

Local Railway Items from Area Papers - 1945

08/03/1945 *Ottawa Citizen*

Winchester

Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls man in critical condition.

Suffering multiple injuries which include a fractured leg, arm, jaw, crushed face and a probable fracture of a skull, condition of C.P.R, Constable Ernest Parker of Smiths Falls was described today as being critical by Civic hospital authorities. He is being attended by his physician, Dr. George Armstrong. He was admitted to hospital yesterday afternoon following an accident at the CPR station at Smiths Falls.

According to witnesses, Constable Parker was crushed between a heavy crate containing a live bull and the station wall when the crate slipped while being unloaded from a train. The crate was said to have toppled after being shifted, catching the man as he attempted to move out of the way.

02/04/1945 *Ottawa Citizen*

New York Central

Ottawa, Mann Avenue

The NYC loss was estimated at \$10,000 and the fire chief was of the opinion it started "around" the boiler room. The ticket office, freight office and public waiting room were destroyed. Initially it was feared that the two watchmen, Alma Delaire and his son Sylvio were trapped and Constable Robert Smith and Ticket Agent Paul St. Pierre entered the building to try and find them (and safely got out). It was determined after that they were at home (wonder if they lost their jobs for not being there - might have saved the station if they had). There was some water damage to the freight sheds and contents on the south side of the offices. The article stated that Boarding Cars would be used temporarily to replace the structure. Mr. St. Pierre was quoted as saying that plans for a new office were proceeding immediately (Bruce Ballantyne)

03/04/1945 *Ottawa Citizen*

Hull Electric

A fast moving Hull Electric Railway tram car carried 50 charwomen and its motorman safely over 35-foot section of unsupported track 100 feet above the swollen waters of the Ottawa river at 5.30 this morning after a wash-out during the night carried away a portion of a 40-foot-high retaining wall and sent it rolling into the river below.

First local car over the line, the tram was a special used for transporting members of the government char service to their work in offices in Ottawa. About an hour and a half earlier, a heavy CPR train, eastbound from Vancouver, passed over the section and railwaymen believe its tremendous weight may have caused the wall, weakened by water seepage and frost, to give way.

Motorman H. Holt of the Hull line said that midway across the weakened track his car tilted to a dangerous degree over the edge of the cliff, which drops 40 feet to a slope which angles about 60 feet to the water's edge.

Thought car derailed.

Fortunately for the motorman and his passengers the unsupported steel rails held firmly and the car passed safely to solid ground. There have been two derailments in the area in recent weeks and at first the motorman believed that this was what caused his car to lurch dangerously. It was not until he had brought the tram to a stop and walked back to investigate that he saw the yawning gap over which the car had passed and the proximity of the cliff's edge over which the tram might have rolled had it tilted any further.

The washout did not affect the CPR transcontinental main line tracks which adjoin the Hull Electric's road. The network of rails are embedded in a rocky ledge skirting the base of Major's Hill Park. Freight and passenger locomotives of the CPR were able to proceed on regular scheduled runs at slow speed over the weakened section of track.

The break occurred about half way between the Hull electric terminal at the Chateau Laurier and the Alexandria bridge.

Motorman Holt brought his passengers safely into the terminal and then notified his company and the CPR, owners of the right of way.

Start Temporary Wall

Section Foreman Joseph Belisle, 208 Redempteur street, Hull, responded with a crew of CPR workmen who began the work of clearing away the tons of rocky debris and the construction of a temporary wooden retaining wall. A crane was sent from Smiths Falls this afternoon to assist in the work.

The Hull Electric Company put a shuttle service into operation on its east track during the morning to maintain a makeshift service until the west track can be put into operation again.

Normal service over the area is not expected to be resumed until tomorrow, however, when the temporary retaining wall should be in place and the gap filled with crushed stone.

The retaining wall bordering the right of way was erected some 45 years ago of heavy cut stone, some as large as two feet square. Some of these lurched and thundered down the cliffside to the edge of the river far below, tearing trees from their path and leaving deep gouges in the soft soil of the 60 foot slope.

A detailed inspection of the scene revealed that a small underground stream flowing from the high ground of Major's Hill Park some 40 feet above the level of the tracks, had over a period of years undermined the retaining wall. This, together with the almost constant vibration of Hull Electric trams and the heavier CPR trains passing over the right of way, weakened the structure sufficiently to cause it to give way.

