

RAILROAD ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Report No 3805

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY

LAKE VIEW, MAINE

MARCH 6, 1958

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

Washington

SUMMARY

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DATE	March 6, 1958	
RAILROAD	Canadian Pacific	
LOCATION	Lake View, Maine	
KIND OF ACCIDENT	Rear end collision	
EQUIPMENT INVOLVED	Track motorcar	Freight train
TRAIN NUMBER		Extra 4003 West
LOCOMOTIVE NUMBERS		Diesel-electric units 4003, 4408
CONSIST		23 cars
ESTIMATED SPEEDS	10 m p h	40 m p h
OPERATION	Timetable, train orders, and automatic block-signal system	
TRACK	Single, 5° curve, 0.13 percent descending grade westward	
WEATHER	Clear	
TIME	7:28 a m	
CASUALTIES	1 killed	
CAUSE	Failure to take required precautions in the operation of a track motorcar	

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO 3905

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

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY

September 22, 1958

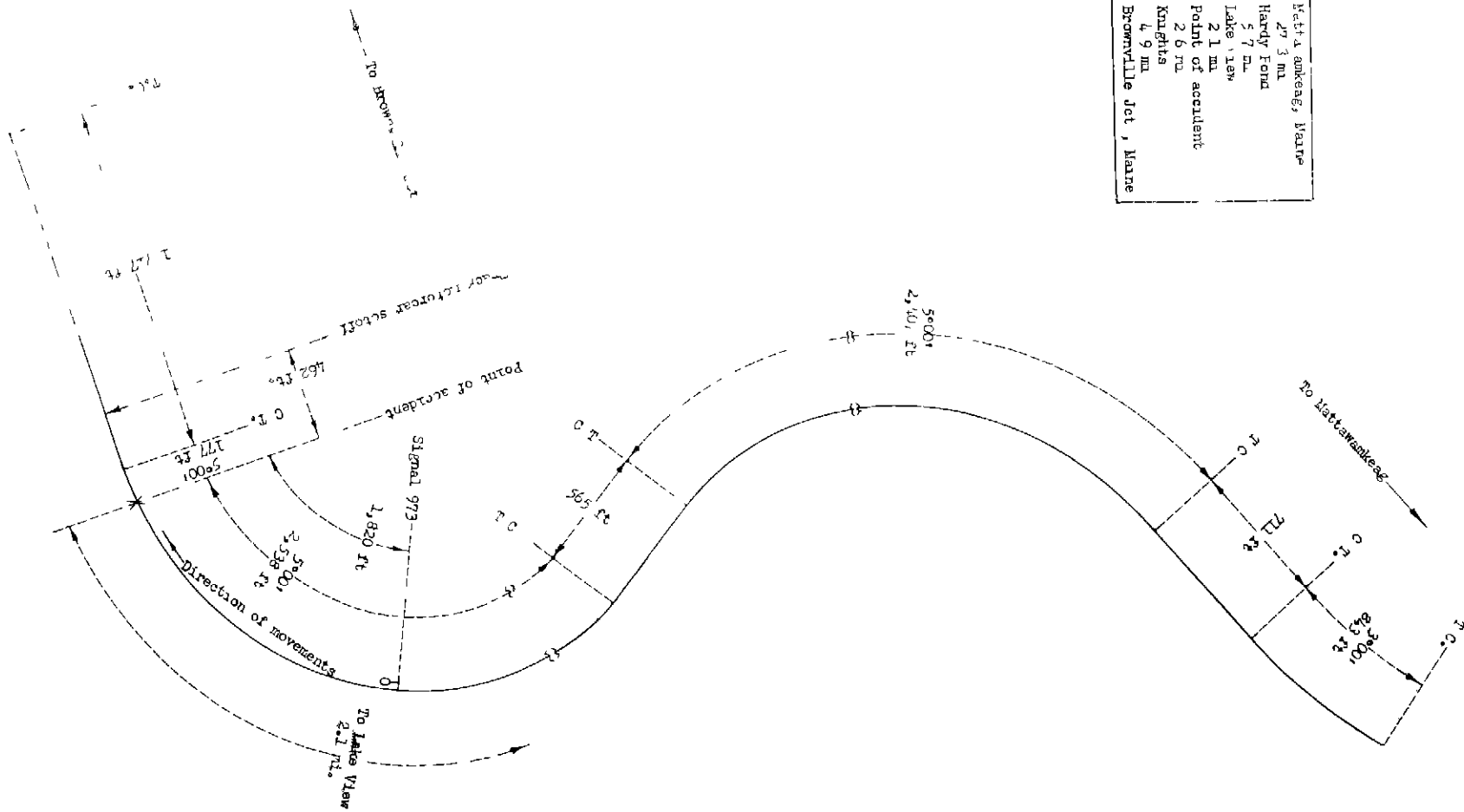
Accident near Lake View, Maine, on March 6, 1958, caused by failure to take required precautions in the operation of a track motorcar

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹*TUGGLE, Commissioner*

On March 6, 1958, there was a collision between a track motorcar and a freight train on the Canadian Pacific Railway near Lake View, Maine, which resulted in the death of one maintenance-of-way employee

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

o Mattawakeag, Maine	27.3 mi
o Hardy Ford	5.7 mi
o Lake View	2.1 mi
x Point of accident	2.6 mi
o Knights	4.9 mi
o Brownville Jet, Maine	



Canadian Pacific Railway
Lake View
March 6, 1958

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Brownville Division extending between Mattawamkeag and Brownville Jct., Maine, 43.1 miles, a single-track line over which trains are operated by timetable, train orders, and an automatic block-signal system. The accident occurred on the main track at a point 35.6 miles west of Mattawamkeag and 2.1 miles west of the station at Lake View, Maine. From the east there are, in succession, a 3° curve to the right 843 feet in length, a tangent 711 feet, a 5° curve to the left 2,407 feet, a tangent 565 feet, a 5° curve to the right 2,538 feet to the point of accident and 177 feet westward, and a tangent 1,717 feet. The grade in the immediate vicinity of the point of accident is 0.13 percent descending westward.

