

THE BEGINNING OF A DANGEROUS ERA?

An Editorial

The train wreck of an Erie-Lackawanna freight train early Sunday morning, January 25th, 1970, in a residential section of Elmira certainly should give everyone food for thought that lives along this, or any other, railroad. In fact, it would seem to us, that every Village or City government should take the possibility of a local accident under advisement and come up with recommendations as well as a disaster plan.

This recent accident in Elmira saw 19 cars of a 66-car freight train derailed in the mishap. And, of these 19 cars, nine of them were loaded with 20 tons of liquid propane gas each, stored at 150 pounds pressure at minus 60 degrees.

When experts were asked what danger existed if one of these tanks ruptured, they answered: "if a spark ignited the gas, a two city-block could go up in flames." And, if the gas was ignited, it would take dry chemical powder, crane booms and men in asbestos suits to control it, according to Fire Chief Edward F. Ryan of Elmira.

The above statement was issued pertaining to just one propane car — but what could happen to the other eight? Wouldn't the explosion blow them up and set them on fire to compound to the disaster?

Visualize a two city-block area superimposed on the center of Andover — and what would you have left? Nothing but a few houses on the approaches to the Village would be left would there?

If this happened to be the only train wreck that the Erie - Lackawanna RR has had in a long time, one wouldn't think so much about it, but only last fall they had another bad one near Waverly, N. Y. — and goodness knows how many others there have been that we haven't seen or read about in the area Newspapers. And folks, this is the same Railroad that runs thru Andover!

Most of us take the trains and Railroad for granted since they have existed before our time. In fact the Railroad ushered in a new era of rapid mass transportation, expansion and prosperity. As the Railroad grew, so did our great Country — and passenger safety as well. In fact, we can't recall the details of any passenger train wreck in our life-time because they have been so few — and far between as well as out of our immediate sphere of life.

What then is happening all of a sudden to the safety records that the Railroads used to be so proud of? Or is it all of a sudden?

Let's stop and think a minute about what has been happening the last few years! Haven't we entered into a new era of transportation with the rapid growth of the Auto, Bus, and Airplane service?

And, with this new era, haven't the Railroads gradually dropped their passenger service until it is non-existent in many areas? Haven't they been gradually merging — until there is almost no competition left between their route coverage. Then too, with the Diesel Engine replacing the old Steam Locomotive, have you noticed how the freight trains have increased from 50 - 60 cars — up to over 150 — and even up as high as 200 cars over flat and level terrain?

Impatiently, you may ask: "what does this have to do with safety and train wrecks?" And, after talking to several retired Railroad men that spent 50 years of their lives at this profession, it can be summed up in one nutshell: "too many Chiefs, and not enough Indians to perform the necessary maintenance on the tracks and rolling stock!"

In years gone by while passenger service was in operation, the Railroads had track-walkers that inspected the road-beds and rails every day, with section crews on call to repair weaknesses that were found. Now it has degenerated to summer section gangs and sporadic inspections, and, at a time when it is needed the most with the rails under more weight, stress and strain from freight trains 3 - 4 times as long!

Thus, unless "WE, the people" who live along a Railroad, demand that stricter controls be instituted to cover the speed and maintenance of freight trains — who knows what time of day or night we may find ourselves in the middle of a great disaster?



50 YEARS AGO

February 6, 1920

J. H. Backus, Publisher

J. P. Cannon & Co. are redecorating the interior of their store. F. R. Henderson is doing the work.

Archie Youmans is moving into his new home recently completed on Greenwood Street.

Mrs. Comstock, who has been spending some time with her daughter, Mrs. L. A. Potter of Independence, returned to Andover Wednesday.

Miss Nell Horan visited at the home of her sister, Mr. and Mrs. Lou Snyder of East Valley from Monday until Tuesday evening.

Miss Margaret Howe of Rochester is the guest of her brother, E. H. Howe for a few days.

Miss Beulah Norton of Jersey Hill, is visiting her sister, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Burdick of Railroad Valley.

Clay Jordan left Wednesday for St. Louis to spend a couple of weeks.

Mr. and Mrs. George Cummings and children were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. James Richardson of Hornell.

Miss Rebecca Burrows, who is teaching at Gainesville, spent Saturday and Sunday with her mother, Mrs. Edward Teasdale.

Mrs. Rachel Williams visited at the home of her brother, Walter Perry of Alfred Station the first of the week.

Mrs. Floyd Green went to Rochester Monday for a week's visit at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Pauline Clarke.

Mrs. D. C. Hardy was the guest of her sister, Mrs. W. H. H. Keller at Alfred Station from Friday until Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. George Bloss were called to Wellsville Thursday by the illness of their daughter, Mrs. Lawrence Hunt.

W. C. Gleason and Floyd Mattison, who are employed at Johnstown, Pa., were called home by the death of Samuel Coats.

Miss Marian Rice of East Windsor is spending some time at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Rice of Chestnut Street while Mrs. Rice is in the hospital.

Mrs. Grant Stevens of Shinglehouse, Pa., John Lewis of Myrtle, Pa., and Mrs. Allie Sheehan of Wellsville, were called to Andover by the death of Samuel Coats.

40 YEARS AGO

January 31, 1930

J. H. Backus & Son, Publishers

Miss Mary Snyder has been elected as Librarian of Andover Free Library to succeed Mrs. Arling Baker, who resigned, and will begin her duties at once.

About thirty friends and neighbors of Mr. and Mrs. Lou Snyder gathered at their home Saturday evening, January 25th and gave them a surprise to celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary.

Milton J. Grey, 76, died Tuesday, January 28th. His wife and a half-brother survive. Interment was in Hillside Cemetery.

