

# BIG 4 FYER IN DITCH; 35 PEOPLE HURT

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Three of These May Die and All Undergo Hospital Treatment As Result of a Disastrous Wreck on West Side

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## SPLIT SWITCH DERAILS TRAIN

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Two Day Coaches and Three Pullmans Piled Up

--- Narrow Escapes of Victims ---

Many Injured are Unrecorded.



Wreck of the Big Four Flyer at Grandview Tower from the Galen Gonsler Collection

(Ohio State Journal, August 19, 1911)

**PROBABLY FATALLY INJURED.**

Miss Jo J. Morris, aged 55, Chattanooga, Tenn., head bruised, unknown internal injuries. May be operated upon; at Protestant Hospital.

Miss Anna Schutte, aged 35 years, 822 East Main Street, Springfield; skull fractured, body bruised, internal injuries; at Protestant Hospital.

Hazel Heninger, aged 14, Mt. Carmel, Ill., arm torn off at shoulder socket and body bruised; at Mt. Camel Hospital.

**LESS SERIOUSLY HURT.**

Many persons who received minor injuries had them dressed and departed without leaving their names or addresses. Those whose identities are know are:

**AT PROTESTANT HOSPITAL.**

Jesse Slane, aged 6, of 1999 West Broad Street, Columbus. Limbs bruised, face cut.

W.M. Tucker, aged 53, of 1999 West Broad Street, Columbus, right arm crushed.

Mrs. W.M. Tucker, aged 54, of 1999 West Broad Street, Columbus, side bruised, rib fractured.

H.S. Williams, aged 52, of 2970 East Ninetieth street, Cleveland, shoulder broken.

Florence E. Goodman, aged 9, Delaware, arm broken.

Agnes Weber, aged 21, of 415 West Third Street, Dayton; left side bruised.

Mrs. Adeline Giles, aged 71, Pomeroy; head cut, left ear crushed and arm broken.

Bigham Uhl, aged 45, kilbuck; gash below left knee.

Mrs. Minnie Shenk, aged 52, Dayton; head bruised and ribs broken.

Mrs. A.H. Brady, aged 55, College Corner; rib broken.

Mrs. John McGowan, aged 55, Hartwell; legs terrible bruised.

Orange Conner, aged 26, Gladstone; slight bruises on right side.

Irene Keullin, aged 21, Bens; slight bruise on head.

Mrs. Guy Johnson, aged 25, Cleveland; slight bruises on right side.

Mrs. R. H. Ham, aged 67, Dayton; head bruised.

Mrs. H.L. Strickland, aged 49, Owenville, Ind.; released from hospital.

Gladys Goodman, aged 17, Delaware; broken shoulder.

Mrs. Carrie Goodman, aged 42, Delaware; face bruised.

Mrs. Collie Wuist, aged 50, Cleveland; released from hospital.

**AT MT. CARMEL HOSPITAL**

W.H. Nauman, aged 48, of 285 Seventeenth Avenue, formerly of Muncie, Ind., head cut and thumb dislocated.

Dr. C.E. Jones, aged 50, Jamestown; head cut.

Mrs. C.E. Jones, aged 49, Jamestown; head cut and body bruised.

Charles d. Bateman, aged 29, of 521 Beech Street, Cleveland, salesman; arm cut and body bruised.

Raymond Scott, aged 20, Junction City, Ky., cook on train; body cut and scalded from hips down.

Albert Progal, aged 32, Lima, cook on train; body and legs scalded.

Mrs. Mabel Heninger, aged 52, Mt. Carmel, Ill.; head cut and back injured.

Harold Heninger, aged 7, Mt. Carmel, Ill., head bruised.

Joel Heninger, aged 11, Mt. Carmel, Ill.; arm cut.

Irene Heninger, aged 9, Mt. Carmel, Ill.; head cut and bruised.

George Thomas, aged 24, Dayton; nose broken.

Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts, aged 72, of 44 west Goodale Street; hand cut and beck bruised.

Mrs. Anna Schutts, aged 69, of 822 East Main Street, Springfield; left leg broken and dislocated at knee.

