

1st Ward	716075	192935	109010	909010
2nd Ward	970750	193060	1164410	1164410
3rd Ward	553040	133840	686880	686880
Total	14,813,545	2,456,400	17,269,945	17,269,945

R. R. WRECK THURSDAY

South Bound Passenger Train Derailed South of Shepherd

Passenger traffic was delayed a great deal on the Ann Arbor Thursday, the result of a wreck just south of Shepherd. As No. 54 south bound passenger train rounded the curve back of Salt River cemetery the tender climbed the rails. The engineer brought his train to a halt, but not until both the baggage and mail car had left the track. The tender tipped partly over on its side, but the other cars kept right side up and but for a slight shaking up no one was hurt. The track was torn up about twice the length of the train, but everything was cleared away at five o'clock in the afternoon and trains were running on schedule time Friday.

Will Celebrate Fourth

Wreck was on Thursday, June 25, 1914.
Mt. Pleasant Times—Reported in July 2 Edition

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DERAILMENT OF A PASSENGER TRAIN NEAR
SHEPHERD, MICHIGAN

Photo notes and comments by Hudson Keenan 2009

A train derailment in 1914 would hardly be worth mentioning almost on hundred years later or at least it would seem this should be the case. The story revolves around a unique set of pictures tucked away in a Kodak envelope for many years and saved by Virginia Layfield of Mt. Pleasant MI. The topic surfaced one day when she inquired if I would like to see some railroad pictures her deceased father, a railroad employee, had saved from years past. The ten pictures in the envelope were extraordinary in providing a glimpse not only into a railroad happening but the local people that turned out to see the "train wreck" first hand. The question quickly turned to where and when were these photos taken?

The pictures were of Ann Arbor Railroad equipment and so the matter of the line was quickly settled. The photos of the fields revealed the time of year was spring or early summer. One final and important clue was a stamp on the Kodak Paper envelope stating that the photo paper should be used by December 1st, 1914. With these facts in mind a search of the microfilms of several Central Michigan Papers was initiated. Eventually articles were found which described the event and matched the photos. The date of the derailment was Thursday, June 25, 1914. Information from Ann Arbor Railroad records then helped to fill in additional details.

South bound Train 53 was moving along with little problem, having left Frankfort on Lake Michigan at dawn. It had been making stops in many towns and villages, keeping close to its schedule. Railroad travel was nearing its summer peak. In fact the railroad had recently announced that for the summer of 1914 it was adding a passenger train to its daily runs. Now on Thursday morning Jun 26th it had just made a short stop in Shepherd, the time being a few minutes of the 11 a.m. hour.

The train was pulled by engine 105 a comparatively new locomotive of the "ten wheeler" type built in 1900. The engineer eased off on the throttle as the train approached the Salt River crossing. Just a little over a mile south of the village there is a bridge over the river and a gentle curve after which the rails then straighten out heading south to Alma.

For some unexplained reason it was here, just behind the Salt River Cemetery the tender for the engine left the rails. Tipping to the east it came to rest in a precarious position. The baggage and mail cars were derailed. The engineer quickly stopped the train and as reported in the paper many were startled and a bit shaken up but no one was hurt.

From this point on we can guess the sequence of events that are recorded in the pictures. Among those early on the scene was an individual who spent most of the day at the location recording the events which followed. Whoever the individual was they had a good knowledge of camera operation and an eye for composition as shown in these remarkable set of photos.



