

# APPALLING DISASTER.

## A SMASH-UP ON THE KENTUCKY CENTRAL.

A PASSENGER EXPRESS RUNS INTO A PICNIC TRAIN.

FOUR PERSONS KILLED OUTRIGHT.

A NUMBER OF OTHERS FEARFULLY WOUNDED.

ONE OF WHOM HAS SINCE DIED.

The regular 2 o'clock out-bound train yesterday afternoon on the Kentucky Central Railroad was in charge of Conductor Frank Matlack, assisted by Jim Winston, with Dave Matlack engineer. The train consisted of five passenger coaches and one baggage car. About 350 passengers were on the train going to Canton Grove to attend the picnic given by the Laurel Club. Owing to the large number of excursionists the train was delayed about fifteen minutes. The conductor then received orders to pull out and lay over on the Culbertson switch and let a special passenger train pass. He sent his orders to Dave Matlack, the engineer, with the message to go ahead as per orders. The engineer either did not read the orders or forgot them, for he continued on and passed Culbertson. Conductor Frank Matlack being busy collecting tickets did not notice that the train had passed Culbertson, and was rushing on to destruction. The out-going train was crowded even to the platforms. The in-coming train was empty and going at a fast rate, about twenty-five miles an hour. They had received orders at Canton to pull out and go fast so as not to delay the regular train. About seven and a half miles out, just opposite the old Boyle homestead, the two trains came together with a fearful crash. The incoming engine was backing. It struck and rode completely over the other engine, landing the tender on the baggage car of the other train. The train did not run 15 feet after colliding. Ladies, children and men were thrown from their seats, landing in the aisle. In the forward seats immediately the wildest confusion prevailed; ladies fainted, some threw themselves from the windows, or made a frantic rush for the doors, a large number being hurt and bruised in this way. One woman threw her baby out of a window, and was only prevented from following by a passenger, who held her in. A regular panic was prevented in the rear coach by a cool headed passenger, who ordered them to keep their seats, saying, "Nothing has happened."

Bob Gray, the engineer of the incoming train, whistled down brakes, reversed his engine, shut off steam and jumped, striking some rocks on the side of the bank. His skull was fractured, face and body badly cut and bruised; when found on the bank was unconscious. One poor fellow, riding on the front end of the baggage car, was mashed up against the end of the car with his hand up. When we saw him, about one minute after the collision, was gasping his last breath, and was dead before he could be reached. He finally had to be cut out from his position with an ax.

On the front end of the first coach, between it and the baggage car, were two more. One poor fellow had his

legs caught, and was begging "For God's sake get me out." After a great deal of prying and chopping he was rescued. Next to him, on the same platform, a young man was mashed into a shapeless mass, his clothing being about all that held him together. After about an hour's hard work he was gotten out.

John Corcoran, an acquaintance of Gray's, riding with him in the cab, had his left arm broken and face and arms badly scalded.

About 20 minutes after the collision the cars began to burn, and it was thought for a while that several would be burned to death. The unbroken cars were uncoupled and rolled back.

John Pye, the fireman of the out-going train, was buried beneath the debris, immediately killed, and his body was only prevented from being burned up by the heroic conduct of the train attaches and passengers, headed by "Drum" Perry, in whose favor too much praise can not be bestowed. He mounted the wreck, and, in the absence of water, opened kegs of beer that were passed to him with an ax. After nearly two hours hard work the remains of poor John Pye were recovered. As fast as the dead and wounded were found they were taken up the bank and laid in the shade. Dr. H. C. Clark, a physician from Falmouth, was on the ground and did good work, assisted by passengers. It would be safe to say that not a single person in the first coach escaped uninjured. In some cases persons were thrown over two and three seats. A number were thrown from the platforms and were more or less bruised.

### THE DEAD.

John Pye, fireman on the out-going train, completely mashed to death under the engine; aged 22; residence Fourteenth and Banklick. His death was instantaneous. His head was torn almost from his body.

Willie Collopy, son of Patrick Collopy, from the flats in South Covington, about fourteen or sixteen years of age. Head mashed in and limbs broken. He was caught on the end of a coach and his death must have been fearful. We saw him breathe his last. He died in about three or four minutes.

Mike Dickson, aged sixteen, son of Pat Dickson, who resides in South Covington, when found was dead. He was crushed to death and probably died immediately.

Billie Weickhaus, 19 years of age, residing on the corner of Scott and Trevor, was mashed between the engine and the baggage car. His death was almost immediate. The lower part of his body and limbs were mashed out of shape.

John Carter, aged 19, was removed from the wreck with both arms broken, badly scalded, and hurt internally. Upon the arrival of the train he was conveyed to St. Elizabeth's Hospital, where he died in about two hours, with his mother and sister by his side.

