

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3737

CHICAGO & EASTERN ILLINOIS RAILROAD COMPANY

IN RE ACCIDENT

AT JAMAICA, ILL., ON

FEBRUARY 25, 1957

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SUMMARY

Date: February 25, 1957

Railroad: Chicago & Eastern Illinois

Location: Jamaica, Ill.

Kind of accident: Derailment

Equipment involved: Locomotive with cars

Locomotive number: Diesel-electric unit 209

Consist: 4 cars

Speed: 28 m. p. h.

Operation: Operating rules; yard limits

Track: Single; tangent; 0.50 percent
descending grade northward

Weather: Clear

Time: 3:45 a. m.

Casualties: 4 injured

Cause: Failure properly to control the
speed of a locomotive with cars
approaching the end of a track

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3737

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

CHICAGO & EASTERN ILLINOIS RAILROAD COMPANY

May 6, 1957

Accident at Jamaica, Ill., on February 25, 1957, caused by failure properly to control the speed of a locomotive with cars approaching the end of a track.

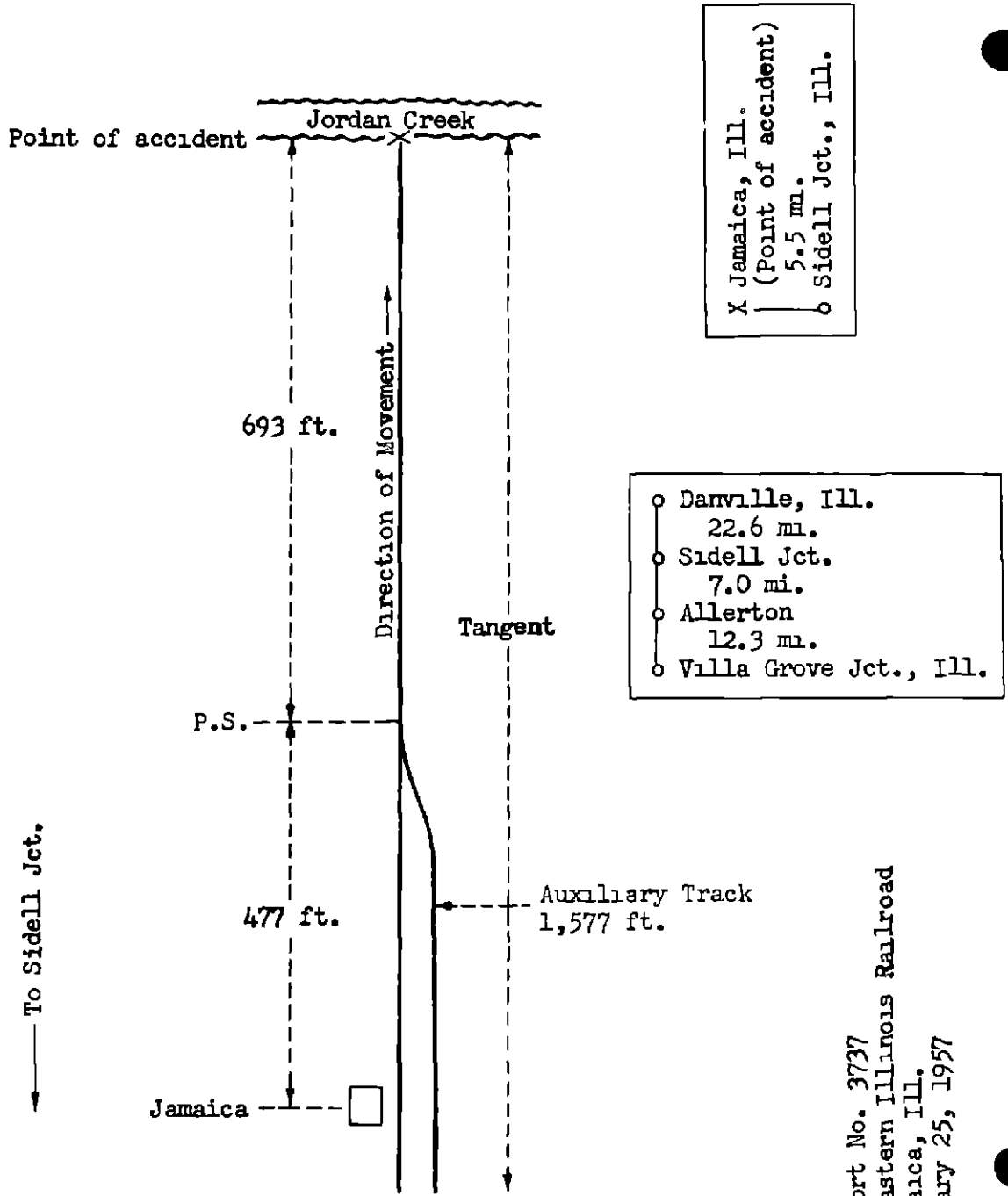
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

TUGGLE, Commissioner:

On February 25, 1957, there was a derailment of a locomotive with cars on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad at Jamaica, Ill., which resulted in the injury of four train-service employees. This accident was investigated in conjunction with a representative of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

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Under authority of section 17 (2) of the Interstate Commerce Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the Commission to Commissioner Tuggle for consideration and disposition.



