



**Tragedy in Galt**

**The May 2, 1956 CP Rail Crash**

**Paul Langan**





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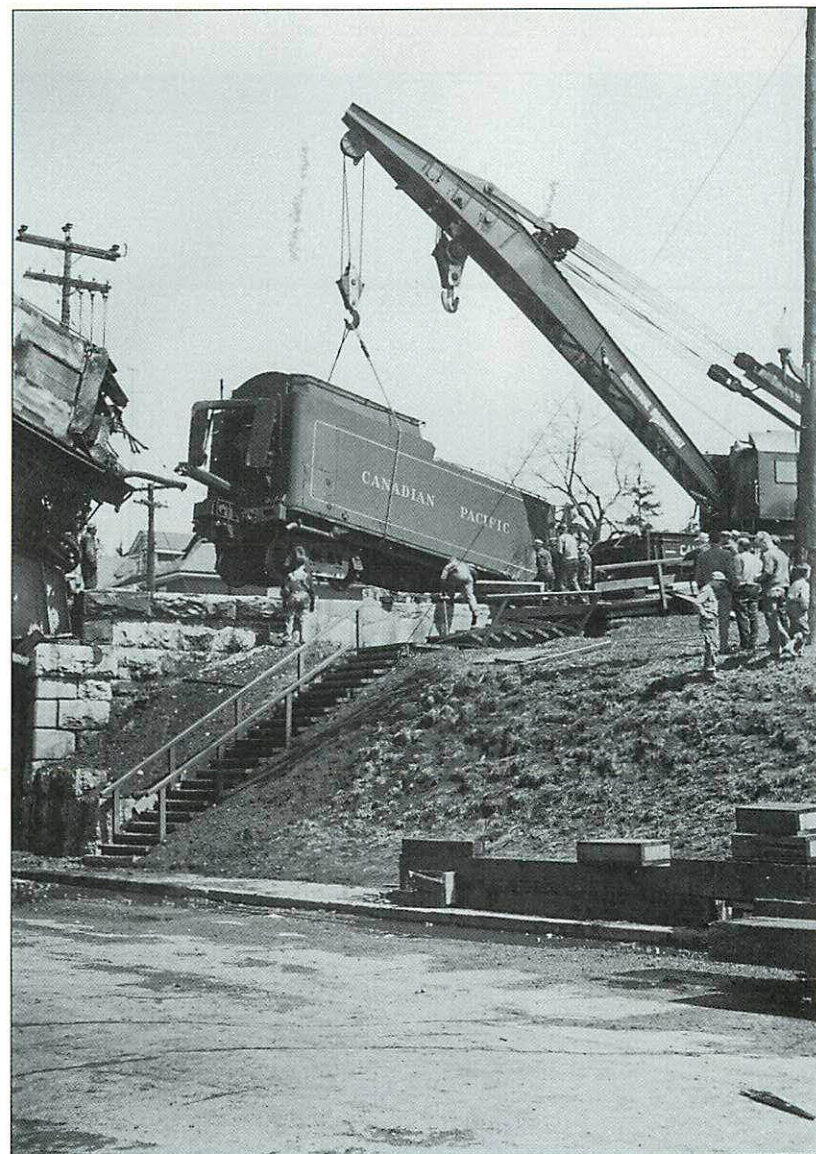
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Tragedy in Galt: The May 2,1956 CP Rail Accident

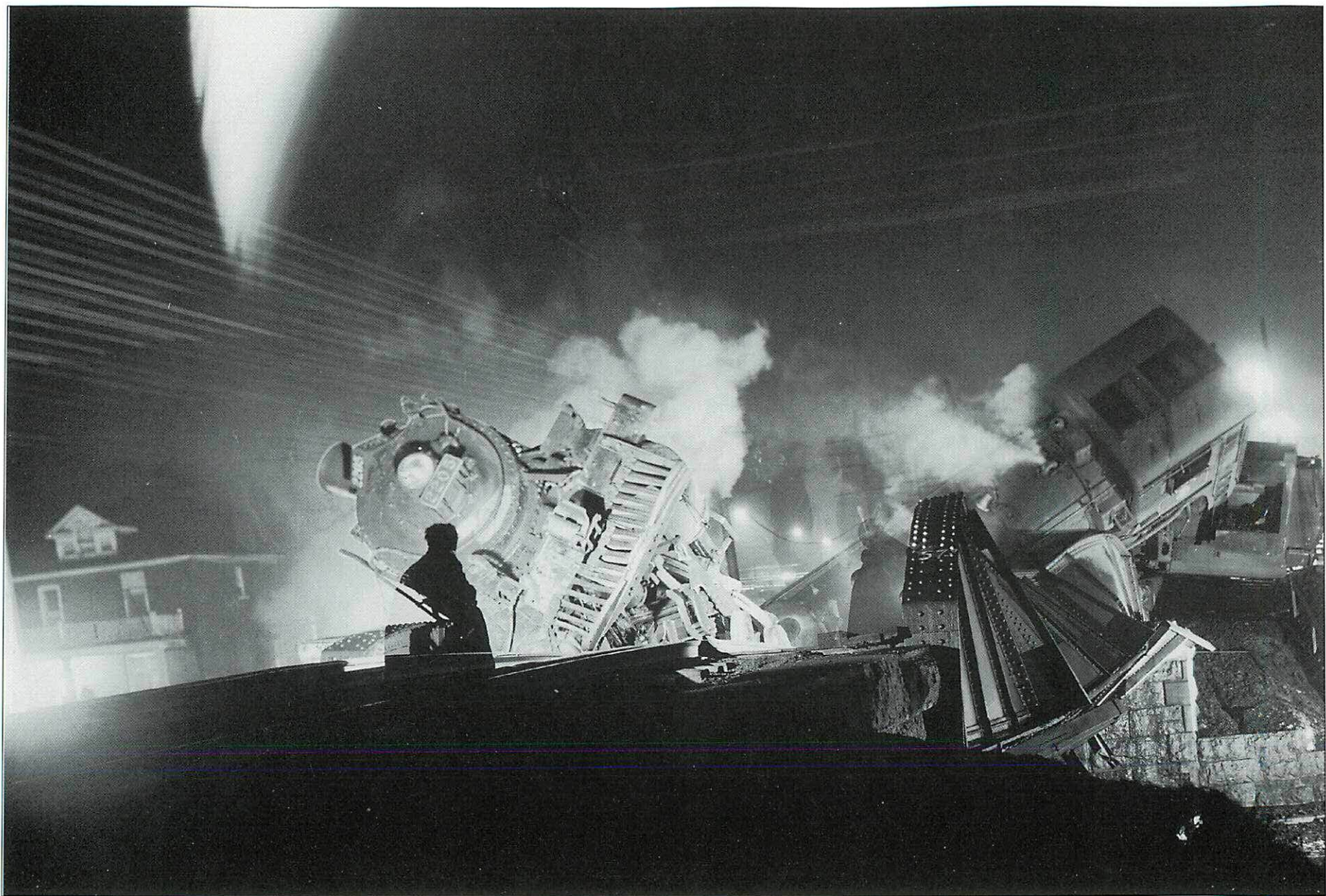
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## The Accident

On May 2nd, 1956 at 6:30pm, Canadian Pacific steam doubleheader "through" freight train #903 ( with engines # 2205 & 5420 ) left Toronto with 40 cars. It was heading for Windsor. It was two hours and thirty minutes late. After arriving at Guelph Junction, #903 was delayed one hour further. The train crew was Lead Locomotive Engineer William Palmer, Toronto; Fireman Henry Blocka, Toronto; Brakeman Tommy Watson; Galt, Second Locomotive Engineer George Nutkins, London; Fireman William Hopkins, London; and in the caboose were Brakeman Ronald Westworth, London and Conductor Jack Cowing, London.

At the Galt CPR station, extra or "slow" steam doubleheader train #5186 ( with engines #5607 & 5126 ) was in the siding. The slow freight had dropped off 14 cars in Galt. The train crew on train #5186 was Lead Engine Engineer William Hunter, Toronto; Fireman A.H. Holden, Toronto; Brakeman R. Gates, London; Second Locomotive Engineer Tim Ready, London; Fireman Jack Easby, London; and Conductor Gerry Rivard, London.

Through freight #903 had priority on the main line over extra freight #5186. Although the crew of #5186 knew that #903 was late they did not know the exact whereabouts of the through freight.

There were block signals at the east and west ends of the Galt yard. When through freight #903 entered the east end of the Guelph yard the lights were green to proceed. Meanwhile train #5186 was in the siding. Then train #5186 moved onto the mainline unaware of the oncoming freight #903.

Meanwhile in the Galt station, Dispatcher James Stewart noticed that the indicator had gone down in the office. This signalled that

freight #903 was in the yard. James ran out into the yard to warn the crew of #5186 to stay in the siding. Tragically his message was not understood. Through train #903 smashed into the back of box cars of train #5186. The impact of the crash caused the Canadian Pacific Railway overpass, a heavy steel-girdered bridge, to collapse onto Water Street, the two engines of #903 plunging to the street.

Noted in the Galt Reporter newspaper article of May 3rd, 1956: " In the terrific crash, which shook windows for a block, the two engines of the through train crumpled through the bridge. Several box cars, with the tender, splintered, reared over the bridge. Steam hissed out, while a boiler exploded with a roar. Coal from the crushed freight car was scattered over the Water Street pavement as far south as Front Street."

Inside the lead engine of #903 was engineer William Palmer. He sustained severe steam burns and died from being crushed. Brakeman *Tom Watson* from Galt was on his first paid run as a brakeman, was also killed instantly. Tom and his parents and brother lived two miles west of the crash scene and their family house was located about 100 yards from the C.P. R. tracks. Twenty year old Tom was about to swing his lantern to give the "highball" to his parents at their home, when the crash happened. (More information on the Watson family is in another chapter in his book.)

Although the crash occurred at May 2, 1956 at 10:30pm, it wasn't until 4:30am that the two bodies could be removed from the wreck.

Fireman Henry "Albert" Blocka of the lead engine jumped out of the engine and landed on the steps and rolled to the street. He was able to get up and escaped being crushed by the falling locomotives. He suffered broken ribs.







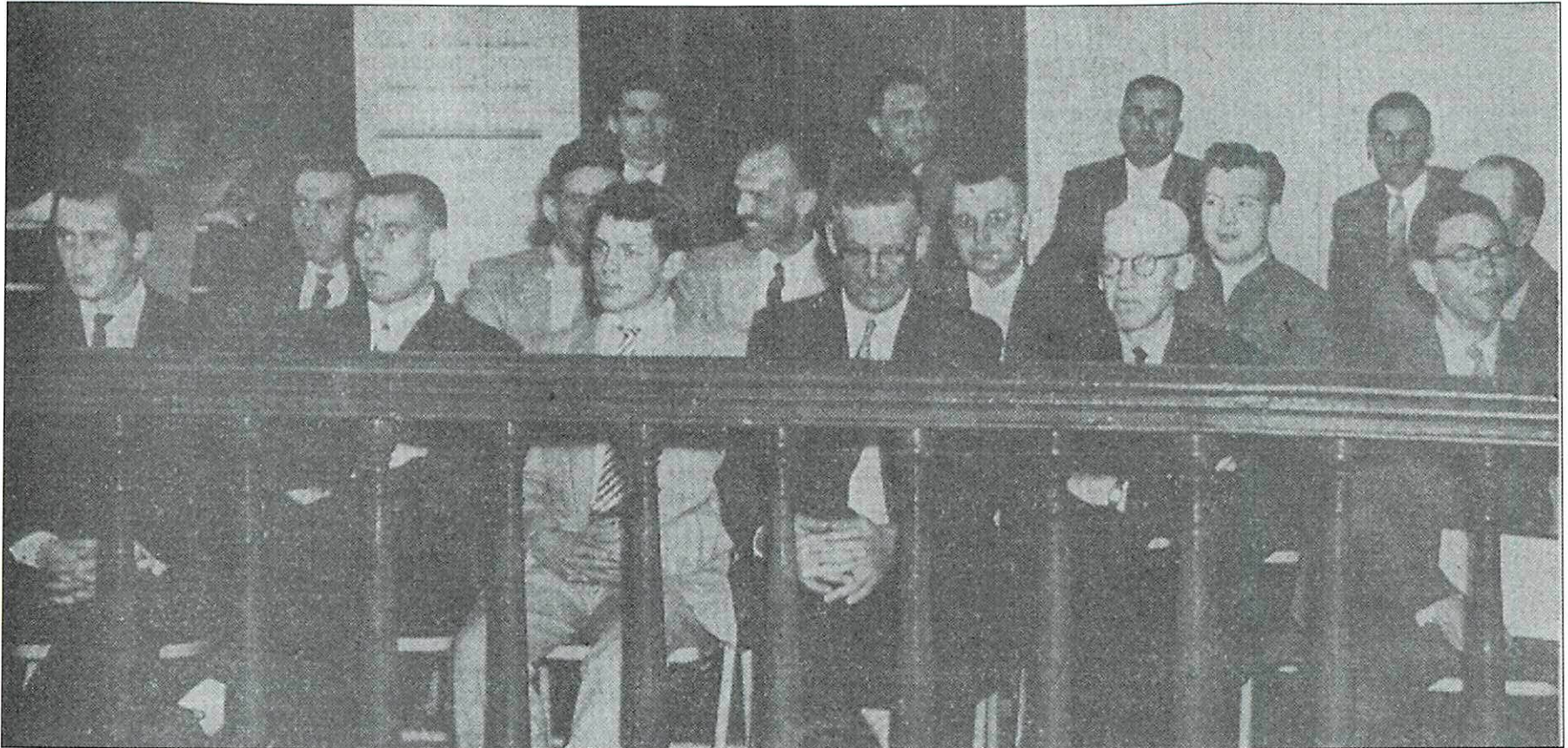
In the second engine of train #903 engineer, George Nutkins suffered critical injuries including broken wrists, a broken elbow, a broken back and extreme shock. The coroner asked his wife to come from London due to the severity of the injuries. Fortunately George Nutkins survived the crash and went on to become a supervisor with the C.P.R. He is still alive. He is recuperating in hospital from a recent illness and was unable to be interviewed for this book. Firemen of the Second Engine on #903, William Hopkins, was hospitalized for shock and unknown injuries.

The crash scene was besieged by hundreds of people as Galt citizens viewed the worst rail crash in their history. The carnage of twisted steel and steam from the locomotives was a sight few people would forget in their lifetime. In 1999, forty three years after the crash occurred, people who were at the crash site vividly remember the rail disaster.

Len Mills was a fireman for the Galt Fire Department and was one of the first people to arrive at the crash scene. His story is also located in this book.







Train Wreck Principals - Here are some members of the crews of the trains which collided in Galt the night of May 2. Front Row from left to right: Henry Blocka, Jack Easby, A. H. Olden, Herbert Hunter, Hartley Stewart, and the identity of the last person is unknown. Middle Row left to right: Gerry Rivard, Ronald Westworth, R. Gates, Jack Cowing the identity of the last two people are unknown. Back Row: Only the identity of the person on the far right is known. He is Tim Ready.



## THE INQUEST ( the following is a transcript of the Galt Reporter Article of May 17, 1956 on the Inquest of the May 2, 1956 Galt Rail Crash)

A combination of negligence and several other factors combined to cause the collision of a "slow" and "fast" freight train here the night of May 2, 1956, when two railroaders were killed.

This is the essence of a critical judgement rendered Wednesday afternoon by a jury probing the circumstances of the death of William Palmer, one of the victims. The other was youthful Tommy Watson of Galt. In addition to charging negligence on the part of the crew of the "extra" or "slow" freight, the jury under the chairmanship of Gordon S. Rouse, made certain recommendations designed to prevent a repetition.

Early in the hearing, Engineer William Hunter of Toronto testified that "if there is any responsibility for the accident, the responsibility is mine." The jury did not agree with Mr. Hunter in this view, its subsequent verdict revealed.

The jury held that the responsibility could not be attributed to any individual but, rather to "a combination of negligence on the part of the crew of the "extra" train, 5186, and lack of a proper system of communication with the station dispatcher."

The jury also expressed the view that "the traffic blocking signals are not visible for all areas of the Galt Railway yards. "We therefore recommend, "the jury asserted in its written judgement, "a closer system of communication between the train crews, especially in connection with "extra" train crews and during unusual circumstances of the moving extra trains."

"We also recommend the use of a red flag by the dispatcher in circumstances similar to those that occurred at this accident,

instead of taking a chance of someone not hearing, or misunderstanding an emergency order. We also recommend the installation of a better and closer blocking signal system within the Galt yard limits.

One of the highlights of the inquiry was the testimony of one of the witnesses that a split second before the crash, Engineer William Palmer realized the collision was imminent. "Jump, jump" he cried to his fellows in the cab. These were his last words. The next instant he was dead. Fireman Henry Blocka of Toronto did have time to jump but, although severely injured, lived to tell the story at the inquest Wednesday.

Veteran dispatcher James Hartley Stewart provided one of the other highlights when he narrated his efforts to prevent the "extra" from pulling onto the main line as the "fast" through freight was nearing its destiny with death and destruction.

"Don't move, don't move," Mr. Stewart cried repeatedly, as he ran toward the crew of the "extra" waving his arms. But, Mr. Stewart's words went unheeded, or unheard, for the "extra" pulled out and into the path of 903.

All witnesses were questioned by Crown- Attorney Harold Daufman of Kitchener, determined, apparently, to ferret out the real causes of the wreck. Once he demanded to know whether a witness would be able to offer a suggestion "which would give the public a guarantee the incident would not be repeated." Both trains were drawn by "double headers" or, in other words, two locomotives of different types. It was also brought out that the crew of the "extra" train had received no orders with respect to Galt and that it was "on its own upon arrival here." Testimony also showed that although the crew of the slow freight knew the fast freight was behind them, they has no idea of how far, or when it would arrive in Galt.







The jury personnel was as follows: Angus A. Ferguson, Fred Bendus, David Brayshaw, Alexander (Sandy) Leith and Gordon S. Rouse, foreman. Detective-Sergeant Allan Slidders was the coroner's constable. Presiding Coroner was Dr. Charles Gordon Powers, of Preston Photographer Glen Forbes identified the pictures which he had taken at the scene the night the collision occurred.

First member of either train crew to testify was Fireman Albert Blocka, a fireman on 903, the through freight. Still not fully recovered from injuries, he limped to the stand but declined a proffered chair.

Mr. Blocka said that he had been employed by the CPR for four and a half years. The through freight of which he was a crew member, had priority over all trains. The two who died in the crash, Mr. Palmer and Mr. Watson were in the cab of the lead engine of 903.

At the instant, Mr. Blocka had caught sight of the other train, he had also heard Engineer Palmer's warning to "jump, jump". He jumped and alighted on the steps at the end of the platform and rolled to the street. Then, he regained his feet and managed to escape being crushed by the falling engines as they plunged into Water Street. He believed, he testified, Brakeman Watson was "giving a highball" with a lantern just before the impact.

Conductor Jack Cowing of London, who was in charge of the fast through freight said he was sitting in the caboose when the train came to a jolting stop, after prolonged application of the brakes.

"When we reached Guelph junction" he said, "we were on time but we lost an hour there."

"Then you were hurrying to make up time," suggested Crown Attorney Harold Daufman. "No," the witness disagreed, "you can do

no better than the time table schedule on the run." Long experience in railroading would enable him to estimate the speed of the run even while riding in the caboose. Mr. Cowing stated that the distance of 18 miles between Galt and Guelph Junction had been covered in the interim of 9:05 and 9:35pm. After Engineer Hunter had showed a willingness to accept responsibility for the crash, Crown Attorney Daufman asked: "Why do you say that?" Because I did not go to the station operator to ask the whereabouts of 903," replied the engineer. Mr. Hunter then said it was customary railroad practice to rely on the brakeman to perform this duty, "but he the (brakeman) was not there."

"I moved my engine onto the main line after it had been uncoupled," Mr. Hunter continued, but was interrupted by the Crown. "Why wouldn't the engineer of the second locomotive be responsible?" pressed Mr. Daufman. "Because he would assume that everything was okay," was the reply. "Surely railroads aren't operated on the basis of assumptions," suggested Mr. Daufman.

"We've had close shaves in the Galt yards before but nothing like this," Dispatcher James Hartley Stewart told the coroner and jury. Mr. Stewart is a veteran railroader with 30 years of experience.

