

## Full Account of the Wreck Investigation.

The inquest into the deaths caused at the wreck at Nash's Creek on the morning of the 6th, was continued on Friday afternoon and evening, and Saturday morning, when a large amount of evidence was taken. The inquest was adjourned until Tuesday, Nov. 16, so that the evidence of the injured trainmen could be taken.

### Afternoon Session

When the afternoon session opened, Mr. Henderson, the morning witness, was recalled and gave the distances between stations from Campbellton to Jacquet River. If Thompson's special left Charlo at 2.15 he would reach New Mills, six miles further on, about 2.30, judging by the earlier portion of his run. That would give him but ten minutes to make Jacquet River and get there at the same time as the express. Henderson said he could have ordered Thompson into the siding at New Mills if there had been a night operator there or the operator could have done so himself.

Witness, to Mr. McKenzie, said there were ten night operators between Moncton and Campbellton, a distance of 185 miles exclusive of those at terminals. When he gave the order to Thompson's special he had no idea of having the trains cross at Jacquet River.

This concluded Henderson's evidence and Alphonse Ingram, despatcher at Campbellton, was then called.

### A. H. Ingram

Alphonse Ingram, train despatcher at Campbellton, said he was on duty the night of the wreck, and between 2.45 and 2.50 o'clock was notified of the collision and told to get chief despatcher Bray and doctors. The order was given to the night foreman McLaughlin in the round house. The auxiliary car got away at 4.10 o'clock on receipt of an order from Newcastle, which was given to Engineer Rushton and conductor Doyle. The cause of delay witness could not give, and in fact it would be difficult to make ready much quicker. It was not necessary to steam up another locomotive, as the locomotive to relieve No. 33 express was standing on the track, but was not used.

Coroner Ferguson thought Mr. Mott was going wide of the mark and said the sending of the auxiliary train had nothing to do with the cause of the wreck.

Mr. Mott remarked that the delay might mean death. He proceeded to question the witness along the same lines.

The witness did not know very much about the engines, he said, but merely gave the orders. Mr. Ingram said he delivered the orders to the crew of the freight special, driver Whelan and conductor Thompson immediately after receiving them at 1.08, and they left at 1.10. These were last orders he had to deal with, and so far as he knew no other instructions were conveyed to them. He would not keep track of the special, nor would he know where the Maritime express was at any time. Should he satisfy himself of danger of an accident, he would notify Newcastle and if he could not get Newcastle, he would notify some other station to flag the train.

To Mr. Ralston the witness said that there was no conversation about the order between himself and the train crew. Whelan looked at watch and said 'I just have an hour and twenty minutes and guess I can make it.' Witness gave it as his opinion that there was not a reasonable probability of them making it, and had thought so at the time, but had not said anything.

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### Meant Jacquet River

To Mr. McKenzie witness said when the remark was made by Driver Whelan he understood the latter to mean Jacquet River and did not think he could make that point, as he would under the rules have to be there at 2.30 to cross the Maritime.

### J. H. Thompson

John H. Thompson of Moncton, conductor on the special train, who was slightly injured in the wreck, was next called. He said his orders were received at Campbellton on the occasion he left there when the train was wrecked. The first stop was at Charlo, the train arriving there at two o'clock.

'It is reported 2.11, with departure 2.15,' said Mr. Mott. Would there be any variation in watches?

'There should not be,' the witness replied. My judgment is that we arrived at two o'clock and pulled out at 2.03 or 2.06. We did not make any other stop. We intended to cross the Maritime at Nash's Creek, if time allowed us, but never intended to run into Jacquet River. In my opinion we could not have made Jacquet River.

The distance from Charlo to Nash's Creek would be between 12 and 13 miles. I had good reason to believe we could accomplish that in the time given us. We would have about 24 or 25 minutes to do this, and pulled out of Charlo with the intention of making New Mills. I gave no orders to the driver to this effect, and there was nothing between us in the way of consultation. At New Mills I compared the brakeman's watch with mine, which showed 2.20 at that place, and we would then have 15 minutes to make it. Were inside the semaphores when No. 33 struck us. I was on the sixth car from the engine, going over the top of the train towards the end.

'What did you go forward for?'  
To see that there was nothing wrong and if necessary to put up the semaphores to protect us. Thought they would be very close.

### Saw It Was Close

'Do you mean that you apprehended you were not getting along as well as you expected?' asked Mr. Ralston.

