

**Pennsylvania Railroad's *The UNION*
Westbound Consist from Cincinnati to Chicago
on Monday, January 27, 1947**

Sometime in the mid-70s, I found a 1970 publication listing **Passenger Train Consists of the 1940s**. I skimmed through it, but had little interest in B&O, NYC, Santa Fe or Union Pacific consists and I started to put it back down. One lasting moment changed everything. I started from the back and started quickly flipping the pages until I skipped right by a PRR listing. I went back and couldn't believe what I'd found. It was the consist of PRR's *The UNION* passenger train for the westbound section from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Chicago. That train had to pass through Elwood. And that's only the beginning.

Passenger Train Consists of the 1940s Paperback – January 1, 1970

by [Robert J. Wayner](#) (Editor) / The library has a copy.

It was **Monday, January 27, 1947** . . . when the Pennsylvania Railroad's *The UNION* passenger train stopped in **ELWOOD** on its way westbound/northbound from **Cincinnati** to **Chicago**.

The consist for *The UNION* that day was:

PRR 5377	4-6-2 K4 Steam Locomotive
PRR 6264	Baggage-Express Car
PRR 4393	Coach
PRR 3207	Coach
COURIER	Parlor-Café Lounge Car
PRR 9862	Coach
PRR 4395	Coach
PRR 4467	Dining Car
LUCRETIA MOTT	Parlor Car (28 seats, 1 D.R.)

Marvin Crim – WLWHS 1957

*And **NOW** . . . the rest of the story . . . from the Kokomo Tribune / Elwood Call-Leader*

Walton, IN Train Wreck, Jan 1947

Submitted by Stu Beitler

<https://www.gendisasters.com/indiana/14891/walton-in-train-wreck-jan-1947?page=0,0>

4 DEAD 36 HURT IN WALTON TRAIN WRECK.

36 PERSONS HOSPITALIZED WITH INJURIES TO 19 LISTED AS SERIOUS; RAIL OFFICIALS AND POLICE SAY ROLL OF WIRE ON TRACKS CAUSED CRASH; FBI STARTS INVESTIGATION.

Walton, Ind., Jan. 28. -- Four persons, two of them from Kokomo, were killed, and almost a score injured when the Pennsylvania railroad's "Union" passenger train, bound north from Cincinnati to Chicago, struck a bale of fencing wire and piled up here Monday night about 6 o'clock.

Conflicting reports were that from 16 to 20 persons were injured and as many as 36 hospitalized, some for only minor scratches and bruises. The engineer, N. J. LAMARTINE, 61, of Richmond, was one of the most seriously injured. He suffered a cut over the eye and a sprained back, with possible internal injuries. Caught in the wreckage of the engine cab, he heroically directed the work of rescuers in cutting pipes to free him. He was taken to the St. Joseph hospital in Logansport, but it was believed his condition was not critical.

Four cars of the eight-car train were thrown crossways of the rails, two others were derailed, and the engine was turned completely around and hurled over on its side. It was the worst railroad accident in the Kokomo area in 40 years or more.

Railroad men estimated that the train was traveling about 80 miles an hour. Engineer LAMARTINE said he didn't know what caused the wreck but that he felt a sudden bump as the train reached the southeast outskirts of Walton.

This, it is believed, was the roll of wire fence which had fallen on the rails from a storage pile alongside the track, or had been placed there.

LAMARTINE said he threw on the air brakes immediately and the engine turned over soon afterward.

It appeared that the bale of wire had been caught by the engine and carried down the track to a switch. The roll of wire, about two feet wide and containing some pipe, weighted about 400 pounds. The train pushed it a short distance down the track and then the wire jammed into the switch. There was one story that thieves might have been in the act of stealing the bale of wire and that it fell off their truck as the train approached.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Indiana state police opened an investigation of this report today.

State Police Lieut. John R. Fisher and A. F. McIntyre, Pennsylvania superintendent, said the roll of wire was found jammed into the switch. Fisher said, "This couldn't have been an accident. It was either sabotage or larceny. Someone either placed the wire on the track or it caught there while they were trying to steal it."

With the brakes slammed on, the fast-moving train screeched through the full length of town and when it reached the northwest edge of town the engine leaped the track. The big locomotive was torn loose from the train, reversed its direction and toppled over on its side before coming to a stop.

The other cars careened wildly, one of them crashing into the Farmers Grain elevator alongside the track. The baggage car and three passenger coaches piled up in the wake of the locomotive. Great sections of the track were ripped up, and the cab was torn off and smashed.