"When the indicator went down in the office, I asked the operator whether it was 903, and he replied "yes". I ran to the siding and yelled to the crew of the extra: "Don't move, don't move. "







"How close were you to the crew of 5186 ?" the Crown asked. "About 30 feet," Mr. Stewart said. When Conductor Cowing was asked how it is possible to check positions of various trains, the reply was by telephone. There were three such phones between Galt and Toronto he said. "Did you check on one of these phones?" the Crown asked. "No", replied Mr. Cowing, "the onus was on the inferior train (5186) to check."

He added that the indicator in the station office would "show the train out of Killalea" and the operator would know 903 was coming through because 5186 was already in the siding.

Fireman William Hopkins, who was on the second engine of 903, said he thought he saw something on the bridge, but the visibility at this point is poor because of the curvature of the tracks. "I hollered to my mate, George Nutkins to look but the air was gone. " This was attributed to the fact that the brakes had already been applied by Engineer Palmer on the first engine.

Rear Trainman Ronald Westworth, London, agreed with his conductor that 903 had not made up time between Guelph and Galt. He added that the "order board board is on the left but you have to be on the right side to see it because of the curvature of the tracks." Mr. Westworth stated that he did not realize there had been an accident until he had moved to the front of the train.

At the request of the Crown, Timothy Ready, London, the engineer of the second engine on the slow freight, was granted protection of the court. Mr. Ready said the crew of his train had "no orders with respect to Galt." Instructions to drop off certain cars here "had been a message." He also said his crew would not know that 903 had been held up in Guelph.

"When you got to Galt then, you were on your own," suggested the Crown. "Yes," replied the witness.

Answering further questions, he said there are block signals at the East and West ends of the yards. "We had to push off the lead engine onto the main line," he said. "We could see him moving."

"There are no signals to control movements at this point," Mr. Ready said, "The signal for us was green." "How do you know when to move or stop?" pressed Mr. Daufman.

"That's hard to answer. I don't know how to answer it," was the response after considerable reflection. "What guarantee can we give to the public that this won't happen again?" Mr. Daufman continued. And what would you do to avoid a similar incident if you came through next week?" Witness did not reply. "I didn't know it was there" witness said. "Did you look?"

"No. Another thing - my vision was restricted."

"What you are saying is that you were driving blind," commented Mr. Daufman. "Do you blame the brakeman?"

"I won't say the brakeman was to blame," Mr. Ready said. "If he had got a red signal he would have known something was wrong."

"How did you get your instructions to drop off cars at Galt," Jury Foreman Rouse asked. "By message " was the answer.

A. H. Holden, from Toronto, the youthful fireman on one of the "extra" engines said he had been employed by the railroad for two years. "Suppose your engineer had a heart attack what would you do," asked the Crown. "Put on the brakes," Mr. Holden replied.







Recalled to the stand following Dispatcher Stewart's evidence, Mr. Holden said: "Yes, I did think it unusual when Mr. Stewart came running out and hollering." He was replying to a question by Mr. Daufman. "But" Mr. Holden added, "I thought he was saying that 903 was on our tail."

He had been a fireman since March 28. "How much training are you given?" asked the Crown. "Well, we had six trial runs," witness said.

Other witnesses agreed the "fast" freight had the "green" all the way through Galt.

R. Gates, London brakeman of the "slow" freight said 14 cars were dropped off at Galt. He gave the signal to proceed to the engineers and presumed both has seen it. He said one of the engineers has handed him a "list " a said "cut me off." (Uncouple engines) "Then, I opened the switch and the signal to proceed. Then the engine moved onto the main line."

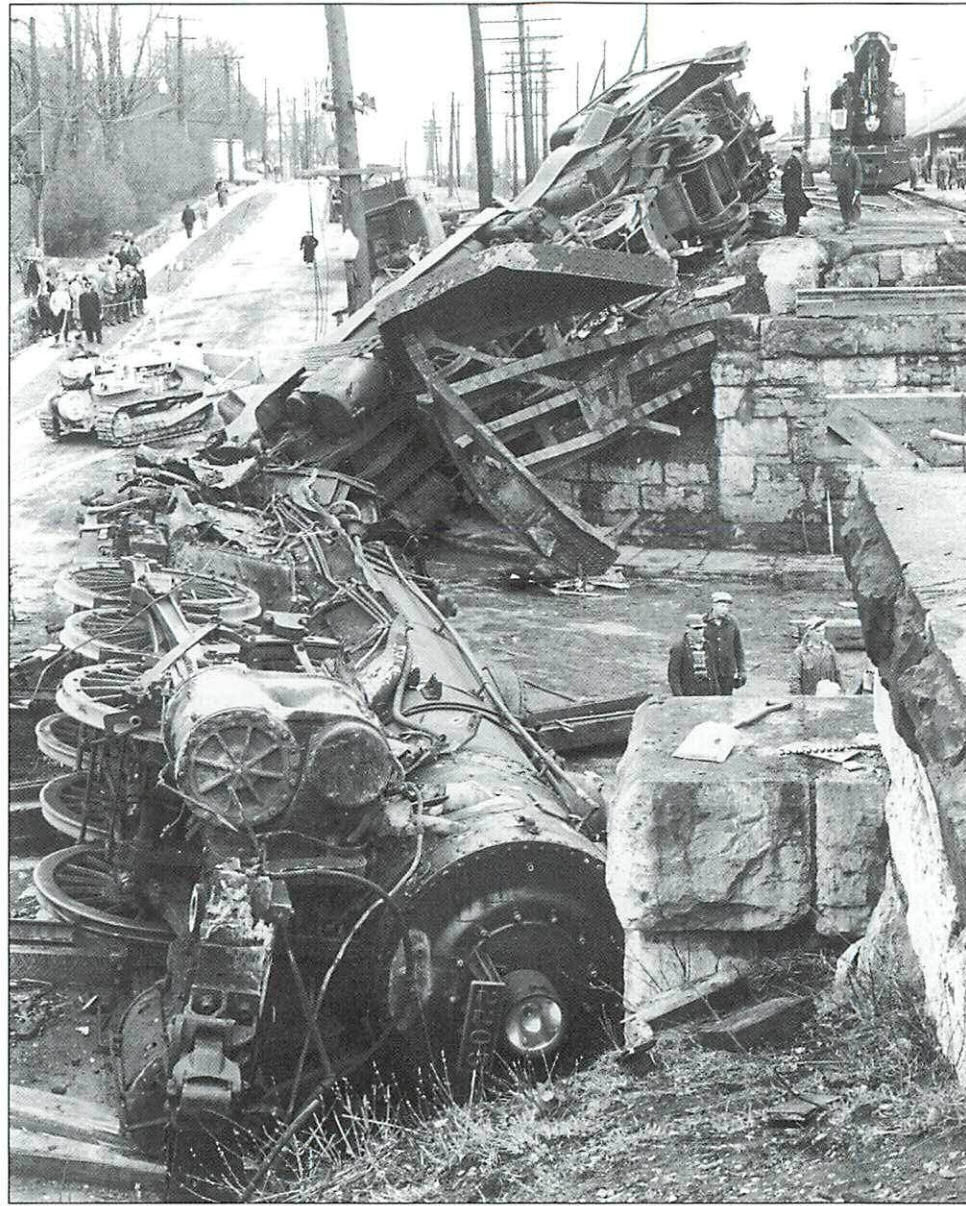
"I could see half way to Bond street and the Galt station, " witness said. He added that he had seen the crash occur and two crew members flying through the air. Then the freight cars started to topple, so the witness had "taken off down the slope."

Fireman J. Easby stood mute when the Crown asked if he knew how this accident could happen?

After asking whether any of those present could throw any further light on the subject, the Crown suggested to the Coroner that the jury be permitted to retire. The inquiry lasted four hours. The jury brought in its verdict after deliberating about 45 minutes.









**Len Mills' Story** - (the following article originally appeared in the Cambridge Reporter on May 2, 1996 . I also interviewed Len in June 1999. Below is Len's version of that fateful night)

In May, 1996, my daughter Nancy, will be 40 years old. This brings back memories of around the time she was about to arrive in this world. I was 21 years old and had just started a new job on May 1, 1956 as a probationary firefighter with the Galt Fire Department.

I was assigned to the night shift which caused some concern to me because Nancy was to arrive at any time.

The first night ( May 1) was uneventful with no fire calls. The second night (May 2) would be a much different story. The shift that night consisted of Capt. Fred Slee, Lt. Bob Murphy, firefighters Jack Plumridge, Ken Walker, Tom Mercer, Alex Nicoll and myself.

I remember feeling the building shake for a second around 10 p.m. Capt. Slee and I both wondered what it was. At 10:02 p.m., the second call of the night came in. A boxcar was on fire on the CPR bridge. To all of us, this meant the large bridge over the Grand River.

As we came to the top of the Water Street hill, the scene was something I will never forget as long as I live.

The bridge over Water Street had collapsed and was down on the street. A large steam locomotive was lying on its side. Hot burning coals had spilled onto the street and a bright red glow was reflecting up on the large volumes of escaping steam from the ill-fated locomotive, producing what looked like a giant fire.

Over on the right side on the sidewalk, an injured crewman lay, calling for help. Fred Slee and I ran over to him. He said "leave me

here and get out—that engine is going to blow up. " We knew we had to get him out of there fast. His injuries looked like he may have had a broken back. We needed to put him on a backboard.

I ran to the nearest house and ripped the door off their back shed. Don't ask me how I did it. but in a few seconds I was back with the make-shift backboard and we carefully removed the injured trainman to safety.

We kept telling ourselves the engine would not blow up as long as the steam was escaping in large volumes. Thinking back later, we were very lucky.

At about that time, Fire Chief Walter Scott arrived on the scene and began piecing together what had happened.

A slow-moving train was pulling out of the station onto the main track. A second fast-moving train was proceeding west on the same main track. They collided on the Water Street bridge, collapsing the bridge and sending steam locomotives down each side of the east bridge embankment. This meant there were two more locomotives on the other side of the wreckage that we had not seen yet.

Chief Scott asked me to get over to the other side (north) and give him a report. It meant climbing up and over the west embankment and down the other side.

As I proceeded towards the embankment someone in the crowd called to me that he had witnessed an automobile proceeding north on Water Street just as the bridge collapsed. He said, " I don't think the car made it through in time."

As I arrived on the north side of the wreck, I was met with another scene right out of a war movie. Two large locomotives were lying on



their sides, one on the road and one down the embankment on Samuelson Street.

