

LETTER BOX

THE COLLISION

Two Monster Steam Engines Come Together

FOUR PEOPLE ARE KILLED

About 40,000 People Witnessed The
Five Inspiring Incident

Taylor, Tex., Sept. 21, '96--
(Special to Gauge)--One of the
greatest picnics and all round
pleasure making days ever known
in the history of Texas was closed
at the setting of a day's sun Tues-
day, September 15.

The largest conglomeration of
human forms that has ever assem-
bled at any one time and place on
the soil of Texas, was gathered at
Crush to witness what will go
down in history's annals as one of
the greatest, most gorgeously re-
splendent, and one of the saddest
pleasure making days in the time
of this state.

It was, indeed a great occasion
to many thousands of people. It
was a day of joy and one of sad-
ness. People gathered on and near
the place designated for the scene,
several days previous to the time
for the prearranged collision. Ful-
ly 2000 people were on hand a day
ahead. It is estimated that be-
tween 30,000 and 60,000 people
stood beneath the rays of a burn-
ing sun to see the event. Twenty-
eight passenger trains with ten
coaches each and several freight
trains carrying passengers, were
necessary to accommodate the peo-
ple. So enormous were the num-
ber of people, that trains from oth-
er roads had to be secured in order
to haul them. Officers in large
squads and plenty of new calaboo-
es were on the grounds and very
fair order prevailed throughout the
day.

Every kind of midway fake and
catchpenny show was there; plenty
of excellent speaking, and lunch
stands to entertain the people till
the time for the alleviation of all
suspense drew near and then

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Tuesday morning the first gray
streaks of dawn spreading out over
the horizon told the world that the
sun would shine all day. Pleasure
was the beginning but death and
sorrow the ending of the day.
With a few minor exceptions the
collision took place at the fixed
time, 4:30 p. m. Two 40-ton en-
gines pulling six freight cars each,
were arranged two miles apart. By
given signals they both started at
the same moment. The engineers
pulled the valves wide open and
stepped off. The engines reached
a speed of 42 miles an hour before
they collided. The whistles being
tied down caused the steam to es-
cape slowly making a lonely, lone-
some noise.

As the moving monsters drew
nearer and nearer their fate, the
excitement of the people became so
intense that it was impossible to
exercise any control of them what-
ever, and they almost rushed on the
engines before they come together.

The two locomotives were dress-
ed in holiday attire, being freshly
painted in fantastic colors and dec-
orated with gorgeous circus posters;
and were a pretty picture as they
were drawn up face to face like
two defiant gladiators, for a final
handshake before the mortal com-
bat, and then they backed to the
final starting places. But if the ex-
citement was intense before this
movement it now became inde-
scribable.

The monsters drew nearer and
nearer, and no words can picture
the scene as the crash came, a loud,
dull, roaring thud and considera-
ble concussion, the complete de-
molishing of two monster steam
powers, and all was in an instant
enveloped in a cloud of steam,
smoke and dust.

The wreck was splendidly com-
plete in every imaginable particu-
lar. Loud cheering, tossing of hats
and deafening roars from the thou-
sands of human throats immediat-
ly followed the crash. The debris
was jammed into the space usually
occupied by two freight cars.

When the smoke cleared away
the curio seekers began to collect
relics in the shape of scrap iron
etc., when there happened an inci-
dent not on the arranged program,
and one which cast a shadow of
gloom and sorrow over the entire
affair. The boiler exploded and
the air was filled with millions of
pieces of flying fragments. Sever-
al people were seriously hurt and
many others more or less injured.
Four human lives were sacrificed
on the altar of the days pleasure.
One young lady had her head al-
most severed from her body, died
soon afterwards; Dean, a photog-
rapher, was killed by a flying bolt,
and two others were fatally injured
and have died since.

It cost the railroad company
\$30,000, to furnish this amusement;
it will cost them 300,000 as indem-
nity for the loss of life and injury
to the people.

W. L. MASON.