The baggage car, which was first in line behind the engine, was ripped into shreds and was a shambles. Part of it hung grotesquely in the air and baggage tumbled out of it and onto the tops of the other cars.

The next car, in which the three passengers were killed, was crushed at the rear end, the victims all having been sitting in that part of the coach. The three other coaches ploughed into each other, two of them hurtling diagonally across the track in a jackknife shape. One car was jammed with terrific force under the baggage coach and under a part of the engine tender. Another coach crashed into the Farmers elevator, smashing into two carloads of grain that were standing on a side track and tearing a great hole in the elevator wall. The 80-foot elevator was moved six inches on its foundation.

The grain -- 1,500 bushels of corn and 4,000 bushels of oats -- tumbled out in a big spill. D. E. Fitzer, elevator manager, said most of the grain could be saved.

Some of the coaches were shorn from their wheels, and the scene was one of havoc.

MISS KINGERY and PISCHKE, who had been friends for some years, were crushed in the wreckage and ground in cinders of the road bed.

PERKINSON, who also was in the first coach behind the baggage car, was buried in the wreckage and it was several hours after the wreck before his body was removed. Rescue workers used acetylene torches to get the body out of the tangled steel and debris.

The third and fourth cars, which were day coaches, crisscrossed the rails, but no one was seriously hurt in either of them. The fifth and sixth cars were derailed, but remained upright on the right-of-way. The seventh car was the diner and it and the last car, a chair coach, remained on the track. Residents in this town of 800 persons rushed to the track and then hurriedly summoned ambulances from Kokomo, Logansport and Peru. Three of the injured were brought to the St. Joseph hospital in Kokomo.

There was little panic at the scene. The injured waited patiently for medical attention, and passengers who were unhurt filed out of the coaches in orderly fashion.

Walton residents and passengers on the train said there was a heavy thud as the coaches piled into each other. Eyewitnesses told of sparks flying from the engine as the brakes were applied.

The train, which formerly left Kokomo at 5:19 p.m. had been changed to a new time schedule, and pulled out of Kokomo at 5:45 on time.

MISS KINGERY and PISCHKE were going to Logansport where PISCHKE operated a night club known as the Logan club and where MISS KINGERY was said to have been in charge of the hat check room.

MISS KINGERY'S body was removed to the Wolf mortuary in Walton and PISCHKE'S body was taken to the Case-Miller funeral home in Logansport. MISS KINGERY was reported survived by her mother, Mrs. Mabel Kingery of Greentown, and two half-sisters, Dorothy Scherer of Kokomo and Mrs. Russell Dean of Indianapolis. PISCHKE'S survivors were reported to be his widow, who lives in South Bend, and a son in Washington, D.C.

MISS KINGERY and PISCHKE had met at the Hotel Frances and then had gone to the Pennsylvania railroad station to take the train. PISCHKE, it was said, had decided to make the trip by rail instead of by automobile because of the fact that his car was in a garage undergoing repairs.

The Casualties.

The Dead:

MISS KATHRYN MARIE KINGERY, 25, 210 West Taylor Street, Kokomo.

WALTER PISCHKE, 45, 611 West Defenbaugh Street, Kokomo.

C. A. WISLER, 700 1/2 Main Street, Richmond, Ind., fireman.

H. G. PERKINSON, 2029 Madison Avenue, Anderson, Ind.

The Injured:

Injured at Cass County Hospital, Logansport, Ind.

HAROLD McDANIEL, Liberty, Ind.

MRS. J. R. KING, Silver Lake, Ind.

DONALD C. ROWE, Longansport.

ALLEN TERHUNE, 65, Richmond, conductor.

THOMAS HACKMAN, 24, Cincinnati, student at Notre Dame, injuries "probably serious."

MRS. WILLIAM KNEPPER, Logansport.

MRS. W. O. HILL, Chicago.

MR. and MRS. A. C. MILLER, Chicago.

Injured at St. Joseph's Hospital, Logansport.

N. J. LAMARTINE, Richmond, Ind., engineer.

GEORGE CAULKINS, Richmond, Ind., brakeman.

