



The scene of the rail crash at Stratton Green bridge in 1958

## **Stratton Triple Train Crash**

A crash involving three trains at Stratton Green Bridge at two o'clock this morning blocked both the up and down main London lines. Although no-one was injured it was the worst train accident in the Swindon area for some years. The locomotive and six wagons of the 12.10 a.m. Bristol East Depot to Reading freight train, running on the up loop line, was derailed. Two other trains were passing on both up and down main lines almost simultaneously. By flashing lights, the crew managed to slow down a second freight train travelling on the parallel main up line from Fishguard to Paddington, but it struck some of the derailed wagons and the locomotive and two wagons in turn were derailed. The third train involved was the 12.45 a.m. Paddington to Carmarthen newspaper and parcels train, which scraped some of the derailed wagons and came to a halt. Swindon men Bill Bateman, of Pinehurst Road, and J. Thompson, of Whiteman Street, had been at the controls of the newspaper train, which was thought to have been travelling at 60 m.p.h. when the chaos of the first two derailments loomed from the darkness. Fellow footplate crews agreed they were lucky not to have been killed. Happily, human suffering was limited to diversions for commuters and morning newspapers absent from breakfast tables throughout the region. The Swindon Junction station master, Mr. W. J. Wilford, and breakdown gangs were called to the scene and the work of clearing the lines and transferring newspapers and parcels to another train began immediately. The line was clear in both directions by the next night.

**Swindon Advertiser, Wednesday, 12 November 1958**