

EIGHT HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS ARE KILLED

Lackawanna Train Grinds a Crowded Newark Trolley.

TWENTY-SIX ARE INJURED

Electric Car Slid Slowly on Icy Rails Through Safety Gates and Against the Side of a Rushing Express.

Special to The New York Times.

NEWARK, Feb. 19.—A trolley car crowded with boys and girls on their way to school this morning slid its locked wheels on slippery rails down the slight hill in Clifton Avenue, from Orange Street, crashed through the railroad safety gates that had been lowered, and out on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad tracks just as an east-bound express train sped over the crossing at a rate estimated at thirty miles an hour. The car, moving slowly, but beyond the control of the motorman, struck the locomotive in front of the engineer's cab, and the train as it thundered past tore the car to pieces, killing eight of the young passengers and injuring twenty-six more, some so seriously that they may not recover.

There were 123 persons on the trolley car, according to the conductor's register. Almost all of them were pupils of the high school, which is about four blocks from the scene of the tragedy. A car of the size of the one wrecked holds 100 persons comfortably. From that it may be judged how closely the passengers were crowded. The front and rear platforms were filled, and boys clung to insecure positions on the steps.

"A death trap," was what the Mayor of Newark in his last message called the crossing where the accident occurred. It lies between two hills, over which the tracks of the North Jersey Street Railway Company run along Clifton Avenue. On the south of the railroad the hill rises at a grade of about 5 per cent, for a distance of a little more than one block, or to a point a short distance beyond Orange Street. On the north the incline is about the same, but in that direction it rises for a little more than three blocks.

Trolley cars going north or south on the Clifton Avenue line are required to stop at the bottom of the hill before proceeding across the railroad tracks. Crossing gates are lowered at the approach of a train, but whether these gates are up or down, the stop must be made, according to the rules of the street car company, and the conductor must go ahead and see that the tracks are clear before the trolley car crosses.

All of these precautions, however, were useless yesterday. The gates were down, the conductor was preparing to alight and lock ahead, but the car, with its heavy load of children, did not stop, notwithstanding the motorman's efforts. It slipped along over the icy rails and out on the railroad tracks.

Those in the car and those crowded on the platforms had no time to escape. They saw the car moving on toward the signal gates, but it was at such a slow pace that they believed it would halt any moment. Then the trolley car seemed to stop, according to survivors who were aboard and others who saw the accident from without. But it was only for an instant. Then it moved on again, slowly, and crashed against the wooden arms of the gates, snapping them off.

Then the danger was realized by those on the front platform. The boys and girls screamed in terror as they saw the car move on to the tracks and heard the whistle and roar of the approaching passenger train. Some tried to break from their tight imprisonment; others were stupefied with fear. But none had time to get away.

SLID AGAINST THE TRAIN.

A moment later the fast-moving train was near, and then upon the crossing. The front platform of the slipping car was scraped by the steam cylinder on the front of the locomotive. Then the "hood," that part of the roof of the car that extends over the platform, was struck by the projection of the engineer's cab. In an instant, as the engine and passenger cars sped past, the front end of the car was torn to pieces. The wreckage flew in all directions, but much of it was carried in the direction of the moving train. The passengers in the forward part of the car were thrown about and their torn bodies strewn along the track.

Although only the front platform had been struck by the train and the trucks had not been knocked from the rails, the entire car seemed to fall apart. The roof caved in as the sides fell away, and those who were near at the time say it was remarkable that any in the crowded car escaped injury. The following-named were victims of the wreck:

THE DEAD.

BAKER, MAUD WALDMAN, sixteen years old, daughter of the late Frederick Waldman, proprietor of the Waldman Opera House, and resided with her stepfather, William Baker, of the Baker Printing Company, at 509 High Street; killed instantly; body identified by means of a note written to the girl by Roy Morrow.

EASTWOOD, EVAN H., JR., nineteen years old, son of Evan H. Eastwood, a member of the firm of Eastwood & Park, jewelers, and living at 596 Clifton Avenue; died in the German Hospital.

