

RED RECORD OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC ROAD.

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEATH RECORD FOR 1899.

- January 11—Engineer William Woods.
- January 20—Engineer Robert Nicholson.
- January 20—Fireman Alonso Miller.
- January 31—Engineer Henry H. Jones.
- January 31—Fireman Edward Colson.
- February 2—Engineer James Leavitt.
- February 2—Fireman Elbert Favoy.
- March 18—Engineer Fred Witham.
- March 18—Fireman Ed Gray.
- April 23—Conductor Dovey.
- April 23—Fireman Courtney.
- May 13—Engineer James McCaul.
- May 13—Two unknown tramps.
- June 15—Fireman Morrill.
- July 11—Miss Addie Harris.
- July 11—Mrs. R. L. Thomas.
- July 25—Engineer Arthur Real.
- August 7—Engineer C. J. Ford.
- August 7—Fireman Porter Wood.
- August 11—Miss Minnie Scribner.
- August 11—Mrs. Arthur Brentner.
- September 9—Section Foreman Edward Smith.
- September 13—Mrs. Maggie Majors.
- September 13—Mrs. Angie Larue.
- September 13—Mrs. Josie Ross.
- September 13—Engineer Ed Wright.

ONCE in a generation or so comes a war for the United States. In its camps and on its firing lines the soldier sons of the Far West—of California, of Oregon, of Nevada, of Arizona—lay down their vigorous young lives that the starry flag may still wave, that the Republic may be preserved.

Day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, in time of peace and in time of war the Southern Pacific goes on with its deadly work, killing here an engineer and maiming there a hapless passenger. The blind greed, the murderous parsimony of the Southern Pacific are more deadly to the states through which it runs than any war or any pestilence. The graveyard of the Kentucky corporation grows appallingly; the one-legged, one-armed men it has made are too many to count. Here is the casualty record of the Southern Pacific for the eight and a half months of 1899 to date:

Number of wrecks	34
Due to negligence or criminal carelessness	30
Number killed	27
Number injured	79
Seriously injured	23
Slightly injured	48

Inadequate signal systems, faulty construction and undermanned trains—that, in brief, is the explanation. The red record of the Southern Pacific is to be read from Oregon to Louisiana. It is open to inspection on the books of nearly every Coroner in the railroad counties of California and its neighbor states.

And the lists of the killed and the crippled do not half tell the evil that has been and is being wrought by the Southern Pacific's criminal policy, under which it cuts down its train crews, neglects its repair work, reduces its force of track walkers and curtails the expenses of its signal system. There are, also, the living—the wives and the children of those crippled, the widows and the orphans of those killed—to curse the railroad and the men who run it, to endure years and years of want and privation which they can fairly blame to the murderous thrift of the most unlovable corporation that ever gripped a commonwealth by the throat. California and the other Coast states are full of families that the railroad has ruined.

If there be any doubt that the accidents on the Southern Pacific have been due to the criminal negligence of the company or of its employees, that doubt will disappear upon inspection of the records of the various Coroners who have had to do with the corporation's disasters. From these records and from equally reliable sources has been compiled the following summary of Southern Pacific accidents during 1899:

On January 7th the faulty approach to the new railroad bridge across the Oakland estuary at Harrison street were responsible for the wrecking of an engine, which, had it gone but a few feet farther, would have plunged into the water, carrying with it to certain death the engineer and fireman. It was fortunate that it was only an engine with two human beings on board, for close behind it came thundering along the overcrossed train from San Fran-

cisco. Had this been the one to first strike the fatal approach the loss of life would have been as terrible as that upon the dark Decoration day, when a whole trainload went into the harbor at nearly the same place, and thirteen persons were drowned or crushed. The possibility of this disaster forced upon him he was obliged to make his train fly through a dangerous pass at the rate of sixty-five miles an hour, and when it dashed into a band of sheep there could be but one result.

Carelessness and the faulty signal system, or, rather, the lack of a system, led to the fatal approach, resulting in an open switch and into collision with a light engine at Lacoste on January 20th, and caused the death of the crew of the light engine and the engineer of the limited, injuries to the crew of the train and the severe shaking up of the passengers. That more deaths did not result was little short of miraculous.

Ten days later the narrow-gauge local train, carrying hundreds of passengers from San Francisco to their homes in Oakland, was ordered to make fast time, owing to the inability of the company to successfully carry its regular passengers on schedule, and in doing so jumped the track on a curve where the construction was faulty. This accident cost the engineer his life, his body being horribly roasted in the fire taken from beneath his engine. The fireman also succumbed. That the whole train did not leave the trestle was due to no fault of the railroad. When the Coroner's jury took up the case the company was severely censured for its carelessness in running engines in front of engines at points on the road where there was great danger.