Equipped with a hand lantern, I climbed up the side of the second engine, knowing what I would probably find inside. No one could survive such a terrible accident. My worst suspicions proved correct. Inside the cab of the engine was a scene imprinted in my mind for life. Two trainmen lay dead.

As I began my descent back down the side of the engine, there stood another member of the train crew who was about to start climbing up. I said, "You cannot come up here." He stated, "I have to get in there and get my buddy out." I then told him everyone in there was dead.

"There is nothing you can do now and I can't let you in there." He did not comprehend anything I said and kept coming toward me, saying over and over, "I have to get my buddy out."

I knew I had to do whatever I could to stop this determined young man from seeing what I had just seen.

I tried pushing him back and we both fell to the street below. Again he started for the cab of the engine. He seemed to have extraordinary strength. This time, he was not getting by me, I hit him with everything I had. As his knees started to buckle, I slid my arms under his to hold him upright.

Over to my left I saw a police officer (Lloyd Bender) and called out to him for help. Lloyd and another officer rushed over and took charge of the young trainman. "What happened to him?" Lloyd asked. "I don't know," I said. "He seems very weak."

"We will take care of him—he will be okay in a few minutes."

"Thanks,!" I said.

We learned later that one of the dead crew was a young man named Watson. I had known him some years before at GCI and VS. This was also his first night on the job. His father (also a railroader) lived across the Grand River and as the train crossed the CPR bridge, young Mr. Watson was to "highball" his dad.

CPR rules stated Mr. Watson was to leave the engine at Guelph Junction and proceed to the caboose to eat his lunch. He asked his replacement if he could wait until Ayr to switch and he agreed. Thus, Mr. Watson was killed instead of his replacement. This was the man I had just hit.

As I made my way back to the south side to make my gruesome report to Chief Scott, it suddenly dawned on me what had just happened. I had just struck a private citizen and a member of the train crew. I became very scared. I was there on probation, on the job just two days. The man was sure to complain to the police who were escorting him away from the accident scene. All I could think of was, I will be fired in the morning.

Once over the embankment and down the other side I came face to face with Ken Walker, "What's wrong with you?" He said. "You're as white as a ghost."

"I'm okay. I just found two train crew dead, but I am really worried about the baby coming. They tell me the rear of the train is blocking Dundas Street and with Water Street closed as well, how could get a taxi to the hospital?"

Ken just smiled and said, "Don't worry Len, they will go by Beverly Street and get around the end of the train on Samuelson."



"Of course," I said. "I'm worried for nothing." I did not tell him my real worry, that I would probably be unemployed in the morning.

We spent the remainder of the night searching for other victims and the car that was supposed to be under the downed bridge and wreckage. Luckily no vehicle was found.

No one ever mentioned the trainman I had "socked." In all the reports that followed, not a word was ever printed as I watched the Galt Reporter each day for a story on how a trainman got "slugged" trying to reach his buddy. That is to say, until a couple of years later when a strange event happened.

My neighbor had invited me over one Christmas Eve for a glass of cheer. I was introduced to his son, Ronald Westworth who was visiting from Lucan. He was a railroader.

We chatted about railroading for a while, then he asked me what I did for a living. "Oh, I am a firefighter with the Galt Fire Department." A strange look came over his face. He said, "There is a guy on your department and if I ever meet up with him I am going to knock his block off."

"Why, what happened?" I asked.

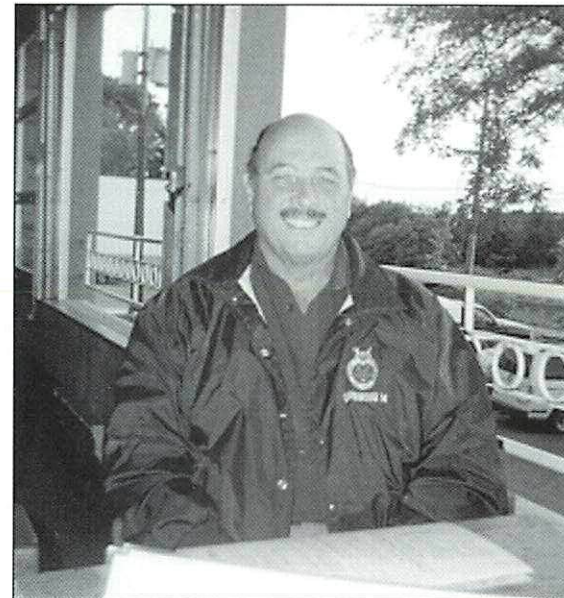
"I was involved with a train wreck a couple of years ago and one of the firefighters hit me when I tried to get into the wreck to find my buddy. I had better not ever meet up with this guy."

"Well," I said, "I'm your man. Take your best shot. But first let me tell you, I had to stop you from going in there at all costs and if I had to do it all over again, I would do the same thing again." Surprisingly, he smiled and said: "Yeah, I know. I was right out of it. I did not appreciate it at the time, but I guess you had to stop me

somehow." We shook hands and that was the end of it.

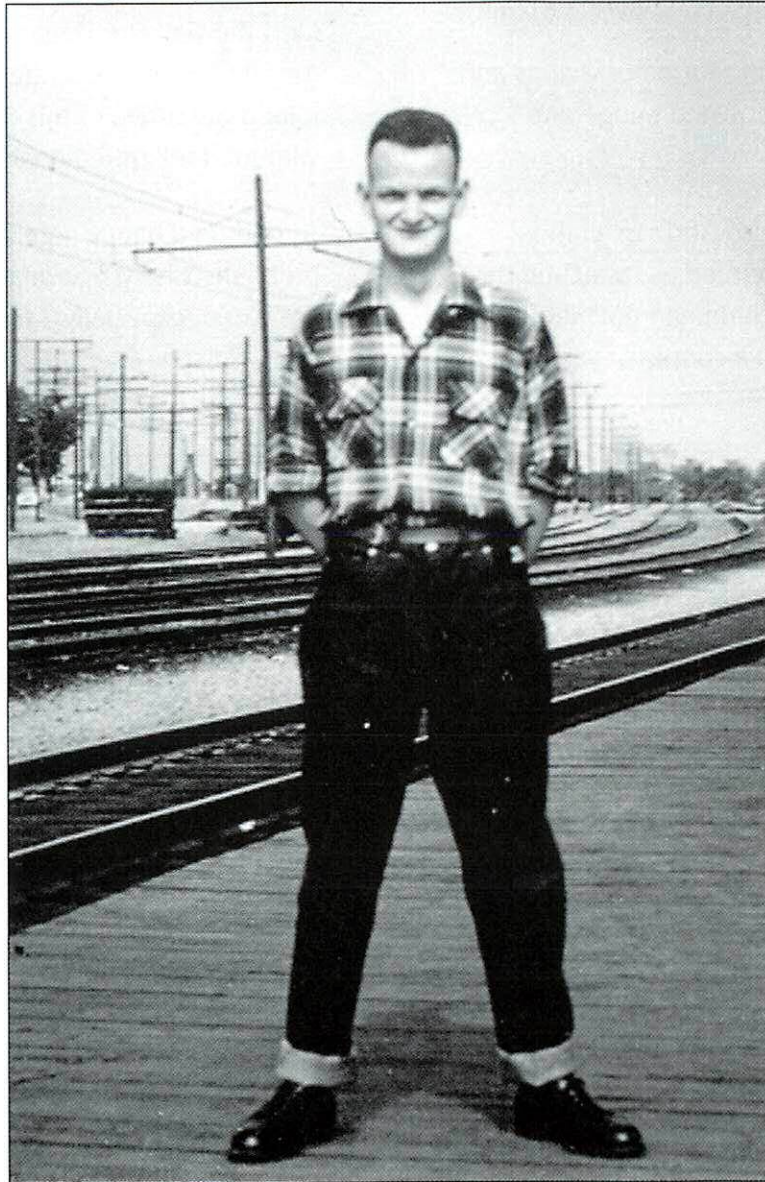
I left the Galt Fire Department in September 1972, and went to Arnprior as fire chief, then on to Barrie as deputy chief. In 1979, I joined the office of the Ontario Fire Marshal, retiring Jan. 31, 1995, with the rank of regional manager.

To end on a happy note, Nancy arrived on May 5, 1956, with no problems. She was a beautiful, very happy baby with not a worry in the world, especially a train wreck on the way to a hospital.



Len Mills 1999





Only Known Photo of Tom Watson



**THE WATSON FAMILY** - The death of 21 year old Tom Watson, on his first paid run as a brakeman, just moments before he was to give the "highball" to his proud parents was tragic. His father Alex and mother Hanna were waiting outside their home, located near the CPR tracks, on 160 Blenheim Rd. waiting to waive to their son. Fate played a cruel hand and within seconds of passing by his parents the rail crash at the Galt station ended his short life.

Tom Watson, was born in Toronto and had worked at the Galt station in the baggage room and as a spare brakeman for two years before the accident.

Alex Watson, born in Scotland, moved to Canada in 1911. He met Hanna his wife in Toronto and worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad for the railroad for 35 years, the last 12 years in Galt in signal maintenance. He worked out of the Dumfries CP station. He bought the station and moved to 160 Blenheim Rd. as the first family home on that site. The station was replaced by another home and finally a large white home stood at the site for a number of years. Eventually the Cambridge Fire Department burned down the abandoned home. All that remains at the site is the ruins of the wooden pump house from the Dumfries station.

All who knew Alex Watson say that he never fully recovered mentally from the loss of his son. Tragedy struck the Watson Family again when on Saturday morning, December 7, 1963 Alex allegedly committed suicide by walking in front of a CPR Dayliner train heading to Toronto south of the Roseville crossing near the Galt city limits. The Watson family home was adjacent to where Alex was killed. No inquest was held.

Hanna Watson was able to overcome the tragedy in her life and remained a part of the community until she died in January 1998.

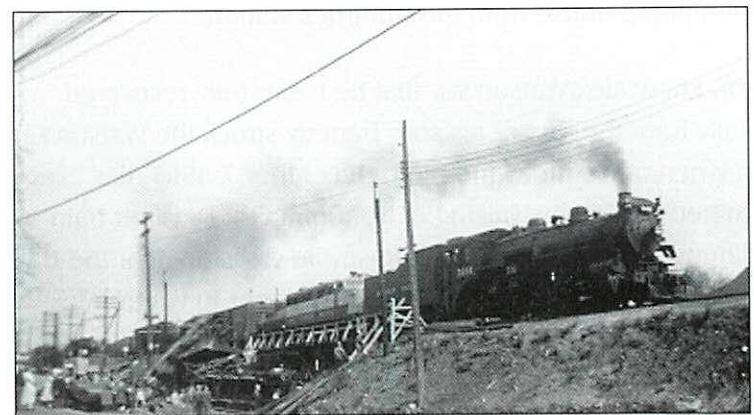
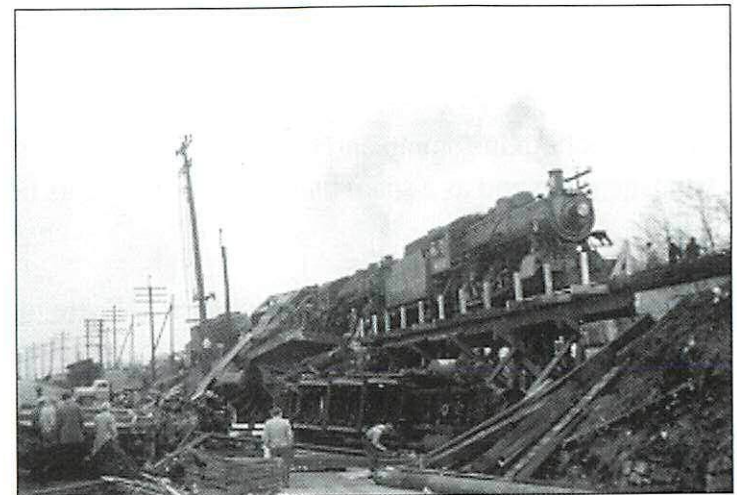
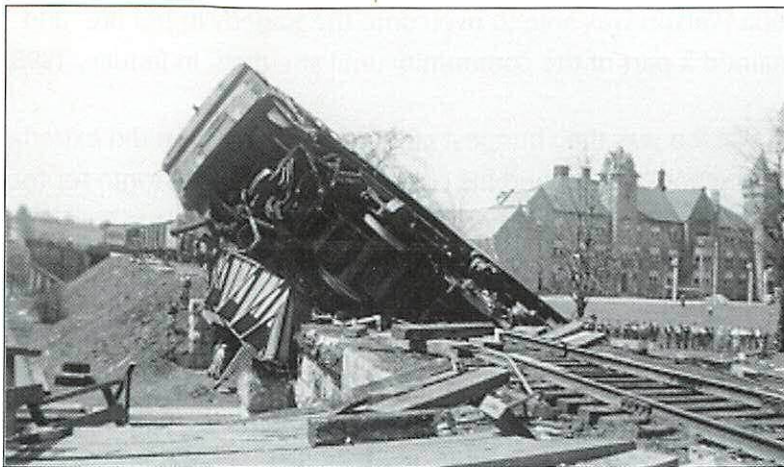
Paul Watson was the youngest child of the family and did extremely well in school. He topped his class at University of Toronto for four years in Honours Arts and Archaeology. He then went to Yale University on a fellowship. He has for a number of years taught at a university in the United States. His memories remain with him of the accidents that took the life of his father and brother.

On Tom and Alex Watson's tombstone it is written, "Safe in the Arms of Jesus."



Alex Watson







## **Interview with Ronald Westworth**

Ronald was the brakeman for the double header through freight train #903. He was supposed to change with Tom Watson before Galt station but Tom wanted to stay up front so he could "highball" his parents who lived just past the station. Ron agreed and stayed in the caboose. Ronald was not injured in the ensuing crash.

Ronald is alive and well today. He is recently retired from CP Rail and lives with his wife Margaret in Elliot Lake, Ontario. The following interview was done on August 1st, 1999.

### **Ronald, can you give me a brief work history?**

I started working for the Grand River Railway in 1954, then owned by CP Rail. They reduced the passenger trains at that time and we were transferred to London in 1955. I worked for CP Rail until 1963 when I quit because they were reducing the work force and I was only working spare. I drove City of London bus till 1965 then started working with Canadian National Railway. I worked at CN till 1969. I rejoined CP in 1971 in Windsor and worked for them in various capacities and cities up till my retirement in 1997. I also had a brief stint with GO Transit in 1995.

### **What type of impact did the crash have on your life and that of your co workers?**

Back in those days they did not have any stress or emergency trauma counselling. You just went back to work. It would have helped the guys if there was some type of psychological counselling dealing with the stress.

Fireman Jack Easby quit right after the crash. He was in extreme

shock. Tim Ready was also in shock. Toms father Alex Watson was never the same after and committed suicide in 1963. Many of the crew had a hard time coping with the accident. I myself was nervous and edgy for a few years after the accident.

### **You had a chance to read the rail crash inquest information. Were there any statements made at the inquest that you felt were not answered adequately?**

Yes, one answer that was given by a crew member was that there was no orders to work around in Galt. Well you do not need any orders to work around Galt. You re given your orders when you leave your base and it tells you what cars are being dropped off or picked up at what stops. You do not need any orders to work in Galt.

The train #5186 in the siding needed permission from the dispatcher to leave the siding when the superior train (903) was over due.

Another statement was made regarding how you contact other trains. It was stated that there were three phones between Toronto and Galt. That is simply not true. You can stop anywhere and hook your line to the wires. But you are not going to be talking to other trains. You are going to be talking to the train dispatcher.

### **Was there any information that did not come out in the inquest that should have?**

Killean used to be at the top of the hill, it was about five miles east of Galt. When our train went through at Killean, it would have triggered an electronic circuit that would have turned on a small indicator light in the Galt station. This would tell the operator that the train was coming out of Killean and he could ensure no trains would move out of the siding at Galt.



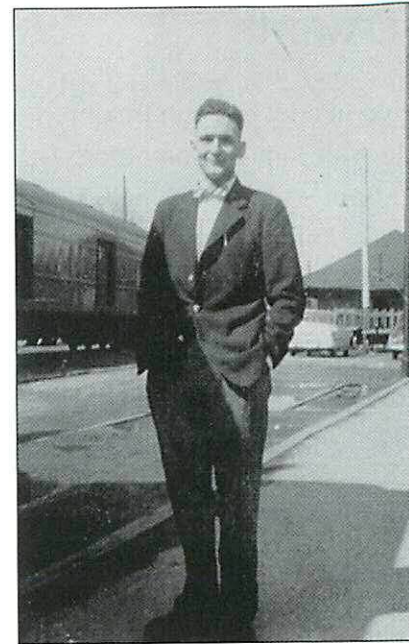
The electronic indicator would also be triggered in a small silver box on the siding switch. The indicator was down. The person throwing the switch, if he checked it, would have known if the train was coming on the main track or not.

Nowadays the switch is automatically locked when the indicator is on. The switch cannot be opened.

The station operator, Stewart, knew that train was coming for at least twenty minutes and failed to notify the train crew in the siding. The engineer William Hunter acknowledged that if anyone was to blame it was him. He was right. Hunter should have gone into the station to ask permission to go on the mainline. He also gave the order to the Trainman Gates to open the switch. It was unclear if Gates knew the indicator position was down on the switch. It is the responsibility of everyone on the crew, not just the engineer, to ensure the train rules are followed.

**Are there any other interesting stories from that tragic night?**

A reporter called my pregnant wife at one in the morning the night of the crash to say I was dead and did she have a picture of me! I was actually fine but was in the hospital briefly.



Ronald Westworth  
1954 Galt Station



Ronald Westworth  
1998 Elliot Lake





Large crowds viewed the accident scene







# **Tragedy in Galt - The May 2nd, 1956 CP Crash - An Unreleased Interview with William Hopkins**

(All photos - credit K-W Record Negative Collection, University of Waterloo Library)

(Authors Note: In 1999, I published the book, "Tragedy in Galt about the CP Rail Crash", I thought I had interviewed all the people who I thought were still alive from the train crews involved in the crash except for George Nutkins who was too ill to give an interview. My wife answered a knock on the door at our home in Hespeler between Christmas and New Year's, 1999 from a man who was requesting a copy of Tragedy in Galt. Unfortunately, the book had sold out. The man mentioned to my wife that he was a member of the crew in the train crash. He left his phone number with us. In the summer of 2002, I interviewed William "Bill" Hopkins who was the fireman on the second locomotive #5420 of "through" freight #903)

## **Background**

On May 2nd, 1956 at 6:30 p.m., Canadian Pacific steam doubleheader "through" freight train #903 (with engines #2205 & 5420) left Toronto with 40 cars. It was heading for Windsor. It was two hours and thirty minutes late. After arriving at Guelph Junction, #903 was delayed one hour further. The train crew was Lead Locomotive Engineer William Palmer, Toronto; Fireman Henry Blocka, Toronto; Brakeman Tommy Watson, Galt; Second Locomotive Engineer George Nutkins, London; Fireman William Hopkins, London; and in the caboose were Brakeman Ronald Westworth, London; and Conductor Jack Cowing, London.

At the Galt CPR station, "extra" or "slow" steam doubleheader train #5186 (with engines #5607 & 5126) was in the siding. The slow freight had dropped off 14 cars in Galt. The train crew on train #5186 was Lead Engine Engineer William Hunter, Toronto; Fireman A.H. Holden, Toronto; Brakeman R. Gates, London; Second Locomotive Engineer Tim Ready, London; Fireman Jack Easby, London; and Conductor Gerry Rivard, London.

Through freight #903 had priority on the main line over extra freight #5186. Although the crew of #5186 knew that #903 was late they did not know the exact whereabouts of the through freight.

There were block signals at the east and west ends of the Galt yard. When through freight #903 entered the east end of the yard the lights were green to proceed. Meanwhile train #5186 was in the siding. Then train #5186 moved onto the mainline unaware of the oncoming freight #903.

Meanwhile in the Galt station, Dispatcher James Stewart noticed that the indicator had gone down in the office. This signalled that freight #903 was in the yard. James ran out into the yard to warn the crew of #5186 to stay in the siding. Tragically his message was not understood. Through train #903 smashed into the back of box cars of train #5186. The impact of the crash caused the Canadian Pacific Railway overpass, a heavy steel-girdered bridge, to collapse onto Water Street, the two engines of #903 plunging to the street.

Inside the lead engine of #903 was engineer William Palmer. He sustained severe steam burns and died from being crushed. Brakeman Tom Watson from Galt was on his first paid run as a brakeman, was also killed instantly.