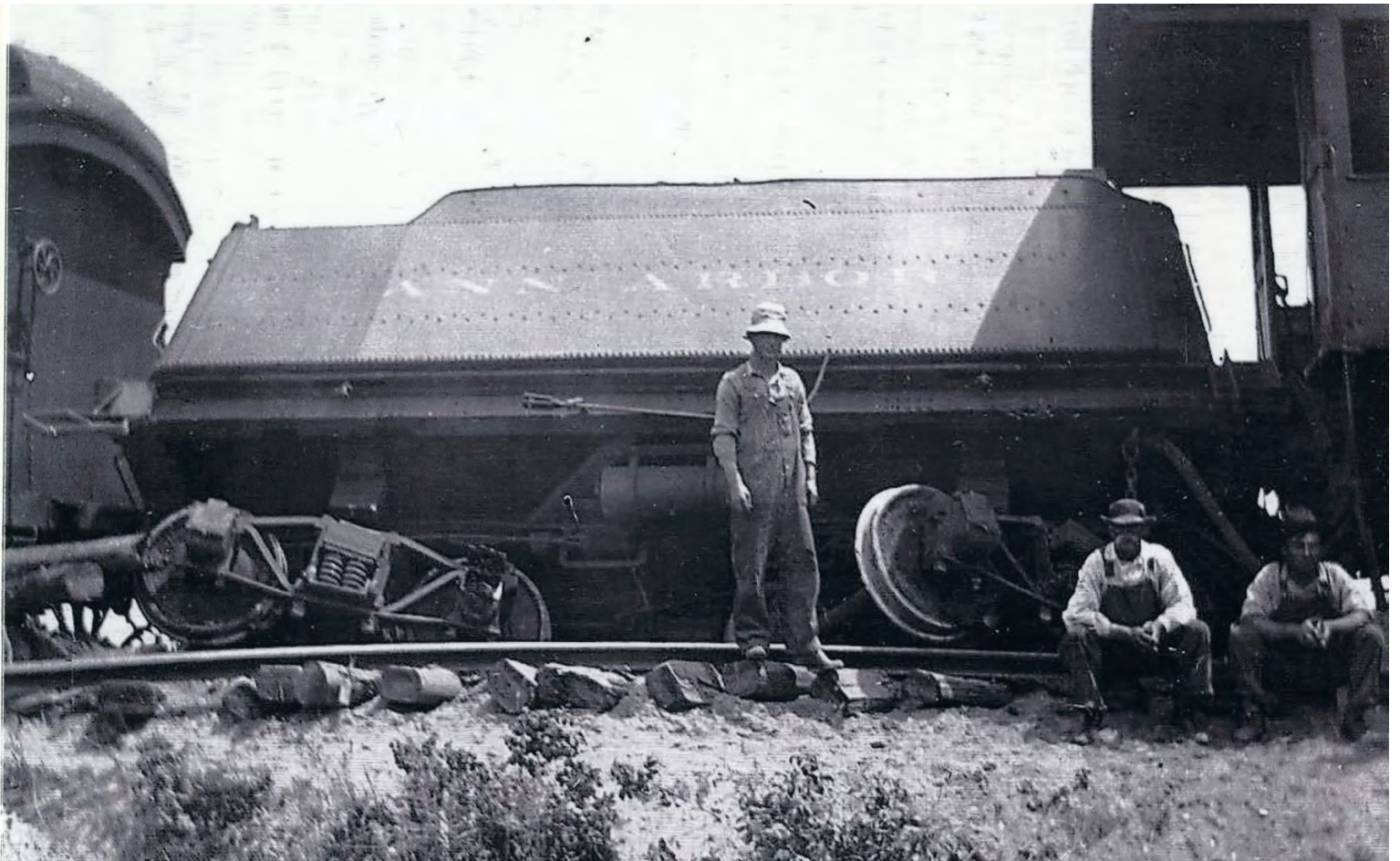
Photo #1: The photographer was early at the scene as only a few persons are about in the farm lane. This view is from the west side of the tracks looking northeast. The Salt River Cemetery would be to the left several hundred yards. The four car train consists of the baggage car, combination mail & passenger car and two regular passenger cars.



Photo #2: Next the photographer moved into the lane pictured in photo one. A lady and her parasol can be seen along the right margin. The "shot gun" stack on the engine is typical of the Pittsburgh Locomotive works "ten wheeler engine". Notice the derailed tender tilted to the east and reflecting the overcast sun of late morning.



Photo #3: The composition of the photo showing the wooden fence from the east side of the tracks is excellent. This westward looking view shows the tender with its supply what looks like low grade coal. Steam is still up and everyone including the engineer is waiting for assistance.



Photo#4: From the looks of the dress it would appear some of the passengers are posed next to the fence for the photographer. Train crew members in the baggage car stand in the open door awaiting the next event. Most likely word had to be gotten back to Shepherd where the telegraph at the station would set in motion new train orders, as well as section gangs and equipment

