

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 2575

THE APACHE, TONPA & SANTA FE RAILWAY
COMPANY

REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT

AT BRYMAN, CALIF., ON

MARCH 2, 1942

- 2 -

SUMMARY

Railroad: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe

Date: March 3, 1942

Location: Dryden, Calif.

Kind of accident: Side collision

Trains involved: A. T. & S. F. : U. P. passenger
freight

Train numbers: Extra 3892 West : 205

Engine numbers: 3892 : 7859

Consist: 52 cars, caboose : 13 cars

Speed: 3-4 m. p. h. : 15-30 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable, train orders and
automatic block-signal system

Track: Double; tangent; 0.38 percent
ascending grade westward

Weather: Clear

Time: 6:55 p. m.

Casualties: 17 injured

Cause: Accident caused by inferior train
fouling main track immediately in
front of following superior train
without authority or protection

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 2575

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

THE ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY

April 29, 1942.

accident at Bryman, Calif., on March 3, 1942, caused by inferior
train fouling main track immediately in front of following
superior train without authority or protection.

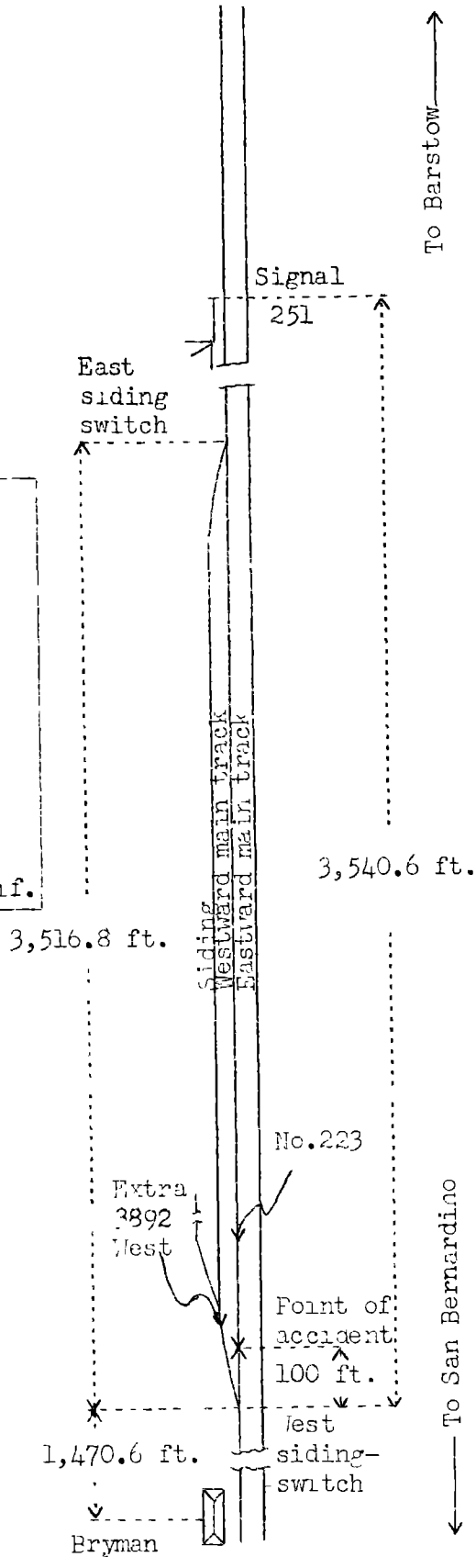
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

Patterson, Commissioner:

On March 3, 1942, there was a side collision between an
Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway freight train and a Union
Pacific Railroad passenger train on the line of the Atchison,
Topeka & Santa Fe Railway at Bryman, Calif., which resulted
in the injury of 6 passengers, 2 railway-mail clerks, 1 rail-
way employee, 3 dining-car employees, 1 private-car employee
and a train-service employee. This accident was investi-
gated in conjunction with a representative of the Railroad
Commission of California.

¹Under authority of section 17 (8) of the Interstate Commerce
Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the Commission
to Commissioner Patterson for consideration and disposition.

- o Barstow, Calif. 11.3 mi.
- o Hodge 9.2 mi.
- o Helendale 4.9 mi.
- x Bryman (Point of accident) 5.4 mi.
- o Cro Grande 5.1 mi.
- o Victorville 44.6 mi.
- o San Bernardino, Calif.



