

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 2850
THE AKRON, CANTON & YOUNGSTOWN RAILROAD COMPANY
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT
AT HILES, OHIO, ON
DECEMBER 13, 1944

SUMMARY

Railroad: Akron, Canton & Youngstown
Date: December 13, 1944
Location: Hiles, Ohio
Kind of accident: Head-end collision
Trains involved: Freight : Freight
Train numbers: 94 ; 97
Engine numbers: 406 : 353
Consist: 38 cars, caboose : 29 cars, caboose
Estimated speed: Standing : 15 m. p. h.
Operation: Timetable and train orders;
yard limits
Track: Single; tangent; 0.23 percent
descending grade westward
Weather: Cloudy
Time: 5:10 a. m.
Casualties: 1 killed; 2 injured
Cause: Switch being opened immediately
in front of approaching train

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 2850

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 6, 1910.

THE AKRON, CANTON & YOUNGSTOWN RAILROAD COMPANY

January 16, 1945.

Accident at Hiles, Ohio, on December 13, 1944, caused by
a switch being opened immediately in front of an
approaching train.

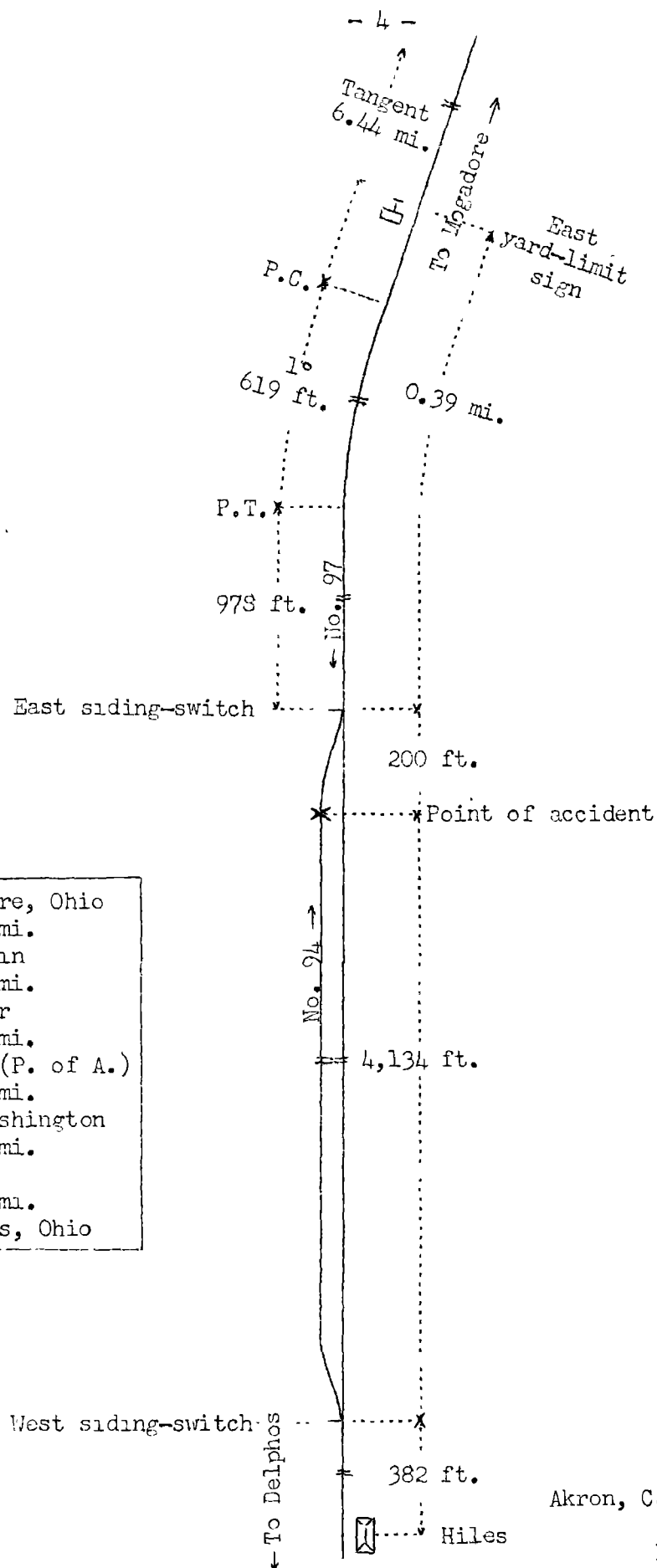
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On December 13, 1944, there was a head-end collision between two freight trains on the Akron, Canton & Youngstown Railroad at Hiles, Ohio, which resulted in the death of one train-service employee and the injury of two train-service employees.

¹Under authority of section 17 (2) of the Interstate Commerce Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the Commission to Commissioner Patterson for consideration and disposition.

o Mogadore, Ohio	3.5 mi.
o Brittain	42.1 mi.
o Spencer	14.0 mi.
X Hiles (P. of A.)	26.6 mi.
o New Washington	28.0 mi.
o Carey	55.1 mi.
o Delphos, Ohio	



Inv-2850
Akron, Canton & Youngstown
Railroad
Hiles, Ohio
December 13, 1944

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

The Akron, Canton & Youngstown Railroad was a single-track line extending eastward from Delphos to Mogadore, Ohio, 169.3 miles. Trains were operated over this line by timetable and train orders. There was no block system in use. Within yard limits at Hiles, 109.7 miles east of Delphos, a siding 4,334 feet long paralleled the main track on the north. The east switch of this siding was 0.39 mile west of the east yard-limit sign and 0.90 mile east of the station. The accident occurred on the siding 200 feet west of the east switch. From the east the main track was tangent throughout a distance of 6.44 miles, then there was a 1° curve to the left 619 feet, which was followed by a tangent 978 feet to the east siding-switch and a considerable distance westward. The grade for west-bound trains was 0.23 percent descending.

