

TWENTY-FIVE DEAD! TWO SCORE INJURED!

**IN THE WORST WRECK
NEW HAMPSHIRE EVER KNEW**

Quebec Express Meets Freight Head-On

On September 15th, 1907, The Quebec and Boston Air Line express, known on the time tables as No. 30 and due here at 3:48 a.m., was wrecked in a head on collision just in the edge of the woods beyond the Kendrick meadow at 4:26 Sunday morning. Fast freight No. 267, which is due here about four o'clock, received orders at this station to run one hour and ten minutes on the time of No. 30. It pulled out of here at 4:20, right on time, and made a quick run down across the meadows, intending to sidetrack at West Canaan for both passenger trains. The morning was thick and foggy, and when the train was nearly across the meadows the head light of the express was seen through the mist. The engineer, A.P. Shurtleff, applied the emergency brakes, and he and the fireman both jumped. John P. Callahan of the express saw the freight at the same time, and after setting the emergency brakes, he and the fireman jumped. The four escaped serious injury although they were bruised and shaken up.



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Both trains were running at a rapid speed, the freight making at the time more than 25 miles per hour, and the passenger twice that. The shock was something fearful, both engines being thrown to one side and entirely demolished. The forward cars of the freight crushed like paper boxes, and three or four cars near the middle of the train thrown across the track. On the express the baggage car was telescoped the whole length of the forward passenger car and both cars nearly demolished. The train was heavily loaded with people who were returning from the Sherbrooke fair and other Canadian points, mostly French Canadians, and when the baggage car plowed its way through the passenger coach it left a sickening scene of death and blood behind it. The flying timbers of the wrecked cars severed heads, arms and legs from the helpless victims, and a scene of horror was presented such as is seldom witnessed.

Frank O. Brown, conductor of the express, although somewhat injured, displayed remarkable coolness and presence of mind. He at once went back to West Canaan and telephoned the news of the wreck to Concord, and asked for help. George Sloane of the telephone service, who was on the

train was also a valuable assistant, and going to a nearby house where there was a telephone he aroused the inmates and notified this village and Enfield of the wreck, and asked for doctors and citizens to come to his assistance. From this village Drs. Crowell and Bogardus were quickly on the spot followed later by Dr. Tucker. Station Agent Gordon was on the scene in a few minutes, and assumed charge pending the arrival of railroad officials. He was aided by a score or more of our citizens, and others were arriving every minute. From Enfield, Drs. Leet, Lamb and Dinsmore rendered valuable assistance, and Lebanon also sent a trio of doctors.

The sleeping car was turned into a hospital and the injured were taken there as fast as they were extricated from the wreck. The dead were laid upon the bank as they were taken out, one, two, three on one side, four on the other and the gruesome line constantly grew as the rescuers worked and hewed away the timbers of the wreck. There were moans and cries from the injured, blood upon the hands and clothing of the workers, and low, decisive orders from those who were in charge all going to make a spectacle never to be forgotten by those who saw it.

About half past seven a relief and wrecking train, with Supt. Ray, doctors and nurses from Concord arrived upon the scene, and Mr. Ray at once assumed charge in the systematic and methodical manner which characterizes the trained railrod man. From that time until the track was clear, in his shirtsleeves, Mr. Ray was in the thickest of the work, suggesting, giving orders, and looking after every detail.

As soon as the wounded could be placed in the sleeper it was sent to Hanover where the wounded were placed in the hospital. A part of the dead were carried up by the freight cars and placed on the cars of the relief train which returned to Concord soon after nine o'clock. The other bodies were placed on the morning passenger, No. 34, which returned to White River Junction, and was sent to Concord by way of Claremont.

As the news of the wreck spread people began to arrive, first hundreds and later thousands being present to view the wreck, and if possible obtain news of friends or some souvenir of the occasion. Many of these came from long distances, some with teams and many with automobiles.



People began to arrive to view the wreck

The responsibility for the accident is as yet undetermined. Freight No. 267 is due here at 4:10 and meets No. 30 at Summit siding and No. 34 here. At East Andover it received orders to run on the time of both trains, and when the train reached here a new order was awaiting it which stated it was to run one hour and ten minutes on the time of No. 30. With the previous order on, No. 34 this would permit the freight to sidetrack at West Canaan to meet both passenger trains. No. 30 had received orders to run 30 minutes late, which would bring them here to meet freight No. 267. The train order was received here by night operator John S. Greely, who is positive that it read train 30. James A. Browley, the dispatcher at Concord who sent the order is equally positive that he sent it for train 34 and that it was repeated back to him correctly. Mr. Greely says with considerable force that it does not seem probable that he should stop writing after he had spelled out the word "thirty" and not add "four" if it was sent to him, and then when the figures are sent, as usual, that he should omit the "four". And in repeating the message back that he should add the word "four" and the figure if it was not on the order before him. Supt. Ray and other officials have investigated the matter and find the records of the order straight both here and in Concord, and they has as yet made no statement that they have placed the responsibility.

Supt. Ray told us Monday that everything possible would be done to get at the bottom facts, and place the responsibility just where it belongs. The public also demand this.

There were three Canaan passengers on the wrecked train, Frank H. Webster was in the forward car and was thrown across it and went through a window, how he cannot describe. He was not much injured. Charles Pascal and Arthur Leavitt boarded the train at Enfield and finding the forward car crowded went back to the smoker and were uninjured. E.M. Pettis intended to come from Sherbrooke on this train, and his baggage was on it. He waited for a later train. Mrs. N.J. Hill intended to come home on this train, but was taken ill and came on an earlier one. Perhaps both the last named saved their lives by not being on this train.

All day there was a constant stream of carriages, automobiles and people on foot going to and from the scene of the disaster. Many came from Franklin, Bristol and Laconia, and some even farther.