Inv. No. 2575
 Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway
 Bryman, Calif.
 March 3, 1942

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Los Angeles Division designated as the First District, which extends between Barstow and San Bernardino, Calif., a distance of 80.8 miles. On this district trains of the Union Pacific Railroad, hereinafter referred to as the U. P., are operated over the tracks of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, hereinafter referred to as the A. T. & S. F. In the vicinity of the point of accident this is a double-track line over which trains are operated by timetable, train orders and an automatic block-signal system. At Bryman a siding 3,516.8 feet in length parallels the westward main track on the north. The west siding-switch is located 1,470.6 feet east of the station at Bryman. The turnout of this switch is 225 feet in length. The accident occurred on the westward main track at a point 100 feet east of the west siding-switch, at the fouling point of the turnout. As the point of accident is approached from the east the tracks are tangent a distance of more than 3 miles to the point of accident. At the point of accident the grade for west-bound trains is 0.38 percent ascending.

Automatic signal 251, which governs west-bound movements on the westward main track, is located 3,340.6 feet east of the west siding-switch.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

86. Unless otherwise provided, an inferior train must clear the time of a superior train in the same direction not less than five minutes, but must be clear at the time a first class train in the same direction is due to leave the next station in the run, where time is shown.

99. * * *

When a train is moving under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, the flagman must take such action as may be necessary to insure full protection. * * *

* * *

Time-table special rules read in part as follows:

15. Rule 104(A): The first paragraph is amended as follows:

At meeting and passing points the employee attending the switch must not unlock derail or main line switch, nor station himself nearer to

main track switch than the clearance point, and, when safe to do so, on opposite side of track, until expected train has been met or passed.

* * *

The maximum authorized speed for the passenger train involved was 70 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 3892 West, a west-bound A. T. & S. F. freight train, consisted of engine 3892, 43 loaded and 9 empty cars and a caboose. After a terminal air-brake test was made this train departed from Borstow, 25.9 miles east of Bryman, at 5:05 p. m., according to the dispatcher's record of movement of trains, and departed from Helendale, 4.9 miles east of Bryman and the last open office, at 6:14 p. m. The flagman was left at Helendale to provide flag protection for Extra 3892 to proceed to Bryman ahead of No. 223. Extra 3892 stopped in the siding at Bryman at 6:30 p. m., according to the statement of the conductor, and about 5 minutes later started to enter the westward main track. While it was moving at an estimated speed of 3 or 4 miles per hour the tender was struck by the engine of No. 223.

No. 223, a west-bound first-class U. F. passenger train, consisted of engine 7859, 2 mail cars, 1 baggage-mail-express car, 1 baggage car, 5 coaches, 1 tourist car, 1 dining car, 2 Pullman sleeping cars and 1 business car, in the order named. All cars were of steel construction. After a terminal air-brake test was made this train departed from Borstow at 5:55 p. m., according to the dispatcher's record of movement of trains, 10 minutes late. After the flagman of Extra 3892 West boarded the engine of No. 223 at Helendale, this train departed at 6:27 p. m., 17 minutes late, passed signal 251, which displayed proceed, and while moving at an estimated speed of 15 to 30 miles per hour it collided with Extra 3892 West at the fouling point of the west siding-switch. The brakes of No. 223 functioned properly at all points where used en route.

The force of the impact derailed engine 3892 and moved it forward a distance of about 75 feet. It stopped in line with the track and leaned to the right at an angle of about 45 degrees. The engine and tender were considerably damaged. The front truck of the first car was derailed and this car was slightly damaged. Engine 7859, of No. 223, was derailed and stopped upright and in line with the track. The right side of the engine was considerably damaged.

It was daylight and the weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 6:35 p. m.

The train-service employees injured were the fireman and the front brakeman of No. 223 and the flagman and the engineer of Extra 3892 West.

Data

According to the timetable, No. 223 was due to leave Hodge, 9.2 miles east of Helendale, at 6:01 p. m., Helendale at 6:10 p. m., and Bryman, 4.9 miles west of Helendale, at 6:16 p. m. There is a siding at each of these stations. The capacity of the siding at Bryman is 62 cars.

Discussion

The rules governing operation on the line involved provide that an inferior train must be clear at the time a first-class train in the same direction is due to leave the next station in the rear where time is shown. When a train is moving under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, the flagman must take such action as may be necessary to insure full protection. At meeting and passing points the employee attending the switch must not unlock the switch until the expected train has been met or passed. All the employees involved understood these requirements.