The switch-stand of the east siding-switch was of the hand-throw, intermediate type, and was provided with two targets and a switch lamp. The centers of the lenses and the targets were, respectively, 8 feet 2-1/2 inches and 6 feet 11 inches above the ties, and 6 feet 10 inches north of the gage side of the north rail of the main track. When the switch was lined normally a green rectangular target, 40 inches by 8-1/4 inches, and a green light were displayed. When the switch was lined for entry to the siding a red oval target, 26 inches by 12 inches, and a red light were displayed.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

10. Color Signals

Color	Indication
(a) Red	Stop.
* * *	
(c) Green	Proceed, * * *
* * *	

17. The headlight will be displayed to the front of every train by night. It must be concealed when a train turns out to meet another and has stopped clear of main track, * * *

It must be dimmed * * * approaching * * * meeting points * * *.

* * *

71. A train is superior to another train by right, class or direction.

* * *

72. * * *; trains of the second class are superior to those of the third; * * *.

* * *

93. * * *

Second and succeeding class and extra trains must move within yard limits prepared to stop unless the main track is seen or known to be clear.

93 (a). Second and succeeding class trains, extra trains and engines while within yard limits, will run under full control of engineman at a speed to enable full stop to be made within one-half the range of his vision.

* * *

104 (d). When trains turn out to meet or to be passed by other trains, the trainmen setting switches must place lever in notch properly and insert lock to avoid lever raising, and must stand on opposite side of track from switch while trains are passing.

211. * * *

* * *

Enginemen must show train orders to firemen and when practicable to forward trainmen. Conductors must show train orders when practicable to trainmen.

Description of Accident

At Carey, 54.6 miles west of Hiles, the crew of No. 94, an east-bound third-class freight train, received copies of train order No. 40 reading as follows:

No 94 Eng 406 has right over No
97 Eng 353 Carey to Spencer

Spencer was 14 miles east of Hiles. At New Washington, 26.6 miles west of Hiles, the crew of No. 94 received copies of train order No. 7 reading as follows:

No 94-Eng 406 take siding meet
No 97 Eng 353 at Hiles

No. 94, consisting of engine 406, 38 cars and a caboose, entered the west siding-switch at Hiles and stopped on the siding, about

4:45 a. m., with the engine standing 200 feet west of the east switch. About 25 minutes later the engine was struck by No. 97.

The crew of No. 97, a west-bound second-class freight train, received copies of train order No. 40 at Brittain, 56.1 miles east of Hiles, and copies of train order No. 7 at Spencer. This train, consisting of engine 353, 29 cars and a caboose, departed from Spencer at 4:39 a. m., 1 hour 59 minutes late, and while moving at an estimated speed of 15 miles per hour it entered the siding at Hiles at the east switch and struck No. 94.

The engine of each train and the second to the ninth cars, inclusive, of No. 97 were derailed and damaged.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident, the average daily movement over this line was 11.16 trains.

The weather was cloudy at the time of the accident, which occurred about 5:10 a. m.

The front brakeman of No. 97 was killed, and the fireman of each train was injured.

Discussion

The crew of each train held copies of train order No. 40, which gave No. 94, an east-bound third-class train, right over No. 97, a west-bound second-class train, Carey to Spencer, and copies of train order No. 7, which established Hiles as the meeting point between these trains and included the instruction for No. 94 to take siding at the meeting point. About 25 minutes after No. 94 had stopped into clear on the siding at Hiles, No. 97 entered the siding at the east switch and struck No. 94. The accident occurred within yard limits.

As No. 97 was approaching the east yard-limit sign the speed was about 15 miles per hour. The headlight was lighted, and the enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. When the engine reached a point about 800 feet east of the east siding-switch the enginemen observed, simultaneously, the headlight of an engine on the siding become extinguished and the switch lamp of the east siding-switch displaying green, and they concluded that No. 94 was into clear on the siding. When the engine reached a point about 200 feet east of the east siding-switch the enginemen observed the aspect of the switch lamp change from green to red. The engineer immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but because of the short distance the engine entered the turnout and struck the engine of No. 94. The superintendent said that since the speed of No. 97, after it passed the east yard-limit sign, was not in excess of 15 miles per hour and since the switch involved was operated for entry to the siding when the engine was at a point less than

stopping distance east of the switch he considered this train was being operated in accordance with the requirements of the yard-limit rule.

When No. 94 entered the siding at the west switch the front brakeman was in the brakeman's booth on the engine tender. He had been employed by this company in train service for approximately two years. He said he did not read the train orders affecting the movement of No. 94 with respect to No. 97. He was not aware that No. 94 was required to clear on the siding to meet No. 97, and he thought his train was occupying the main track. When he saw the reflection of the headlight of the approaching train he proceeded eastward, and, when the engine of No. 97 was a few hundred feet east of the east siding-switch, he operated the switch for No. 97 to enter the siding. The conductor of No. 94 was in the caboose, and the flagman and the enginemen were on the engine. These employees did not observe the action of the front brakeman and they were not aware of anything being wrong until No. 97 entered the turnout.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a switch being opened immediately in front of an approaching train.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this sixteenth day of January, 1945.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.