

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2877  
BANGOR AND AROOSTOCK RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
NEAR INGALLS, MAINE, ON  
MARCH 23, 1945

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SUMMARY

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Railroad: Bangor and Aroostook  
Date: March 23, 1945  
Location: Ingalls, Maine  
Kind of accident: Head-end collision  
Trains involved: Passenger : Freight  
Train numbers: 8 : Extra 180 North  
Engine numbers: 252 : 180  
Consist: 8 cars : caboose  
Estimated speed: 45 m. p. h. : 35 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable and train orders  
Track: Single; 3° curve; 0.29 percent  
descending grade southward  
Weather: Snowing  
Time: 9:35 p. m.  
Casualties: 3 killed; 6 injured  
Cause: Failure to obey meet order  
Recommendation: That the Bangor and Aroostook  
Railroad Company establish an  
adequate block system on the  
line on which this accident  
occurred

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2877

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

BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK RAILROAD COMPANY

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April 30, 1945.

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Accident near Ingalls, Maine, on March 23, 1945, caused  
by failure to obey a meet order.

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

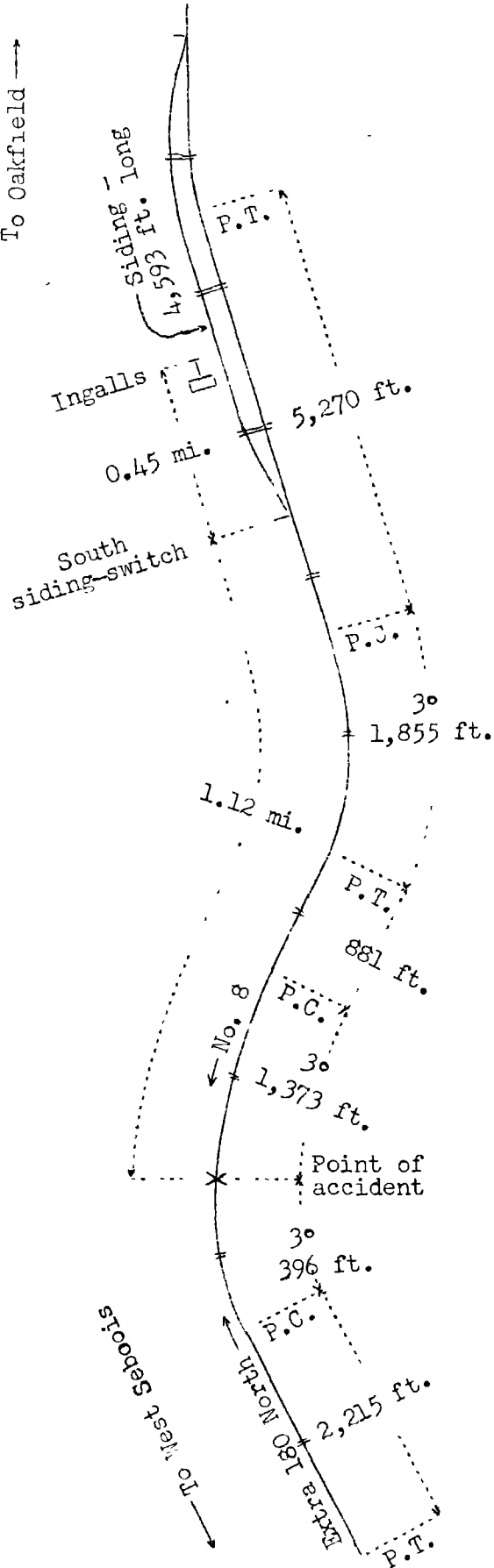
PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On March 23, 1945, there was a head-end collision between a passenger train and a freight train on the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad near Ingalls, Maine, which resulted in the death of three train-service employees, and the injury of one railway-express messenger, one railway-mail clerk and four train-service employees. This accident was investigated in conjunction with a representative of the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

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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.

To Oakfield →



○	Oakfield, Maine
	18.60 mi.
○	Patten Jct.
	1.10 mi.
○	Sherman
	24.00 mi.
○	Millinocket
	9.00 mi.
○	Ingalls
	1.57 mi.
X	Point of accident
	3.53 mi.
○	West Sebois, Maine

Inv. No. 2877  
 Bangor and Aroostook Railroad  
 Ingalls, Maine  
 March 23, 1945

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Southern Division extending southward from Oakfield to West Seboois, Maine, 57.8 miles, a single-track line over which trains are operated in the vicinity of the point of accident by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. At Ingalls, 52.7 miles south of Oakfield, a siding 4,593 feet in length parallels the main track on the west. The south switch of this siding is 0.45 mile south of the station. The accident occurred on the main track 1.12 miles south of the south siding-switch. From the north there are, in succession, a tangent 5,270 feet in length, a 3° curve to the right 1,855 feet, a tangent 881 feet and a 3° curve to the left 1,373 feet to the point of accident and 396 feet southward. From the south there is a tangent 2,215 feet in length, which is followed by the curve on which the accident occurred. The grade is 0.29 percent descending southward.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

14. Engine and Motor Whistle Signals.

NOTE.--The signals prescribed are illustrated by "o" for short sounds; "\_\_\_" for longer sounds.  
\* \* \*

Sound. Indication.

\* \* \*

(n) \_\_\_ \_\_\_ o Approaching meeting points.  
See Rule 90 and 16(1).