There was a constant stream going to and from the scene

NOTES

The first news of the accident was brought here by flagman M.P. Wallace. Station agent Gordon at once got busy and had two teams harnessed at the stable, and sent out calls to the doctors and others. At about the same time through the efforts of George Sloane word was received at the telephone office, and Mary Story started around the village to notify people while Mrs. Story called others over the phone. Mr. Gordon and Dr. Bogardus were the first to get started at 5:35 and they were closely followed by Carey Smith and R.A. Burgess. When they arrived at the wreck Mr. Gordon detailed E.M. Allen, R.A. Burgess and Rev. Mr. Corliss to look after the dead and guard their personal effects. Don Woodward, C.A. Kimball and H.J. Goss had charge of the baggage, and Edward A. Barney and George Sloan were getting names of the dead and injured. Mr Sloan did most efficient work throughout the day and is deserving of not little credit.

A number of other citizens were soon on the scene, among them Sheriff and Mrs. Claude Murray, H.A. Barney, A. M. Shackford and many more, who rendered most valuable aid. Sheriff Murray later taking charge of all valuables until they were turned over to Mr. Gordon. Two much cannot be said in praise of our physicians and those from Enfield and Lebanon, who had the brunt of the work, and had accomplished a good share of it before the Concord doctors arrived.

When Brakeman Ryan started to go back and flag the following train and his strength failed him some of the passengers who were walking back to West Canaan saw the importance of stopping the train. No. 34 however got word of the wreck at West Canaan and engineer. B.H. Wood was sent up with an engine. As he knew about the wreck he paid no attention to the signals of the people going back until he got to where the old tray factory was. Here a man tried to stop him and when he did not do so pulled a revolver and pointed it directly at him telling him to stop. As Mr. Wood, was running slowly he thought it was wise to stop and explain matters, which he did.

The influx of visitors cleaned out the hotels and many private residences. Late in the afternoon a party of thirty went to the Rand, the resources of which had been exhausted. They came back to Hotel Barnard whose proprietor at first thought he could not feed them. Mrs. Barnard, however, rose equal to the occasion, and calling for volunteers from outside the hotel help, went at it with such energy that in 45 minutes she had a supper of beefsteak, eggs, potatoes, rolls and coffee ready for the hungry men.

Baggage Master Cotton of No. 30 was the worst injured of any of the train crews. He was brought here as soon as possible from the wreck and placed upon a couch in the ladies' room at the station where he was taken in charge by several ladies, the blood washed from his face and everything possible done for his comfort before he was taken to the hospital at Concord on the special. A score of ladies were more than ready to do anything in their power for the relief of the injured, and they should have equal credit with others for rendering every assistance of which they were capable.

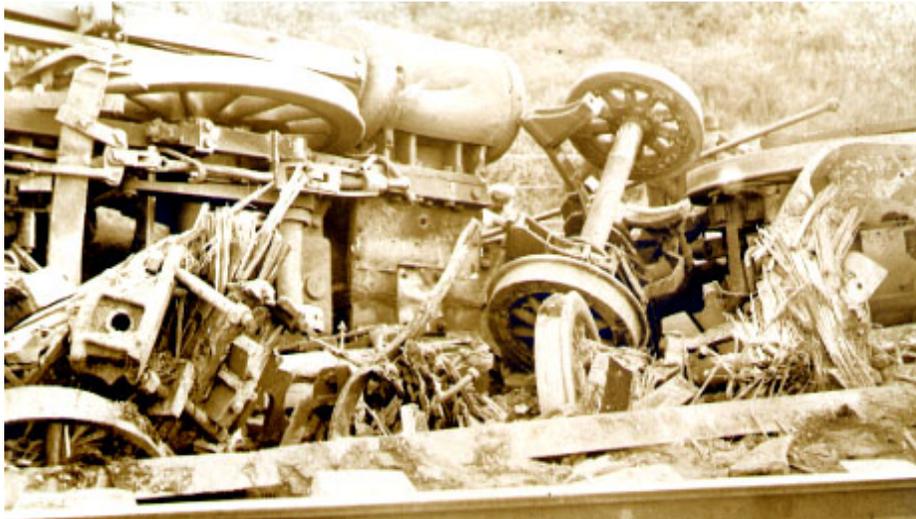
Arthur Leavitt, who supposed he had escaped serious injury in the wreck Sunday morning, is in bad shape from its effects, and has the doctor visit him every day.

The two cars loaded with corn were destined to A.H. Hill, the miller at Lebanon, who was in urgent need of it. It has been sold as it is to Carey Smith and Harris J. Goss.

A carload of nice coated book paper was demolished, and the paper scattered beside the track in a way to make a printer groan with the present high prices.

Among the killed was Richard Clarkson, tailor, of Lebanon. His body was sent to Concord, and it was not identified until Sunday evening when a clerk at the Eagle Hotel recognized it. Mrs. Clarkson heard of the wreck and drove out here, but could get no news of her husband. She then went to the hospital at Hanover with no better success. It was not until late Sunday evening that she learned of his death. Mr. Clarkson was a member of Mt. Cardigan Lodge, K. of P. here, and also high up in the Foresters.

It was officially stated by the B. & M. railroad Monday that the list of dead numbered 25, although Sunday it was said that 27 had been killed. The injured list was still larger, numbering well into the thirties.



Entirely demolished.

A large number of newspapermen arrived here in the afternoon to get the story of the wreck. The editor of this paper got in a strenuous day starting before six o'clock and not getting through until eleven at night. After he supposed his day's work was done he helped out on a story for a Boston paper and telephoned a somewhat lengthy account of it to New York twice. He has received two highly complimentary letters regarding the work done, with the promise of a much more substantial remuneration.