

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

---

INVESTIGATION NO. 2777  
THE ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT PEORIA, ARIZ., ON  
FEBRUARY 26, 1944

---

SUMMARY

---

Railroad: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe  
Date: February 26, 1944  
Location: Peoria, Ariz.  
Kind of accident: Derailment  
Train involved: Freight  
Train number: Extra 3236 West  
Engine number: 3236  
Consist: 34 cars, caboose  
Speed: 30 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable and train orders  
Track: Single; 5° curve; 0.11 percent ascending grade westward  
Weather: Cloudy  
Time: 12:30 p. m.  
Casualties: 1 killed; 2 injured  
Cause: Cow on track

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

---

INVESTIGATION NO. 2777

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 3, 1944.

---

Accident at Peoria, Ariz., on February 26, 1944, caused  
by a cow on the track.

---

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

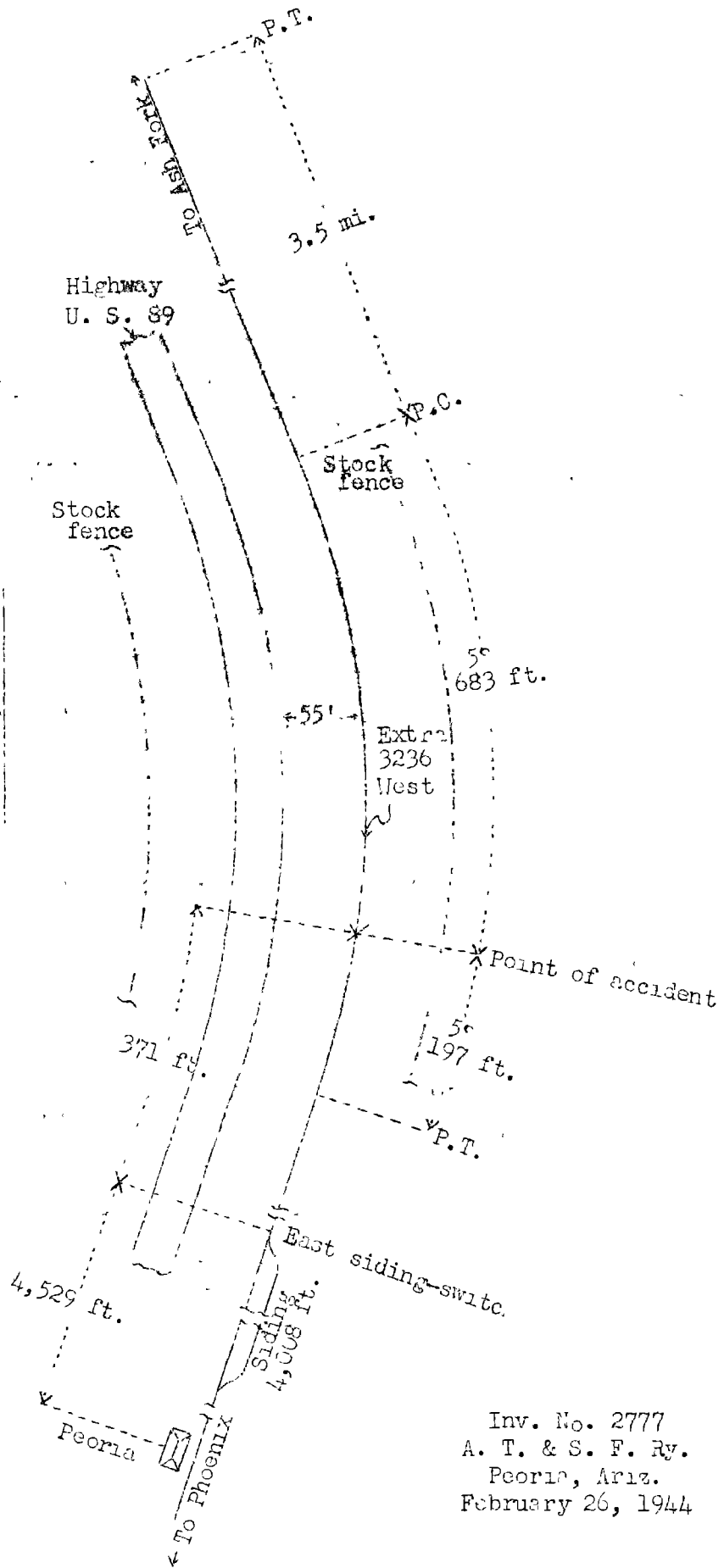
PATTERSON, Chairman:

On February 26, 1944, there was a derailment of a freight train on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway at Peoria, Ariz., which resulted in the death of one employee and the injury of two employees. This accident was investigated in conjunction with representatives of the Arizona Corporation Commission.

---

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

- o Ash Fork, Ariz. 176.70 mi.
- o Mkrinette 2.27 mi.
- X Point of accident 0.93 mi.
- o Peoria 10.80 mi.
- o Phoenix, Ariz.



Inv. No. 2777  
 A. T. & S. F. Ry.  
 Peoria, Ariz.  
 February 26, 1944

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Albuquerque Division designated as the Fourth District and extending between Ash Fork and Phoenix, Ariz., 193.7 miles. This was a single-track line over which trains were operated by timetable and train orders. There was no block system in use. The east switch of a siding 4,008 feet in length, which paralleled the main track on the south, was located 4,529 feet east of the station at Peoria. The accident occurred on the main track 371 feet east of the east siding-switch, and the general derailment occurred at the switch. From the east there was a tangent 3.5 miles in length, which was followed by a 5° curve to the right 683 feet to the point of accident and 197 feet beyond, then there was a tangent a considerable distance westward. The grade for west-bound trains was 0.11 percent ascending.

On the curve the track was laid on a fill, the maximum height of which was 4 feet. The track structure consisted of 90-pound rail, 39 feet in length, laid on 24 ties to the rail length. It was fully tieplated, double-spiked, provided with 8 rail anchors per rail length, and was ballasted with gravel to a depth of 8 inches. The maximum superelevation on the curve was 5-3/4 inches and the gage varied between 4 feet 8-1/2 inches and 4 feet 8-3/4 inches. The superelevation at the point of accident was 3-1/4 inches and the gage was 4 feet 8-5/8 inches.

In the vicinity of the point of accident Highway U. S. 89 was about 55 feet north of the main track and parallel to it. Stock fences paralleled the main track on the south and the highway on the north.

The maximum authorized speed for freight trains on the curve involved was 30 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 3236 West, a west-bound freight train, consisting of engine 3236, of the 2-8-2 type, 34 cars and a caboose, departed from Marinette, 3.2 miles east of Peoria, about 12:23 p. m., and while moving at a speed of about 30 miles per hour the engine and the first 10 cars were derailed.

The front wheels of the engine truck were derailed to the left at a point 4,900 feet east of the station at Peoria and continued in line with the track 371 feet to the east siding-switch, where the general derailment occurred. The engine and its tender, remaining coupled, stopped upright and in line with the siding, with the front end of the engine 285 feet west of the east siding-switch. They were considerably damaged. The first 9 cars were derailed and stopped, badly damaged, in various positions across the tracks. The front truck of the tenth car was derailed.

It was cloudy at the time of the accident, which occurred about 12:30 p. m.

The conductor was killed, and the front brakeman and the swing brakeman were injured.

Discussion.

As Extra 3236 West was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 30 miles per hour. Prior to the accident, there was no defective condition of the engine or of the track that contributed to the cause of the derailment. The enginemen, the conductor, the front brakeman and the swing brakeman were in the engine cab. The enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. As the engine entered the curve to the right the fireman observed a cow on the right-of-way running toward the track about 200 feet distant, and he called a warning. The engineer immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the cow obstructed the track and was struck before the brakes became effective. The carcass of the animal was caught under the engine truck, and the left front wheel was raised high enough for its flange to drop on the top surface of the high rail of the curve. The wheels of the engine truck were derailed to the left but continued in line with the track a distance of about 370 feet to the turnout of the east siding-switch, where the general derailment occurred.

Although there were fences south of the track and north of the highway which paralleled the railroad on the north, there was no fence between the railroad and the highway. In addition, there were numerous private crossings and cattle lanes that crossed the railroad. Under these conditions cattle could easily encroach upon the railroad.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a cow on the track.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this third day of April, 1944.

By the Commission, Chairman Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,  
Secretary.