# The William Hopkins Interview

1948

In January 2, 1948, I started in the railway working out of John Street in Toronto, doing my shop time. I started out as a labourer and then as a machinist's helper. They wanted me to stay in the shops but I wanted to go out and "play" trains. The money was better working outside. I was a young man then and I wanted to travel around.

You either went head end or tail end at that time. I started as a fireman, afterwards I was classified as an engineer. I did some spare runs. You just gravitated through the seniority list.

May 2nd, 1956

What went on that day was nothing unusual. It was a miscalculation that is all. The only saving grace, as far as I am concerned personally, was that Bill Palmer (lead locomotive engineer on the "through" freight) was going slow. It was his first trip back after fracturing his skull, when the train he engineers on hit a cement truck in west Toronto. He was off for quite awhile. He came back and this was his first trip west so he was going slow.

We were going through Galt, and we had lots of reason to fly through there. We used to violate every rule in the book at that time relating to speed going through Galt. I believe it was 10mph through Galt. We never did 10 mph. Bill did go 10mph. I would suggest, had he not gone the speed limit, that there would have been no head end crew left, no station left and the first two houses on Water Street would have been gone also. Usually, once you get a clear order board, we would go full out, stick it to her. I know guys who have gone through there at 50 to 60mph.

We all knew what happened. I went to the inquest. It really hurt William Hunter (engineer on lead engine of slow or "extra train that came out of the siding that was hit by "through" freight #903) because Bill Palmer, who was killed, was his buddy. Once it started, he broke up, I asked if we could be excused. I tried to help him. We went across the street to the hotel and had a drink to try and help Hunter get through the inquest.



**William "Bill" Hopkins, Hespeler, Ontario, 2002**



I was off about 18 days. You get thrown around in that cab pretty good. I was banged up in the upper corner but I was able to get out. George Nutkins went out the window behind me. I had a little trouble convincing the police chief that there was another person still in the crash. I said there is a kid Tommy Watson. They found Tommy and I just fell apart. I was sitting in the station and the assistant superintendent was smoking a cigar. He said, "What are you doing here?" I said I was waiting for transportation home. He said, "You don't have to wait in here you can wait outside."

The general superintendent Johnson was there. He had one main job in life and it was to get that line open. Jack Cowing, conductor, told the general superintendent who I was and the superintendent said, "Get this person to the hospital now!" Johnson called a cab and got me outta there. It was very sad.

We were way late in single freight #903. We sat an hour at Guelph Junction waiting for engine #2205 to come. We were late because we were supposed to be diesels but they were not functional, so we had steam diesels. So the guys in the train in the siding at Galt thought that #903 won't be on that time. So it just so happens, we almost were. What they were gonna do was get out of the siding, get up, get back in, so they could do what they wanna do around the interchange. It was just out and back in. Slam the switch and that was it. Palmer could not see ahead, that the "extra" train had moved out of the siding, there was a curve. George (Nutkins) had dumped the air. Once the air goes you know something is wrong. Anyway, that is all there was to it.

William Hunter, Jack Easby and Tim Ready were all suspended for a year as the result of that accident. I don't know if K. Shillington, brakeman on second locomotive in siding, (previously not mentioned in Tragedy in Galt Book) ever came back. He was a sharp young man.

1957-58

The whole culture was changing. I became local chairman of the Fireman Union, Chief Griever. Not long after that we had a nine day lock out in January. Then we had a strike in the summer. At that time the total number of fireman on the CPR was 2,855. The CPR on the first strike was only able to run passenger trains - no freights.

I went to Ottawa to speak at a Royal Commission. The policy attitude of the CPR was that they were the front man for the American railroads. The Canadian union was being supported by the American Union. The CPR never got rid of the Fireman when I was there. It was a cut and dry deal though. At the time they were putting in the Diesels, I couldn't see the reason for the Fireman.

1960

The prospect of spending three of four years of being a hogger in Windsor, a couple years on the spare board and spending years chugging up and down that line with diesels till I was 65 years old did nothing for me. I decided to leave the CPR.



Steam engines were fun. Sure they were dirty. If they still had the steam engines I would probably still be with the CPR. All the time I was working with the steam engines, no one ever wanted to ride up front. When Diesel came everyone except the secretary wanted to ride up front. I was still a young man when I wanted to get out.

Later I worked in sales and then ten years with the provincial government.



**The crash scene with curious townsfolk**



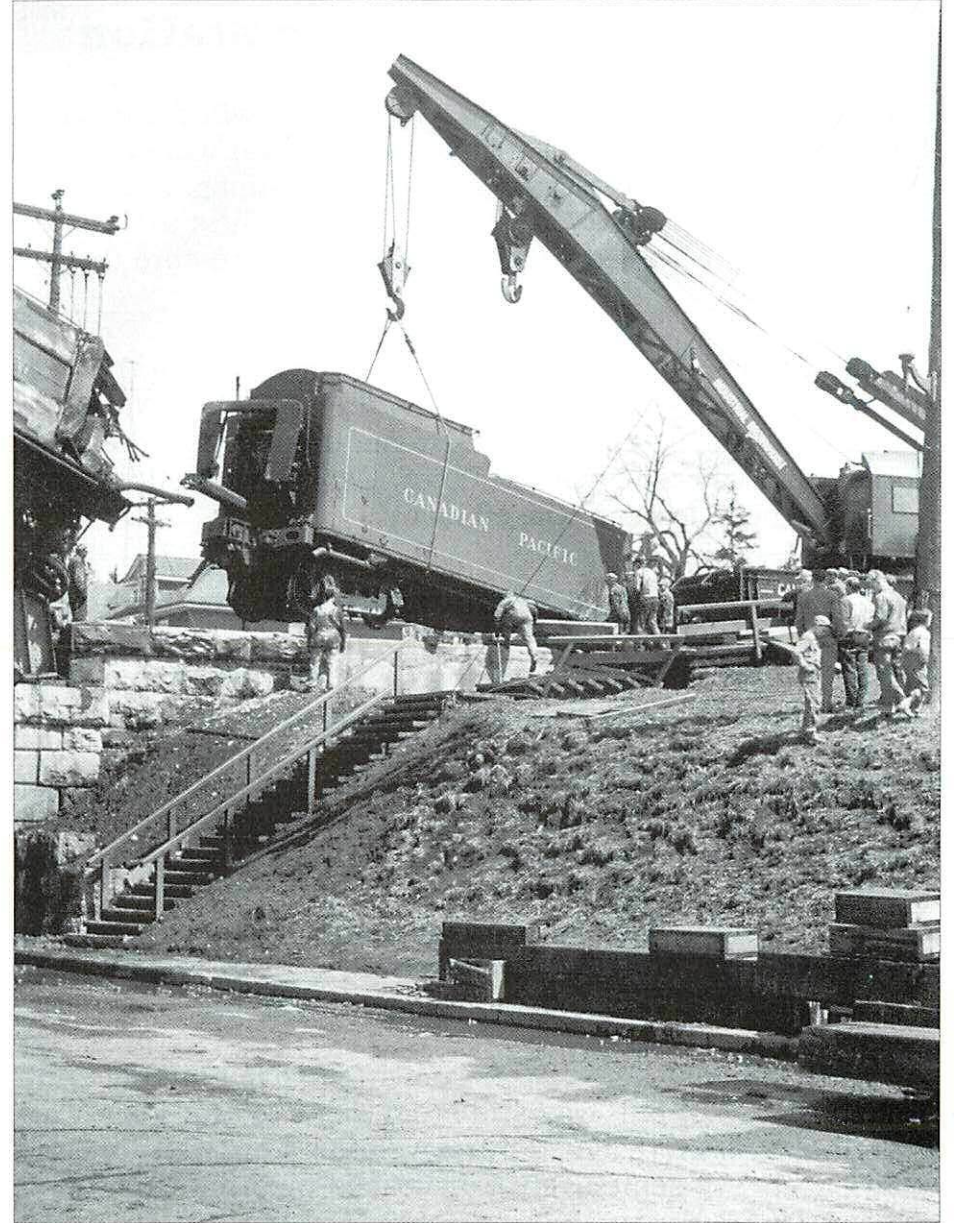


Notice the steam in this crash scene picture





Clean up of crash site



Another crash clean up picture



# Jury Finds Lack Of Proper System Communication

BY CLAUDE KEWLEY

A combination of negligence and several other factors combined to cause the collision of a 'slow' and 'fast' freight train here the night of May 2, when two railroaders were killed.

This is the essence of a critical judgment rendered Wednesday afternoon by a jury probing the circumstances of the death of William Palmer, one of the victims. The other was youthful Tommy Watson of Galt. Mr. Palmer was engineer on the lead engine of a "doubleheader" drawing the "fast" freight. Mr. Watson was his brakeman.

In addition to charging negligence on the part of the crew of the "extra" or "slow" freight, the jury, under the chairmanship of Gordon S. Rouse, made certain recommendations designed to prevent a repetition.

## NO INDIVIDUAL BLAME

Early in the hearing, Engineer William Hunter of Toronto testified that "if there is any responsibility for the accident, the responsibility is mine." The jury did not agree with Mr. Hunter in this view, its subsequent verdict revealed.

The jury held that the responsibility could not be attributed to any individual but, rather to "a combination of negligence on the part of the crew of the 'extra' train, 5186, and lack of a proper system of communication with the station dispatcher."

## SIGNALS INADEQUATE

The jury also expressed the view that "the traffic blocking signals are not advisable for all areas of the Galt railway yards."

"We therefore recommend," the jury asserted in its written judgment "a closer system of communication between the station dispatcher and the train crews, especially in connection with 'extra' train crews and during the unusual circumstances of the moving of extra trains."

"We also recommend the use of a red danger flag by the dispatcher in circumstances similar to those that occurred at this accident, instead of taking a chance of someone not hearing, or misunderstanding an emergency order. We also recommend the installation of a better and closer blocking signal system within the Galt yard limits."

One of the highlights of the inquiry was the testimony of one of the witnesses that a "split second before the crash, Engineer William Hunter realized the collision was imminent."

## HIS LAST WORDS

"Jump! Jump!" he cried to his fellows in the cab. These were his last words. The next instant he was dead. Fireman Henry Blocka of Toronto did have time to jump but, although severely injured, lived to tell the story at the inquest Wednesday.

Veteran dispatcher James Hartley Stewart provided one of the other highlights when he narrated his efforts to prevent the "extra" from pulling onto the main line as the "fast" freight was nearing its destiny with death and destruction.

