



# Middletown, OH Deadly Train Collision, July 1910

Submitted by Stu Beitler

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19 KILLED BY CRASH OF TRAINS.

LIMITED AND FREIGHT MEET ON THE "BIG FOUR."

MORE THAN SCORE HURT.

ALL IN TWO CARS NEAREST ENGINE DEAD OR INJURED.

ERROR IN ORDERS BLAMED.

Pilot Engineer of Express Mistaken, It Is Said, as to Time Left in Which to Reach Siding Just Beyond a Sharp Curve at Middletown, Ohio -- Crews of Locomotives Jump and Escape, but One Brakeman Loses His Life -- Limited Ahead of Schedult, Trainmen of the Freight Declare -- Relief Rushed to the Scene -- Three Victims in Hospitals May Die.

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Middletown, Ohio, July 4. -- Nineteen persons were killed outright, three probably fatally hurt, and many were seriously injured in a head-on collision between a freight and passenger train on the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railroad here today. Of the killed, eighteen were passengers, the other victim being a member of the passenger train crew. The dead, so far as known, are:

H. P. BAKER, Cincinnati.

H. A. SLITH, Dayton.

J. SMITH KIRK, Dayton.

GEORGE FROHLER, Dayton.

FRANK GOLDEN, passenger train brakeman.

JOHN W. COOLEY, McCutcheonsville, Ohio.

MISS FAY H. DAUBENMIRE, Pleasantville, Ohio.

RAY B. SNYDER, London, Ohio.

A. S. GARRIGUS, Columbus, Ohio.

RICHARD VAN HORN, Dayton.

CHARLES H. MOULTON, Youngstown.

MRS. JESSE J. BODEY, Dayton.

WILLIAM DUNLEAVY, Dayton.

KING YEN LUN, Columbus.

C. B. GRANT, Springfield, Ohio.

Unidentified Woman, about 40 years old.

Unidentified Man, initials "W.A." on clothing.

Unidentified Man, supposed to be from Dayton.

Following is a list of the seriously injured:

MRS. J. SMITH KIRK, Dayton, perhaps fatally.

H. A. SMITH, Dayton, leg cut off.

PETER JENNINGS, engineer Big Four passenger train, badly injured internally.

W. P. LAMM, fireman, Big Four passenger train, internal injuries, recovery doubtful.

Train pilot WALD, of the C. H. & D., seriously injured internally.

SAMUEL WAYNE GARRIGUS, Columbus, arms and several ribs broken.

JAMES L. H. KENNENY, Louisville, Ky., right leg and ribs broken.

W. S. EREKINS, of Memphis, Tenn., back injured, seriously hurt.

WILL LITZEY, Harrodsburg, Ky., badly burned; condition doubtful.

WILLIAM WEISNER, Cincinnati, head cut and elbows and shoulder fractured.

W. D. WHITE, Cleveland, head cut; condition serious.

A. F. DAYTON, Latonia, Ky.; condition serious.

MRS. EMMA LINDY, Caledonia, Ohio, thighs and hips injured; serious.

JOHN RANKIN, Springfield, right leg dislocated, hip injured.

C. E. DOTY, Bellefontaine, right leg broken.

Eight others seriously but not dangerously injured.

Detoured On Earlier Wreck.

The trains were the Cincinnati section of the Twentieth Century Limited on the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad, and the second section of a freight train on the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton road.

The freight train was attempting to make a siding to give the passenger train a clear track, when the flying limited, traveling 50 miles an hour, flashed around a curve and crashed into it.

The Big Four train had been detoured to avoid a blocked track on that road at Genoa, a few miles south of here, caused by a freight wreck earlier in the day. In addition to its regular crew it carried a pilot engineer of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton road, who practically was in charge of the train.

A misunderstanding of orders caused the disaster, which was one of the worst that this section of the country has ever experienced.

Read Orders Wrong.

Pilot Engineer GEORGE WALD had received orders to wait at Post Town, a siding station 3 miles north of this city, according to railroad officers. The freight train was to have passed him there, but was late in pulling out of Middletown. Instead of the 7 minutes margin, which WALD thought he had to reach Middletown, the time was less than 5 minutes. The first section of the freight had taken the siding here, and Conductor JOHN WEAVER, in charge of the second section, tried to reach the north end of the siding. Before his train had cleared the switch points the passenger train rounded a curve, screened by the thickly-wooded lots on each side of the track. The engine crews had

time to jump and all escaped serious injury.

The crash, when the trains met, was terrific. The freight was made up of gondola cars, flat cars, and box cars loaded with lumber. Directly behind the passenger locomotive and the tender was a combination baggage and smoking car, followed by a day coach and a chair car. All the dead and injured were in the first two cars, there being six passengers in the smoker and 21 in the day coach. The engines locked into a mass of smashed steel and iron, the heavy passenger locomotive telescoping its smaller fellow as far as the cab. First in the freight train were a steel coal car and a box car loaded with 6-inch timbers. The heavy gondola car ripped the floor out of the combination car, and tossed it and the locomotive tender down a 10-foot embankment into a cornfield. The timbers in the car following were driven with terrific force into the day coach, which mounted the gondola car, and split it in twain.

Help On Hand Early.

Every seat in the coach was torn from its fastenings, the roof was thrown to one side, and the heavy weight of massive timbers, hurled with awful force, struck among the men and women in the coach. Even before the crash came, rescuers were running to the scene from the Middletown station of the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton, some 300 yards south of the accident.

Every surgeon in town was summoned to the place, which is a mile or more from the city proper, and calls for assistance were sent to Dayton and Hamilton. Relief trains were made up at each of these places, and the injured were placed upon them and sent to hospitals in those cities, there being no such institution in Middletown.

Coroner J. A. BURNETT was summoned from Hamilton and immediately began an inquiry into the cause of the wreck. He was unwilling tonight to announce any conclusions on the result of his investigations.

Ahead Of Schedule.

VERNON WALLACE, of the freight train, declared that the passenger train was running ahead of schedule.

"We had seven minutes to make the siding when we left the Middletown yards, just below the city," he said. "That must have given us fully five minutes margin as we passed the station. Yet we hardly cleared the station with our rear flags when the flyer came around the curve. I yelled to the engineer and jumped and he did the same."

WALD, the passenger engineer, is said to have declared that he was strictly on schedule.

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