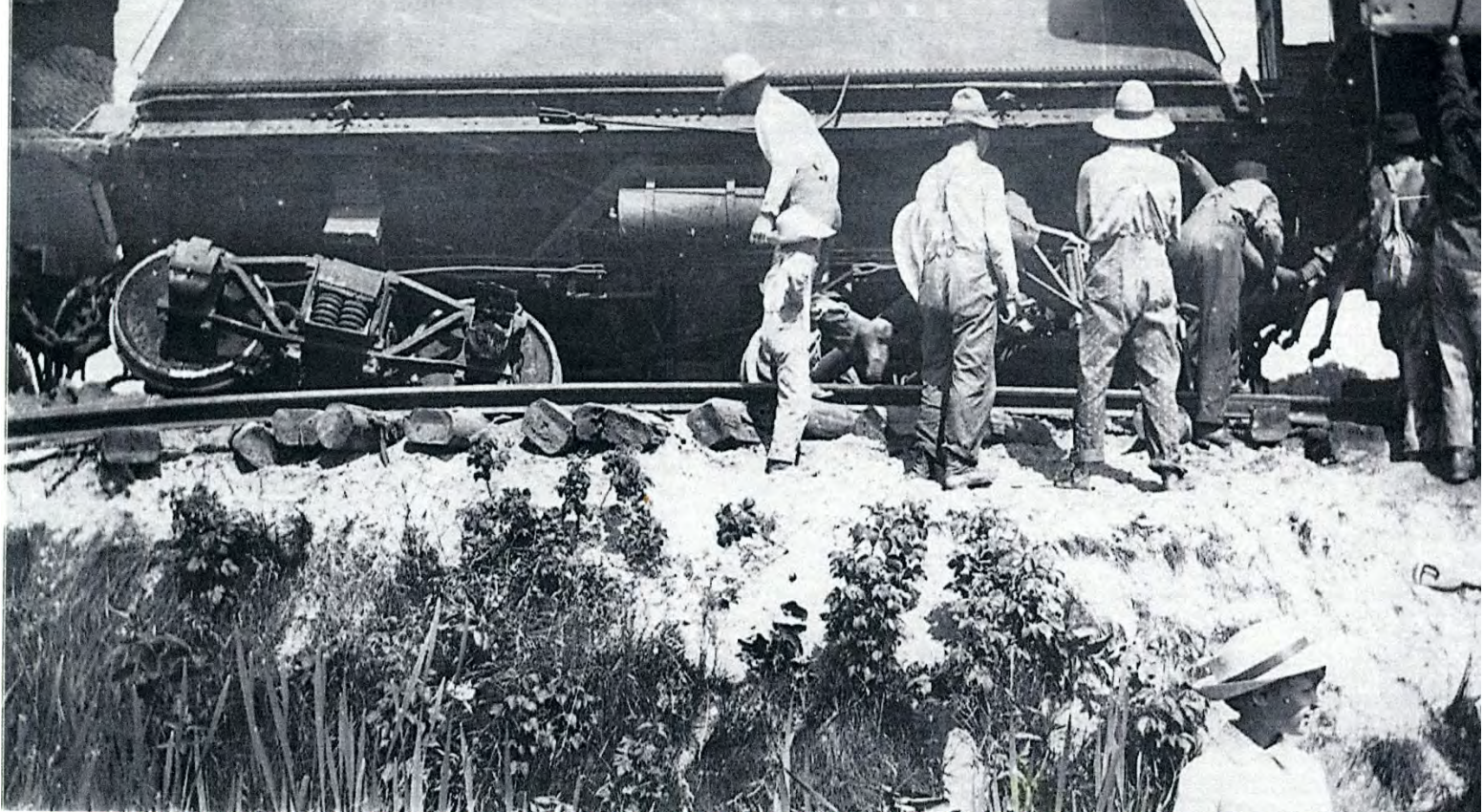


Photo #5: Coming in from the south the Ann Arbor Motor Car is now on the scene. More than likely the passengers transferred to this car to continue their journey. Motor cars were powered by a gasoline engines were first used on the Ann Arbor in 1911. They augmented steam service and stopped at crossings along the way to pick up passengers. By 1925 they were no longer in use.

