



Disaster at 160km/h: the twisted wreckage of the Paddington-bound train after the fatal crash in west London

6 die as trains hit

From JANE WILLSON in London

Driver held in manslaughter inquiry

THE driver of the express train that crashed yesterday in west London killing six passengers was arrested in connection with manslaughter charges, British Transport Police have revealed.

The development came as the last two trapped bodies were removed from the mangled wreckage.

A further 160 passengers were injured, 13 seriously, when the train from Swansea to Paddington smashed into the eighth wagon of an empty freight train crossing in front of it at Southall station in west London.

It was London's worst train crash for nine years.

A British Transport spokesman said the ar-

rested driver was being interviewed at Southall police station.

The unnamed express driver had earlier passed a breath test for alcohol, transport police spokesman Simon Lupin said.

"The passenger train driver is being questioned by police in connection with manslaughter charges but he has not been charged," he said.

Of the freight train driver, he said: "He was spoken to but was quite shaken after the crash and he is no longer being interviewed."

The express train, from south Wales, was travelling about 160km/h, and just 10 minutes from its destination at Paddington, when the disaster occurred.

The second carriage

was shunted over the first, which took the force of the impact, pushing seats through the partly torn-off roof. Sixteen passengers had to be freed from the wreckage.

Among the survivors was Jane Garvey, one of many journalists returning to London from Wales after the referendum vote.

Using her mobile to give BBC Radio listeners a first-hand account, Ms Garvey described the scene as "total and utter chaos".

After leaving the train Ms Garvey said: "There was a judder and a dull series of thuds.

"We were in the third carriage and after the crash the first two carriages were no longer attached to the train.

"They were all over

the place. One woman in our carriage seemed to be trapped under a seat, while a man in a blue shirt had blood all over his back."

Other survivors told how people were crying in the darkness, queuing to be released, but finding the doors locked.

Chris Dixey, an engineer from Kent, said he tried to break a window, but it would not smash.

"There was a flash of fire, then it went out, but I was worried about fire," he said.

Adam Van der Mark, a TV producer, said passengers did not know if the power lines brought down with the wreckage were still active.

He said there was a smell of burning, and "loads of smoke".

"My suitcase fell from

the rack on to a lady who was sitting in front of me and dislocated her neck," Mr Van der Mark said.

"She was in a real state."

Investigators sifting through the wreckage were unable to say whether a sophisticated computerised safety system to counter driver error was working.

The \$1.4 billion system, which prevents a driver overriding a red signal, had undergone trials on the section of railway where the accident happened.

So the question still to be answered, but on everybody's lips, was did the fatal crash happen because of signal failure, driver error or track faults?