

DISASTER TO LIVERPOOL-LONDON EXPRESS

Derailed by a Luggage Barrow

A Liverpool-to-Euston express was wrecked as it approached the London area on Saturday by a luggage trolley which fell on the line in front of the engine. Nine people, including the driver and fireman, were killed.

Two passengers—Private James Tallett, of 30, Warren Road, Northampton, and Mr. Frederick Hopkins, of 49, Major Road, Stratford, London, E.—were killed instantly. Five of the injured passengers subsequently died in hospital. They were—

Mrs. G. Edwards, of 231, Green Lanes, London, N.

Mr. George James Wright, of 478, Loughboro Road, Birstall, Leicester.

Mrs. Mason, of 33, Golden Place, Kensington, London, W.

Mr. George William Plumb, of 95, Atheldene Road, Earsfield, London, S.W.

Mrs. Kathleen Foster, of Dagmar Terrace, Islington, London, N.

Six persons injured are still detained in hospital. It was stated that "most of them are in a very dangerous condition." They are—

Mr. Thomas Foster, Lorengo Street, Pentonville (husband of Mrs. Kathleen Foster).

Mr. Cecil Barnard, of Sunnyside, Great Wickhill, near Bletchley.

Mr. Charles Kelly, Townsend Court, London, N.W.

Lance Corporal Hugh Verral, Highly Manor, Balcombe, Sussex.

Private Joseph Ratcliffe, Woking.

Mr. R. Parsons, Eltham Hill, Eltham.

Lance Corporal Hughes was knocked unconscious and lay under one of the carriages for over an hour. On regaining consciousness he picked up his kit, complete with rifle, walked across the electric lines, and climbed a fence into a roadway. While walking along the road he collapsed, and was taken to hospital suffering from shock and bruises.

"CHANCE IN A MILLION"

It was a "chance in a million" accident. The driver appears to have seen the obstruction and to have applied his brakes. The express, however, was travelling fast and, almost in a flash, the locomotive had hurled itself upon the trolley to carry it forward on to some points. Here the trolley became wedged, and a moment later the engine reared up, turned over, and tried to bury its nose in the track. The tender was flung in another direction. The three coaches immediately behind it were telescoped and the remaining four derailed. Fifty yards of the track had been ripped up, and lengths of rail, twisted into fantastic shapes, tore through windows and doors as the coaches crashed over.

The railway staff and others on the station through which the express had just passed rushed to the rescue, and in a few minutes were joined by A.R.P. wardens, demolition squads, first-aid nurses, and members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. They tore at the wreckage to extricate a number of women with babies and young children in the front part of the train while awaiting the arrival of ambulances.

In the midst of their labours came the familiar drone of Nazi warplanes

followed by anti-aircraft gunfire. But the risk of falling bombs and of flying shrapnel was no deterrent to the work of rescuing the trapped passengers.

RESCUERS' STORIES

Residents whose houses back on the railway told a reporter that they thought a land mine had dropped on the station. "No words could possibly describe the noise that was made," said Mr. Dye. "There was a deafening crash followed by screams."

People living a mile or more from the station heard the crash. Mrs. Thorn said: "My daughter Pat and I made tea for the passengers. Some were lying in the signal-box seriously injured and others who were trapped were moaning. When I tried to give an injured soldier a sip of tea he said: 'Tell my mother and sister I shall be all right.' That young fellow died shortly afterwards."

Railwaymen, guards, ticket-collectors, porters, and members of the local A.R.P. services laboured all night clearing away some of the wreckage.

"The A.R.P. were bricks," said a porter. "They did all that was humanly possible. Some of them made tea for us while others helped us to clear up the mess on the platform and lines."

A warden who rescued a number of passengers told a reporter: "During the rescue operations we had to dive under railway carriages once or twice to take cover from flying shrapnel. The whole time we were falling over twisted metal and wading about in two inches of water which had come from a damaged water column by the side of the track. We bumped several times into rails that had pierced the carriages and we also had to be careful of broken glass which was strewn all over the platform. Sleepers were chopped up like firewood."

Lord Stamp, chairman of the L.M.S., and other officials visited the scene of the crash yesterday.

MANCHESTER EXPRESS ACCIDENT RECALLED

The accident recalls a disaster, caused also by a luggage barrow, which happened at Wellingborough in September, 1898, to the Manchester express which left St. Pancras at 6.45. Some boys were playing with the barrow on the Wellingborough platform and it fell on the line in front of the express. The engine carried the barrow to a crossing, where it caught in the points and the train was derailed. Four people were killed and many injured.