

**John Eckstine talks with Murial Geoghegan whose father was a foreman on the railway in the early 1900's. Here she talks about the 1923 Owings train wreck.**

**Mr. Eckstine:** And you were on the train that wrecked in Owings?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** That's right.

**Mr. Eckstine:** That was 1922?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** '23 I think it was.

**Mr. Eckstine:** You were at the Beach that day?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** My Uncle Jim was taking Hilda, and my baby sister, and me. And the train and everything was going fine. It was the last trip of the year. And everything was going fine.

And when we got near the station — this crossing at Owings and the whistle, you know, was blowing, blowing; and then the brakes went on the train, and the whistle kept blowing. And all of a sudden there was this crash. And then there was smoke. And the odor was awful. It was terrible.

And I was foolish. I had to get out and go out to see what was going there. And there were three bodies. They were colored men I understand. And they burned to death out there.

I don't remember whether that train made it to the Beach that day or whether we went back home. I don't remember that part.

**Mr. Eckstine:** Which way were you headed?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** We were coming down here.

**Mr. Eckstine:** That train was coming to the Beach?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** Yes.

And I don't know whether they sent a train up here to take us down here and then get us back home. But it made a whole mess there at Owings.

**Mr. Eckstine:** Well, I understand that there was a pretty bad fire.

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** Yeah.

**Mr. Eckstine:** And it burned the coaches and burned part of the station.

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** And three colored men. And people there claimed that they were going I forget how many miles an hour; they were going pretty fast. And the sign was there — Railroad Crossing, you know.

And then Pop was on his work car and an automobile came down that hill, and they hit his work car. And he was thrown off it. And he had shoulder and rib injuries from that. He was in Old Providence Hospital at that time.

**Mr. Eckstine:** Now, what do you call a work car?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** Well, it's this —

**Mr. Eckstine:** You mean a hand car?

**Mrs. Geoghegan:** A hand car.