On February 24 a local freight and pay car collided at a point on the road where a signal system should have been, but was not maintained. March 18th brought another wreck, resulting in the sacrifice of two lives. Fog rails caused the wreck of a freight train near Auburn on March 30th, which was disastrous, but resulted, fortunately, in no loss of life. On April 3d another freight train was ditched from the same cause.

Other wrecks are recorded for April 8th and 13th. The penny-wick policy of flimsy construction cost two lives on the 23d of the same month, when a west-bound freight went through a culvert which was not strong enough to support a train of cars.

Though the parsimony of the corporation is apparent on all sides, it became strikingly prominent on May 7th, when ninety feet of roadbed near San Leandro bay sank a distance of eight feet, leaving only the unsupported rails. Luckily for the passengers it was discovered in time. Instead of making a proper "fill" in the stretch of marsh land over which the rails were laid, which would have cost a little more money, false economy prompted the digging away of the earth bed of either side of the track, thus breaking through the crust of a contiguous swamp. The railroad officials must have realized the danger, as did every one else, but not until it was too late to prevent a tragedy which was a serious attention paid to the matter, notwithstanding the constant menace to life.

A fatal wreck occurred on May 13th at Glenbrook, Ore., netting three deaths and one severe injury. Less than two weeks later there was another collision, which, though it did much damage, did not add fatalities to the long list. The, likewise, was due to Southern Pacific



economy, which has cost so many lives. Instead of making up two passenger trains to carry its patrons, the company crowded them all into one. The engine was unable to put the heavy load, and while ascending a grade the train broke and some of the cars were left behind. A freight train coming along at a lively rate crashed into the rear cars and did the damage. Again there were no signals to prevent what might have been a terrible loss of life.

Engineer Morrill's life was the forfeit of a disastrous "head-on" collision near Iron Point, Nev., on June 15th. June 27th would have been a dark day for the company had not fate intervened to save the lives of a trainload of passengers. On that date a gravel train, the cars without brakes, started on a wild run down the grade toward Hayward, Cal., and in the direction of a rapidly approaching train from the other direction. By accident the derailing switch at Chittenden was open and this threw the runaway cars into the ditch, piling them up in splinters, and, as a consequence, later the passenger train thundered by. Few aboard it knew that the carelessness of the corporation which could not afford ordinary brakes for its heavily loaded gravel cars had nearly cost them their lives. Had the gravel cars been properly equipped the danger might have been averted.

On July 5th, while running forty miles an hour, the East-bound overland was wrecked three miles from Elko, Nev., jeopardizing the lives of the eighty passengers and seriously injuring fourteen of them. Criminal negligence and that alone

was responsible for the telescoping of coaches of the Los Angeles and Atlantic express trains at Port Costa on July 4th. The trains, running under orders, were following each other too closely and, as a result, two women were badly injured.

Three days later a whole trainload of horses was wrecked, resulting in the death of most of them.

The horrors of the Newman wreck on July 10th, which cost four lives, are well remembered by all who read of the harrowing details. Here was another gross piece of carelessness upon the part of the company. A badly handled excursion train, carrying for the most part women, who were on their way to the Teachers' Convention at Los Angeles, was allowed to crash into a freight train, which was left standing within 200 yards of the station. The night was clear and the track had no curves to obstruct the view of the engineer of the excursion train. No warning signals were posted, no signal system was in operation, and, as a consequence, before the engineer of the special realized the danger his engine had crashed into the standing freight cars, smashing the rear ones to splinters and buckling up the passenger train in a frightful heap, throwing from the cars the passengers, who were not killed outright, and severely injuring many by the force of the impact. With the Southern Pacific's customary disregard for the lives and safety of its patrons, orders had been issued from headquarters to make up the train without the usual baggage or day coaches in front. As a consequence the tender of the en-

gine was coupled directly to the front sleeper. When the collision occurred the tender was jammed through the front end of the sleeper, crushing to death the occupants of the first few berths. Shut in like rats in a trap, they were aroused from sleep to death, though, unmercifully, the end did not come before tortures untold were inflicted upon them. Had the train properly made up the fatalities would probably not have occurred, since the occupants of the coaches following the fatal one, while injured, were not killed. Then, too, it was understood that the excursion was to keep ten minutes behind the freight, but the engineer, knowing that his employers cared more for orders than for human life, rushed ahead to doom. The freight train, which should have displayed a light on the caboose, had none.