The wall is about one-half mile long and will be thoroughly inspected for further signs of stress, officials said.

07/04/1945 *Ottawa Citizen*

Montreal and Ottawa

Roger Brown, a truck driver of 275 Rohester street, was killed instantly when his truck was hit by a CPR Montreal to Ottawa train at the Crrville crossing near Hurdman's Bridge.

18/04/1945 *Ottawa Citizen*

Maniwaki

Maniwaki train summer schedule same as last year.

The Board of Transport Commissioners, in an oral judgment delivered by Chief Commissioner J.A. Cross, today ordered that the assenger train sefrvice in effect during the summermonths of 1944 be ut into effect this year on the Canadian Pacific Railway line between Maniwaki and Ottawa, for the same period and on the same or "practically the same" schedueas was in effect in 1944.

The judgment said that although persons living in the Maniwaki district were inconvenienced when the summer train schedule was in effect, the situation prevailing in Ottawa, largely because of war conditions, made it necessary that a summer service be provided.

More.

Six Killed in Chesterville Car crash

Party Returning From Rodeo Hit District Persons Perish at Rail Crossing When Automobile Struck by Freight Train.

Six Ottawa district residents, four men and two women, were killed this morning at Chesterville railway crossing when the car in which they were returning to their homes from the rodeo at the Auditorium was struck by an eastbound freight train.

Inquest To Be Held

Town Constable Garnett McLean of Chesterville informed Coroner Dr. Thomas Hamilton of Brinston, Ont., and Ontario Provincial Police of the accident. An inquest is to be held. Harold Ouderkirk is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Ouderkirk of Berwick. He had been confined to a wheelchair, which was in the luggage truck of the car during his drive from Ottawa. It was smashed to pieces in the crash. Ouderkirk had, previously been a patient at the Ridrau Military Hospital, but due to the nature of his injuries was sent to Christie street hospital for treatment and a possible operation.

Was on Leave

Due to the death of his sister and the serious illness of his mother, had been transferred back to th Ottawa Civic Hospital, where he had been allowed a dally compassionate pass by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. Beckstead is survived by on son, Cecil.

Those identified were:

Harold Beckstead, 52, farmer, Chesterville;

Herbert Irving, 50, farmer, Chesterville, whose wife resides at 598 Gilmour street.

Gwendolyn Irving, 20, Mr. Irving's daughter;

Omer Groulx, 25, Chesterville.

Earl Ouderkirk, 25, of Berwick.

Pauline Seguin, 20, Chesterville.

It was reported that an Essie Goulm, 16, who works on the farm of Wallace Myers, Chesterville, had been involved in the accident but it is believed she had been mistaken for Pauline Seguin. Another unidentified man was also reported as killed, and that a bankbook found on his person gave his name as Lalonde, of Verdun, Que.

Ouderkirk, a patient in the Civic Hospital as a result of shrapnel wounds he received in his back overseas, had been on leave at his home to attend the funeral of his sister, who was buried yesterday

Mr. Beckstead was driver of the car in which all were killed. Police believe that Mr. Beckstead was under the impression that the "wig-wag" railway warning sign which was in motion at the time of the accident was for a westbound freight train stopped at the Chesterville station to take on water, and he did not see the eastbound freight.

On impact the two girls and Mr. Irving were thrown clear of the automobile, which was dragged a quarter mile along the track carrying the bodies of Mr. Beckstead, Harold Ouderkirk, and the yet unidentified man.

Visited Ottawa. The party had spent yesterday in Ottawa, and had gone to see the rodeo in the evening at the Ottawa Auditorium.

Mr. Irving had been employed as a sheet-metal worker at the Ottawa Car and Aircraft. In March of this year he was released from the Ottawa Car and had been working in Eastview.

Indian Walking On Trestle Is Hit By Tram

A 65-year-old Indian, Tom D. Lefebvre. of the Oka Reserve, Lake of Two Mountains, Que., is in serious condition at the Ottawa General Hospital, as a result of injuries he received shortly after midnight Saturday, when he was struck by a Hull Electric streetcar on the trestle just south of the Interprovincial Bridge.