ILL, VIOLA, seventeen years old, daughter of Henry Ill, a manufacturer, living at 43 Sterling Street; killed instantly. Identification by Drs. Edward J. and Charles Ill, uncles of the girl.

KARSHNER, MABEL E., sixteen years old, daughter of G. W. Karshner of Tiffin, Ohio, and resided with an uncle, B. F. Cogger, at 41 Humbolt Street; died in St. Michael's Hospital.

KOHN, Rosetta, sixteen years old, daughter of Milton J. Kohn, a traveling salesman for

Headley & Farmer, trunk-manufacturers, of Newark, and now traveling in Cuba; home 49 James Street; died almost immediately.

LOHENBERG, ALMA, fourteen years old, daughter of the late Peter Lohenberg, who was President of the Atlantic Leather Company of this city; identified by her brother Peter by means of rings on her fingers.

MUELLER, ERNESTINE, fifteen years old, of 144 Fairmount Avenue; died almost immediately; body identified by an older sister of the girl by means of an ear-ring and her dress.

WERPUEPER, ELLA, eighteen years old, daughter of C. Werpueper, foreman in the C. Fretz Brewery in this city; died soon after being removed to the City Hospital.

THE INJURED.

ALLSLOP, FREDERICK, 78 Ridgewood Avenue; injured about the head and body; taken home.

BARCLIFFE, OSCAR, engineer of the Delaware and Lackawanna express, of Gladstone, N. J.; injured about the head and body; taken to St. Michael's Hospital; condition serious.

BRADY, PETER, thirty years old, motorman on the wrecked trolley car, 248½ Highland Avenue; skull badly fractured; unconscious at the City Hospital and probably will die.

BULL, MINA, seventeen years old, living at 41 Austin Street; leg and arm broken; taken to City Hospital.

COMERFORD, MARGARET, nineteen years old, of 370 South Orange Avenue; cut about the abdomen and serious internal injuries; taken to City Hospital; may recover.

COURSEN, ALINE, fifteen years old, daughter of Herbert R. Coursen, 140 Roseville Avenue; leg broken; taken to City Hospital.

DE CAMP, SUSAN, 123 Seymour Avenue; right arm fractured; taken home.

DOLL, FLORENCE, 35 Van Ness Place; ankle broken and badly injured about the head and shoulders; taken home.

FOX, EDITH, sixteen years old, of 114 Bank Street; bruised and cut with glass.

GERAGHTY, LILLIE, seventeen years old, of 295 Plane Street; thigh fractured; taken to City Hospital.

KNIGHT, EMILY, fourteen years old, daughter of Herbert Knight, a lawyer and court stenographer, 13 Walnut Street; cut and bruised; taken home.

LINDSLEY, FREDERICK, sixteen years old, 48 Avon Avenue; contusions of the head and dislocation of the hip; removed to St. Michael's Hospital.

LYTLE, MARIAN, fourteen years old, of 73 Plane Street; cut on head, not badly; taken to City Hospital.

MCCORD, HELEN, sixteen years old, of 17 Burnetts Street; scalp wound and slight internal injuries; taken to City Hospital.

MCLELLAND, JENNIE E., sixteen years old, daughter of Thomas McLelland of 315 South Orange Avenue; contusions of the brain; taken to City Hospital; condition serious.

MESSNER, OTTO, sixteen years old, 47 Dewey Street; slight injuries; taken to City Hospital.

MUELLER, FERDINAND, seventeen years old, of 29 Stratford Place. After the accident he boarded another car and started for home; when he reached Broad and Market Streets, a mile and a half away, he became unconscious in the car. It was found that he had three ribs broken.

NEVIUS, FRANCES, sixteen years old, of 445 Broad Street; contusions on the head; taken to the City Hospital and later to her home.

PRICE, MARION, fifteen years old, daughter of Frank Price of 41 Humbolt Street; cut on the head; taken to St. Michael's Hospital.

RAQUET, CARL, 37 Waverley Avenue; seriously bruised; taken home.

RICH, PAULINE, fifteen years old, of 38 Thirteenth Avenue; cut about face and hands; taken home.