A track motorcar setoff is located approximately 460 feet west of the point of accident.

Automatic signal 973, governing westbound movements, is located 1,520 feet east of the point of accident.

This carrier's rules for the operation of track motorcars read in part as follows:

58. The person in charge of a car must obtain information on all possible occasions in regard to the movement of trains * * * and must operate the car at all times prepared to find the main track obstructed or in use.

64. * * * In all cases, whether on single, double or three or more tracks a sharp lookout must be kept at all times in both directions for trains, cars or other obstructions. When more than one man accompanies a car, a man must be specially assigned to act as rear lookout.

* * *

The maximum authorized speeds in the vicinity of the point of accident are 45 miles per hour for all trains and 25 miles per hour for track motorcars.

Description of Accident

On the day of the accident a section force consisting of a foreman and 5 sectionmen reported for duty at Lake View, 33.5 miles west of Mattawamkeag, about 7:00 a. m. This section force departed westbound on a track motorcar about 7:10 a. m. After performing work at two locations immediately west of signal 973 the section force proceeded westward on the track motorcar and while moving at an estimated speed of 10 miles per hour the track motorcar was struck by Extra 4003 West.

Extra 4003 West, a westbound freight train, consisted of the electric units 4003 and 4408, coupled in multiple-unit control, 23 cars, and a caboose. This train departed from Mattawamkeag at 6:40 a. m., passed Hardy Pond, the last open office, 27.8 miles west of Mattawamkeag, at 7:18 a. m., and while moving at an estimated speed of 40 miles per hour it struck the track motorcar.

The track motorcar was derailed and stopped immediately north of the main track and 221 feet east of the point of accident. It was destroyed. More of the equipment of Extra 4003 was derailed or damaged. The front end of this train stopped 1,761 feet west of the point of accident.

A sectionman was killed.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred at 7:28 a.m.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident the average daily movement in the vicinity of the point of accident was 15.8 trains.

The track motorcar was of the belt-drive type, powered by a 1-cylinder, 5 to 8 horsepower engine. It weighed approximately 760 pounds and had a seating capacity for six persons. It was equipped with a windshield, cab top, and a rear canvas curtain.

Discussion

On the day of the accident the section force at Lake View were scheduled to perform work at Knights, 4.7 miles east of Lake View. At 7:00 a.m. the section foreman obtained a line-up of train movements from the train dispatcher reading in part as follows:

WEST

403 heading 640 ft

Kearney is an employee of Marquette. The section foreman read the line-up to the members of the section force before their departure from Lake View. The section foreman said that after the second stop west of signal 973 he observed that the time was 7:26:30 a.m. He said that according to his calculations it was then time to clear the main track for Extra 4003 West. He instructed the sectionmen to board the motorcar. He said that he intended to set the motorcar off at a set off located approximately 1,000 feet westward. As the motorcar proceeded westward at a speed of approximately 10 miles per hour a sectionman observed Extra 4003 West approaching at a distance of approximately 250 feet. He immediately called a warning. The section foreman and the sectionmen alighted before the collision occurred.

As Extra 4003 West was approaching the point where the accident occurred the engineer and the front brakeman were in the control compartment of the first diesel-electric unit maintaining a lookout ahead, and the conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. The fireman, a qualified engineer, was operating the locomotive. The brakes of the train had been tested and had functioned properly when used en route. The headlight was lighted. The members of the crew on the locomotive observed the track motorcar when it was approximately 330 feet distant as the train was moving on the main track at the point where the collision occurred. The fireman immediately initiated the emergency brake and the train stopped. The train was at the point where the collision occurred. The section foreman stated that the speed of the train was approximately 40 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

Under the rules of the carrier the section foreman is required to specifically assign a sectionman to act as rear lookout while the motorcar was occupying the main track. In the instant case the section foreman failed to do this. However, he said that one of the sectionmen regularly assigned to the force customarily sat on the right rear corner of the deck of the motorcar when the motorcar was moving forward on the main track and that the sectionman usually maintained a lookout to the rear. The sectionman said that en route from Lake View to the point of accident he raised the rear curtain on two occasions to watch for following movements. The rules of the carrier provide that the person in charge of a section must maintain a lookout at all possible occasions as to the movement of trains and must operate the car at all times prepared to find the main track obstructed.

or in use. In using a line-up for information a motorcar operator is required to estimate the speeds of the trains involved and to calculate the approximate time for these trains to move over portions of the railroad. The line-up does not contain information regarding the consists of trains or the work to be performed en route by the crews of these trains which would assist the motorcar operator in making more accurate calculations. In the instant case the section foreman said that he was using the timetable schedule of No. 951, a second-class freight train, to base his calculations regarding the location of Extra 4003 West. The section foreman was aware that Extra 4003 West was approaching the point where the section force was performing work but he did not take action soon enough to clear the main track by setting the motorcar off at the nearest setoff.

During the past 10 years the Commission has investigated 69 collisions, including the present case, in which track motorcars were involved. These accidents resulted in the death of 92 persons and the injury of 216 persons.

Cause

This accident was caused by failure to take required precautions in the operation of a track motorcar.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-second day of September, 1958

By the Commissioner, Commissioner Tuggle

(SEAL)

HAROLD D. McCOY,

Secretary

Interstate Commerce Commission

Washington 25, D C

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

RETURN AFTER FIVE DAYS

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION