

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 3031  
THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT LINCOLN PARK, N. Y., ON  
OCTOBER 26, 1946

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SUMMARY

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Railroad: Baltimore and Ohio  
Date: October 26, 1946  
Location: Lincoln Park, N. Y.  
Kind of accident: Collision  
Equipment involved: Cut of cars : Freight train  
Train number: : Extra 4739-4430  
East  
Engine numbers: : 4739 and 4420  
Consists: 62 cars : Caboose  
Estimated speeds: Standing : 12 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable, train orders and automatic  
block-signal system; yard limits  
Tracks: Double; tangent; 0.6 percent descend-  
ing grade eastward  
Weather: Foggy  
Time: 5:35 a. m.  
Casualties: 2 killed; 2 injured  
Cause: Switch being opened immediately  
in front of approaching train

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

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INVESTIGATION NO. 3031

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS  
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 3, 1910.

THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD COMPANY

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November 25, 1946

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Accident at Lincoln Park, N. Y., on October 26, 1946,  
caused by a switch being opened immediately in  
front of an approaching train.

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

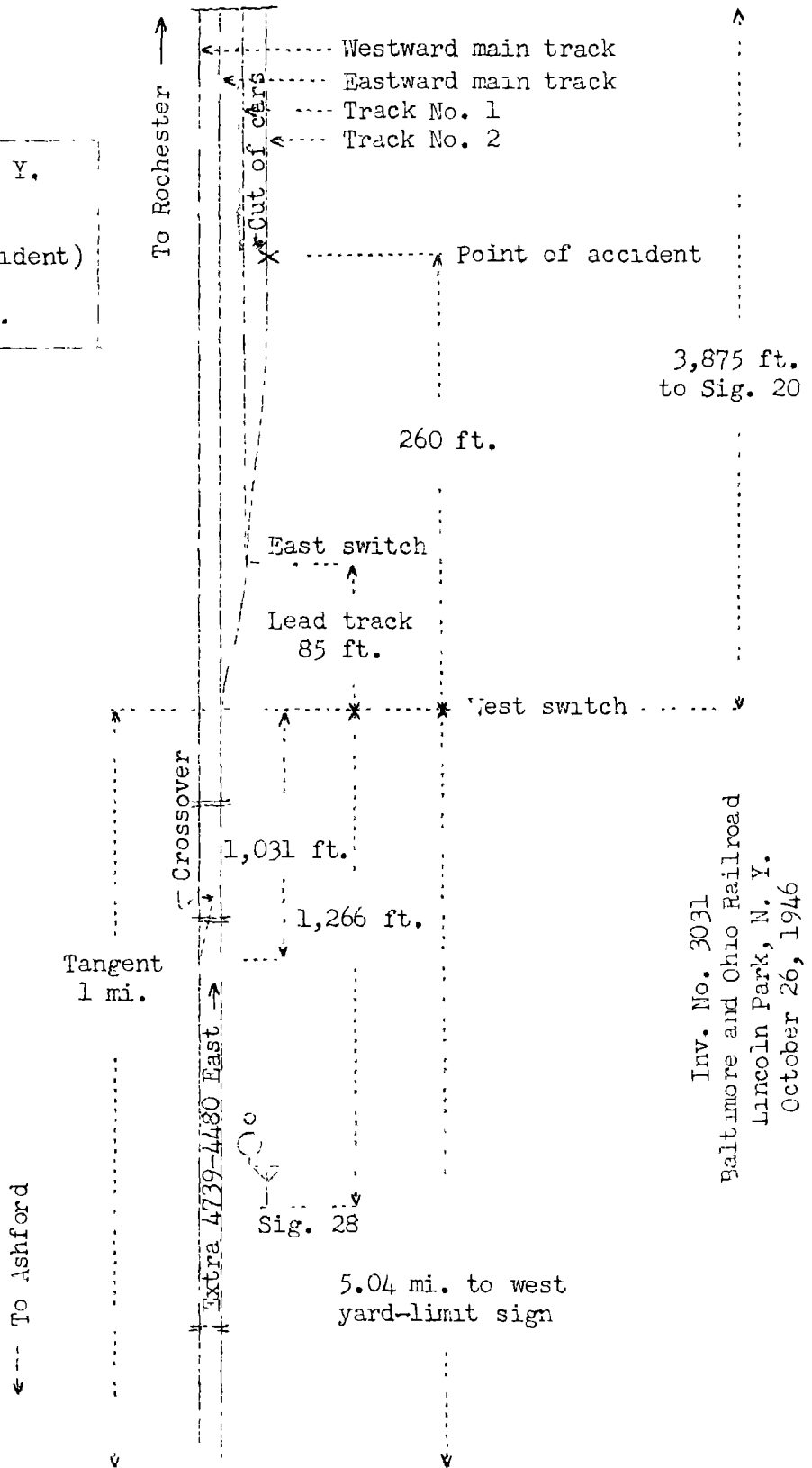
PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On October 26, 1946, there was a collision between a freight train and cars on an auxiliary track on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Lincoln Park, N. Y., which resulted in the death of two employees, and the injury of two employees.

