

GONZALES, JUAN

?-June 9, 1933

One of the most tragic and horrifying accidents to take place in this vicinity happened shortly after midnight Friday about two miles south of town.

The section crew on the Colorado & Southern found what remained of a human body on the tracks, at this point, as they were traveling on a hand-car. They immediately notified R.M. Reed, station agent, and he in turn notified Jesse Payne, coroner.

Payne immediately left for the scene where he witnessed the effect of the gruesome accident.

Parts of the body were scattered along the railroad track for a distance of 425 feet and it was necessary to gather the remains up in a tarpaulin. The torso was the only portion of the body remaining partially intact. The arms, head, feet and legs were dismembered and portions of them were ground to pulp. Clothing from the dead man's body was also found scattered along the track. His shoes were first to be found. The strings had been broken on each and they had been torn from his feet.

Coroner Payne immediately investigated concerning the man and how the accident happened. It was found he had boarded the midnight passenger train, going south, between the baggage car and tender, in the vernacular of the "night of the road" known as the blinds. In some manner he fell, shortly after the passenger left the station. He was evidently caught under the trucks of the coach and tumbled along the track with his body passing from one side of the rail to the other, causing the frightful condition of his body. Three other trains passed the spot before he was discovered and it is possible they were also responsible for the dismembering of the body. Investigation disclosed the baggage car on this train contained evidences of blood on the front of it when it reached Denver, helping to prove the theory of the accident.

Papers found scattered along the track and in his clothing identified him as Juan Gonzales of Pueblo, Colo. He was married and one letter had been written to his wife the day before the accident and he had failed to mail it. He had worked for a short time for the Two Bar ranch and had quit and was brought to Wheatland Friday. That evening he had expressed his bedroll to Pueblo and this was the last time he was seen alive. He was about 45 to 50 years of age.

The body was turned over to the Lyla Watson Funeral Home and burial took place in the Wheatland cemetery Sunday.