"DON'T MOVE, DON'T MOVE

"Don't move, don't move!" Mr.

Stewart cried repeatedly, as he ran toward the crew of the "extra" waving his arms. But, Mr. Stewart's words went unheeded, or, unheard for the "extra" pulled out and into the path of 903.

All witnesses were questioned relentlessly by Crown Attorney Harold Daufman of Kitchener, determined, apparently, to ferret out the real causes of the wreck.

Once he demanded to know whether a witness would be able to offer a suggestion "which would give the public a guarantee the incident would not be repeated."

Both trains were drawn by "double-headers" or, in other words, two locomotives of different types.

It was also brought out that the crew of the "extra" train had "received no orders with respect to Galt and that it was "on its own upon arrival here."

## NOT INFORMED

The fast freight was two and a half hours late in departing from Toronto and had lost an additional hour at Guelph. Testimony also showed that although the crew of the slow freight knew the fast freight was behind them, they had no idea of how far, or when it would arrive at Galt.

The jury personnel was as follows: Angus A. Ferguson, Fred Bendus, David Brayshaw, Alexander (Sandy) Leith and Gordon S. Rouse, foreman. Detective-Sergeant Allan Slidders was the coronor's constable.

Presiding Coroner was Dr. Charles Gordon Powers, of Preston.

## STILL IN HOSPITAL

Also critically injured in the collision was Engineer George

(Continued on Page 3)

# Reco Fear



## G.C.I. CADET COLOURS

Two main standards, the Union Jack and the school cadet flag, form the heart of the G.C.I. and V.S. cadet corps, which paraded 900-strong in their

the saluting  
good precise  
blustery wear  
a premature



# Negligence, Other Factors Are Blamed For Wreck

(Continued from Page 1)

Nutkins of London, who, although he is in a cast at the South Waterloo Memorial, is slowly recovering. He sustained multiple fractures of the arms and back.

Mortician Maurice O'Brien of Preston, who removed the bodies to the morgue, said he had recovered the watches and wallets of the victims.

On checking the watches of Mr. Palmer and Mr. Watson he had found a time difference of 55 seconds.

Photographer Glen Forbes identified pictures which he had taken of the scene the night the collision occurred.

First member of either train crew to testify was Fireman Al Bloka, a fireman on 903, the freight. Still not fully recovered from injuries, he limped to the stand but declined a proffered chair.

Mr. Bloka said he had been employed by the CPR for four and a half years. The through freight, of which he was a crew member, had priority over all other trains except passenger trains. This train had left Toronto at approximately 6.35 o'clock in the evening, about two and a half hours beyond the normal starting time. Then, it had been delayed another hour at Guelph.

The two who died in the crash, Mr. Palmer and Mr. Watson were in the cab of the lead engine of 903.

## TIME TO JUMP

At the instant, Mr. Bloka had caught sight of the other train bearing down on 903, he had also heard Engineer Palmer's warning to "jump, jump". He jumped and alighted on the steps at the end of the platform and "rolled" to the street. Then, he regained his feet and managed to escape being crushed by the falling engines as they plunged into Water street. He believed, he testified, Brakeman Watson was "giving a 'highball' with a lantern just before the impact."

Conductor Jack Cowling of London, who was in charge of the fast freight said he was sitting in the caboose when the train came to a jolting stop, after prolonged application of the brakes.

"When we reached Guelph Junction" he said, "we were on time but we lost an hour there."

"Then you were hurrying to make up time," suggested Crown Attorney Harold Daufman.

"No," the witness disagreed, "you can do no better than the time-table schedule on the run." Long experience in railroading would enable him to estimate the speed of the train even while riding in the caboose. Mr. Cowling stated. The distance of 18 miles between Galt and Guelph Junction had been covered in the interim between 9.05 and 9.35.

## MULTIPLE FRACTURES

Verne Fisher, pathologist who performed the autopsies on

customary railroad practice to rely on the brakeman to perform this duty, "but he the (brakeman) was not there."

## MOVED TO MAIN LINE

"I moved my engine onto the main line after it had been uncoupled," Mr. Hunter continued, but he was interrupted by the Crown.

"Why wouldn't the engineer of the second locomotive be responsible?" pressed Mr. Daufman. "Because he would assume that everything was okay," was the reply.

"Surely railroads aren't operated on the basis of assumptions," suggested Mr. Daufman.

"We've had 'close shaves' in the Galt yards before but nothing like this," Dispatcher James Hartley Stewart told the coroner and jury. Mr. Stewart is a veteran railroadman with 30 years experience.

"When the indicator went 'down' in the office, I asked the operator whether it was 903, and when he replied 'yes', I ran to the siding and yelled to the crew of the extra: 'Don't move, Don't move.'"

How close were you to the crew of 5186," the Crown asked.

"About 30 feet," Mr. Stewart said. When Conductor Cowling was asked how "it is possible to check positions of various trains, the reply was by telephone. There are three such phones between Galt and Toronto, he said.

"Did you check on one of these phones," the Crown asked.

"No," replied Mr. Cowling, "the onus was on the inferior train (5186) to check."

He added that the 'indicator' in the station office would "show the train out of Killan" and the operator would know 903 was coming through because 5186 was already in the siding.

## POOR VISIBILITY

Fireman William Hopkins, who was on the second engine of 903, said he thought he saw "something on the bridge," but the visibility at this point is poor because of the curvature in the tracks.

"I hollered to my mate, George (Nutkins) to 'soak her' but the air was gone." This last was attributed to the fact that the brakes had already been applied by Engineer Palmer on the first engine of 903.

Rear Trainman Ronald Westworth, London, agreed with his conductor that 903 had not made up time between Guelph and Galt. He added that the "order board" is on the left but you have to be on the right side to see it because of the curvature of the tracks.

Mr. Westworth stated he did not realize there had been an accident until he had moved to the front of the train.

At this point witness injected an element of humor into the proceedings when he asserted he had been taken to the hospital although not injured.

"What was the matter with

me who was fireman on one of the 'extra' engines said he had been employed by the railroad for two years.

"Suppose your engineer had a heart attack what would you do?" asked the Crown.

"Put on the brakes," Mr. Holden replied.

Recalled to the stand following Dispatcher Stewart's evidence, Mr. Holden said: "Yes, I did think it unusual when Mr. Stewart came running out and hollering." He was replying to a question put by Mr. Daufman.

"But," Mr. Holden added, "I thought he was saying that 903 was on our tail."

He said he had been a fireman since March 28.

"How much training are you given?" asked the Crown.

## SIX TRIAL RUNS

"Well, we had six trial runs," witness said.

Other witnesses agreed the 'fast' freight had the "green" all the way through Galt.

R. Gates, London brakeman of the 'slow' freight said 14 cars were dropped off at Galt. Before testifying he had been granted the protection of the court, at the request of the Crown. He gave the signal to proceed to the engineers and presumed both had seen it.

He said one of the engineers had handed him a 'list list' and said "cut me off." (Uncouple engines.)

"Then, I opened the switch and gave the signal to proceed. Then the engine moved onto the main line."

## SAW CRASH OCCUR

"I could see half way to Bond street and the Galt station witness said. He added that he had seen the crash occur and two crew members flying through the air. Then the freight cars started to topple, so the witness had "taken off down the slope."

Fireman J. Easby stood mute when the Crown asked if he knew how an accident like this could happen?

After asking whether any of those present could throw any further light on the subject, the Crown suggested to the Coroner that the jury be permitted to retire. The inquiry lasted four hours. The jury brought in its verdict after deliberating about 45 minutes.

## DEATHS

### FRANK R. BURNELL

Frank Richard Burnell, 8 Easton street, died at South Waterloo Memorial hospital this morning in his 66th year. Born in Hardwicke, England, he came to Canada 48 years ago. After living 36 years in Westover, Mr. Burnell came to Galt 12 years ago. He was employed at Galt Brass Co. Mr. Burnell was a veteran of two world wars. He was a member of Trinity Anglican church and the Canadian Legion.

Surviving are his widow, the former Gertrude May Parsons; two daughters, Mrs. Albert Rath (Maise) of Mount Forest and Mrs. Geoffrey Hopcraft (Eileen) of Galt; two sisters, Mrs. Frank Carter and Mrs. Alfred Pummell, both of Eng-

## FUNE

### FENNELL F. SUD

Funeral service for F. Sudden, was held from St. Wednesday morning. Requiem high mass was celebrated by Monsignor Sudden took place at cemetery with Rev. Lock conducting the vice.

Palbearers were Eagle, Michael Coughlin, Dominic old Schoeneau.

Mrs. Sudden died at the South Waterloo hospital.

## Says All Business 20 Or 60 Shoul

### TORONTO (CP)

man should take it he is 20 or 60, Jr. general secretary of YMCA, said Wednesday.

In an address to Office Management Mr. Connell said the business should forgive when he goes home right amount of pro-

He said that while in 100 might die from stress in business, as persons will indirectly the stress and strain.

Coverette (Violet) of 1 S. Greig (Madeline) a Macartney (Kaye) born A son, William was seas in 1944.

Friends will be received at the funeral home, 39 rue north, Friday afternoon. Funeral service held from there on 10.00 a.m. Interment Memory Gardens, Bre-

### MISS LAURA LAMBE

Miss Laura Lambert, Queen's boulevard, Kilt at St. Mary's hospital, early today following illness. She was born at on May 18, 1907. A former of Preston, Miss Lambert daughter of the late C. Lambert and Mrs. Daisy of Galt who survives. Two brothers surviving, Charles of Galt and Aubertloo.

The late Miss Lamberting at the Ratz-Bechte home, 621 King street, chener, where funeral service be held on Saturday at with interment in Woodlery, Kitchener.

## SIRLOIN

57



# Attend olic Here

people from many  
America received  
of Kitchener's  
services, held yes-  
chener Auditor-  
ce of hundreds  
the platform.  
New Apostolic  
with reverence  
their leader, Rev.  
church's "chief  
called from Ger-  
the Canadian  
anches of his re

ABIES  
way as Miami,  
ous, New York,  
Winnipeg and  
congregation,  
men and many  
their arms, re-  
from a score  
blessed bread.  
th of the roof  
banner, bearing  
clauben deimen  
an an deimer  
ve Your word  
in hand.  
if delivered his  
which was  
A united choir  
on, of the dais  
rman.  
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wept when the  
le said it was  
t time they  
re 27 years ago.  
membership of  
small, but Rev.  
minister of the  
as the member-  
at 3,000. Total  
is 600,000

## Job-Stress Peril Cited by Connell

TORONTO (CP)—A busi-  
nessman should take it easy  
whether he is 20 or 60, Joseph  
Connell, general secre-  
tary of the Kitchener-Water-  
loo YMCA, said last night.  
In an address to the Na-  
tional Office Management  
Association, Mr. Connell said  
the average business man  
should forget his worries  
when he goes home and get  
the right amount of proper  
exercise.  
He said that while only one  
man in 100 might die from  
overexertion in business, as  
many as 99 persons will in-  
directly suffer from the  
stress and strain of their  
jobs.