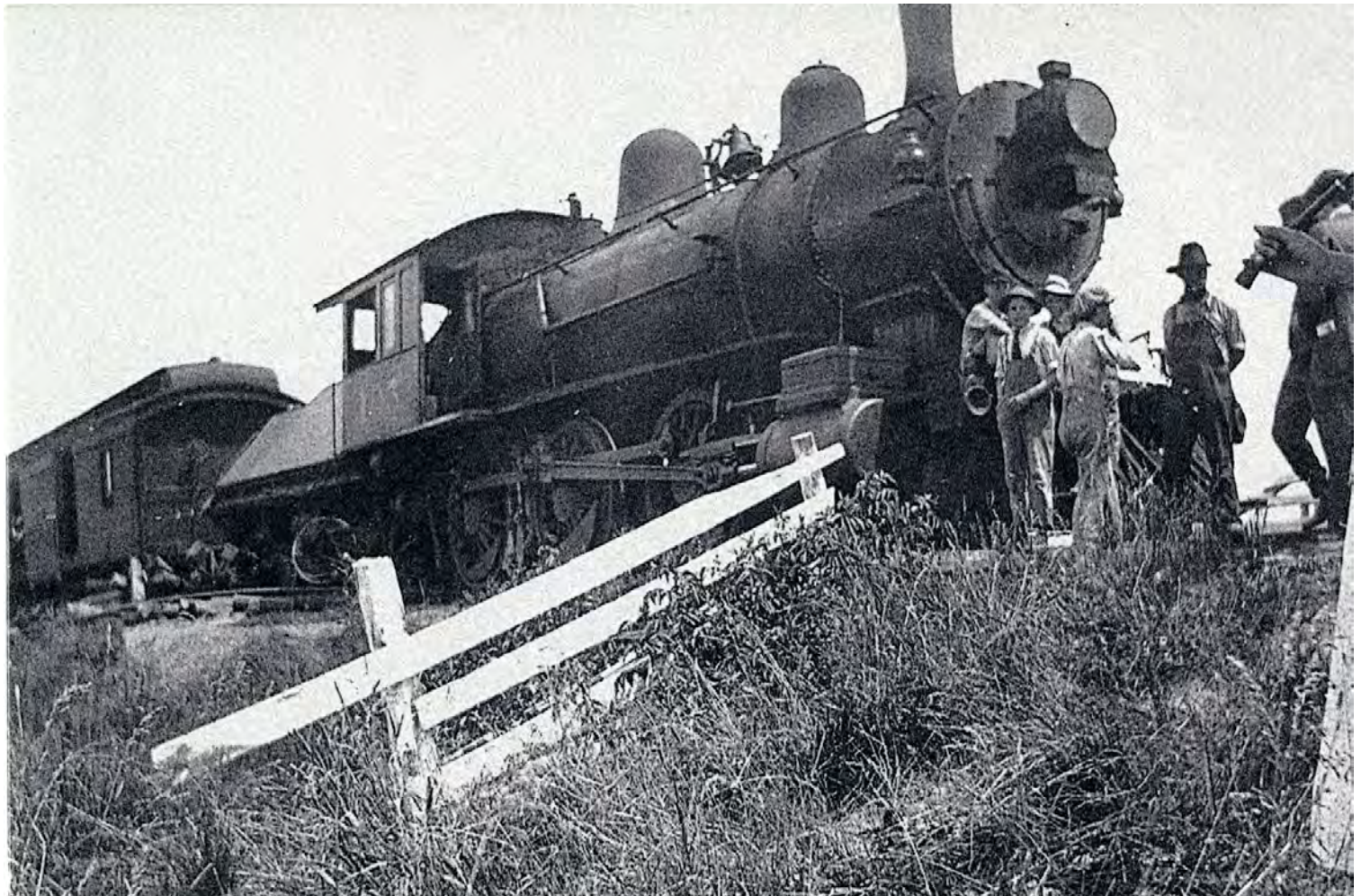


Photo #6: The twisted wheel trucks and torn up track is evident in this view of the crew sitting next to the tender. The sun casts its shadow to the edge of misaligned ties.



Photo #7: Time has passed, notice the shadow is steeper and the wheel trucks are in full sunlight. Men and equipment have arrived. The first order of business is to separate the locomotive from the tender.



Photo #8: With the locomotive separated from the tender the former has been moved away, perhaps to the nearest siding at Forest Hill a few miles south. Torn up tracks and several large jacks are near the tender. The mail car has been put back on the track and is connected to the passenger cars in the background. A section crew can be seen repairing the right of way.



Photo #9: What a day for kids! A most unique photograph. The big Ann Arbor steam crane was probably brought up from Owosso. The job of lifting the heavy tender is underway. (In 2009 this crane in disrepair is on the grounds of the Buckley Steam Show site just west of Buckley MI in Grand Traverse County.)



Photo #10: Pictured here are at least 25 men involved in setting ties and rails. The broken and split ties are off to the side as the work progresses. By evening the track was repaired. The newspapers reported trains ran on schedule on Friday the next day after the accident.