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At least 35 persons were injured, three probably fatally, at 11:40 yesterday morning when Big Four train No. 46 split a switch at the McKinley Avenue curve and five coaches were ditched. The train was running between 40 and 60 miles an hour, making up lost time in the run from Cincinnati. Many other persons received minor injuries and after these were release proceeded to their destinations without giving their names or addresses.

Five of the known injured are residents of Columbus. They are Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts, 441 West Goodale Street; Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Tucker, 1999 West Broad Street; W.H. Nauman, 285 Seventeenth Avenue, and Jesse Slane, 1999 West Broad Street.

With the exception of Mrs. Roberts, all have just secured homes in Columbus and were moving here from points west. Mr. Tucker was former state food inspector of Indiana.

### **Two Hospitals Crowded**

All the ambulances in the city were pressed into service and 14 of the injured were taken to Mt. Carmel Hospital and 21 to Protestant Hospital.

While Mrs. Anna Schutte of Springfield is in Mt. Carmel Hospital suffering for a broken leg and dislocated knee, her daughter, Miss Anna Schutte, is suffering from a fractured skull and internal injuries at Protestant Hospital and may die. On account of her age Mrs. Schutte's condition is regarded as serious.

The train was made up of eight cars, consisting of baggage car, two mail cars, as many day coaches and three Pullmans. The day coaches and Pullmans were derailed, the other part of the train passing over the switch in safety.

The front end of hate train, which escaped the wreck, wsa made up at the Union Station and left for New Youk to complete the schedule of the derailed train, which is one of the fastest on the road.

### **Cause Not Certainly Known.**

Just what caused the accident probably will never be known, but as the third coach passed over the switch at the junction of the tracks of the Big Four and T.&O.C. the switch sprung and the first coach, followed by the second and the three Pullmans, left the rails and all were dragged over the ties for a distance of 100 yards. Three coaches turned on their sides and two rolled completely over.

The train was loaded with passengers for points East and all were piled in the mass of ruins, whole flying glass and fragments of the coaches literally filled the air. Screams of women and children caught beneath the debris added the terrors of the scene. West Side physicians were promptly at hand carrying out the injured and in many cases taking them to hospitals in their autos before the ambulances arrived. Uninjured passengers also performed heroic work.

The engine hauling the first three cars passed the switch without accident was quickly stopped and members of the crew busied themselves extricating the injured from the wreck and carrying them to places of safety to await the arrival of ambulances.

### **Most Seriously Hurt.**

The most seriously hurt were Miss Hazel Heninger, Mt. Carmel, Ill., and Miss Anna Schutte, Springfield, and Miss Jo J. Morris, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Mrs. Mabel Heninger and her four children were on the train in the fourth coach, which fared the worst of any in the wreck, and that they escaped with their lives is little short of miraculous. Hazel Heninger's left arm was practically torn off and will be amputated as soon as she recovers sufficiently from the shock to stand the operation. He also suffered a bad wound on the head and internal injuries are feared.

Every ambulance in the city was called to the scene of the wreck and a corps of physicians was dispatched to give relief. The injured were taken to hospital nearest the scene of the wreck and everything possible done to alleviate suffering.

### **Some Ties in Bad Shape.**

The accident occurred as the train rounded the curve at McKinley Avenue, near the Grandview bridge and the track was torn up for a distance of approximately 100 yards. Some of the ties seemed to be in bad condition and there was some conjecture as to whether that had contributed to the cause of the disaster.

A similar accident occurred at the same place two years ago and several cars were turned over. No one was injured.

The track at the point where the cars left the track is elevated and the coaches rolled over into the slight ravine, making it hard for the wreck train, which was sent to the scene immediately after the accident, to clear away the debris. It was said that the tracks would be cleared before this morning.

### **No broken Flanges.**

General Yardmaster H.J. Murphy of the Big Four Road, who arrived at the scene of the wreck a few minutes after it occurred, when asked for a statement, said:

“The train split the switch, but just what caused it, I am unable to say. It is one of those cases that cannot be explained. I doubt if it ever will be known just what caused the derailment.

“It was reported that a broken flange had been found on one of the coaches and that was responsible for the wreck. That is not true, since every wheel of the derailed coaches was in excellent shape when examined after the accident.

“It seems that something must have gone wrong with the switch, which opened after the engine and the first three coaches had passed. We will endeavor to sift the cause of the accident to the bottom.”

### **Police sent to the Scene.**

Owing to the partial isolation of the place where the wreck occurred, it was fully 30 minutes from the time of the accident until ambulances arrived, but the news of the disaster had spread widely and a large portion of the population of the west side turned out and offered assistance. A detachment of police was sent to the scene to assist in the work as soon as the news was received.

That more people were not killed is attributed to the fact that the coaches were of the strong Pullman variety and glided over the ties for a considerable distance before overturning, meantime losing much of their velocity.

After the noon hour, when the news of the wreck had spread to all corners of the city in a more or less exaggerated form, hundreds of people boarded cars, pressed automobiles and other vehicles of conveyance into service and hastened to the scene. It was the Mecca for sightseers all afternoon and evening.

### **Whole Family Injured.**

A particularly distressing feature in connection with the accident was that Mrs. Heninger and her four children all were injured. Hazel, her little daughter, will lose an arm and her condition, according to information last night, is very serious. All were taken to Mt. Carmel Hospital, where the mother, although painfully injured herself, insisted that the nurses do everything possible for the children, regardless of her own hurts. Mrs. Heninger, with her children, was in route east to a visit with friends.

C.G. Bateman, Toledo traveling salesman, when the coach in which he was riding turned over, jumped through a window and escape with a broken nose and other bruises. “I landed in the bottom of the coach on top of a woman and several children,” said Bateman, “and I since learned that the child was one of the worst injured. I certainly consider myself lucky that I was not killed.”

### **Train Running very Fast**

Bateman says he had just remarked to the conductor that although he had been traveling the road for 11 years, he never had noticed its train run as fast. He had scarcely finished the conversation when the curve was rounded and the cars left the track.

Just as the train left the track Mrs. Mary Bendetta, 665 McKinley Avenue, was standing in her back yard, looking in the direction of the track. Witnessing the wreck, she hastened to the scene arriving almost before the dust had cleared away. She saw passengers chopping broken timbers of the coaches and climbing from the windows. The scene, she says was indescribable.

W.H. Nauman, Muncie, Ind., who has rented a house at 285 Seventeenth Avenue and was en route to Columbus to look after his household goods which arrived yesterday, gave a graphic depiction of the wreck.

### **Many Hurt in His Car.**

"I was in the fifth coach," he said, "and I felt the unsteady movement as the trucks left the track. I think I must have been right over the trucks.

As I noticed the movement that told me that the train had left the track I jumped into the aisle and grabbed the seats with both hands, thinking that I probably could save myself. The coach turned over on its side, however, my grip on the seats was broken and I pitched head first onto the seats. But for the fact that I had stepped into the aisle I believe I would have been killed as the floor of the coach gave way beneath my feet.

"The coach was filled with broken glass and flying bits of timber from the shattered cars. Cries of women and children met my ears and I thought that at least half of the people in the coach were either dead or fatally hurt. How they escaped with their lives I cannot tell. I am thankful that I did not bring my wife and daughter with me from Muncie today. They wanted to come but I told them to wait until the first of the week.

### **One Experience Enough.**

"As soon as I could find my way to the door I broke it open and assisted about 10 men and fully half a dozen women out. Some of them were badly hurt, but I do not know who they were. I heard a women screaming that her children had been killed. I tell you I never want to go through that experience again".

Miss Ethel Miller, 613(?) East Mound Street, who was severely shocked but not hurt, said last night:

"I was in the second day coach, which turned over, sitting on the right hand side. We were going about 50 miles per hour when we crossed the tracks. I heard a rumble ahead, grabbed my seat and instantly the car turned over. People who were sitting on the opposite side of the car were thrown violently down when it rolled d over. I was stunned for a minute, but then all was clear and I helped a boy to get out."