'I saw we were going to be very close when we were a couple of miles away from Nash's Creek. There was nothing I know of working wrong, but the train did not appear to be going quite as fast as we had been.'

'You began to be afraid of meeting 33?'

'I had no fear of meeting her, but thought it would be very close.'

'What time did the collision occur?'

'As nearly as I could judge, about 2.38. I looked at my watch when we were a mile or a half away from the switch and it was then 2.34. I then began to fear we could not make it and got out on top. When we left New Mills I thought we were going to make it. The collision occurred between 15 and 20 car lengths from the switch. I looked at my watch after it was all over. After the smash I went over the wreckage and called Fireman Smith, lighted a match, and we compared watches. It was then between 2.40 and 2.41 by our watches and this was two or three minutes after the wreck had occurred. I had compared my watch with the I. C. R. clock at Campbellton before leaving and Driver Whelan had also.

Why He Compared Watch With Fireman

Mr. Ralston questioned the witness why he had looked at his watch. Conductor Thompson said it was very important to him on account of his orders.

'Did you know there was any one killed?' questioned Mr. Ralston.

'I thought there would be.'

'Did you consider it more important to find the time than to find out whether there was any one killed?'

'It was important to me to know the time on account of my orders,' the witness said after considerable questioning.

### Compared Watches

He said he had compared watches with Driver Whelan after leaving Campbellton. He did not hear Driver Whelan's remark that they had an hour and twenty minutes to make it. Questioned further by Mr. Ralston witness said he seldom consulted with the driver of his trains regarding the running of the trains, though it was occasionally done. He had compared his watch with that of conductor Lambie while coming in on the auxiliary train to Campbellton and found them the same.

'Did you do that to find out whether or not you had been within your orders?'

'I wanted to see how my watch compared with others.'

To Mr. Mott witness said his orders told him the Maritime was forty minutes late at Newcastle, which would make her due at Jacquet River at 2.40 if there had been a night operator at New Mills he would not have stopped there to have ascertained the position of the Maritime. It would have been possible to have the semaphores

thrown against the Maritime at Nash's Creek. If there had been night operators at both places and if there was any doubt of the freight making Nash's Creek. 'But,' added the witness, 'if there had been any doubt of our making Nash's Creek we would not have left New Mills.'

To Mr. McKenzie the witness said that if the accident had occurred at 2.45 he would have been ten minutes on the Maritime time. As he should have been on the siding at 2.35 he had no doubt when leaving New Mills that he could get to Nash's Creek at 2.35. The train had fifteen minutes to make the six miles between New Mills and Nash's Creek.

### Conductor McLellan

Angus McLellan of Campbellton, conductor on the wrecked Maritime express, was the next witness and said he had been in the service since 1871. He repeated the order given him at Newcastle as already given. He had not himself that the express passed Jacquet River at 2.40, as he looked at his watch at that place. He did not look at his watch after the wreck. 'I had enough to look after,' Nash's Creek if we made good time to Conductor McLellan remarked. 'The train ran at between 35 and 40 miles an hour between Jacquet River and Nash's Creek.'

To Mr. Ralston witness said he was in the smoking car passing Jacquet River, and looking at his watch saw it was just 2.40. He was looking for Thompson's special at that point, expecting him there from the orders, but did not see him. He knew nothing of Thompson's time. The Maritime was still forty minutes late at Jacquet River. Conductor McLellan said he and Conductor Thos. Coffey had compared their watches with the I. C. R. clock at Moncton and his watch had been correct. He said he generally compared his watch with the Campbellton or Moncton clock daily. He had not compared watches with Driver Morton that day, and had not seen Driver Morton at Newcastle. They reached Bathurst that night at two o'clock and received no orders there.

'There seems to have been another order gone out from Newcastle twenty-five minutes later,' remarked Mr. Mott.

The witness said he did not get any further orders.

