

CHILD KILLED.

Little Eva Solovich Run Over By Trolley Car.

DEATH WAS ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS

Inquest Held Sunday and Railway Employees Absolved from Blame for the Accident.

The first fatal accident in this city on the Lewiston, Brunswick and Bath Street Railway occurred Saturday evening and the victim was the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Solovich, a Jew family who reside on Front street. She was aged 4 years and 6 months. The accident occurred on Front street opposite the Columbia Theatre and from the stories told by the few people who witnessed the accident it happened in such a manner that the men on the car and bystanders were unable to do anything to prevent it.

Car No. 34, Conductor Grows and Motorman Merrill, was coming down the street and the little girl in an attempt to cross in front of the car, was caught and knocked down.

Motorman Merrill says he only saw the girl when she was within a few feet of the car and he did all in his power to stop. When the car was brought to a standstill the child was underneath on the track. The car was started ahead and moved over the child. Dr. Bibber happened to be in the vicinity and the child was immediately removed to Leonard & Mitchell's drug store and on examination it was found that death was almost instantaneous. She breathed only a few times.

The wound in the head was a sharp cut over the temple denuding the skull and fracturing it. She bled freely at the nose and mouth. The parents of the child were immediately notified. A crowd had gathered in front of the drug store and Marshal Kittridge was on guard at the door to prevent people crowding into the store.

When word was sent out that the child was dead the poor mother was nearly prostrated. She was taken home by Mr. Solovich through the crowd and many expressions of sympathy were heard on all sides. Eva was the oldest child and a favorite. Coroner Ballou was sent for and on his arrival the body was removed to Coney's undertaking rooms.

Motorman Merrill and Conductor Grows were taken into custody by Marshal Kittridge and detained in his office. No complaint was made against them and they were released with orders to appear at the inquest. The inquest was held Sunday afternoon. The jury were John O. Shaw, Frank A. Palmer, Charles L. Turner, Harry C. Webber, Fred D. Hill and R. P. Ham. Nine witnesses were summoned. The testimony introduced was as follows:

Dr. R. D. Bibber: Did not see the accident, but saw the car near the corner of Front and Summer streets and saw an object in the track opposite Russell's store five or six feet from the rear of the car; heard a groan; I requested the child be removed to Leonard & Mitchell's; she breathed only four or five times after she was picked up; there was no heart action and no pulse at the wrist; she lost a large quantity of blood; the wound was in the left side of the head about six inches long and was an oblong cut; the temple bone was broken and carried away blood vessels; fracture of base of brain; the body was not otherwise injured; the immediate cause of death was concussion of the brain caused by coming in contact with the car; don't know what struck the head; the wound was caused by something sharp; I did not notice the speed of the car; in my opinion it was going twice as fast as I was walking; I was walking about three miles an hour.

Chas. H. Miller testified:

I live in Lisbon, aged 38 years, occupation, motorman, was running car No. 34. The accident happened at 6.42 on Front street, near foot of Summer street on a down grade. Have been motorman 9 months, remember distinctly rate of speed the car was going at the time of accident. It was about 6 miles an hour which is the usual speed I run through Front street. I was not using any power and had brake partially set on account of the cross streets in this vicinity. First saw child within two feet of rail about three feet ahead of the car coming toward it. She kept going and was on the track when the car struck her. She was trying to go across ahead of the car. Couldn't say what part of the car hit her, think it was the truck frame. She was under the car when it stopped, afterwards started the car ahead over the body so it could be removed. She started from the east side of the street and did not stop. No part of the car touched her when we started ahead after we stopped the first time. The car was stopped within 6 feet after I saw her. Have been motorman on the road since it started operations. Have been bothered with children playing about the track, they frequently run out and place things on the track. The running time from head of Centre street to car barn is 7-12 minutes, should judge the distance was about a mile. The child was under the gear case. We are instructed to run about 5 or 6 miles an hour in the city. Have never heard of motormen being discharged for not being able to make time. The space underneath the car from the pavement is about six inches. The last stop the car made previous to the accident was at Jordan's stable. Never had an accident before.

John E. Fitzgerald testified: Did not see the accident. Was on the car returning from Brunswick and about to get off; had motioned the conductor to stop when I heard somebody say: "You have run over a child," and another: "Don't go ahead." I immediately started for the drug store to telephone for a doctor and met Dr. Bibber. Went with him and saw the child on the track between the rails. Did not know the car had run over anybody until it stopped. It came to a standstill so suddenly that it almost threw me over. The bell had been rung to let me off; it happened about the same time the child was struck. The car was running about 6 or 8 miles an hour; Don't remember car stopping at Jordan street. The car was about four feet from the child when I saw it.

Chas. Grows testified: live in Lisbon Falls and been conductor on L. B. and B. R.R. for 9 months constantly. Did not see accident. First saw child when it was under car after we had stopped. I gave orders for car to go forward as there was no other way to get the child out from under it. I instantly inquired for a doctor when Dr. Bibber appeared. I let him have charge of the body. I then ran the car up to the waiting room.

Fitzgerald gave me a motion to stop the car for him to get off and I was in the act of giving two bells to keep on going when I heard somebody in the street say: "You have run over a child." About eight feet of the car had gone over the body when it stopped.

The child was under the gear case. The car had slackened speed considerably after I rang the bell for Fitzgerald. We were running six or seven miles to the city. When the car stopped I supposed it was owing to my signal. No part of the car touched the child when it was moved ahead after the accident to allow an opportunity to get at the body. This is my first accident on the road.

Chas. P. Snow, an employee of the road, testified that he was in the car. First knew of the accident just after the car stopped; saw the child under the car, under the gear casing. The car was started forward again in a moment or two. I assisted in carrying child to the drug store. Saw Fitzgerald signal Conductor to stop. The child opened its mouth when it was in my arms.

Houghton Kimball and Wm. Labree, two boys who were standing on the sidewalk nearly opposite the spot where the accident occurred, testified that they saw the child when she was struck by the car and thrown down;

What is the price of Dobbin's Electric Soap?"

"Five cents a bar full size, just reduced from ten. Hasn't been less than ten for 33 years."

"Why that's the price of common brown soap. I can't afford to buy any other soap after this."

"Send me a box of Dobbins' Electric. It would be very foolish for me to buy any other."

did not see her before and did not know where she came from. They saw a little boy running on the track and hollered at him to get off. He turned around the corner by Foote & Sparks; saw the car when it struck the child. It was going slow. Labree said he turned his head away from the car at that instant.

The jury then viewed the body which was in the rear room of the establishment. According to the Jewish custom the body had to be left just as it was after the accident. They do not want to dress it but bury it as soon as possible.

The jury after a brief session in Dr. W. G. Webber's office made up the following report:

That Eva Solovich came to her death by being struck and run over by car No. 34 of the Lewiston, Brunswick and Bath Street Railway on the evening of April 15, 1899, and that from the evidence produced no blame can be attached to the employees of the road.

The body was taken to Portland this morning for interment in the Jewish cemetery.

Mr. Solovich will bring action against the road for damages and has engaged E. C. Plummer Esq., as counsel. He was present at the inquest. F. E. Southard, Esq., and Supt. Maloon were present representing the road.

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