## Firm, Union Sign Pact

A new agreement between  
management and employees of  
Milrig Industrial Installations,  
Ltd., Kitchener, has been signed  
after the conclusion of peaceful  
negotiations, John S. Wagner  
said today.  
Mr. Wagner is business agent  
for Local 1940, United Brothers  
hood of Carpenters and Joiners,  
bargaining agent for the 50 em-  
ployees of the company.  
The agreement calls for an in-  
crease of 10 cents an hour and  
other benefits. Hourly wage rate  
is now \$2.20.  
The company was established  
about two years ago and installs  
heavy industrial machinery. Most  
of its employees are millwrights,  
who work in Waterloo, Wel-  
lington, Brant and Norfolk Coun-  
ties.  
The increase was effective  
from May 14 and the agreement  
lasts for one year.

## INQUEST VERDICT

# No Individual Blamed In Galt Train Crash

By Record Staff Writer  
GALT — A coroner's inquest  
last night found a train crew,  
communications and signals in  
the Galt CPR yards here, as the  
joint cause of the freight train  
crash May 2 at the Water street  
overpass in which an engineer  
and a brakeman were killed.  
The verdict said "no one per-  
son was to blame" for the colli-  
sion which sent two engines of  
freight No. 903 plunging over  
the side of the bridge, collapsing  
the overpass and killing William  
Palmer, Toronto, engineer, and  
16-year-old brakeman Thomas  
Watson of Galt.  
WAS HEADED WEST  
The double-header freight  
crashed into extra westbound  
freight No. 5186, minutes after  
the extra began pulling out of  
a siding onto the main line.  
The verdict was handed down  
after the jury heard more than  
three hours of testimony from  
a dozen witnesses which revealed  
the collision would not have  
occurred if:  
1. A brakeman on No. 5186  
had heard and interpreted prop-  
erly an order shouted to him by  
the dispatcher at the Galt sta-  
tion to keep the train on the sid-  
ing.  
2. Freight No. 903, had come  
along three minutes later. At  
the time it had reached Galt it  
was running three and a half  
hours late.  
The jury's verdict read:  
"We find no one person is to  
blame for the collision, but do  
find a combination of negligence  
on the part of the extra train  
crew No. 5186 and the lack of  
proper communications with the  
station dispatcher."

The verdict also said the traf-  
fic blocking system is not visible  
from all areas of the Galt yard.  
James H. Stewart, dispatcher  
for the past 30 years said there  
had been some near accidents  
during his time at the station,  
but this was the first wreck.  
Under questioning from Crown  
Attorney Daufman, who assisted  
Coroner C. G. Powers in conduct-  
ing the inquest, Mr. Stewart said  
he had checked No. 5186 into  
the siding at 9:35.  
"At 9:40 I received the signal  
that No. 903 had entered the  
eastern limits of the yard. I ran  
out the door and hollered to No.  
5186 not to move, and then re-  
turned to the station.  
"Minutes later the extra freight  
pulled out onto the right-of-way  
and No. 903 crashed into it," he  
said.  
MISTOOK WARNING  
A. H. Olden of Toronto, the  
fireman who was in the cab of  
the head engine of the double-  
headed freight, said he mistook  
Mr. Stewart's warning for a  
question.  
Mr. Olden said he had been a  
fireman since March 28 of this  
year.  
"I saw Mr. Stewart come out  
of the station while we were  
stopped on the siding, and he  
shouted something to us," Mr.  
Olden said.  
"But I thought he was asking  
us if we knew where No. 903  
was," he said.  
Earlier testimony established  
that No. 903 had left Toronto,  
enroute to Windsor, two hours  
and 30 minutes late. It was de-  
See CRASH—Page 2

M. Bolton said Kitchener  
the same problem. He said th  
ty had tried to stockpile earl  
some time but unless it has  
quate protection from the elem  
it freezes.  
Ald. Bower was concerned  
infestation of rats and bugs  
garbage was allowed to stan  
was also worried about the  
and smoke if the garbage is  
ed.  
The item was filed.

## May Weather Is Coldest On Record

Coldest mid-May weather  
recorded has been reported by  
local weather bureau.  
Maximum of 39 degrees ye  
day and minimum of 27 last  
were the lowest readings  
recorded for the second ha  
May.  
Coldest previous May 16  
ly was 31 degrees May 16, 19  
It was the first time in  
second half of May that  
mercury had dropped below  
Coldest late May day previ  
was 41 degrees May 24, 19  
Temperature last night a  
degrees was four degrees co  
than the previous low late  
reading of 31 degrees, May  
1921.  
Average temperatures  
March and April this year  
six degrees cooler than the  
average for the same two months  
year.  
The mean temperature for  
two months (March and Ap  
indicating the coldest spring  
since 1950 when the average  
31 degrees.

## Can't Replace Garbage Lids

Waterloo householders w  
have to keep on replacing  
lids on their garbage cans th  
selves—like they've always b  
doing  
"Waterloo Council's sewer  
sanitation committee came  
this conclusion yesterday a  
reading a report from E. E.  
Oke, city engineer, on the s  
ject.  
"Mr. Oke said a two-day  
indicated replacement of lids  
garbage cans by garbage coll  
ors would mean one extra ho  
work every collection day a  
would necessitate rearrangem  
of work schedules.  
The committee felt the ad  
expense and shifting of

## N CHIDES CANADIANS

# 'Shabby' Treatment of K-W Dutchies

Toronto, veteran  
ator, last night  
for "shabby"  
K-W Dutchmen  
Team.  
aker at the lad-  
by the National  
Kitchener-Wa-  
pressions of her  
while travelling  
importuned on  
avalanche of pub-  
because

"A U.S. magazine sports editor  
told them before a game to get  
out there and fight for your wife  
for your sweethearts. Two  
boys went on the ice with tears  
in their eyes," she said.  
"The Russian team who have  
worked together for seven years  
were treated like first-class race  
horses. They had the best of meals  
and care, and most of all, they  
had privacy. I saw them watching  
films of games between the Pen-  
sion Vs and the Dutchies and the

outside of the Twin Cities was  
shabby. Shame on Canadians!"  
she said.  
She also described the riots she  
saw in Cyprus. "I think it is little  
known that Cyprus has been offer-  
ed independence three times: once  
by Victoria and twice by Church-  
ill.  
"Why all this turmoil now? The  
people are not dissatisfied, they  
are being stirred by a gang of  
terrorists of a world rather fight



of three nuns perimeter of the church after the priest, 42, of Toronto and a Kille apparently 0 feet by the truck the three- e, hurtled in-

celebrated the Church May oration of the

AY

later found bodies, all with jewelry, bits of nuns' hairies. Inves- take days to ins.

okesman an- vices for the burday morn- Dame Cath- on J. M. Le- ciating. Bur- cathedral's burial of the

Governor-General Massey sent a message of deepest sympathy to Archbishop Lemieux, asking it be conveyed to families of the dead.

Air Marshal Roy Slemmon, chief of the air staff, said the whole air force is deeply shocked.

Most of the sisters were in bed in the convent when the fighter came screaming out of the over-cast night sky like a destruction-bomb.

Sister Louise Auguste of St. Arsene, Que., one of the surviving nuns, said it was "horrible."

"The whole building seemed to burst into flames at once," she said. "I think everyone on the top floor must have been burned."

#### RUSH TO FIRE SCENE

Mrs. Marie Flora and her 14-year-old daughter, rushed to the fire scene across the road from their little store. They knew most of the nuns well.

"Mommy and I stood there and cried," Gloria said. "I was sick to my stomach when the screams died off. I knew what that meant. Mommy and I went back and beside our beds prayed for our friends."

a record... adation from the Waterloo Police Commission on the advisability of hiring such an engineer

From Page 3

## CRASH

layed another hour at Guelph Junction.

No. 5186 was running ahead of No. 903, but was to give priority to the through train when overtaken.

The series of events which caused the collision occurred within only a few minutes.

#### PULLED INTO SIDING

No. 5186 pulled into the siding from the eastern limits where it was to drop off several cars. To drop the cars it had to pull out onto the main line and back in again. But first the head engine had to unhook and travel ahead on the main line to wait until the dropping-off procedure was completed.

At 9:25 No. 5186 had checked into the siding and began preparing its dropping off manoeuvre.

At 9:40 No. 903 was reported entering the eastern end of the yards. A block light, which turns red or green automatically depending on whether the main line is clear or not, was green.

The through train passed the signal and continued along the main line at about 10 miles an hour.

Meanwhile, at the station the head engine of No. 5186 unhooked and pulled onto the right-of-way and stopped on the nearby bridge across the Grand River.

The movement would automatically change the block signal at the eastern limits to red, but the head of No. 903 had already passed the signal and it was out of sight to the crew.

The second engine of No. 5186 followed the first engine onto the main line and had crossed the Water street overpass when the through train crashed into the box cars.

The jury recommended that: "There be closer communication between the station despatcher and train crews, especially in connection with extra trains, and unusual circumstances in the movements of extra trains."

"The despatcher use red danger flags in circumstances similar to this accident instead of taking the chance on anyone not hearing or understanding an emergency order."

"A better block signal system be instituted."



Guy Mollet (left foreground) of France as they inspect an honor guard in capital for conversations with Soviet using East-West co-operation.

AP Wirephoto (C) radio from Paris

# NOW

## G.I.R.'s are b

## THEY PAY

# 4

## INT

WHICH  
TYPE  
DO  
YOU  
PREFER  
?

Here is the id-  
tions, offering  
high as 4% pa  
\$100 and up.

## Acco

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registered in c  
with 4% intere

AMOUNT IN  
\$ 50  
41

## Get your G.I.R.'S at an

# WATERLOO AND SAVIN

Kitchener

Waterloo