SMITH, GEORGE, 78 Monmouth Street; left leg fractured.

SMITH, MABEL, fourteen years old, of 57 Elizabeth Avenue; severe cut over left eye; taken home.

WALLACK, JACOB, 23 Ninth Avenue; cut and bruised about the face and body; taken home.

WOLFE, HENRY, a mounted policeman of the Second Precinct; struck on head with broken arm of the guard rail; not seriously injured.

VAN VALEN, MAUD, seventeen years old, daughter of Morris Van Valen, 87 Hillside Avenue; bruised about head and body; taken home.

Mounted Policeman William Stucky of the Second Precinct, accompanied by Mounted Policeman Henry Wolte, arrived at the railroad tracks on their way from the station house to their beats just as the gates were lowered. They were on the north side. Reining in their horses, they waited for the train to pass. Both saw the approach of the train and the car and witnessed the crash. Policeman Stucky said:

"It was about 8:40 o'clock. As I drew up in front of the gates on the north side I saw the trolley car descending the hill opposite. It was moving very slowly as it approached the tracks, and it did not occur to me that it could fail to stop. I am certain I saw it stop stone still for an instant, and then move along very slowly. It crashed into the gates, and the motorman was screwing away at his brake, but the car did not stop. I had time to see it, for it was moving so much slower than the passenger train.

"A moment later I saw there would be a collision, and the crash came. I couldn't see much of it until the train was past, for I was on the opposite side. But it was scarcely a second until the train had run on past, and there I saw the wreck of the car with the children screaming and crying."

Stucky says he then turned and rode as fast as he could make his horse go to a patrol box two blocks away. From there he notified the police. One platoon at the Second Precinct Station, the nearest to the scene, was lining up to be sent out on patrol. They were dispatched to the crossing. Others responded later from other precincts.

Ambulances and doctors were called simultaneously, and surgeons came from St. Michael's, the German, and the City Hospitals. The three girls who were instantly killed were removed to morgues.

Policeman Stucky returned to the scene and aided in the work of rescue. He had helped remove three of the injured when he took hold of the hand of his daughter Edna, sixteen years old. Apparently she was lifeless. Frantically her father tore away the timbers that held her and carried her to one side. A physician found that she had not been injured, but had been overcome by the excitement or stunned by the shock. She was revived and sent home, but is still ill and under a physician's care.

SCATTERED IN THE SNOW.

The mangled bodies of the boys and girls were lying in the snow, some a considerable distance from the railroad tracks. Severed hands, arms, and legs were strewn about. After the dead and injured had been removed the police gathered up watches, earrings, finger rings, chatelaine bags, nineteen rubber shoes, several leather shoes, pieces of garments, schoolbooks, papers bearing essays and compositions—those the children had prepared to present at the school to-day—notes from friends, luncheon baskets, and other things.

The motorman's injuries were very serious. At the hospital an operation was performed, two inches of his skull bone being removed. He has not regained consciousness to-night and consequently nothing can be learned from him as to the accident. It is believed by the physicians that he cannot survive.

Oscar Barcliffe, the engineer of the express train, also was badly hurt. He was sitting at his window when the framework of his cab was shattered by contact with the "hood" of the trolley car. Splinters and glass pierced his face and body, and he suffered serious bruises. At the hospital it was said to-night that his condition was serious.

The conductor of the trolley car was George M. Gould. He was detained by the police immediately after the accident, and late in the afternoon was taken to the County Clerk's office and held in \$2,000 bail on a charge of manslaughter.

To County Physician McKenzie he made a statement, saying that the car was crowded so that he could hardly make his way through. He did not remember the exact number of fares he had collected, but thought it was 123. He said it was the custom for the car to stop before it reached the railroad tracks, and for the conductor to walk ahead and see that no train was approaching. He was in the middle of the car when the descent of the little hill was made, and he pushed and shoved to get to the end of the car so as to get out and look ahead. He said he was near the door when the crash came. He did not think the car was near the tracks yet, for it had not stopped. He said he intended to jump to the ground as soon as it did stop. He did not know whether there was sand in the box for sprinkling on icy rails or not.

