

# DOUBLE-HEADER WRECKED ON THE C., S. & H. RAILROAD.

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Engineer Smith is Killed

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And Five Others Are Badly Hurt.

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Broken Rail Wrecks the Freight Train

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And Piles Up Debris at Shepard's Station.

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One Engine Explodes as it Lands and the Other

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Is Found One Hundred Feet from the Scene –  
Details of an Early Morning Smash-up.

(Columbus Dispatch, February 19, 1902)

## THE DEAD

**William Smith**, engineer, C., S. & H. locomotive No. 24. Head crushed and badly scalded. Taken to Pletcher's Undertaking establishment. Residence on Woodruff avenue, Grogan.

## THE INJURED

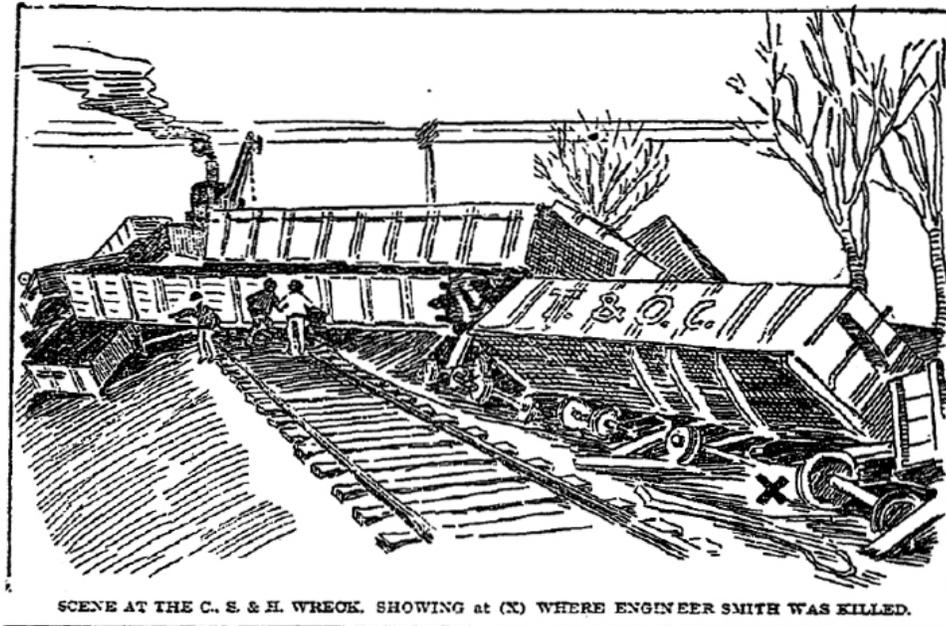
**Frank Winteringer**, fireman, both legs broke, and body scalded. Age 21, residence Grogan. Taken to Protestant hospital.

**F. S. Sweet**, engineer of No. 75, both ankles scalded, and back injured. Age 33, resides 1391 Wesley avenue. Taken to Protestant hospital.

**J. F. Dixon**, right leg and side badly bruised, and head cut. Age 29. Residence, Lewis Center. Taken to Protestant hospital.

**Henry Tipton**, shoulder dislocated. Resides at the Railway Y. M. C. A. Taken to Protestant hospital.

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One of the most disastrous wrecks in the history of the Columbus, Shawnee & Hocking Railway company, attended with the loss of life, occurred near Nelson's crossing at Shepard, four miles from the city, at 3:30 o'clock, Wednesday morning.

As a result, William Smith, an engineer was killed, five men were injured and a most costly damage to property resulted.

The dead engineer's watch stopped at 3:32 a.m.

The scene of the wreck when daylight arrived was a most disparaging one. Thirty-two gondola cars, piled promiscuously in a decidedly small space, splintered and smashed, some of them almost beyond repair, line the sides of the track.

The ill-fated train was an exceptionally large one, containing, when it left the Columbus yards, 72 gondola cars, part of them loaded with iron ore, two engines and a caboose. The train, in charge of Conductor John Kincade, left the yards at 3:15, scheduled "Extra 24 and 75."

Engine No. 75 was in charge of F. S. Sweet, of 1391 Westley avenue, engineer and Fireman J. F. Dixon of Lewis Center. The brake crew was composed of Henry Tipton and Charles Kelly and these comprised the entire train crew.

Both engines were working heavily on the grade and upon reaching Nelson's crossing at Shepard, 75 the second engine, left the track, according to theory, and as a result, the two engines with 35 cars were ditched.

