

Introduction

*L*ost at Thaxton is divided into two main sections. Part I, "Their Story," is written in the form of a story-based narrative history. I want you to be able to feel as if you were riding along on the train that night and that you were an eyewitness to all of the events that took place. Even though the story is told in this manner, every detail that you read is directly related to information found through research. Descriptions of the weather, the geography, physical descriptions of passengers and crew, and even descriptions of the train itself are all based on eyewitness statements and historical documents.

Conversations and statements made by passengers and crew that night quoted during the course of the story are the actual words documented at the time. No additional dialogue was added if there was no evidence that it took place. In other words, this is not a book "based on a true story," but instead it is an authentic true story. The real-life drama that took place that night stands on its own. That is certainly not to say the book is infallible, but it is a genuine effort to tell as true a tale as can be told while looking back so long ago.

Part II is titled "The Rest of the Story," and it provides a deeper look into the causes of the wreck, what happened in the months and years afterward, and some mysteries that were revealed during the research for the book. In the final chapter, you are introduced to each person on the train. Any photographs that were uncovered of the passengers and crew can be found there.

History is at the mercy of the hands that document it, and that fact has not been taken lightly in the writing of this book.

MJ