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<sup>1</sup>Under 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 Rochester, N. Y.  
 1.8 mi.  
 X Lincoln Park  
 (Point of accident)  
 91.8 mi.  
 o Ashford, N. Y.



3,875 ft.  
 to Sig. 20

260 ft.

East switch

Lead track  
 85 ft.

West switch

Crossover

1,031 ft.

1,266 ft.

Tangent  
 1 mi.

Extra 4739-4480 East

Sig. 28

5.04 mi. to west  
 yard-limit sign

Inv. No. 3031  
 Baltimore and Ohio Railroad  
 Lincoln Park, N. Y.  
 October 26, 1946

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Buffalo Division extending between Ashford and Rochester, N. Y., 95.6 miles, a double-track line in the vicinity of the point of accident, over which trains moving with the current of traffic are operated by timetable, train orders and an automatic block-signal system. Within yard limits at Lincoln Park, 91.8 miles east of Ashford, two auxiliary tracks, designated from north to south as tracks No. 1 and No. 2, parallel the main tracks on the south. A lead track 85 feet long connects the west ends of the auxiliary tracks and the eastward main track. The west and east switches of the lead track are approximately 5.04 miles east of the west yard-light sign. The accident occurred on track No. 2 at a point 260 feet east of the west lead-track switch. The eastward main track is tangent throughout a distance of about 1 mile immediately west of the west lead-track switch and a considerable distance eastward. The grade is 0.6 percent descending eastward.

The switchstands of the east and west lead-track switches are of the hand-throw low-stand type. The west switch is provided with an oil-burning lamp and two targets. The centers of the lenses and the targets are, respectively, 2 feet 6 inches and 1 foot 7 inches above the tops of the ties and 7 feet 2 inches south of the centerline of the eastward main track. When the switch is lined normally a green target, 1 foot 5 inches by 7-1/4 inches, and a green light are displayed at right angles to the track. When the switch is lined for entry to the lead track a red target, 1 foot 4 inches by 5-1/4 inches, and a red light are displayed at right angles to the track. No lamp or other illuminating device is provided on the switchstand of the east lead-track switch.

Automatic signal 28, governing east-bound movements on the eastward main track, is 1,266 feet west of the west lead-track switch. This signal is of the color-position-light type, and the involved aspects and corresponding indications and names are as follows:

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Indication</u>	<u>Name</u>
White marker light above two yellow lights in diagonal position to the right	Proceed, preparing to stop at next signal, * * * Train exceeding medium speed must at once reduce to that speed.	Approach.
White marker light above two red lights in horizontal position	Stop, then proceed at restricted speed * * *	Stop and Proceed.

The controlling circuits are so arranged that when the block immediately east of automatic signal 20, located 5,141 feet east of signal 28, is occupied and the west lead-track switch is in normal position, signal 28 displays proceed-preparing-to-stop-at-next-signal. When the west lead-track switch is lined for entry to the lead track, signal 28 displays stop-then-proceed-at-restricted-speed.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

SPEED RESTRICTIONS.

Normal Speed--The maximum speed permitted by timetables for main track movements.

Medium Speed--One-half the normal speed, not to exceed thirty (30) miles per hour.