### Hiram Smith

Hiram Smith of Moncton, fireman on the freight special with Driver Whelan, who saved his life by jumping before the trains crashed, said Driver Whelan had read the order over to him (Smith) at Campbellton. There was no remark made about where they would cross the Maritime. Charlo was the first stop and witness thought they made a good run to that point, probably averaging twenty or twenty-two miles an hour. About the same rate of speed was made to New Mills with the engine working fairly well, and there was no reason to hold up the train at that point, where they were running about the same rate of speed. There is a slight grade after leaving New Mills, and the train went a little slower there, but still appeared to be doing well. She dropped speed on a small grade some two miles west of Nash's Creek, but no remark was made about it by himself or Driver Whelan. Witness did not look at his watch when the collision occurred. Witness said he jumped from the window of the locomotive before the collision occurred. He met Conductor Thompson some time after the wreck, but could not give any idea how long it would be after the wreck. He had checked watches with Conductor Thompson. Did not remember seeing other watch. He could not swear whether he had seen Conductor Thompson's watch. The latter had come to him and asked what time it was. Witness had taken out his watch and showed it to

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Conductor Thompson, who remarked, 'that's all right,' which witness understood to mean that the watches were alike. He did not remember seeing Conductor's watch. He could not swear just to the second what time it was then by his watch, but it was, about 2.41. Witness said his watch was an American Waltham and reliable.

To Mr. Ralston witness said he did not know whether or not he had been rendered unconscious, but was badly shaken up. He kept on going up the bank as soon as he struck. He did not remember whether the latter overtook him, but thought Conductor Thompson was coming from the rear of the train. Thompson asked him what time it was, as stated and witness showed him his watch.

Fireman Smith said that about one and a half miles west of Nash's Creek he had looked at his watch and it was then 2.34. He said, 'We haven't got much time.' Driver Whelan said, 'It's pretty close, but I guess we can make it.'

'Did you think you could make Nash's Creek?' asked Mr. Ralston.

'Do you mean with ten minutes clear?' queried the witness.

'No. Did you think you could get there?'

'I thought we could by using some of the Maritime time,' replied Fireman Smith. The witness had only a vague idea of the length of time after the wreck. He had checked watches with Driver Whelan the previous day and their time pieces agreed. Fireman Smith said that when he saw the express coming he called out to Driver Whelan, 'She's on us.' Steam was then shut off and had been for some time and he thought Driver Whelan put on the brakes as soon as he (witness) called out. Regarding orders, witness said he had worked under time orders frequently and did not think there was much practical difference between these and other varieties of orders. To Mr. McKenzie witness rehearsed the conversation he had had with Driver Whelan west of Nash's Creek as given previously. Fireman Smith thought he had also said then that the Maritime would run from Jacquet River to Nash's Creek in about three minutes, and Driver Whelan had responded that it would be pretty sharp, but he guessed he could make it. It was 2.35 when he looked at his watch and they should have been in the siding at Nash's Creek then.

### Evening Session

When the inquiry was resumed at 8.10 p.m. John Montgomery was the first witness called.

### John Montgomery

Mr. Mott offered in evidence the last train orders issued to the freight special. Examined by Mr. Mott, Mr. Montgomery testified that he was a train baggage master, residing in Moncton. He was on the Maritime express on the night of the wreck and when the collision occurred he was in



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the forward end of the first class car. He did not note the time. His car was not derailed or smashed, and he was simply thrown about a bit. He did not remember looking at his watch again until that afternoon. He looked at the watch when they were passing Jacquet River station and he noted the time was barely 2.40. He knew of the wait order for Jacquet River and he mentioned the matter to the brakeman. The latter looked out of the car and noted that the other train was not there. When the wreck occurred witness went forward and examined what was left of the baggage car. He came down on the same train with the remains of Mor-

risson, but did not see the bodies of the other two. In reply to Mr. Ralston witness told of speaking with Fireman Smith, who was in a somewhat dazed condition, immediately after the wreck occurred. In reply to Mr. McKenzie, the witness said that when he arrived at Campbellton he examined his watch and found that its time was correct.

The coroner asked what emergency tools were carried and the witness said that an axe, a saw and a bar were at hand in a glass-fronted box. This concluded Montgomery's evidence.

### Alexander Cameron

Alexander Cameron (sworn) said he resided in Dalhousie and was a brakeman. He was on duty on the Maritime express at the time of the collision, operating on the rear end. He remembered that the train passed Jacquet River station without stopping. It was then 2.40 by his watch, and conductor McLellan's watch showed the same time. He did not look at his watch when the collision occurred but thought it would take about four minutes to make the run. They were making fair speed at the time of the collision; he was on the first class car. He was not thrown from his feet; the car did not leave the track, but bent one of the rails. Continuing, witness said that he remembered leaving Bathurst at two o'clock and thought 40 minutes would be a fair run to Jacquet River. Replying to

(Continued on page 7)

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