

October 17, 1912.

Accident on the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis
& Omaha Railway near Hustler, Wis., on
September 2, 1912.

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On September 2, 1912, there was a derailment on the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway near Hustler, Wisconsin, which resulted in the death of the engineman, fireman, and a trespasser, and the injury of seven passengers, four employees and one mail clerk. This accident was reported by telegraph, and after an investigation the Chief Inspector of Safety Appliances reports as follows:

East-bound passenger train No. 10 was en route from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Chicago, Illinois. It consisted of one refrigerator car, one combination baggage and mail car, one baggage car, one coach, one chair car and one Pullman sleeping car, hauled by engine No. 372. This train passed Camp Douglas, the last station previous to the point of derailment, at 5:19 a.m., 24 minutes late, and was derailed at about 5:25 p.m., at bridge No. 34, which is about 2-1/2 miles beyond Camp Douglas and 1/2 mile west of Hustler.

When the train came to a stop the engine, tender and first three cars were piled up just across the bridge; the fourth car in the train, the coach, was carried several hundred feet down the stream, while the chair car and sleeping car did not cross the bridge and remained upright. After the passengers in the last two cars were out the bank gave way,

throwing the chair car over on its side at the bottom of the stream, while the sleeping car was left with one end hanging over the edge of the embankment. The engine, tender, and first three cars were all badly damaged, while the remaining three cars were more or less damaged. The speed of the train at the time was estimated at about 55 miles per hour.

This division of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railroad is a single track line. Approaching the scene of the accident from the west the track is straight for 1-1/2 miles. It is level and ballasted with gravel. The approach to bridge No. 34 is on a fill of sand and gravel, about 20 feet in height. Examination of the track showed that it was in good condition on each side of the bridge until within a few feet of the spans. The bridge itself had been washed out by water.

East-bound train No. 6 passed over this bridge within less than one hour of the time preceding the accident, and met west-bound train No. 13 at Tunnel, a station four miles beyond Hustler. At this point train No. 15 was being held until a report could be received from section men at Camp Douglas regarding the condition of the track. At 4:40 a.m. word was received that the track was all right, and train No. 15 left Tunnel at 4:50 a.m., passed over bridge No. 34 and met train No. 10 at Camp Douglas. It would, therefore, appear that train No. 15 passed over bridge No. 34 at about 5:00 a.m., less than 1/2 hour before the accident occurred.

The section foreman in charge of this section went on duty at 12:30 a.m., being called to go out over the track, and started over the section at 2:30 a.m., returning at about 4:30 a.m. On this trip he went under bridge No. 54 and examined each end of it, but found nothing wrong with the bank or abutments.

The weather had been very stormy during the night; but at the time of the accident it had stopped raining. Heavy rains caused the water to rise and to undermine the embankment and the abutments of the bridge, thus making them give way under the wrecked train, causing this accident.