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SALIDA, CHAFFEE COUNTY, COLORADO NO. 24

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**28 DEAD, 1 MISSING IN
WRECK NEAR GRANITE**

Train No. 2 Plunges Into Arkansas River On Curve; Many Pinned under Wreckage or Fall Into Stream

Twenty-eight people are known to be dead and one is known to be missing in the wreck of D. & R. G. W. passenger train No. 2, which occurred two miles west of Granite and eighteen miles east of Leadville shortly before noon Sunday. It is expected that when the coaches are lifted from the river other bodies will be found underneath. The task of identifying the dead is difficult because the deaths were all in the day coaches where no record of the names of passengers is kept.

The wreck occurred on the first sharp curve entering the Granite district, where the railroad company is now changing the grade and spending a vast sum of money to eliminate the curves. It was given out by President Pyeatt of the company that the wreck was due to excessive speed.

The editor of The Mail was on his way to Leadville in a car with Mr. Hudson, manager of the City Motor Sales company, when they saw the wreck from the highway, a half-mile away. He reached the wreck after only a few of the injured had been brought out and while the cries of the injured were rending the air. This lasted only a few minutes and then all was still in the coaches.

Dr. G. W. Larimer and Mrs. Larimer and Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Allan and S. K. Murdock and family

were driving to Leadville in their cars when they saw the wreck ten minutes after it happened. They rushed down to the wreck but as Dr. Larimer did not have his surgeon kit he looked first for injured persons in danger of bleeding to death. Having attended to these he went to Engineer Hal Harpending, a neighbor and personal friend of Dr. Larimer and administered to him, until Drs. Newel and Ayres arrived from Buena Vista with their surgical kits and first aid materials. Six doctors also hurried down from Leadville with nurses and sisters from the hospital and all worked valiantly to relieve the injured.

Mrs. Larimer and Mrs. Allan joined with the women passengers in caring for the injured and in preparing coffee for them. A woman produced a quart bottle of bonded whiskey which she served to the injured while the fires were being built for coffee. On the other side of the stream the injured were being loaded into Pullman cars.

Most of the killed were in the third car of the train, and the wreck was spread along in zig-zag fashion. The engine was lying on the engineer's side, headed straight down the stream. It was 300 feet from the point where it left the track. The baggage car was at right angles to the engine and turned on its side, but crushed only on the rear end where it was jammed by car No. 2. Car No. 2 was nearly at right angles with the baggage car. It was a day coach filled with passengers, but only a few bodies were taken out of the rear of this coach. Most of the dead were in the third car which was on its side across the river and formed a bridge. They had taken most of the injured out of this coach in a few minutes and when this writer walked across and peered down through the windows he could see only one man dead and no injured, so deeply was the wreckage piled inside. Men with shovels, picks, axes, and sledge hammers were tearing away at the wreckage. A half hour later other injured were brought out and late in the afternoon they began to take out the bodies. There was a jam of dead in the front end of the third car.

The wreck was especially cruel to children. Tiny tots were killed, injured and separated from their parents.

The fourth car was a Pullman, lying on its side in the river. One woman was killed in the vestibule. The fifth coach was off the track, the sixth tilting down the bank and the balance stayed on the track.

Sam Murdock held the head of Mrs. Rathbun of Buena Vista above the water for more than an hour before doctors arrived and amputated her legs to free her from the wreckage. She died immediately afterwards.

The wreck occurred opposite a camp of the Utah Construction company, and the men from the camp rushed down with tools and gave valiant assistance in removing the injured.

Another gang of the same company working nearer Granite rushed to the scene. On the way they saw a man holding a boy and running. They fell exhausted on the side of the track. The man did not know his own name. The boy did not know the man, and he said the man had run with him, so hard that he was exhausted. The man was revived and returned to the wreck. This crew also saw three bodies floating down the river. They were the bodies of two youths about 18 years old, and a girl 4 years old, dressed in a pretty red dress, white silk stockings and white shoes. One of the boys and the girl have not been identified. They were placed alongside the railroad track and covered with a blanket until the relief train arrived.

Russell Willingham, fireman on the train, climbed out of the cab as he called for Engineer Hal Harpending. When he started across the river Mr. Willingham saw a man floating by. He dragged the man to shore but he ran into the stream again. Willingham rescued him a second time and

fainted. When he revived Mr. Harpending was lying on the bank. Mr. Harpending said Traveling Engineer George M. Lillis was dead in the engine. Mr. Harpending remained conscious until he died at 3.07 o'clock in the baggage coach of the relief train. The relief train had reached the wreck at one o'clock with Superintendent Carpenter, Master Mechanic Haskins, Dr. Curfman, Dr. Fuller and corps of nurses from the Rio Grande hospital.

Many of the injured were carried directly to the relief train but those across the river were borne on to the highway and carried in autos to Granite where they were placed on the train. The relief train waited until all injured had been removed from the wreck except one girl who had to be released with acetylene torches. The wrecking train moved up as soon as the relief train had gone and repaired the track the same evening.

