sustained a simple fracture of the left ankle also.

The collision occurred at what is know as the Gibson switch. Westbound car No. 72, in charge of Conductor Gallagher and Motorman Bishop, had arrived at the switch and the motorman left to telephone the central office that everything was all right. In the meantime, the Conductor threw the switch ready for the car to pull on the spur in order to allow No. 49 eastbound to pass. The eastbound car, in charge of Motorman J.W. Rawlins and Conductor Fred Brundige was coming down the grade at a lively rate. When within 500 feet of the spur conductor Brundige went to the head of the car and

told the motorman to slacken up. This the motorman attempted to do but found his brake refused to work and the car gaining speed at every foot crashed into the car standing on the main track. When it was found that the car could not be stopped either by the brake or by reversing, Conductor Brundige told the passengers to jump.

Most of the passengers on the car attempted to jump and those who succeeded in getting off were the ones who were injured, with the exception of Miss Romosier. The first off, the car was Secretary Ellis who landed safe at the side. The next was the conductor in jumping he wrenched his left ankle and was found lying by the tracks. A negro, David Nelson was the next to jump and he also broke his leg. John Dauber, who is about 60 years of age, tried to jump. He struck on his head and rolled over several times and was badly bruised. Dauber was visiting his brother at West Jefferson when he took the ill-fated car home.

The injured were quickly carried in the house of Mrs. Gibson, a short distance away, physicians were summoned from Rome and Alton. Dr. Dream and Drs. Evans and Norris of Alton quickly responded and dressed the injuries. Police headquarters were notified and the city ambulance and Pletcher's ambulance were held in readiness for the injured. A relief car was immediately fitted out, under charge of George Thomas, superintendent of the western division. This car took three physicians and hurried to the scene of the wreck. Another relief car followed in 10 minutes, under charge of Lee Fisher, son of H.A. Fisher, who was out of the city. All attention possible was given the injured and they were brought into the city on the first car. Fisher's ambulance made a run for the accident and brought in Dauber, who was taken to the Grant hospital.

The eastbound car, the one that ran into the stationary car, is a 60-foot car and has been in service only a few days. It was equipped with a Stirling Meeker brake, which is one of the latest improved brakes.

Upon an examination after the accident, it was found that one of the nuts holding the chain which connects the brake to the wheel had loosened and fallen off and thus rendered the brake useless. The responsibility of the accident cannot be placed farther than in inspecting the car it might have been noticed and remedied. When the motorman found that the brake would not work, he reversed the car, but a plug slipped out and the speed could not be stopped.

There were 12 passengers on the eastbound car, three of whom were injured. On the westbound car there were but seven passengers, none of whom were injured. Motorman Bishop told the passengers when he noticed that the accident was inevitable to gather to the back of the car and thus, they were saved from injury. When the heavy car struck the smaller one the bumper which is somewhat higher than the bumper of the smaller car, pushed through the vestibule and demolished the entire front end. The smaller car was thrown back for a distance of 60 feet and the sides of the track splintered. The larger car was uninjured except the front vestibule.

Motorman Rawlins jumped in time to avoid injury. It was but a short time until the tracks were cleared and traffic resumed. This makes three of the new cars which have suffered accidents and are out of service.

N. Hathaway of Dupn, Taft & Co. was on the eastbound car accompanied by his wife. They remained in their seats and were unhurt.

H.A. Fisher, general manager of the road, was out of the city at the time of the accident but arrived later in the evening and dictated the following statement:

“The cause of the accident was on account of the brakes on car 49 failing to work. The foreman at the car barns inspected the car in the morning before it went out and found everything in satisfactory condition, and the fact that it had made several trips before the accident occurred and that the brake worked perfectly in every instance, even to the last stop, which was at Alton, indicated that something happened to the brake between Alton and where the cars came together.

“Upon examination of the mechanism of the brake after the accident occurred the trouble was positively located. The turnbuckle that connects the brake mechanism of the two trucks and upon which depends the efficiency of the brake was found detached at one end in a manner clearly showing that the locknuts holding the same had jarred lose from the motion of the car. The threads at both ends of the turnbuckle and the rod that was disconnected was in perfect condition showing clearly that it could not have been separated as a result of the accident. The brake is of the Sterling Meeker type and the most effective and reliable hand brake in use on interurban cars today.”

When the report of the wreck was first received a hurry call was sent out for physicians and Drs. Rankin, Barnhill, Birmingham, Morain, Wilcox, Ferran, Sadler and Dennis gathered at the city prison where it was expected that a special car would call and take them to the scene of the accident. After waiting a while, a car dashed past without stopping and the physicians thinking their services were not needed dispersed.

Sometime later Drs. Custer and Norris arrived and, in a few minutes, a second car appeared which stopped and took them on board and conveyed them to the scene of the wreck. There they found the four injured in the Gibson residence nearby. They rendered what services they could at the scene and accompanied the more seriously injured to their homes in this city.