\* \* \*

Restricted Speed--Proceed, prepared to stop short of train, obstruction, or anything that may require the speed of a train to be reduced.

24. When cars are pushed by an engine, \* \* \* a white light must be displayed on the front of the leading car by night.

93. \* \* \*

\* \* \*

Two or More Tracks.

Within yard limits the main tracks may be used clearing first-class trains as prescribed by the rules and protecting against all other trains.

\* \* \*

Note--Where block signal rules are in effect "known to be clear" includes when track is known to be clear by signal indication.

103. When cars are pushed by an engine, \* \* \* a trainman must take a conspicuous position on the front of the leading car.

The maximum authorized speeds in this territory are 55 miles per hour for passenger trains and 35 miles per hour for freight trains.

### Description of Accident

Extra 4739-4480 East, consisting of a caboose and engines 4730 and 4480, headed east, in the order named, passed signal 28, which displayed proceed-preparing-to-stop-at-next-signal, and was moving on the eastward main track at an estimated speed of 15 miles per hour when it entered the lead track at the west switch, then entered track No. 2 at the east switch and collided with the west car of a cut of 62 cars, which were standing on track No. 2 immediately east of the east switch.

The caboose of Extra 4739-4480 East was demolished. The front end of engine 4739 and the most westerly two cars on track No. 2 were slightly damaged.

The weather was foggy and it was dark at the time of the accident, which occurred about 5:35 a. m.

The front brakeman and the middle brakeman were killed, and the conductor and the flagman were injured.

The caboose of Extra 4739-4480 East was of steel-under-frame and wood-superstructure construction. At the time of the accident a back-up hose was attached to the brake-pipe nose at the east end of the caboose. This back-up hose was so arranged that when the valve was open brake-pipe air would be vented to the atmosphere and the train brakes would become applied. In addition, the caboose was provided with a warning whistle operated from either platform by means of a cord.

During the 30-day period preceding the day the accident occurred, the average daily movement on this district was 24.9 trains.

### Discussion

Extra 4739-4480 East consisted of engines 4739 and 4480, in forward motion, and a caboose, which was being pushed ahead of the engines. As this train was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 15 miles per hour. The conductor was maintaining a lookout ahead from the east platform of the caboose and a lighted white lantern was displayed on the platform. The flagman and two brakemen were inside the caboose. The engineers of each engine were maintaining a lookout ahead. Signal 28, located 1,266 feet west of the west lead-track switch, displayed proceed-preparing-to-stop-at-next-signal. The conductor and both engineers said that from the time their train passed signal 28 and until the train was a short distance west of the west lead-track switch

the switch lamp of that switch displayed a green aspect. Then their view of the switch lamp was obscured by a person who was holding a lighted white lantern and standing just west of the switchstand. The first that any member of the crew of Extra 4739-4480 knew of anything being wrong was immediately before the caboose entered the turnout; then the conductor observed that the switchpoints were in position for entry to the turnout and he jumped from the caboose. Immediately afterward the engineer of the first engine saw stop signals being given by the person standing at the switch, and he moved the brake valve to emergency position. The speed of Extra 4739-4480 East was about 12 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

The investigation disclosed that the employee who operated the west lead-track switch immediately in front of Extra 4739-4480 East was a brakeman of the crew of Extra 4741-4409 West. The engines of that train were en route westward on the westward main track to a crossover, located about 1,030 feet west of the west lead-track switch, where the engines were to be crossed over to the eastward main track, thence to proceed eastward on the eastward main track and through the lead-track to track No. 2, where the engines were to be coupled to the cars on track No. 2. The brakeman of Extra 4741-4409 West said that he did not see or hear Extra 4739-4480 East until immediately after he operated the west lead-track switch, and the front portion of that train entered the turnout before he could change the position of the switch.

In addition to the present accident, during the past 15 years the Commission has investigated nineteen accidents which resulted from the opening of switches immediately in front of approaching trains, similar to the accident under discussion. These accidents resulted in the death of 29 and the injury of 425 persons. If the west lead-track switch at Lincoln Park had been provided with electric switch-locking, it would not have been possible to operate the switch immediately in front of Extra 4739-4480 East.

#### 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 twenty-fifth day of November, 1946.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,  
Secretary.