Superintendent Carpenter directed the relief work and the wrecking crew. The bodies of Engineers Lillis and Harpending were taken to Salida. Coroner Walsh of Leadville took charge of the bodies as they were removed and at 12 o'clock Sunday night there were thirteen in the Leadville morgue. Others arrived by train and automobile until there were twenty in the morgue yesterday at noon.

Mrs. Dorothy Rathbun, who was pinned in the wreck and died after her legs had been amputated, was a school teacher at Buena Vista and was returning home from Avon to resume her work. She was accompanied by Mrs. Burleson Perschacker also of Buena Vista, who also was killed. Both were brides of less than a month. The Isabel family also are Buena Vista people. Mr. Isabel was the first lettuce grower in the Buena Vista district, but removed to Avon a few years ago. The family was on the way to Canon City to visit friends.

Elmer Bovee, Rio Grande engineer, was thought to be in the wreck, but he had returned to Salida on an earlier train. George M. Gerhart, Salida Engineer, was deadheading back from Minturn and was riding in a day coach. His body was recovered today.

Hilda Everett died last evening at the Red Cross hospital in Salida of shock. She was 18 years old. Her brother, Albert, aged 14 years, was killed in the wreck.

A purse was found containing tickets for Mrs. Agnes Helt of Topeka, Kansas, Miss Helen Holt of Topeka, Kansas, a stenographer for the Santa Fe and Mrs. J. B. Holt. Mrs. John Holt was found dead. The others are missing.

President Pyeatt issued a statement that the wreck was caused by excessive speed. Traveling Engineer Lillis had taken the throttle at Minturn.

The engine was No. 1604, one of the new type put into service a couple weeks ago.

Coroner Walsh of Leadville expects to hold an inquest today or tomorrow. M. M. Lines and Charles H. Rankin of the Public Utilities Commission of Colorado and Mr. Gardner of the Interstate Commerce Commission arrived yesterday morning to make an investigation. It is planned to hold this investigation Wednesday morning in Salida to determine the cause of the accident and fix the responsibility. The railroad company also will hold an investigation.

The Isabel boy was wedged in the car and could be plainly seen for several hours before he was extricated. Acetylene torches were used in cutting away steel to get at the bodies of the victims.

A boy, 3 years old, apparently able only to speak a foreign language, was found on the bank of the river after the accident. He could not give his name. He was brought to the Rio Grande hospital and later turned over to Daniel Matthews, who is taking care of him until he can be identified. A picture of the boy was sent to Denver yesterday to be published in the newspapers. Several Salida linguists were asked to question the boy, but nobody has been able to understand his language. He talks with the Matthews children, but they do not understand. He is bashful in the

28 DEAD IN WRECK

Continued from page one

presence of adults.

The river where the wreck occurred is thirty feet wide and only one foot deep. Men waded across it without difficulty and it is not considered likely that bodies could have floated far down the stream without lodging. The engine is fifty feet from the railroad track.

Photographers arrived by the score and many pictures of the wreck were taken.

W. E. Gregory express messenger, riding in the express car, escaped with a cut under the eye.

T. McClenahan, a railroad fireman was hurt at Tennessee Pass Saturday night and was going to the hospital in Salida. He received broken ribs, a broken arm and a cut on the head. He was thrown into the river but managed to crawl out.

Russell Willingham, fireman on the train, was thought at first to have a broken leg, but it is only bruised and strained.

There are thirty-two injured in the Rio Grande hospital today and it was given out that all should recover.

Assistant Superintendent Lynch was walking up to engine of the train when he saw his son in a Pullman car and stopped to visit with him. Had he not met his son he would have had time to reach the engine. He and his son escaped injury.

THE DEAD

G. M. LILLIS, traveling engineer, Salida.

GEORGE GERHART, engineer, Salida.

HAL HARPENDING, engineer, Salida.

L. E. DOBBLER, Kearney, Neb.

D. REDMOND, Denver.

MRS. H. C. RATHBUN, Buena Vista.

MRS. JOHN HOLT, Elmont, Kan.

MRS. DENNY ISABEL, Pando.

1 girl, 2 years old.

1 girl, 4 years old.

1 girl, 4 years old.

ALLISON BOY, Avon Colo.

JACKIE ISABEL, Avon.

MISS HILDA EVERETT, Avon.

RUTH ISABEL, Avon.

LOUIS BAUIS, Denver.

ASA WOODFORD, Elsnore, Calif.

MRS. C. LOCKMAN, Clarksburg, West Virginia.

LOUISA BOWLES, Leadville.

TRAMER DANIELS, Jonesboro, Arkansas.

ALBERT EVERETT, Avon.

ASA WOODFORD, Elsmore, Calif.

MRS. BURLESON PERSCHACKER, Buena Vista.

JACK COFFMAN, Harrison, Ark.

One unidentified Mexican woman.

One unidentified white man.

ABEL SANCHEZ, Salt Lake City.

M. CELLIZ, Bingham, Utah.

One foreigner, male.

MISSING

MARTHA R. COFFMAN, Harrison, Arkansas.

INJURED

T. McClanahan, age 26 years, of Salida, fireman on the Rio Grande, injury to leg and back.

Miss Lucille Millis, 22 years old, 832 Arlington St., Houston, Texas, contusion of forehead and left leg.