### **12 Injured Proceed East.**

When the Baltimore and Ohio relief train, the first to arrive at the scene of the wreck, reached Union Station 12 passengers, who were more or less seriously injured, refused to go to hospitals and continued their journey.

The five coaches that were derailed were so badly damaged that all will have to be rebuilt before they can be of any further use to the company. The two rear Pullmans, however, will not have to be completely replaced.

It was regarded as fortunate that the train was on the eastbound track instead of headed west, as had the wreck occurred while the train was going in the opposite direction it probably would have plunged into the Scioto River and scores of lives undoubtedly would have been lost.

Although a delay naturally was caused as the result of the wreck, arrangements were made with the officials of the T.&O.C. for the use of its tracks until the wreckage was cleared away and the track repaired. Train No. 62 was detoured via the Panhandle from London.

It was said last night that scores of ties will have to be provided, since the derailed coaches practically reduced those in use to kindling wood. The road bed also was damaged.

### **Touching Scenes at Station.**

Scores of people who did not go to the scene of the wreck went to the Union Station, where they awaited the arrival of the relief train. As the ill fated passengers mounted the steps at the station the sight was touching, and many tears were shed. Strong men assisted women whom they did not know, carrying their babies as tenderly as if they were their own, all the while uttering words of condolence to the mothers and soothing the crying babies, many of whom were worse scared than hurt. The worst injured who were aboard the relief train were taken to hospitals and the others found their own way home or continued on their journey.

According to Dr. C.H. Baumgardner of Selma, who was a passenger on the wrecked train, paraphernalia needed in emergency cases was lacking until the arrival of the ambulances. Fortunately, however, some one thought of the table cloths in the dining coach and they were pressed into service, bandages and cots being quickly made.

### **Cooks Badly Scalded.**

Raymond Scott of Junction City, Ky., and Albert Progal, Lima, the two cooks, who are in Mt. Carmel Hospital, badly scalded, were in the dining car when the accident happened. They were in the act of clearing away the dinner dishes and when the coach was derailed and suddenly turned on the side hot water that had been used in the cooking dashed on them. Progal was the worst injured.

Little 7-year-old Harold Heninger, who, with his mother, two sisters and brother, was in the wreck, said to a reported at the hospital, " Oh, I am not hurt much; just sore, that's all. I guess Hazel had her arm cut, though." The bright little fellow had not been told that the condition of his sister might prove fatal and that she would lose an arm, at best.



The ill-fated train was under the charge of Conductor "Dock" Goldrick of Columbus, who only a short time ago was given the run, having been transferred from the Columbus-Dayton accommodation. J.S. Noe of 305 West Third Avenue was the engineer and the other members of the were Stanley Dickerson, Columbus, fireman, G.A. Volk, Bryan, brakeman; Charles Franklin, negro porter.

### **Engine in Middletown Wreck**

The wreck yesterday was the first involving the Big Four Road since July 4, 1910, when 20 persons were killed at Middletown and a score or more hurt. That wreck occurred on the tracks of the C. H. & D. which the Big Four was using owing to an obstruction on its own lines, but the Big Four was held responsible.

Engine No. 6418, which was drawing the train which was wrecked yesterday, also pulled the train that was ditched at Middletown over a year ago. Pete Jennings, Delaware, who was the engineer when the wreck occurred at Middletown, is still unable for duty.

At 10:15 o'clock last night the wreck crew succeeded in opening the track and putting it in condition to allow an incoming train to pass over it, but it was stated that a good part of the day will be needed to clear away all traces of the wreck.

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# SERVERS WILL INVESTIGATE

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## State Commission to Examine Into Cause of Wreck

(Ohio State Journal, August 19, 1911)

Early next week the public service commission will hold an official inquiry to determine the cause of the Big Four wreck. All train men, track men and local officials who have to do with running of trains, probably will be summoned.