\* \* \*

15. Communicating Signals.

NOTE.--The signals prescribed are illustrated by "o" for short sounds; "\_\_\_" for longer sounds.

Sound. Indication.

\* \* \*

(1) \_\_\_ \_\_\_ o To call attention to meeting point. See 14(n) and Rule 90.

73. Extra trains are inferior to regular trains.

89. At meeting points \* \* \* the inferior train must take the siding \* \* \*

90. \* \* \*

\* \* \*

Trains must stop clear of the switch used by the train to be met in going on the siding.

The engineer will give signal 14 (n) at least one mile before reaching \* \* \* a point where by train order the train is to meet or wait for an opposing train. On passenger trains should the engineer fail to give signal 14 (n) as herein prescribed, the conductor will give signal 16 (1) and failing to get response must take immediate action to stop the train. \* \* \*

210a. Conductors must require their baggage-masters or senior brakemen, and engineers their firemen, to read the orders aloud in their presence. Before signing train orders, conductors must read them aloud to the operators.

FORMS OF TRAIN ORDERS.

\* \* \*

Form A. \* \* \* Fixing Meeting Points for Opposing Trains.

(1.) \* \* \*

No. 7 Eng. 251 meet Extra 95 south at "B".

\* \* \*

Trains receiving these orders will run with respect to each other to the designated points and there meet in the manner prescribed by the Rules.

\* \* \*

The maximum authorized speed for passenger trains was 50 miles per hour and for freight trains, 40 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

At Millinocket, 9 miles north of Ingalls, the crew of No. 8, a south-bound first-class passenger train, received copies of train order No. 96, reading as follows:

Eng 180 run Extra West Sebouis to Millinocket Meet No 8 Eng 252 at Ingalls

No. 8 consisted of engine 252, two baggage cars, one baggage-mail car, two coaches, one buffet car, and two Pullman sleeping cars, in the order named. The first and second cars were of wooden construction, the fourth and fifth cars were of steel-underframe construction, and the remainder were of all-steel construction. This train departed from Millinocket, the last open office, at 9:13 p. m., 56 minutes late, passed the clearance point of the south siding-switch at Ingalls, where it was required to wait unless Extra 180 North was into clear on the siding, and while moving at an estimated speed of 45 miles per hour it collided with Extra 180 North 1.12 miles south of the south siding-switch.

At West Seboois, 5.1 miles south of Ingalls, the crew of Extra 180 North, a north-bound freight train, received copies of train order No. 96. This train, consisting of engine 180 and a caboose, departed from West Seboois, the last open office, at 9:25 p. m., and while moving at an estimated speed of 35 miles per hour it collided with No. 8.

The engine and the caboose of Extra 180 and the engine and the first two cars of No. 8 were derailed and badly damaged.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident, the average daily movement in the vicinity of the point of accident was 18.3 trains.

It was snowing at the time of the accident, which occurred at 9:35 p. m.

The engineer of No. 8, and the front brakeman and the flagman of Extra 180 were killed. The fireman of No. 8, and the engineer, the fireman and the conductor of Extra 180 were injured.

#### Discussion

The crew of each train held copies of train order No. 96, which established Ingalls as the meeting point between No. 8 and Extra 180 North. Under the rules, No. 8 was required to stop clear of the south siding-switch at Ingalls unless Extra 180 was into clear on the siding. The surviving employees concerned so understood.

Extra 2644 North, a light engine, was in the clear on the north end of the siding at Ingalls. This train had proceeded to this station under the authority of a train order that No. 8 was running 25 minutes late.

As Extra 180 was approaching Ingalls the headlight was lighted, and the enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. The first the employees on the engine knew of anything being wrong was when the engineer saw the reflection of the headlight of the approaching train about 300 feet distant. He immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the collision occurred before the train could be stopped.

As No. 8 was approaching Ingalls the speed was about 30 miles per hour. The enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. The members of the train crew were in various locations throughout the cars of the train. The meeting-point signal was sounded

when the engine was about 1 mile north of the north siding-switch. The fireman said that when the engine was in the vicinity of the north siding-switch the engineer informed him that Extra 180 North was into clear on the siding. From this point southward until after the engine entered the curve on which the accident occurred the speed was increased to about 45 miles per hour, and the fireman was engaged in tending the fire. Then he looked southward and saw the reflection of the headlight of the approaching train. He called a warning to the engineer, who immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the collision occurred before the speed was materially reduced. The baggageman and the brakeman said they observed a train in the siding but were unable to see the engine number because visibility was restricted by falling snow. Since the speed of their train was increased after it passed the siding, they thought that the enginemen had identified the train on the siding as Extra 180 North. The conductor and the flagman did not hear the meeting-point signal sounded, and they took no action to ascertain if the train to be met was into clear on the siding. None of the surviving members of the crew of No. 8 was aware that the train on the siding was not Extra 180 until after the accident occurred.

At the time of the accident trains were being operated in this territory by timetable and train orders only. This carrier has an automatic block-signal system in operation between points 1.3 miles south and 1.03 miles north of Millinocket and between Patten Jct. and Sherman, 1.1 miles. The accident occurred 9.27 miles south of the south end of the first-mentioned territory and 34.57 miles south of the latter. If an adequate block system had been in use in the territory involved, these opposing trains would not have been permitted to occupy the same block simultaneously.

#### Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by failure to obey a meet order.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Company establish an adequate block system on the line on which this accident occurred.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this thirtieth day of April, 1945.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,  
Secretary.