Engine No. 24 in the lead, went over the embankment on the north side of the track, smashed through two trees, felling one to the ground, ran about 100 feet out in a field and careened on its side.

### **A TERRIFIC EXPLOSION.**

After it careened, the steam dome on the engine exploded, and the noise coupled with the crashing of cars, awakened everybody in the immediate neighborhood.

The tender of engine 24 was caught by a tree and left 50 feet behind the engine, and both are complete wrecks. Pieces of the big iron dome were found several hundred feet distant from where the engine lay.

Engine No. 75 went over the embankment on the south side of the track and careened over on its side about 45 feet from the track. The tender followed, and also turned on its side.

### **A BROKEN RAIL**

is evidently the cause of the accident, as far as the investigation has been made.

This rail is about 15 feet from the switch just west of the Nelson road crossing, and it is presumed that engine No. 24, in the lead, passed over it safely, keeping the track. Engine 75 however, lost the track, at this point, as the evidence plainly shows. The point where the train went over the embankment is about 150 feet east of the point where the rail was broken, and the fact that engine 75 did not go into the ditch sooner is explained by the theory that the front engine, which still clung to the rails held it on. The strain from engine 75 on the head engine evidently caused, it to leave the track after going the 150 feet.

This theory also explains the fact that one engine went into the ditch on the north side of the tracks, while 75 went to the south. The last engine left the track at the broken rail on the southside.

### **CORONER INVESTIGATION.**

Coroner Lindsay, who was summoned in the care of William Smith, the lead engineer, is investigating the cause of the accident. He has summoned a number of witnesses and will find out, if possible, just what the cause was.

### **WAS A MASON.**

William Smith the engineer who was killed, lives on Woodruff avenue, Grogan and was a Mason, a member of the Odd Fellows and the Elks Lodge of Logan, O.

### **THREE- THIRTY-TWO**

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**Was the Time of the Dead Engineer's Watch When Body Was Found.**  
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When the watch was taken from the body of Engineer Smith it registered the time as "3:32." It had stopped, evidently, from the crush and jar attendant upon the wreck.

As near as can be ascertained, it was about this time that the engine manned by Smith went over the embankment.

## **NO TRACK WALKER**

### **Is Employed to Inspect This Section of the road – An Official Statement.**

The statement is made that no trackwalkers are employed by the company to watch or examine this section of the road. Instead, the section foreman and his gang are expected to keep a weather eye open for weak points in the road.

Mr. Oscar Aldrich, the foreman of the section gang for that portion of the road, stated to a Dispatch representative Wednesday morning that he, accompanied by one man, went over the roadbed Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock and found everything right.

## **JOLTED OUT OF BED**

### **Were Residents in the Immediate neighborhood of the Wreck.**

For three minutes after the first crash, it is said the cars of the ill-fated train continued to pile upon and over each other. The concussion from both the wreck and the explosion is said to have thrown persons residing in the neighborhood entirely out of their beds, and to have broken a few windows in the neighborhood.

Mr. Charles Bainter, who resides over a grocery not 75 feet distant from where the cars went into the ditch, states that he was toppled out of his bed by the concussion when the explosion occurred. Other residing adjacent to the railroad track say they felt the jar perceptibly.

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## **TWO YEARS AGO**

### **A Wreck Occurred Near the Same Point on the C., S. & H.**

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## **THE INJURED REMOVED**

### **Taken to the Protestant Hospital for Treatment.**

As quickly as possible the injured were pulled from the wreckage and Pletcher's ambulance, that had made a record run to the scene, began to rush them to the Protestant hospital. Most of them had been scalded and their agony was pitiful. Fireman Frank Winteringer had suffered the fracture of both legs and his arms and body were badly scalded. He is 21 and lives in Grogan.

Engineer F. S. Sweet suffered from scalded ankles and his back was injured. He lives at 1391 Wesley avenue.

Foreman J. F. Dixon's right leg and side were badly bruised and his head was badly cut. He is 29 and lives at Lewis Center.

All three were taken at once to the Protestant hospital.

Henry Tipton, a brakeman boarding at the railway Y. M. C. A. suffered dislocation of the shoulder.

Conductor John Kincaid's side was injured.

The body of poor Engineer Smith was removed to Pletcher's to be prepared for burial.

Dr. Kidd was called to the wreck and did heroic service among the wounded.