This course was decided upon during the afternoon after Commissioners J.C. Sullivan and O.P. Gothlin and Secretary C.A. Radcliffe had visited the wreck scene and made a close examination of the track, switch and cars. The commission is of the opinion the cause can be definitely established after everybody has been heard.

Mr. Sullivan, when seen after his return, was inclined to the opinion that the switch rail must have parted from the main track on the right side and that the wheel of the first coach started to go into the switch, thereby derailing the car and pulling the others along with it.

### Equipment Good.

"The equipment of all the cars was in good condition," said Mr. Sullivan. "I examined all of them and did not find a bad wheel. The explanation I suggested is the only one that seems reasonable now. Of course other things may develop when we reach an official inquiry."

Because the switch was provided with a facing point locking apparatus, which is declared to be much superior to the ordinary switch lock, railroad men are not certain as to the switch theory.

On the other hand there was no indication that the car had climbed the right-hand rail. As strengthening the theory advanced by Mr. Sullivan the first marks found were five or six feet from where the switch rail meets the main track rail and between the two. It is possible that the locking apparatus was not exactly adjusted and a little space was left between the rails of the main and side track. The switch is locked, both when open and closed, and also is provided with a detector rod which makes it impossible for the man in the tower to throw the switch after the train has entered a certain area.

### Rails Did Not Spread.

Careful examination revealed that there was no spreading of the rails, railroad men say. The rails were held firm in their places at point where the cars first left the track.

Still another theory advanced was that the light smoking car, which first left the track, actually bounced off the track and drew other cars along with it. It was pointed out that running at high speed over the crossing and switch might have started a springing of the car.

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# Columbus, OH Train Wreck, Aug 1911

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## 50 Persons Hurt in Big Four Wreck Five Cars Ditched When New England Special Strikes Switch Near Columbus, Ohio.

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Running 40 Miles an Hour.

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## Physician On Train Uses Dining Car Table Linen For Bandages-Columbus Sends Aid.

The New York Times, August 19, 1911

Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 18.- Fifty persons were injured, some of them seriously, to-day when Big Four Train 46, one of the fastest trains in the service, was ditched near the Ohio State Hospital for the Insane, just west of Columbus. The most seriously injured are:

DRODALL, ALBERT, Cincinnati, chef on dining car; back injured.

DICKERSON, STANLEY, Columbus, fireman.

HEMINGER, MABEL, 7 years old, Mount Carmel, Ill.; left arm torn off.

NOE, J.S., Columbus, Ohio, engineer.

ROUGH, MRS. C.E., Dayton, Ohio; back hurt.

SHARP, MISS MINNIE, Dayton, Ohio; head cut.

WUEST, MRS. CALLIE, Dayton, Ohio; jaw broken.

The most seriously injured is MABEL HEMINGER, 7 years old, of Mount Carmel, Ill., whose left arm was torn off and head severely bruised. Her mother, sister and two brothers also were cut and bruised.

The wrecked train is known as the New York & New England Special, and left Cincinnati at 8:30 for New York, being due in Columbus at 11:40 a.m.

It was made up of a mail car, baggage car, three day coaches, a diner and two Pullmans. As the train rounded a curve at the Grand View Avenue crossing of the Toledo & Ohio Central tracks the front trunks of the second day coach climbed a switch point and the car was derailed.

Bumping over the ties at the rate of forty miles an hour, the derailed coach pulled the other coaches from the track, and two of the coaches toppled over a ten-foot embankment.

It was nearly an hour after the accident that the report reached the police. In the meantime the injured were taken into near-by homes and given treatment. Then came the call for the physicians, and all the available ambulances in the city and police patrols were rushed to the scene.

Before the ambulances arrived persons living nearby had extricated all the wreck victims. A relief train brought twelve injured passengers to this city. None of these was seriously hurt.

DR. C.H. BAUMGARDNER of Selma, Ohio, was on the train and helped care for the injured. He was without bandages, and table linen was taken off the dining car tables and torn into strips to bind cuts.

Gleamed from:

<http://www3.gendisasters.com/mainlist/ohio/Train+Wrecks+and+Accidents>

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