

3 KILLED, 8 HURT AS JERSEY FLIER RUNS PAST SIGNAL

**Heavy Express Train Crashes
at High Speed Into Local
Near Elizabeth.**

ENGINEERS DIE AT POSTS

**Officials Cite His Long Record,
and Heart Stroke Theory
Is Advanced.**

BARELY MISSES FULL CARS

**Enginemen on Short Line Save
Passengers, but Lose Their
Own Lives.**

Keeping up full speed of fifty miles an hour with a danger signal set "dead stop" against him, Engineer William Sell yesterday crashed his heavy steel-coached "Philadelphia Flier" into a Jersey Central local train at the crossing at Elizabethport Junction, near Elizabeth, N. J. Sell and two other enginemen were killed and eight other persons were seriously injured.

The Dead.

BROADLEY, J. J., of Dunellen, N. J., fireman of the Newark local.
HAHN, HERMAN, of Dunellen, N. J., engineer of the Newark local.
SELLS, WILLIAM H., of Hampton Junction, N. J., engineer of the Philadelphia express.

The Injured.

COX, JAMES, of Red Bank, N. J.
GREEN, CORNELIUS, negro, 134 Fisher Avenue, Asbury Park, N. J., fractured leg and internal injuries; serious.
HENWOOD, DONALD, of 733 Kensington Avenue, Plainfield, N. J.
HALBOY, WILLIAM, of 607 Eleventh Avenue, Belmar, N. J.
MURRAY, WILLIAM, of Newark, N. J.
SCHWARTZ, RUSSELL W., of 326 North Ninth Street, Allentown, Pa., fireman of the Philadelphia express; fractured leg and internal injuries; condition critical.
STUART, ELIZABETH, Twenty-eighth Street, Bayonne, N. J.
VAIL, RUSSELL, of 326 East Sixth Street, Plainfield, N. J.

With the testimony of scores of witnesses that the signal was set against the speeding express while the local was crossing the main line, none of the officials of the Central Railroad of New Jersey was able to explain last night how the engineer could have failed to see the signal with a quarter of a mile of straight track ahead of him. His fireman, the only other man who might be able to explain why Sells ran his train full speed to disaster, is in a critical condition in the Elizabeth General Hospital. No railroad man or other witness among hundreds who saw the accident has denied that the danger signal was set.

Heart Disease Theory Advanced.

A statement issued last night by the officials of the railroad said that "the cause of the wreck was a disregard of a positive stop signal," and then told of the long years of service of Sells. An examination will be made by physicians to determine whether the hand that held the throttle already was lifeless when the danger signal was set to stop the oncoming Flier until the local had cleared the main line. Some of Sells's associates think it probable that he died of heart disease.

The "Philadelphia Flier," made up of seven steel coaches and carrying hundreds of passengers, left the Jersey Central terminal at Communipaw at about 5:12 P. M. It makes no regular stop until it reaches Netherwood, near Plainfield, N. J., and unless a signal is set against it on the long stretch of straight track running through Elizabethport, the engineer usually holds his throttle open so that the express passes the junction at high speed.

Shortly before 5:40 yesterday afternoon, within a few minutes of the usual time for the Flier to dash by, the three-coach local running between Elizabeth and Newark on a connecting link line, pulled into the Elizabethport Station and discharged its passengers. Then, as usual, it started backing slowly around a "Y" piece of track so that it could reach the main line tracks and continue its trip to Elizabeth. The towerman in the structure near the station dropped his danger signal, so that the local would be protected from both directions as it crossed diagonally across the main line tracks.

Danger Signals Set.

The middle car of three in the local, all filled with passengers, was moving slowly across the main line track, when the passengers and scores of persons on the station platform saw the oncoming Flier speed over the Newark Bay Bridge. Some of them looked up at the tower signal; it glared red.

They turned their eyes quickly to the short straight stretch of open track that lay between the rushing express and the flimsy sides of the wooden cars of the local. The locomotive was rocking from side to side, and the exhaust was blowing smoke high in the air, as it came on at full speed. Railroad men on the station platform looked for the engineer to shut off steam and put on the air brakes, but the heavy train's speed did not slacken.

Looking from the side of his cab, Herman Hahn, engineer of the local train, saw the heavy express was rushing on. He made ready to back his train to safety if the engineer of the express did not slacken speed. His drive wheels spun and the local hesitated. He felt the sand, the drivers caught and the light coaches moved a little more swiftly.

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with the swift express only a hundred feet away. He opened the throttle again, the drivers spun again, and the last coach, then the coal tender, passed out of danger.

Both Boilers Explode.

When all but fifteen feet of the locomotive had cleared from the path of the express, the heavy locomotive of the express caught the front part of the local's engine, tore it from the rest of the train, and piled up in a twisted mass of steel. The boilers of both locomotives exploded and the windows in coaches, signal tower, nearby houses, and the railroad station were shattered.

Four of the heavy steel coaches were derailed. Then there was an outpouring of passengers who had watched the swift progress of the express train from the windows of the light coaches in the local train. Railroad men ran to aid those who had been injured in the wooden cars by the impact when the local locomotive was torn away, and to seek possible injured persons among the passengers of the Flier.

The wrecked locomotives blocked the four tracks of the Jersey Central main

line. Men delved into the debris trying to find the bodies of the three dead engineers, but the steam from the broken boilers and the heavy smoke from the fireboxes drove them away. The Elizabeth Fire Department was called to cool the hot mass of steel so the bodies might be taken from the wreckage.

Ambulances were called from the Elizabeth hospitals and eight persons were taken away, some of them suffering from serious hurts. One of those most seriously injured was the fireman of the Philadelphia Flier. The buckling of the cab of his locomotive hurled him into the air, and witnesses told of seeing him strike telegraph wires as he descended. He suffered a fracture of the leg and possible internal injuries. He was not able to tell his story of the wreck.

Traffic Delayed an Hour.

Adding to the confusion, scores of passengers from trains that were forced to stop on both sides of the spot left their coaches to see the wreckage. Ten trains from Jersey City were held up near the wreck and the traffic was delayed for more than an hour. Shifts of traffic to other lines were made, new trains were made up, and finally all passengers were able to proceed. Radiating from the junction are lines to Asbury Park and many other New Jersey towns and thousands of commuters and other passengers were late in reaching their homes.

Wrecking crews found the bodies of the two engineers shortly after they started to work. The body of Bradley of Dunellen, N. J., fireman on the local, was not recovered until late last night.

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