Report No. 3737
 Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad
 Jamaica, Ill.
 February 25, 1957

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the railroad extending between Villa Grove Jct. and Danville, Ill., 41.9 miles. In the vicinity of the point of accident this is a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. At Sidell Jct., 19.3 miles north of Villa Grove Jct., a line designated as Jamaica Spur diverges to the west from the main track and extends northward from Sidell Jct. to Jamaica, 5.5 miles. Yard limits extend between Sidell Jct. and Jamaica. At Jamaica an auxiliary track 1,577 feet in length parallels Jamaica Spur on the east. The north auxiliary-track switch is 477 feet north of the station and 693 feet south of the north end of Jamaica Spur. The accident occurred at the north end of Jamaica Spur. The track is tangent throughout a distance of 5.2 miles immediately south of the point of accident. The grade for north-bound movements is 0.50 per cent descending throughout a distance of 1,900 feet immediately south of the point of accident.

At the north end of Jamaica Spur the track is laid on a fill approximately 12 feet in height. The track ends at the south bank of Jordan Creek. The tops of the rails are 19 feet above the level of the bottom of the stream. The track formerly extended northward across the stream on a bridge approximately 52 feet in length. The bridge and the portion of track north of the stream were removed in 1950. Eight cross ties on the rails at the end of the track served as a bumping post.

The maximum authorized speed between Sidell Jct. and Jamaica is 25 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 209 North, a north-bound freight train, consisted of Diesel-electric unit 209, 41 cars, and a caboose. This train stopped on the main track at Sidell Jct. about 3:30 a. m. The locomotive and the first four cars were detached and proceeded to Jamaica. While moving at a speed of 28 miles per hour, as indicated by the tape of the speed-recording device, the locomotive ran off the north end of the track at Jamaica.

The locomotive stopped upright with the front end against an embankment on the north side of the creek. The front end was 53 feet north of the end of the track and 18 feet below the level of the tops of the rails. The rear end was supported by the front end of the first car, which was crushed inward. The front truck of the first car was derailed, and this car stopped upright and in line with the track. The locomotive was considerably damaged, and the first car was somewhat damaged.

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The engineer, the fireman, the front brakeman, and the flagman were injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 3:45 a. m.

The locomotive was of the road-switcher type. It was equipped with No. 6-BL brake equipment.

Discussion

The crew of Extra 209 North was assigned to perform switching service between Villa Grove Jct. and Danville. Locomotive 209 was assigned to this crew at Villa Grove Jct. The engineer said that when he inspected the locomotive before departing he found that the brakes applied and released properly. He tested the sanding device and found that very little sand was deposited on the rails ahead of the wheels and that no sand was deposited behind the wheels. He said that while switching at Allerton, 7.0 miles south of Sidell Jct., the locomotive brake did not seem to be as effective as usual. He experienced no difficulty in stopping the train with the automatic brake. He said that after leaving Sidell Jct. with the locomotive and the four cars he had no occasion to use the brakes until he reached Jamaica.

As the locomotive and cars were approaching the point where the accident occurred the enginemen, the front brakeman, and the flagman were in the control compartment of the locomotive. The conductor had remained with the rear portion of the train at Sidell Jct. The headlight of the locomotive was lighted brightly. The engineer said that the speed of the locomotive between Sidell Jct. and Jamaica was between 20 and 25 miles per hour. The employees on the locomotive intended to place the cars on the north end of the auxiliary track at Jamaica, and the engineer said that when the locomotive was in the vicinity of a rail-highway grade crossing immediately north of the station he applied the locomotive brakes with the independent brake valve. He said that the rate of deceleration appeared to be less than normal, and when the locomotive reached a point about 90 feet north of the crossing he made a service application of the brakes. He said that the rate of deceleration still appeared to be less than normal, and when the locomotive was in the vicinity of the north auxiliary-track switch he placed the brake valve in emergency position. He said that at this time he released the brakes on the locomotive momentarily with the independent brake valve so that the wheels would not lock and slide. He said the emergency application seemed to be effective, and he thought the locomotive would stop before reaching the end

of the track. The other employees on the locomotive agreed with the engineer as to the approximate point at which the brakes were applied. They said that until the locomotive was in the vicinity of the north auxiliary-track switch they took no exception to the manner in which the movement was being handled.

After the accident occurred the brakes on the four cars were found to be applied. In tests made several days after the accident occurred the piston travel after an emergency brake application was found to be 6-1/4 inches, 6-1/4 inches, 11 inches, and 9-1/2 inches. These tests were made after a brake beam and one pair of wheels had been changed on the car which was derailed. The independent brake valve, the automatic brake valve, the distributing valve, and the feed valve were removed from the locomotive and tested on a test rack. They were found to operate properly. No slid-flat marks were found on the wheels of any of the cars or the locomotive. An inspection of the track disclosed no indications of sand on the rails near the north end of the track.

The tape of the speed-recording device, as interpreted by an official of the carrier, indicated that the speed of the locomotive increased from 23 to 28 miles per hour throughout a distance of 1/2 mile immediately south of the end of the track, and that it was 28 miles per hour at the time of the derailment. There was no apparent reduction in speed before the accident occurred.

All members of the crew except the fireman had been on this assignment for some time and were familiar with the physical characteristics of the line between Sidell Jct. and Jamaica. Apparently the brakes on the locomotive and cars were not applied in sufficient time to stop the locomotive short of the end of the track, and it appears that the members of the crew were mistaken as to the location of the locomotive at the time the brakes were applied in emergency.

Cause

This accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of a locomotive with cars approaching the end of a track.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this sixth day of May, 1957.

By the Commission, Commissioner Tuggle.

(SEAL)

HAROLD D. McCOY,
Secretary.