Sgt. KENNETH SHANNON, Anderson, Ind.
WILLIAM LORCH, 31, Xenia, O.
MRS. DORIS COLENS, 48, Richmond.
Pvt. RUSSELL SHOWALTER, Fort Sheridan, Ill.
MRS. DOROTHY COENS, Richmond, Ind., a nurse.
CELESTYNE WEBSTER, nurse, Cook County Hospital, Chicago.
MRS. DAISY SCOTT, Chicago.
WILLIAM LARCH, Dallas City, Ill.
Injured treated and released from St. Joseph Hospital, Kokomo:
MRS. MERLE COULSON, 25, Logansport, Ind.
Pvt. ANDRE C. KERINUK, 19, Newport, Ky.
WILLIS DISHNER, 27, Brookville, Ohio.
Injured at Miami County Hospital, Peru, Ind.:
EDITH CECILIA SWEAT, Logansport.
Others who were injured slightly but released after treatment included:
PERRY HOLLOWAY, Chicago, cook on train.
GERHARD DRAP, Connersville, Ind.
J. R. WILSON, Loveland, O.
H. G. DOUGHERTY, Hamilton, O.
W. W. HODGE, Louisville, Ky.
MARY ALBERS, Nautika, Calif.
CLARENCE and MINNETA ALDRED, Yakima, Wash.
MRS. O. C. ATWOOD, Anderson, Ind.
MRS. MARK BROWN, Wilmette, Ill.
MRS. PEARL WILLIAMS, New Castle, Ind.
MRS. E. R. BROOKS, Dayton, O.
D. V. SMITH, Chicago.
R. D. WILLHITE, Anderson, Ind.
MR. and MRS. J. I. DIXON, Chicago.

Kokomo Tribune Indiana 1947-01-28

A) Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society:

Jan. 27, 1947 Passenger train derailed at Walton, Ind., by wire coil placed on track by two boys; 6 killed; 20 injured. (NYT)

MY NOTE: Number of deaths should read **4**, not 6

http://www.prrths.com/newprrr_files/Hagley/PRR1947.pdf

B) And confirmed by the FBI / Kokomo Tribune . . . two young boys . . . and **4** deaths

The two boys were identified as Lysle Graves, 10, and Jack Sprinkles, 11. There were photos of both boys.

Kokomo Tribune
31 January 1947

Additional Notes: Thursday, 13 March 1947 – pg 14 - Elwood Call-Leader

Youth Wreckers Are Sent Away

Logansport, Ind. – (UP) –

Society has collected its debt from two young boys accused of causing a fatal train wreck, but the public may never know what happened to them.

...

Observers speculated that the boys may have been sent to a private or state home or institution to remain until they reach the age of 21.

My Notes:

- *Two of the four, believed to have died from being thrown to the roadbed in the accident, were actually scalded to death from steam leaking from the steam locomotive that had overturned.
- *The boys were identified in this Call-Leader account as 11-year-old Lysle Graves and 10-year-old Jack Sprinkle of Walton. Their ages were reported to be from 10 to 12 years old and were often reversed by the newspapers.
- *The line from Cincinnati to Chicago has always been considered an eastbound/westbound line by the railroad companies. Although often noted locally northbound and southbound, until abandoned in 1976, the railroads classified it as an eastbound/westbound route.
- *It's been confirmed; at the time of the Walton wreck, Lysle Graves was 11 and Jack Sprinkle was 10.

*Elwood Call-Leader / Tuesday, January 28, 1947

TRAIN WRECK KILLS 4 – NO ACCIDENT

Former Elwood Man Dies In Walton Crash

FBI Believes Wreck Sabotage Or Larceny

"Among those dead in the train crash at Walton last night was a former Elwood man, C. A. Whisler, now of Richmond." . . . "The former Elwood man was the fireman on the ill-fated train."

*Elwood Call-Leader / Tuesday, January 28, 1947

Tom Rood Is Relief Operator At Walton

Tom Rood, 18 years old, of [1606] South D Street, was called last night to the scene of the Walton train wreck, where he was to work as a relief operator. He will be in charge of the office in Walton during the emergency.

*Elwood Call-Leader / Thursday, January 30, 1947

<Front page photo from the train wreck>

Where A Former Elwood Man Died in Indiana Train Wreck

[PHOTO]

TWO WALTON YOUTHS, ages 11 and 12 years, have admitted putting the 175-pound bale of fence wire on the Pennsylvania railroad track which caused the train wreck that took the lives of four. In the wreck, C. A. Whisler, fireman on the ill-fated train, met his death. Mr. Whisler, who made his home in Richmond at the time of his death, was formerly of Elwood. Mr. Whisler's body lies in the above pictured wreckage of the train.

Column to the right of the photo:

Youths Admit Placing Wire Bale On Track

"Just Wanted To See What Would Happen"

*Additional news account and continued on Page 6

Marvin Crim – WLWHS 1957

Jamie Scott – Director / North Madison County Public Library System

PRRs The Union Wreck - 27 January 1947