

LOMBARD THRILLED BY BIG TRAIN WRECK



Above—Scene of wreckage as viewed from tracks looking west.
Left—Heart of wreck as seen immediately after accident occurred.
Mass of running gear in foreground conceals roadbed and indicates
how trucks were sheared from many of cars, which then skidded ahead
and plowed to right and left off embankment.—Photos by Fred Kruse.

Great Western Freight Piles Up in Heart of Town Sunday

Blazing piles of rubbish were all that remained today of a spectacular freight train wreck that broke on the quiet of Lombard at 2 o'clock last Sunday afternoon. Fourteen loaded refrigerator and two tank cars tore loose from the middle of a 55-car train of the Chicago Great Western railroad and were all but smashed to kindling just west of the Park avenue subway, in the heart of the village.

No figure has been placed on the damage but it was high. Most of the refrigerator cars were packed with hams, bacon, sides of beef, whole lamb carcasses and cartons of liver and canned corn. This was strewn among the wreckage over 100 yards of right-of-way, and only a small part salvaged. Rail officials said likely cause of the wreck was a faulty truck on the lead tank car that jumped the track.

Crowd Gathers Fast

Roar of the freight train drowned out all noise of the smashup and even families in homes abutting the tracks were not aware of it until the sound of the village fire alarm and gathering crowds led them to investigate. From that time on for the next 48 hours or more it became a gala scene for spectators numbering up to 1,000.

Not least in interest was the early efforts of many to make away with pieces of meat and cartons of corn. This individual "salvaging" continued through most of Sunday night until the police staff was augmented enough to cover all exposed points.

Cranes Go to Work

Two rail car cranes attached to wrecking trains were assembled on the site by early Sunday evening, one being brought from a point 200 miles west on the road. The disrupted trackage was joined and freed of wreckage by 5 o'clock Monday morning, but meanwhile Great Western rail traffic was detoured via the Illinois Central to Munger thence south over the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern line to a junction at Ingallton.

Removal of the last of the meat, part of which went by truck to a rendering company in Aurora, was accomplished only yesterday.

One oddity of the event was that with some 150 tons of fresh meat scattered about the premises, several Lombard butchers were favored with large orders for pork chops, etc., for the mess tables of the wrecking crew.
