Finding Aid to the Coroner’s inquest of the Michigan, North Dakota Train accident

Johnson, Einar and Kelsch, C. F.
Coroner’s inquest of the Michigan, North Dakota Train accident, 1945
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OVERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY

The train wreck that happened on August 9, 1945 in Michigan, North Dakota would become the worst train disaster in North Dakota history. Two Great Northern passenger trains were traveling towards the west coast. Most of the more than 900 passengers in both cars were military men and women. Train 1 contained Pullman sleeper cars with 237 on board while Train 2 carried between 600 and 700 in coach cars. Train 1 had to make an emergency stop (one of several since leaving the Fargo station) in Michigan and Train 2 was not able to slow in time before crashing into the end of Train one. The last section of Train one, contained 35 people. One serviceman jumped out a window but the other 34 were killed either instantly or by steam from the Train 2 engine. One person was found alive, Mrs. George Bannan,
however, once she was freed, she did 15 minutes later. The people of Michigan, North Dakota came out to help with the rescue including, once night fell, turning on their car headlights to illuminate the scene.

A coroner’s inquest would later find the flagman and conductor of Train 1 to be responsible for the accident and were subsequently fired.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT**

Contains a copy of the coroner’s inquest with the witness testimonies.

**BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

Contains a copy of the coroner’s inquest with the witness testimonies.