Because the siding at Helendale was occupied by other trains, Extra 3892 West departed from Helendale at 6:14 p. m. and proceeded under flag protection to Bryman, 4.9 miles west of Helendale, on the time of No. 223, a following first-class train. Extra 3892 West entered the siding at Bryman at 6:30 p. m. to clear for No. 223. About 5 minutes later Extra 3892 started to enter the westward main track at the west siding-switch and the tender was struck by the engine of No. 223.

No. 223 picked up the flagman of Extra 3892 and departed from Helendale at 6:27 p. m. The flagman informed the engineer of No. 223 that Extra 3892 had departed from Helendale at 6:14 p. m. and would clear at Bryman if the siding was not occupied. The enginemen of No. 223, who were on their respective sides of the cab, and the flagman, who was in the gangway on the right side of the engine, were maintaining a lookout ahead. When the engine of No. 223 reached a point about 1,000 feet east of signal 251, the engineer observed the aspect of this signal change from red to yellow to green, and immediately afterward he observed the caboose of the preceding train on the siding clear of the main track. The engineer controlled the speed of his train so that his engine would stop in the vicinity of the caboose for the flagman to alight. When the engine reached a point about 500 feet east of signal 251, the engineer observed a member of the crew of Extra 3892 near the caboose giving a signal with a white flag. When the engine

of No. 223 passed the caboose, the conductor of Extra 3892 orally instructed the flagman to remain on the engine of No. 223 and to continue to Victorville, 10.5 miles west of Bryman, in order that this train would not be delayed unnecessarily. The engineer of No. 223 observed that the front of the train on the siding was clear of the main track and that the west siding-switch was lined for movement on the main track. He increased the speed of his train to about 30 miles per hour. When his engine reached a point about 350 feet east of the west siding-switch he observed that Extra 3892 was moving westward and that the engine had fouled the main track. The engineer of No. 223 immediately placed the brake valve in emergency position but the distance was not sufficient to stop short of Extra 3892.

The front brakeman of Extra 3892 said that his train entered the siding at Bryman to clear for No. 223. About 3 minutes later his engineer instructed him to go to the west siding-switch and to line it for their train to enter the main track after No. 223 passed. When he reached the switch his engineer called to him to line the switch immediately. He started to raise the throwing lever to operate the switch but, observing his train moving to the main track and No. 223 approaching about 350 feet distant, he replaced the throwing lever, and the collision occurred almost immediately. The engineer of Extra 3892 said that his train had been standing on the siding at Bryman several minutes waiting for No. 223 to pass when he looked toward the rear and observed that his conductor was giving a signal with a white flag which he interpreted as a signal for his train to proceed. He did not see any train approaching on the westward main track. He sounded two short blasts on the engine whistle and called to the front brakemen to line the switch for entry to the main track. Movement of his train had just been started when the fireman warned him of the approaching train. The engineer immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position but the engine entered the turnout and fouled the westward main track. The engineer said that when he acted on the signal given by the conductor he thought the movement of his train from the siding to the main track was being protected by the conductor. He did not have an understanding with the conductor as to what instructions had been given to the flagman at Indendale, but he assumed that flag protection had been provided and that no further authority was required for his train to proceed beyond Bryman ahead of No. 223; however, the engineer said a train other than No. 223 could have approached from the east, as his flagman was protecting against No. 223 only. The conductor of Extra 3892 said the signal he gave was not intended as a signal for his train to proceed. He was facing toward No. 223 when he gave the signal which was intended to convey information to the engineer of No. 223 and the flagman of Extra 3892 that the flagman was

to proceed to Victorville to avoid stopping No. 223 at Bryman. When Extra 3892 began to move slowly in the siding, the conductor and a brakeman, who were on the ground a short distance to the rear of the caboose, thought their engine would stop east of the clearance point. They were not aware of anything being wrong until the accident occurred. Under the rules, Extra 3892 was required to remain in the siding at Bryman until No. 223 had passed unless proper authority to proceed or flag protection was provided. If these requirements had been complied with this accident would have been averted.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by an inferior train fouling the main track immediately in front of a following superior train without authority or protection.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-ninth day of April, 1941.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

W. P. BARTEL,

(SEAL)

Secretary.