Numerous stitches were required to close the wounds about his head, face and neck. Lefebvre's left leg was badly injured. His condition was reported as "very poor."

Reginald Beaugard, of 64 Paplneau street, operator of the Hull streetcar stated that he did not see Lefebvre on the trestle until he was about five feet away. Mr. Beaugard said he rang the bell, and immediately put the car into reverse, but was unable to avoid hitting the man.

Mr. Lefebvre was caught between the front right frame of the streetcar and the wheel. Mr. Beaugard immediately called the police and medical attention.

Dr. L. Michaud attended the injured man, who was taken to the Ottawa General Hospital In Gauthier's ambulance, and was admitted about 1.30 a m.

It is believed that Mr. Lefebvre instead of walking along the sidewalk under the streetcar and railway bridge over the roadway was taking a shortcut over the trestle when he was hit.

Seventh Person Escaped Fatal Accident

Funeral Rites for Victims Arranged

CHESTERVILLE, Oct. 7.- (Staff) The investigation of the level crossing accident which cost the lives of six people here early Saturday morning revealed that a seventh person had been riding in the ill-fated automobile until a few minutes before the crash.

He was Amedee Marlon who resides about two miles west of this town. Mr. Marion who had accompanied the party to the rodeo in Ottawa alighted from the car outside his home and learned of the tragedy several hours later. He was a friend of one of the girls who met her death in the accident.

Thorough Probe

A thorough probe of the level crossing accident the worst in this district in several years was under taken immediately by CPR officials and the Ontario provincial police. Dr. T. A. Hamilton, Brinston, district coroner, investigated the circumstances of the tragedy and announced that no inquest would be held. The dead are: Howard Beckstead, 60, owner of the car, Chesterville: Herbert Irving, 50, 698 Gilmour street, Ottawa; his daughter, Gwendolyn Irving, 20, of Chesterville; Omer Groulx, 38, Chrsterville: Earl Ouderlkrk, 25, Berwick; and Pauline Seguln, 20, Chesterville.

The funeral service for Howard Beckstead, 60, owner of the car, was held yesterday afternoon at 2 o'clock in the Grantley United church. Burial took place in Grantley cemetery.

Double Service

A double service for Mr. Irving and his daughter, Gwendolyn, will be held today at 2 o'clock at their residence in Chesterville. Burial will be in Maple Ridge cemetery.

Earl Ouderlkrk, whose body is resting at the Brownlee funeral home in Finch, will be buried Tuesday afternoon in Berwick cemetery following a service in the United church at Berwick at 2 o'clock.

The body of Omer Groulx also of Chesterville, was taken on Saturday afternoon to Casselman where a service is being held this morning at 8.30 o'clock at the Quesnel undertaking parlors there. Burial will be made in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Casselman.

The remains of Pauline Seguln, also of Chesterville, are resting at the home of her uncle at Chesterville where the funeral service is being held at 10 o'clock this morning. Burial will be made in the Kemptville cemetery.

Hit by Freight.

Hit squarely in the side by the fast travelling freight train, the sedan was pushed by the locomotive a distance equal to the length of 45 boxcars before the train could be brought to a stop. Three of the bodies were thrown clear of the car on impact while the three others remained trapped in the debris. The twisted wreckage of the automobile scraped the side of another freight train which was stopped on the north track, hitting it with such force that several of the boxcars were uncoupled.

The party were returning to their homes after seeing the rodeo at the Auditorium in Ottawa. They reached the main CPR crossing in the town at 2.55 a.m. The owner, Mr. Beckstead, was believed to have been driving the car at the time. The wig-wag signal at the double-line crossing was in action. A westbound freight train was stopped 50 feet east of the crossing taking water. The driver evidently assumed that the presence of this train was activating the crossing signal, and proceeded to cross the tracks after slowing down. He failed to notice the approach of the east-bound freight, a through train travelling at a high rate of speed.

Only Witness.

The only witness of the crash was the engineer of the stationary train, C. J. Bigelow, of Smiths Falls. Mr. Bigelow told police that he saw the automobile reach the crossing, slow down, and drive right in front of the oncoming train.

C. Boland, of Smiths Falls, fireman on the east-bound train, was the first member of the crew to notice the automobile. Crossing the cab he yelled to engineer, L. McNayr, also of Smiths Falls who proceeded to apply the brakes. The 60-car freight train stopped nearly three-quarters of a mile east of the crossing.