### **BRAKEMAN TIPTON.**

Brakeman Henry Tipton, whose shoulder was dislocated, was taken to the protestant hospital by Fisher's ambulance.

### **TO THE RESCUE.**

The crash of pilling cars followed by the explosion of the steam chest on engine 24 awakened residents for some distance around. Peter Hawbecker, who lives on the Sunbury pike, near the scene, had just left his home for the Rarig plant, where he is employed, and ran for the crossing to get ahead of the engine. He succeeded in getting across, when the cars began jolting and a few seconds afterward the crash came.

Charles Bainter, a carpenter, who resides over Montgomery and Andrews' store, about 140 feet from the scene, was also awakened by the crash. Al Clark, who lives about 75 feet distant, was another one awakened. He was almost thrown out of bed.

The family of Chas. McLeish, at the corner of Fifth avenue Nelson road, were awakened. All these, along with several others, immediately went to the scene. Bainter ran to the over turned engine No. 75, grabbed a lighted lantern, and assisted the conductor, engineer and fireman out through the cab window.

All three were injured, and were assisted to the grocery nearby.

Mr. T. J. McLeish and his mother were in the grocery and offered the hospitality of their home to the injured, engineer Sweet, who was suffering from painful scalds, pleaded with those about him to look out for his comrades on the other engine.

Then the search on the north side of the tracks began.

### **A GHASTLY SIGHT.**

With lantern, those on the scene began the search. Their efforts were soon rewarded by the finding of the lifeless body of Engineer William Smith, pinned down to the ground under the hind wheels and truck of a gondola car, at least [??] from his engine.

His fireman, Frank Winteringer, was also found pinned under the wreckage back of the engine. It is presumed that both men were forced from the engine cab when the huge machine crashed through the trees. The cab was entirely demolished before the engine careened, and the men were evidently carried off with it as both were found quite a distance away.

The need of immediate medical assistance at once became apparent and while the

### **SEARCH FOR THE INJURED**

progressed, Dr. R. A. Kidd, who lives nearby, was summoned. The injured were all gathered in the warm room of the grocery store, where Dr. Kidd did all possible to relieve their sufferings pending the arrival of ambulances, which were summoned.

### **FROM UNDER THE WRECK**

the body of Engineer Smith was taken by the wreck crew, which came out as soon as notified. It was necessary to jack up the truck and wheels in order to release the lifeless mass of mangled flesh.

Brakeman Tipton was found sitting against a tree about 200 feet from the wreck nursing his injuries. He cannot account for his actions after the wreck. When the train left the yard, he was 35 cars back from the engines and making his way towards them. He was undoubtedly in the midst of the cars which piled up.

### **FIREMAN DIXON'S STORY**

J. F. Dixon, the fireman on engine No. 75, after being taken to his home, Lewis Center, was at the scene of the wreck. He stated that Conductor Kincade was in the engine cab with Engineer Smith and himself when the wreck occurred.

The train was running at a good rate of speed when the jolting of the engine showed that the wheels had left the tracks. Everything was dark except the flashes of light which were caused by the clashes of the wheels and cars on the tracks. Suddenly the engine made a lunge and soon all was still. The first Dixon knew he had extricated himself from the debris. He only had slight injuries and was able to look about for his fellow trainmen.

The conductor was thrown on his head and was severely bruised. Engineer Sweet was found sitting on the embankment only a short distance from the engine.

Fireman Dixon stated that Engineer Sweet

### **TRIED TO JUMP**

after the wheels left the track and before the engine toppled down the embankment. He was caught in the window of the cab and thus was not seriously injured. Dixon attributes his escape to a miraculous piece of luck.

Trainmaster M. J. Coples was among the first of the officials on the scene. He came with the wrecking train and immediately began an investigation of the cause of

the wreck. He thinks the cause was the broken rail beyond a doubt. All the indications pointed to that cause.

Mr. Coples superintended the work of the wrecking crew and was assisted by C. S. Wilkins, trainmaster for the Sandusky division, and Master Mechanic John Cullinan.

The C., S. & H. tracks are blocked and trains are detoured via the Pan Handle.

#### **KILLED A 'POSSUM.**

The dead body of an opossum was found lying near a tree at the scene of the wreck. Underneath the tree were sticks and small pieces of iron which evidently came from the cars. Residents of the neighborhood say the 'possum had been an inhabitant of the tree for some time it is thought that flying debris from the wreck killed the animal.