At the inquest which followed a Coroner's jury, made up of men who do not fear threats from a corporation which regards human life as a mere trifle compared to financial gain, administered a scathing rebuke. In fact, the verdict virtually branded the corporation and its managers as murderers. The testimony showed that the loss of life was caused directly by the criminal system of running trains and the penurious policy of the Southern Pacific, which saves money at the expense of the safety of its passengers. The testimony and the verdict most vigorously condemned the obsolete and dangerous plan of semaphore signals, which leaves one man to do the work of many.

INJURED ON SOUTHERN PACIFIC DURING 1899.

- January 20th—Engineer Frank Taylor; Fireman Joe Mohavler; Assistant Surgeon Andrew R. Wentworth; L. S. W.; Lieutenant Walter H. Gordon, United States Army; E. M. Stanford.
- January 31st—B. Ghilleri, Alameda; Robert G. Byrnes; W. W. Goggin; Alameda; R. E. Parr, Alameda; Frank Hoffman, Alameda; F. A. Kearney, Alameda; William Horst, Alameda; E. H. Clark, Alameda; ten others, names unknown.
- February 2d—Engineer Ralph Fretterley.
- March 30th—Conductor Charles Cooper.
- April 23d—Engineer Clancy.
- May 13th—Fireman James Merriman.
- July 5th—Mrs. C. Howson, Grass Valley; Mrs. Frank A. Cleland, San Francisco; Mrs. M. S. Endress, Coloma; Miss Marian Terrier, San Francisco; John Nolan, San Francisco; J. D. Irvin, Oakland; E. F. Whiting, San Bernardino; J. W. Grant, San Francisco; Westlake, San Francisco; C. A. Lynch, Denver; Mrs. M.

- E. Hassell, Pacific Grove; three others, names unknown.
- July 10th—Miss May Oliver, St. Louis; Miss E. Ensh, St. Louis; Miss Sallie R. Smith, St. Louis; Miss Gertrude Rosenberg, St. Louis; Mrs. Mary Adams; Robert L. B. Mills, Lake Creston; Miss Lucella A. Wehmiller, St. Louis; Miss Elizabeth White, Hillsboro; E. D. Luckey, St. Louis.
- August 7th—Mrs. Cora McCarthy, Los Angeles; Mary E. Cowan, Fresno; Mrs. J. S. Niewwander, Fresno; H. Moore, San Diego; unknown Japanese; L. J. Hulen; Al Delley, Fresno; W. H. Stein; A. R. McKneu; C. F. Matthy.
- August 28th—Fireman Judd; Engineer Steppard.
- September 3d—Engineer Bert Smith.
- September 13th—Engineer Jones.
- September 15th—Fireman George Williams; Engineer J. W. Wright; Conductor Harry Steel; Engineer Jesse Penn.
- September 17th—Fireman Franklin Braswell; Engineer Horace A. Hammond.

and crime for one day at a later hour on the same night came another wreck, when the last four cars of the passenger train from Los Angeles were derailed as it was pulling into Tracy. Though the passengers were frightened, shaken up and otherwise discommodated no one was killed. This train ran over a broken frog, which threw the last four cars off the track. Of course it is expensive to have efficient and sufficient inspectors to see that the tracks are fit to carry trains, and frogs cost nearly 40 cents apiece, but 40 cents is just that much more for the railroad pocket, and the peril of a few lives is a small matter.

The lapse of ten days brought forth another wreck, where a kind Providence saved the lives of the mortals intrusted to the care of the company. This time the Southern Pacific west-bound overland was ditched near Sentinel, where the lack of a track-walker sent the loaded cars into a dangerous washout of the several injured two were seriously hurt. Five days after this exposure of the lack of working force which could insure safety of life, another human being was sacrificed, through the spreading of rails twenty-three miles from Los Angeles, where a passenger train came on in its mad dash to death. The accident was at a vital point of the road and could have been easily averted had anything like ordinary precaution been taken to warn the engineer that the tracks had given way. It might have easily been averted a month to employ a track walker. None was employed, and as a consequence poor Arthur Real met a frightful end and left behind him a helpless family.

The burning of a bridge near Sacramento, which delayed all trains for four hours and naturally meant loss of time and money to the inconvenienced passengers. When they complained of the needless delay they received in reply curt and insulting answers from the hirelings of the company.

Lack of proper attention to check runaway cars was exposed on August 4th, near Ben Lomond, when the rear section of a lumber train broke away, and, not being supplied with brakes sufficient to hold it, crashed into the other section of the train, making kindling wood of the cars. It is probably the only collision of the cars was recognized as a good thing since just such a smash had often been predicted, but the loss of the lumber worked a hardship upon the man to whom it was consigned.