Mr. Beckstead, Pauline Seguin and Mr. Groulx were thrown clear of the car and their lifeless bodies were found on the right of way.

The automobile was jammed on the front of the locomotive and considerable difficulty was experienced in extricating the bodies of the three other victims from the wreckage. It was nine a.m. before the front of the locomotive and tracks were cleared of debris.

Awakened by Noise.

Neighboring residents were awakened by the noise and word of the tragedy soon spread to the entire community, about 500 people gathered at the crossing. It took sometime before the number of victims could be ascertained and before the dead could be identified. Dr. H. W. Justus, of Chesterville, was called to the scene but all the six passengers had been killed out-right.

Town Constable Garnet McLean, who lives near the railway crossing, was one of the first to arrive at the scene of the crash. He was awakened by the terrific noise caused by the impact, and took charge pending the arrival of Provincial Constable Leslie Throop, of Morrisburg.

Police officers assisted members of the train crew in releasing the battered automobile from the front of the locomotive. The debris of the car was removed to the Hamilton garage here.

Earl Ouderkirk, a disabled war veteran, and an invalid, was sitting in the rear of the car and had his folding wheel chair with him. The wheel chair was thrown out of the car by the impact and was later found beside the tracks. Ouderkirk was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Ouderkirk of Berwick. He had previously been a patient at the Rideau Military Hospital, but because of the nature of his injuries was sent to Christie street hospital for treatment and a possible operation.

Changed Plans

Ouderkirk came to his parents' home at Berwick to attend the funeral of his sister, Mary, 18, last Wednesday. He returned to Ottawa on Friday, He had planned on returning to his home for the weekend in an ambulance but decided to make the trip in Mr. Beckstead's automobile. Mr. Beckstead was a friend of the invalid soldier. Ouderkirk's body was taken to the Brownlee funeral home at Finch.

Although a resident of Ottawa in recent years. Mr. Irving was widely known in the Chesterville district where he lived for several years. Born at Dundas, Ont. he was educated at Wiliamsburg. He was employed at the Nestle Food Company at Chesterville prior to coming to Ottawa to join the staff of the Ottawa Car and Aircraft Company. He was the father of Gwendolyn Irving, 20, who was also killed in the accident. Mr. Irving was coming to spend the week-end with his mother, Mrs. William Irving, who lives on a farm near here. The daughter, Gwendolyn, was employed at the farm of Howard Beckstead, one of the victims. Surviving in the Irving family, in addition to Mrs. Irving, are five daughters, Phyllis, Beulah, Audrey and Lila, all of Ottawa, and Mrs. Beatrice Belanger, of Brockville, and a son, Arnold, Chesterville.

Well Known Farmer

A well known Chesterville farmer, John Howard Beckstead had spent all his life in the district. His wife predeceased him. He is survived by a son, Cecil, at home; one sister, Mrs. Almira Wallace and three brothers, Arthur, Ross and Irvine.

Miss Pauline Seguin was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Philippe Seguin, of Oxford Mills. She had been living since childhood at the home of her uncle, Eugene Monast, a neighbor of Howard Beckstead. Besides her parents, she leaves 11 brothers and sisters, Jean-Louis, Bernard, Gisele, Fleurette, Suzanne, Reuben, Maurice, Rosaline, Nicole, Murielle and Lorraine.

Omer Groulx was a former resident of Casselman and was working on the farm of Eugene Monast. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Groulx, of Casselman. He was unmarried. The bodies of Mr. Irving and his daughter were taken to the Dixon funeral home here, while those of Mr. Beckstead, Omer Groulx and Pauline Seguin were removed to the Henderson funeral home of Chesterville.

--the railway threw open their yards to the Legion reception committee for the serving of refreshments and hot coffee to repatriated liberated British prisoners-of-war homeward bound from Japanese prison camps.

As a result more than 800 prisoners-of-war were greeted by the mayor Stanley Lewis and the Legion and Legionettes. The welcome was well received as two 15-car trains arrived at Union station yards, one at 12.25 and the other at 1.15 at noon.

Troops cheer Mayor.

At the arrival of the first train the Mayor speaking from a railway caboose greeted the repatriates in the name of the city and Legion--

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