There was no session of the high school to-day, and none will be held until Tuesday. The pupils who arrived were not notified of the accident until after the roll had been called, the Principal realizing that

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that might aid in learning who were safe. The Faculty, after dismissal, hurried to the scene and aided in the rescuing.

Mayor Doremus, when asked about the wreck, called attention to his last message, in which he referred to the dangers of grade crossings in the city, and particularly to that where the tragedy occurred to-day. Hundreds of High School pupils cross there twice every school day, and during the Summer thousands go that way to and from the main entrance to Bredford Park. Effort has been made in three sessions of the New Jersey Legislature to have the Morris Canal abandoned. It is because of that canal that it is impossible for the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western to depress its tracks. Although the canal is generally conceded to be practically useless, it has been impossible to obtain legislation abolishing it.

Superintendent Charles M. Shipman of the North Jersey Street Railway Company said the car that was wrecked was in the hands of extra men, that is, men extra on that line. Brady, the motorman, Superintendent Shipman said, had been in the employ of the company as motorman for four years. He did not know that he had ever run a car over the Clifton Avenue line before, but believed that he was familiar with the road.

"What was the condition of the car?"

"The Inspector has told me that it was in perfect shape," replied the Superintendent.

CARS COVERED WITH ICE.

"Was there ice on the shoe of the brake to cause slipping?"

"I do not know. The cars have no shelter now. The barn on Bloomfield Avenue was burned in 1895 and has not been rebuilt. All of the cars stand out of doors, exposed to the elements day and night the year round. They are frequently found to be covered with ice. I don't know anything about the wrecked car except what the Inspector told me."

Asked about the rules regarding overcrowding of cars, Superintendent Shipman said:

"There is no legal restriction of persons riding on the platforms of street cars here. There is a rule of the company that no passenger shall stand on the platform so long as there is room inside. When the car is filled, passengers frequently are permitted to ride on the platforms.

"The cause of the accident was due entirely to the slippery condition of the rails," said the Superintendent, "for I am positive the brakes were applied."

"Was the car equipped with electric brakes?" he was asked.

"No, there was only ordinary hand brakes."

There is no derailing switch at the Delaware and Lackawanna tracks at Clifton Avenue. Superintendent Shipman was asked why.

"There is no law that I know of requiring derailing switches. We have them at two railroad crossings in the city and on one steep grade where there is a curve at the bottom."

The attention of the Superintendent was called to the Mayor's reference to the crossing as a "death trap." He said his company had never been asked to bridge their tracks at the point.

Prosecutor Chandler W. Riker, the Chief of Police, and the County Physician are working together gathering evidence as to the accident and its cause. It was not deemed necessary to hold a Coroner's inquest, and the case will be presented to the Essex County Grand Jury in about ten days, the Prosecutor said.

Prosecutor Riker said that from the evidence his detectives had procured it was plain that the gates were closed. There was some doubt as to this, notwithstanding the fact that the arm was broken, because of an accident that occurred at the crossing yesterday. When a train approaches the crossing a bell rings in the shanty of the flagman. Yesterday, however, that failed to work, and Theodore Kline, a milkman, drove his wagon out on to the tracks and a train struck it. The horse was killed and the vehicle badly broken up. Kline saved himself by jumping, but was slightly injured.

Edward J. Ill and Charles Ill, brothers, and physicians, arrived at the City Hospital soon after hearing that their niece Viola Ill was seriously injured. They entered one ward and decided that one of the injured and bandaged girls was their relative. They made a hasty examination and found that an operation would be necessary immediately. Working as fast, but as carefully as they could, they soon finished the task.

Hardly were they done when news was brought them that a schoolgirl was certain that a victim dead in Holle's Morgue was Viola Ill. Hastening thither they were astonished to learn that it was true that Viola had been killed, and that the operation had been performed on another girl. Later it was ascertained that the girl operated on was Jennie E. McLelland. Her life, the hospital physicians said to-night, probably was saved by the operation performed by the Doctors Ill.