

A RAILWAY HORROR!

Express Train Crashes Into a Fast Freight on the G.T.R. Near Wanstead, and Twenty-eight Lives are Lost.— Over a Score, in Addition, are More or Less Seriously Injured.

One of the worst railway accidents in the history of the Grand Trunk railway occurred on Friday night last when the fast Pacific Express crashed into a freight train on the Sarnia line, near Wanstead. The express was over an hour late, and was crowded with holiday travelers, returning to their homes after spending Christmas with relatives and friends in the east. The express had left Watford, the station just east of Wanstead, with clearance orders to Wyoming, and about the same time the freight left Wyoming with orders to meet the express at Wanstead. A terrific blizzard was raging at the time and prevented the engineers of the two trains from seeing each other until it was too late to stop. The result was an appalling collision, the big mogul engine on the express smashing into the freight engine with such force that the latter turned a complete somersault into the ditch, with the express engine lying on top of it. The force of the impact drove the baggage car three quarters way through the passenger coach behind it, and it was there the appalling loss of life occurred, nearly every passenger being either killed or seriously wounded. The floor of the baggage car was raised just high enough to plow its way through the passenger car a little above the top of the seat backs, and the unfortunate passengers were nearly all killed by wounds in the breast or head.

THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

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minute's more time would have seen the passing of the two in safety.

Saturday was a day not soon to be forgotten in this and several other communities, who lost citizens in the frightful accident. Those who were expecting friends or members of the family, indulged in many anxious moments until they learned for certain they were safe or had not been on the ill-fated train. All day long the details of the accident were discussed everywhere, and business was at about a standstill most of the day. Those who were in the Pullmans attached to the train got merely a shaking-up, and those in the second day-coach escaped with slight bruises, but all the occupants of the first day-coach were either killed or bodily injured, and went through an experience the horror of which is apt to remain in their memories for the rest of their lives. The list of dead from Petrolia and immediate vicinity totals four: Alex Stewart and wife of the 12th line, Alex Cameron, and Miss Trotter, a sister of Mrs. Geo. Pearce, of Marthaville. Besides these Dr. Penwarden and wife of Grand Rapids, Mich., were among the killed, they were returning here from a Christmas visit at St. Thomas. Mrs. Penwarden formerly lived here, being a daughter of the late town clerk—G. S. McPherson, and a sister of Mrs. Wm. Lowery. Miss Trotter had been attending the funeral of her father at Kingston, and was returning to her sister's. Mr. and Mrs. Stewart had been spending Christmas at London with friends, and Mr. Cameron had been to Strathroy for Christmas. Although these four seemed

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It will require the coroner's to definitely fix the responsibility for the disaster. Meanwhile it is said station agent A. Carson, of Watford, failed to deliver to conductor John McAuliff of the express, westbound, an order from train dispatcher J. G. Kerr at London for the express to pass an extra freight, east bound, at Washstead. Carson received his order at 9:48, and as a result of his error the head-on collision occurred at Washstead at 10:10, just 22 minutes late.

During those intervening minutes dispatcher Kerr, chief dispatcher Hayward, of London, agent Carson of Watford, the operator at Kingscourt Junction, and the operator at Wyoming were making vain efforts to rectify the mistake by catching either the passenger or the freight on signals. When the passenger rushed past Kingscourt Junction the last chance was gone to avoid a collision, unless they should see the headlights in time, and this failed to do. In four different instances it was the fraction of a second by which the express got away, and even when the two trains came together, one

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