J. A. Orchard, 52 years old, 610 E. 7th St., Portland, Oregon, general contusion.

A. H. Breuggemeyer, 39 years old, 100 New St., Blue Island, Ill., lacerated wounds of hand and scalp, injury to back.

Mrs. Walter Myrawski, 24 years old, 1415 E Second St., Pueblo, Colorado, injury to back.

Mike Novak, 10 years old, 429 W. Chestnut, Leadville Colo.

Mrs. Joe Antonello, 30 years old, 5446 Tracy, Kansas City, Mo., general contusion.

Mrs. J. W. Cockrill, 45 years old, 1205 C Ave., Oklahoma, injury to arm.

John Antonello, 10 years old, 5446 Tracey, Kansas City, Mo., contusion of abdomen.

Mrs. Arthur Breuggemeyer, 38 years old, 100 New St., Blue Island, Ill., contusions forehead and back.

Mrs. Mary Sheldon, 71 years old, 2300 Downing St., Denver, lacerated wound, right hand.

Mrs. Pearl Scholtz, 2300 Downing, Denver, cut right hand.

T. S. Lynch, 58 years old, 529 Freeman Ave., Kansas City, Mo., fractured right leg.

Dempsey Davie, 33 years old, Minturn, injury to pelvis.

Russell Willingham, 23 years old, Fireman of Salida, injury to right leg.

Lee Horne, 45 years old, 2329 Humbolt St., Denver, Colo., fractured right shoulder, scalp wound, shock.

Mrs. T. S. Lynch, 46 years old, 539 Freeman Ave., Kansas City, Mo., contused wounds of legs, scalp wound.

Miss Gertrude Cockrill, 26 years old, 1205 C Ave., Lawton, Oklahoma, scalp wound, general contusion and severe shock.

Beatrice Brennan, 21 years old, 223 E. 10th St., Leadville, Colo., contusion

back and legs.

Mrs. M. M. Hodges, 71 years old, 1405 E. 5th St., Winfield, Kansas.

Mrs. Florence Park, 57 years old, 1901 Broadway, Little Rock, Ark., severe shock, injury to pelvis.

Miss Helen Holt, 21 years old, Elmont, Kansas, compound fracture of right ankle, cuts on arm and leg.

Herbert Graham, 26 years old, Del Norte, contused wound of forehead, contusion of chest severe shock.

Vivian Daniel, 18 years old, Jonesboro, Ark., internal abdominal injury, severe shock.

Mrs. Addie Dobbler, 57 years old, Kearney, Nebr., scalp wound and bruise on arm.

Miss Dorothy Dobbler, 22, Kearney, Neb., scalp wound, contusions.

Mrs. Dora E. Fitch, 60 years old, 118 Capitol Ave., Omaha, Nebr., scalp wound.

Mrs. Tiltman Daniel, 37 years old, Jonesboro, Ark.

J. S. Henderickson, 28 years old, Como, Texas, contusion left hip.

Alexander Cameron, 5827 Buchanan St., Los Angeles, California, lacerated wound head, left hand, contusion left thigh.

Marion Conley, 120 E. 10th St., Leadville. Lacerated wounds of arms, general contusion.

Mrs. R. Matzaisch, Leadville, scalp wounds.

B. G. Smith, 306 Gunckel Ave., Dayton, Ohio, contused wound of left knee, moderate shock.

Dr. Andrew C. Nelson, 912 1-2 K St., Lincoln Neb., injury to back, scalp wound.

W. L. Angel, brakeman of Salida, scalp wound and bruises.

Harry Millis, 111 Preston Ave., Houston, Texas, general contusion.

C. C. Dreman, 15 So. Church St., Princeton, Ill., contusion of chest and shoulder.

Mrs. Eli Gray, Pomeroy, Washington, puncture wound of knee and general contusion.

PRESIDENT PYEATT ISSUED THE FOLOWING STATEMENT:

"The conclusion of our investigation develops that the derailment of train No. 2 on an eleven degree forty minute curve one half mile west of Waco, Colorado, September 5, was caused by excessive speed. The train was running twenty-five minutes late and, from the best information available and from the position of wrecked equipment, at a speed of between forty and forty-five miles per hour when it reached point of derailment. Time card rule restricts the speed of all passenger trains to a maximum of thirty miles per hour over this and similar curves. At the time of derailment the engine was in charge of Road Foreman of Equipment G. M. Lillis, who had been in the service twenty-five years as fireman, locomotive engineer and road foreman of equipment and always regarded as highly competent and efficient as a locomotive engineer. He was aware of the time card rule referred to and was familiar with the handling of the particular type of locomotive involved in the derailment of this train."

FUNERALS

The body of George M. Lillis was sent to Walsenburg at noon today and the funeral will be held there at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon. Mr. Lillis is survived by his wife and one daughter, Miss Frieda Lillis. His complete obituary will be published in the next issue of The Mail.

The funeral of George M. Gerhart will be held at ten o'clock Thursday morning from the Elk's home. His body will be sent to Kansas City, Mo.

The funeral of Hal Harpending will be held at 2:30 o'clock Friday afternoon.
