



The driver of a tractor trailer, which was hit by a southbound CN freight train at a private crossing in Richvale last week, walked away from it all with only a slight limp and assorted bruises to show for the experience. His truck and the train fared much worse. In the top left hand corner can be seen the wheels of the trailer, which wound up against a hydro pole about 100 yards from the scene of impact. Top right shows some of the battered boxcars and twisted track, which

was torn up for 800 feet. A load of new Datsun cars and trucks was still secured to moorings in the picture lower left hand corner, but several more were jarred loose and were completely demolished. Lower right shows two of the engines, which wound up by themselves another 100 yards from the rest of the cars. Damage is estimated at more than \$1,000,000.

(Photo by Ron Fawn)

23 Rail Cars "Skidoo" As Tractor Trailer And Train Meet

BY JIM IRVING

A fifth wheel became a big wheel in helping to save the life of Tottenham truck driver, John Fox, 26, who walked away from a \$1 to \$3 million tractor-trailer — train crash in Richmond Hill Thursday of last week with not much more than a twisted knee and some body abrasions. The accident, which sent 23 southbound CN Railway cars careering down the track leap-frog fashion, ground up some 800 feet of track and sent the trailer portion of the Canada Cartage truck off on its own private ride one hundred yards or so from the point of impact, occurred at a private railway crossing at the Pre-Con Concrete Company, 9121 Yonge Street, Richvale, about 10:35 am, Valentine's Day. Wheels of the tractor came to rest at the bottom of a hydro pole 100 yards away. The collision resulted when Fox, who was partially ac-

ross the private crossing with his load of 12 tons of flat steel, plus a quantity of elongated three-inch steel rods, was struck by the CN freight, which was doing about 50 miles an hour at the time. Fox told investigating officers, Constables George Anderson and David Farquharson of York Regional Police, that he hadn't noticed the train coming until it was almost on top of him. He then accelerated to try to get across, but the train plowed into the trailer. **CATTLE KILLED** Police said the trailer was severed from the cab of the truck at the point where the fifth wheel sits on the tractor. The immediate separation prevented the cab and Mr. Fox from being carried along with the rest of the vehicle. As it was, the locomotive continued down the track, coming to a stop some 1,000 feet away, still upright, al-

though partially off the track, and with none of its four-man crew seriously injured. Two other derailed engines also remained upright. Several cattle cars were also derailed, killing one of the 107 cattle aboard. Another one, which sustained a broken leg, had to be destroyed. The cattle were later unloaded into trucks by the Ontario Humane Society, assisted by York Region Canine Control Officer, James Ryan. Two three-tiered carriers, loaded with new Datsun cars and trucks, were also sent flying, badly smashing up several of the vehicles. However, most of the cargo remained secured and surprisingly intact. The scene of smashed boxcars, uprooted track, broken hydro poles, torn up fences and scattered cargo, was reminiscent of pictures of wartime bombing over London and Berlin. It also looked as

if the clean-up would take about as long as some of the post-war operations. However, a crane was on the job the next day and it was expected to have the place cleared in about three days. Trains were being re-routed on the alternate Newmarket line. Richmond Hill Fire Department was on hand with foam equipment when it was thought oil from a damaged engine might start a fire. **STOP, LOOK, LISTEN** Steve Illing, an employee of the company, said he had been working in the yard when the accident occurred. He said Fox had asked him how to get out of the yard and he had told him to pull his truck around and go out the Yonge Street entrance. Vince Paradiso, another employee, said that Fox, however, had driven straight ahead instead over the crossing. Driver of the engine was Albert Matthews, 45, of

Rexdale, who described the incident as "a rough one." With him at the time were Dick Rowe, of Barrie, a conductor; and brakemen, Ken Marshall, Downsview, and Emmet Croteau, Keswick. The CN is holding its own investigation into the matter, and Barney Danson, Liberal MP for York North, whose riding includes Richmond Hill, said he was concerned about private crossings without safety precautions and would discuss the matter with Transport Minister Jean Marchand. The sign on the west side of the crossing says: Caution. Stop, look and listen. On the other side, the sign reads: Caution. Stop, look and listen. Private crossing. Persons using this crossing do so at their own risk. Driver Fox's only comment to a reporter following the mishap was: "Well, I'm alive . . . At least I think I am."

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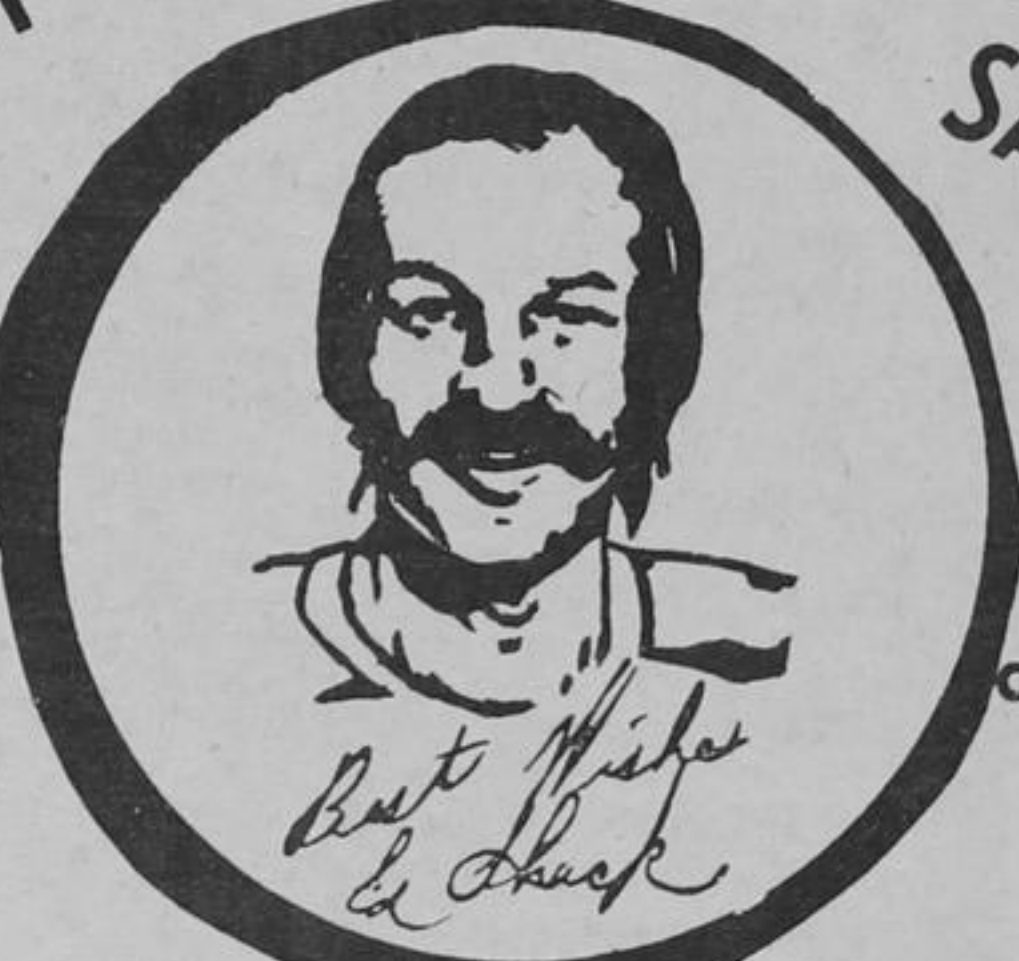
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