Those who will preside and look after the interests of Andover's fraternities the coming year are: Arling R. Baker, Master, Andover Masonic Lodge No. 558 F. & A. M., Bernice Nobles, Worth Matron, Anna W. McArthur Chapter No. 242, Order of Eastern Star; Howard Green, Master, Andover Grange No. 1098; Earl A. Howland, Noble Grand, Andover Lodge No. 786 I.O.O.F.; C. S. Rennells, Chief P., Union Encampment, No. 171; Clara Hann, Noble Grand, Andover Rebekah Lodge No. 303; Lella Livermore, President, Andover Woman's Christian Temperance Union; Fannie Backus, President, Edward Seaman Relief Corps No. 155.

John Karcane has opened the

Harmony Hall for roller skating.

Tom Ellerington of Niagara Falls is visiting Mr. and Mrs. Arling Briggs and Roy Meade.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Tracy and Leona, were Saturday and Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Horton of Hornell.

Mrs. Gladys Brown and daughter, Veronica, have returned to their home on Kine Hill after spending some time with her father, Fred Conrad of West Greenwood.

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Davis and son, Fred of West Greenwood, spent the week-end at the home of their daughter in Hornell.

Mrs. Agnes Langworthy has been passing a few days at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer Lanphear of Railroad Valley.

Mrs. David Slocum has been visiting at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harold Horton and family of Buffalo this week.

Sergeant Harold L. Kemp of the New York State Police, is in Andover visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Kemp for a few days.

Mrs. Giles C. Grantier of Hornell was a week-end guest at the Frisbey-Porter home on East Center Street.

Prof. Carl Hann was home from Hamburg as guest of his parents Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Hann over the week-end.

Miss Margaret Green is passing two weeks in Greenwood, visiting friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Kaple are passing the week at the farm home of their son, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Kaple.

ALBANY
open line

by Alex Rankin

The state now has 41 new U. S. congressional district lines. They are almost worthless and totally irrelevant.

The reapportionment bill passed the Legislature recently, but only after Republicans got Senator Anthony B. Giffre of Port Chester out of a sick bed at home — he had just returned from the hospital after a serious illness and was resting a few days before returning to Albany — to pass the bill because of a rebellion in Democratic ranks.

Republicans had counted on a number of Democratic votes to push the bill through. But on the day of the debate the Democratic leaders were forced to call a "party vote" on the bill when the rank and file objected in stormy caucus meetings.

Best quote of the day during the debate belongs to Republican Assemblyman James L. Emery of Genesee.

"The justices of the U. S. Supreme Court, many of them senile old men, directed us to do this thing," he said.

The court had ordered the legislature to redraw the lines by January 30.

But the lines are irrelevant because they are based on 10 year old 1960 census figures.

The lines are almost worthless because they will be good for only one election, the one this November.

In January, 1971, the newly

elected state Legislature will then, using figures from the 1970 census now underway, redraw the lines again.

Those lines, unless someone challenges them in court and if the past is any indication, that is almost certain to happen, will last for the next 10 years.

Reporters called the bill the Alice in Albany Wonderland Memorial Bill.

Democrats, of course, howled that the new lines were rigged to favor Republicans.

But it appears that Republicans squelched their natural instincts in favor of strict adherence to the court decision — there has to be a mathematical equality between all districts. The new lines show a one tenth of one per cent variance in population between districts.

On paper at least — no one can say what the voters will do from one year to the next — it appears that Republicans will be able to pick up only one or two seats with their plan.

The Buffalo district of Democratic Republican Max McCarthy, for example, is still in his hands.

It was that district as a matter of fact, that kicked off the party squabble that led to the "party" vote that led to Giffre's trip.

The Buffalo Democratic assemblymen wanted to vote for the bill. Other members, trying to push the party line and build up an image for the November election, got angry and forced the party line vote.

Miss Hilda Clarke has completed her studies at Brockport State Normal and is now practice teaching at East Rochester.

Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Stearns observed their 53rd wedding anniversary at their home Monday, January 29th.

John Lewis, Jr., of Buffalo, was a week-end guest of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Lewis, Sr., of Independence.

Lawrence Hawks and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Whitsell of Independence, are visiting in Westfield, Pa., for a few days.

Robert Dickerson, who has worked the Richardson farm in Elm Valley the past year, moved his family back to Kansas City, Mo., Monday.

Oliver Keough of Slate Creek and Miss Goldie Whitesell of West Greenwood, were united in marriage Thursday, January 25th.

Mrs. Lulu Byrnes is spending a few days with her niece and family, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Dougherty of South Hill.

Miss Roberta Church left Monday for Genesee Normal for the last semester.

Miss Helen Rogers of Whitesville, passed the week-end guest of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Cannon.

James L. McDonough left Tuesday night for Port Chester, N. Y., where he will visit his daughters.

Mrs. Robert Hober of Belmont spent Tuesday and Wednesday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. C. Sweet.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lynch and son, James, were in Buffalo the first of the week, where James entered the University of Buffalo.

Mrs. Charles Bloss of Canistota, spent several days last week at the home of her brother, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Church.

Miss Rita Dean, who has been employed at the Mountain Clinic Hospital in Olean for some time, has accepted a position with the Jones Memorial Hospital Nursing Staff in Wellsville, commencing her new duties February 1st.

Edward F. Padden returned to Friendship Tuesday after passing several days with relatives in Andover.

Malcolm Brundage of Gasport passed the week-end with his father, Robert Brundage and other Andover friends.

Miss Margaret McQueen of Bolivar, returned home Sunday after passing several days with her sister, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Satterlee.

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