### THE WOUNDED.

were numerous. Those most seriously hurt were:

Bob Gray, skull fractured, face badly cut; his wounds are considered mortal, although he may recover. He is 25 years of age and unmarried. At a late hour last night he was resting easy at his home near Thirteenth and Spring streets.

Roxey Welch, aged 23, hurt internally, right leg broken, and scalded. He may recover. Taken to St. Elizabeth's.

John Corcoran, of 1422 Banklick, cut on the head, arm broken, and scalded. An employe of the road, with a large family.

John Carney, nose and face mashed in; was a fearful sight. He remained conscious, but may die.

Dave Matlack, engineer on out-going train, leg cut, scalded and cut about the head and face. Taken to his home on Tenth near Russell street. He will recover.

Miss Maggie Carey, living on Second street, near the Suspension bridge, bruised and burned. Not serious.

Ulysses Brown, leg broken and scalded. Lives on Second street, near Main.

Thomas Sheridan, bruised badly about the head. Not serious.

John (Grimmer) McDonald, of West Third street, dangerously injured. His left leg broken, collar bone broken, and a splinter entered his left side and scalded. He is a rolling mill hand. It is hardly thought that he will recover.

John Rusk, slightly injured, scalded, &c. It was thought at first that his leg was broken.

Dan Conner, a brakeman, face and head badly bruised. He stuck to his brake till the collision.

John Hill, of Covington, cut over right eye.

Charlie Collopy, brother of the one killed, arm and leg broken, head cut. Condition considered serious.

Frank Rother, bruised and head cut.

Ed. Hays, son of Larry Hays, head and face cut.

Miss May Martin, sprained ankle and bruised from jumping from the car.

John Murphy, cut about face and hands.

One coach was completely destroyed by fire, as was the wood work of both of the engines and tenders.

A special train arrived about 6 o'clock and conveyed the passengers and dead and wounded back to Covington. The picnickers at Canton did not get home until about 12 o'clock.

No blame is attached to Keith, the conductor of the incoming train. His orders were to go head and meet regular at Culbertson.

Geo. Collopy, John Welch and Ulysses Brown, at St. Elizabeth Hospital, were resting very comfortably this morning. Little Geo. Collopy, however, is not expected to live. Bob Gray, at his home, is better and slowly improving. John McDonald is no better this morning. His recovery is very doubtful. An inquest will be held this evening on the dead bodies at

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### Frightful Accident on the Kentucky Central.

A most disastrous accident occurred on the Kentucky Central Railroad on the afternoon of the Fourth, one which brought sadness and mourning to many families. The down regular afternoon train was crowded with passengers, and while turning a bend, a short distance beyond Culbertson Station, it came in collision with a special up-train, and a horrible scene was the result. The two engines were crushed into fragments, the steam and water from the mashed boilers and flues pouring through the passenger cars with damaging effect. The scene beggars description. The fireman, Robt. Pye, was instantly roasted to death, and many others either killed or badly injured.

The following is a list of the killed and seriously wounded, a score of others being wounded slightly:

#### KILLED.

Michael Dixon, of South Covington.  
William Callopy, of South Covington.  
William Weichaus, milk-cart driver.  
John Pye, fireman.  
John Cotter, Second street, near bridge.

#### WOUNDED.

George Callopy, both legs broken.  
John Welsh, head bruised, right leg broken and side badly crushed.

John Carney, nose and face mashed almost into a jelly.

Ulysses Brown, a youth, leg broken.

Tom Sheridan, body badly bruised.

John McDonald, left leg broken, collar bone dislocated and a wooden splinter driven into his left side.

John Rusk, leg broken.

John Cochran, left arm broken, and scalded.

James Crow, injured internally.

John Bethel, severe contusions about leg and knee.

Ed. Hays, son of Larry Hays, received a blow over his forehead, raising a lump as large as a hen's egg, with a terrible gash across his right cheek one-and-a-half inch in length.

Dan, O'Conner, the brakeman, received serious injuries about the head.

Nearly all the killed and wounded were, at the time of the collision, standing on the platform of the cars.

James C. Ernst, the General Passenger agent, was on the down train, and he was thrown from his seat heels over head, but escaped unhurt.

The cause of the accident is said to have been a neglect of the engineer on the down train to stop at Culbertson for the passage of the up train, according to instructions.

An extra train was sent to the wreck as soon as possible, and the scene at the Covington depot when the killed and wounded were brought in was of a most exciting nature.

The wounded are being well cared for at the hospital and at home.

As to the unfortunate dead, Coroner De Gruyter at once impaneled a jury for the purpose of investigation, and will hold an inquest this evening at 8 o'clock.

*Wiegghaus, William 1862 - 1881*

