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Wreck on the S. & L. Railway at Mira Gut, April 14th, I903rrt~ was a train of j empty hopper cars, running out of Louisbourg. The swing bridge was openT The engine went over the o- pen draw, kill? ing the engin? eer, James Par- sons. (Photo by Dodge). only thing we did, we broke the rail, but that isn't serious. Another thing you weren't allowed to do was make a flying shunt. You'd be going right along the main line and there'd be a switch going into the yard. And you'd want to get a car from behind the engine. Well, the engineer would back up quite a piece, and he would give it to her, he'd go quite fast. Then he'd stop just enough to give you a chance to cut the coupling--he'd give slack coupling; he'd likely shut her off or just touch the brake--and when you lifted the coupling, he'd give it to her and get away from that car. He'd keep on going right up the main line. There'd be a fellow at the switch; and when the engine went by, he'd turn the switch and let the car go in the yard. But a flying shunt is not allowed, unless it's. absolutely necessary. It's dangerous. Anything could happen. I remember one time we had taken a few cars--I think it was slag, mixed up with empties. The engineer said, "I think we'll fly those in at the east end of the assembly yard." He sent the fireman out to cut them off, 2 or 3 cars, and I went to the switch. And the en? gine we had, the firebox was very low on her. And sometimes the guardrail would be up a little bit high. So anyway, he cut her off. And when he was going by, the firebox hooked the guardrail and it put her off the track. And the other cars came in, ran into her, and it dropped the bot? toms in those cars, broke the beam, I guess, on the locomotive--and there it was, everything was tied up. And there was a regular train that would leave Sydney in the morning at 8 o'clock. Most of the of? ficials of the Dominion Coal Company lived in Sydney, and they would take this train to Glace Bay, to go to the General Office--the superintendent and whoever else it might be. It was a regular train, but they travelled on it. Anyway, this day it was behind u', and couldn't get by--the main line was tied up. They were there till 11 o'clock that night. And I think we were laid off that time, 10 days, because what we had done really wasn't necessary. It was just an idea that the engineer had. And we tied up the main line there for a- bout eight hours. But then there's lots of times, we used to say, "make a drop"--the grade would be so that you could just pull the pin, let the engine keep going, and the fellow on the switch would let you in on the track. But it was no effort, because it was a gradual incline, the cars would just follow in. There was an awful lot of that done one time. When I first started on the road as a brakeman in 1918, mostly it was practical? ly all wooden hoppers--there were no air brakes. Those wooden hoppers, they only had two axles, one on each end. They used to get hot--the journal would break--and they'd catch fire. It was quite a job then to get that car out of the way, get it somewhere on a siding. Chances are it would cause a derailment before you got it anywhere. There wasn't always a place to get off. So you'd probably have to chain it--put a chain around the axle and around the drawbars, chain it up as best you could--because once the axle was broken, the wheels would start to spread. You'd try to keep that part together, take that car along to the next

siding, to get clear of it. You'd be surprised the things that could happen. There could be a broken rail; it may break between the ties; or there might be part of the top of it break off, and that would cause trouble. You wouldn't be able to stop, you wouldn't recognize it till it was too late. And it's hard to be? lieve , but the sun could throw the whole track right out of line. I've seen the track like that, straight like that, and then it'd turn right off. They'd call it a "sun kink." A train couldn't get by it un? til they put the track back in. It must have been the expansion that would do it. But you'd hardly credit that, would you? It could happen once a year or so. And the day before, there was just a straight line of track. When I started brakeman we had to brake those trains down by hand. The brakeman