To the dilapidated condition of cars used for the accommodation of patrons and to the carelessness in sending them out when known to be unfit for use are attributed the deaths of Engineer C. J. Ford and Fireman Porter Wood on August 7th, two miles east of Dos Palos, as well as the severe injury of five passengers, who could not be so criminally negligent as to send them into coffin cars. The running gear of one of these old cars, the flat wheels of which had previously caused much annoyance, was to blame for the disaster. The flange on the wheel of this car broke and sent the train careening over the track, while the engine and tender went over a seven-foot embankment. In the engine were the engineer and fireman, who were literally cooked before their bodies were taken from beneath the mass of red hot and twisted iron.

Absence of signals and the usual disregard for life caused two more deaths on August 11th near San Pedro, when a train backing down a grade crushed the life out of Miss Minnie Scribner and Mrs. Arthur Brentner. As usual in such cases, no precautions had been taken to warn the company's passengers of the approach of the train, and before the ladies realized their danger the wheels were upon them. There was no one on the rear end of the train to give warning. A signal at this point might have cost as much as \$10 or \$20, and might have saved the lives of these women. Eight days later the record of criminal negligence and accident was renewed when the north-bound owl train was ditched at Dos Palos. No excuse was given for the wreck—in fact, none was necessary, since all knew it was due to carelessness and poor rails.

It is but repetition to state that the Southern Pacific's false and criminal economy is responsible for other wrecks and more loss of life, but one glaring example is worth notice. On August 28th the Del Monte express crashed through an open switch into the narrow-gauge train at the Santa Clara crossing, and made a complete wreck of both. With its usual sneaking tactics, the Southern Pacific Company sought to relieve itself of responsibility by putting the blame on the brakeman of the narrow-gauge. The crossing where the accident occurred is a most dangerous one, but there was no signal and no flagman on August 28th. Instead, the brakeman was obliged to do his own duty, as well as that of the flagman. The collision resulted in the injury of several train men and distressed many passengers. A one-armed flagman, who has been bereft of his means of support through the carelessness of the corporation, was placed at this point at a salary which would not have kept him out of bankruptcy, but safety of passengers is not even a secondary consideration with the Southern Pacific.

The boneyard in Oakland, where all the cars and engines that cannot possibly be hauled over the tracks without danger of falling to pieces, are waiting antediluvian coaches which are still used, on occasion, for the carrying of passengers. At Union Courting Park on September 3d a portion of a train made up of these abandoned coaches was wrecked, the cars being derailed and switched. It was fortunate that the company and for the passengers that the cars were empty at the time, or there is no telling what loss of life would have followed. Some of the woodwork of the cars was so rotten that the couplings were out of the decked timbers, and as there was little or no pressure in the way of brakes, it was the wonder of the passengers that they escaped from the coffin cars without being maimed or killed.

An open switch, the result of lack of system, wrecked a passenger train on September 3d and severely injured the engineer. Another life was lost at Metz, Cal., on September 9th. Edward Smith was the victim. As he was the foreman of a Southern Pacific section gang, the company probably felt that it had a right to kill him, if necessary, by running work trains composed of cars which were not provided with appliances for proper handling.

September 13th marked another wreck in which the engineer of a freight train was badly scalded. At Fomoso only a few days ago, in which three women and the engineer of a passenger train were killed and horribly mangled, is another sample of Southern Pacific neglect. The details of this affair are too fresh in the minds of the public to need repetition, but four mounds have been added to the boneyard as a consequence of the death roll of the octopus has been swelled accordingly. The company throws or attempts to throw the blame upon one of its engineers, but it carefully conceals the fact that if a proper signal service had been maintained at the point Mrs. Majors, Mrs. Larue and Mrs. Ross might now be in their homes with their families and Engineer Wright might still be risking his life daily for the company.

At Ocean View on September 14th another smash-up was added to the list, while on the 15th, at Clark's station, Nev., came the collision injury to four of the trainmen and played havoc with cars and passengers. Fireman Williams is suffering at the hospital with a thigh and arm and three ribs broken. Needless to say, the company vainly tries to absolve itself from all blame. The record of a wreck for every two days, on Sunday morning the Southern Pacific sent two engines crashing together in East Oakland and piled up its running stock beside the track as a monument to its criminal negligence and disregard for the safety of the human beings intrusted to its care. Fireman Franklin Braswell was badly scalded and otherwise injured, and Engineer Horace A. Hammond was hurt less seriously. The passengers thank their luck and not the railroad company for their fortunate escape from death and maiming.

And this is the record for only eight months and a half.