

October 16, 1912.

Accident on the Chicago, & North Western Railway
near Lyndhurst, Wis., on September 1, 1912.

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On September 1, 1912, there was a derailment on the Chicago & North Western Railway near Lyndhurst, Wis., which resulted in the death of the engineman, conductor, baggageman, brakeman, express messenger and one passenger, and the injury of six employees, three Pullman employees and sixty-two passengers. One mail clerk died afterwards of injuries received.

The train involved in this accident was southbound train No. 112. It was in charge of engineman Jones and conductor Bushey, and consisted of one combination mail and baggage car, one baggage car, one smoking car, one chair car, six Pullman sleeping cars, and Chicago & North Western business car No. 402, all of wooden construction, hauled by engine No. 70. Train No. 112 was bound for Chicago. It left Eland, Wis., its last stopping point, at 2:01 a. m., and was derailed at 2:34 a. m. when within one and one-half miles of Lyndhurst, a station 21 miles south of Eland. The engine and first seven cars were derailed. The combination car and the baggage car, in which latter car the conductor, brakeman, baggageman and express messenger were riding at the time, were badly damaged and telescoped, the roof being the only part of the baggage car left intact, while the mail end of the combination car was telescoped for a distance of about 25 feet. The vestibules, windows, and a few seats of the smoking car and chair car were damaged, while the three sleeping cars which were derailed were only slightly damaged.

This is a single track line, and at the point of derailment is straight in both directions for about 2 miles. The rails are 72-lbs. to the yard with about 18 ties under each rail, ballasted with about 18 inches of gravel. The grade is slightly descending for south-bound trains. Examination of the track showed that about 150 feet of the roadbed on the north side had been washed out, the washout extending to the middle of the track, while the track was torn up for a distance of about 300 feet. From the way the sand and gravel appeared and the manner in which the grass was matted down it was evident that there had been a very heavy downpour of rain.

Engineman Lund, of north-bound train No. 111, stated that his train passed the point of derailment at about 1:25 a. m. At that time he did not notice any water on the ground,

although he did not know whether or not water was running in the ditches. Between Pulaaki and Zackow, points 33 and 25 miles south of Lyndhurst, his train encountered a heavy down-pour of rain, and it rained all the way to Eland, 21 miles north of Lyndhurst. His train met train No. 112 at Eland. The engine crew of No. 112 asked him how the track was and he said all right.

Fireman Oregman, of train No. 112, stated that there had been more or less rain, but not hard enough at any time to cause alarm. North of Eland his train received an order advising them of a small washout near Spring Cut, a station also located north of Eland, but they had no orders relating to any track conditions south of Eland. At Bowler, nine miles from Lyndhurst, he noticed some water on the side tracks, but did not see any elsewhere; neither did he notice anything wrong with the track at any time. At Eland engineman Jones was advised by Assistant Superintendent Armstrong to be very careful and to use his own judgment as to speed. Fireman Oregman estimated that the speed at the time of the accident was about 35 miles per hour. The train was late at the time, but engineman Jones stated to him that he did not care to make up any of the lost time, being satisfied to maintain his running time.

As previously suggested, this accident was due to a washout, caused by sudden heavy rainfall. While the track was in condition to allow the passage of a train within about an hour of the time of the accident, it is evident that the heavy rain washed away the embankment between the time that train No. 111 passed and the time of the accident.

Had the two head cars been of all steel construction it is probable that the employees riding in them would not have been killed.