

Florian Frederick (- 24 Sep 1875)

The Evening Star, September 25, 1875

Run Over and Killed by a Railroad Train

Mr. Florence Frederick, driver of a two-horse wagon, loaded with sand, was run over last evening by a southern train of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad at the southern end of the Anacostia bridge, and the driver and his two horses were instantly killed. Mr. Frederick was thrown a distance of seventy-five feet, and one of his horses was carried a distance of 130 feet by the engine, and the other horse some 60 feet on the cow catcher. The man was picked up and carried to his late residence in Uniontown, and several physicians were summoned as soon as possible, but life was extinct before any of them arrived. Deceased was a German, 52 years old, and leaves a wife and five children. The flagman stationed at that point warned Frederick of his danger, and not to attempt to cross before the train passed, but he whipped his horses up to pass, notwithstanding the warning.

The Inquest

This morning, Dr. Patterson, the coroner, held the inquest--the jurors being as follows: Jos. S. Worthington, F.A. Young, S.F. Shreve, R. Swan, U. Swan, L. Bingham, D. Lee, George Anderson, R.F. Martin, William Martin, James Webb and John Johnson.

The first witness was Henry Haggermaker, who testified that he has a shop in the house of deceased, but a few steps from the crossing, and saw the accident; the deceased was whipping up his horse to get across and the engine struck the team, which was less than 30 feet from the track when witness first saw deceased. The engine was going south and witness heard it coming; did not notice whether there was any head light. Before witness looked out he heard the flagman calling to Frederick to stop. It was about twilight and light enough for the deceased to have seen the engine some distance off. If the team had not been unmanageable, the deceased could have checked up after the flagman hailed him to stop. Frederick was whipping the horses when he first saw him. Both the horses seemed afraid of the cars. The flagman did his best to stop deceased by calling to him; was positive that the whistle was blown for the crossing, and also the signal for brakes given before the team was struck. The track is about four feet above the road bed; thinks that the train was running at about forty miles per hour. They usually run at a high rate of speed. Deceased was in the habit of crossing the track daily, and it seemed to witness that after deceased whipped up the horses to get them across they became unmanageable and he could not hold them up.

Peter L. Davis testified that he was talking with Haggermaker and the flagman; heard the whistle blow for the crossing. The flagman got his lamp and went to his post; deceased had just got off of the bridge, and he put whip to his horses. The flagman warned him not to come any further. Deceased said "Let me alone, I can make it." The flagman then went in front of the team, but had to get back to keep from being run over. When he started to make the rise the whistle blew down brakes--the engine being 30 or 40 yards from the crossing. The engine struck the team just as the front wheels reached the track. The train was checked in a short distance below and run back. The horses appeared to be under control, and the head light as also the signal lights and flags were displayed on the train. The train was going at the rate of 20 to 25 miles an hour. The deceased had time to have stopped after the first hailing. It was perhaps three-fourths of a minute from the time the whistle blew to the time of the accident.

T.W. Roberts, the flagman, testified that when the whistle blew he heard the deceased coming over the bridge, and heard him start his horses up. Witness was at his post before he heard the whistle; signaled with the light to stop but deceased continued to whip his horses, and witness then called to

him, when he answered, "Get out of the way," and continued to whip them. Witness jumped out of his (F.'s) way just in time to save himself, and as the train struck the team he turned his head. The first signal was given over 900 feet above the crossing. The train was running from 20 to 25 miles per hour. Witness was standing on the track with Davis, when he saw the train about a mile off, and then he got his light from the store. The horses came to the track at a full gallop.

The Verdict

The jury rendered the following verdict: "That the said Florence Frederick came to his death at the crossing of the Washington City and Point Lookout railroad and Monroe street, Uniontown, D.C., by reason of injuries received in a collision with an engine of said road. The jury are of the opinion that the flagman and other employees of the road are in no wise to blame in the matter. But we earnestly urge that the District authorities compel the railroad company to place such safeguards at this point as shall render such accidents impossible.