

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 2789

THE CLEVELAND, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO & ST. LOUIS
RAILWAY COMPANY

REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT

AT DEER CREEK, OHIO, ON

APRIL 7, 1944

SUMMARY

Railroad: Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago
& St. Louis

Date: April 7, 1944

Location: Deer Creek, Ohio

Kind of accident: Derailment

Train involved: Passenger

Train number: 404

Engine number: 5332

Consist: 10 cars

Speed: 70 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable, train orders and
manual-block system

Track: Single; tangent; 0.35 percent
descending grade eastward

Weather: Misting

Time: 2:57 p. m.

Casualties: 2 killed; 18 injured

Cause: Train entering open switch at
high rate of speed

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 2789

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

THE CLEVELAND, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO & ST. LOUIS
RAILWAY COMPANY

May 3, 1944.

Accident at Deer Creek, Ohio, on April 7, 1944, caused
by a train entering an open switch at a high rate
of speed.

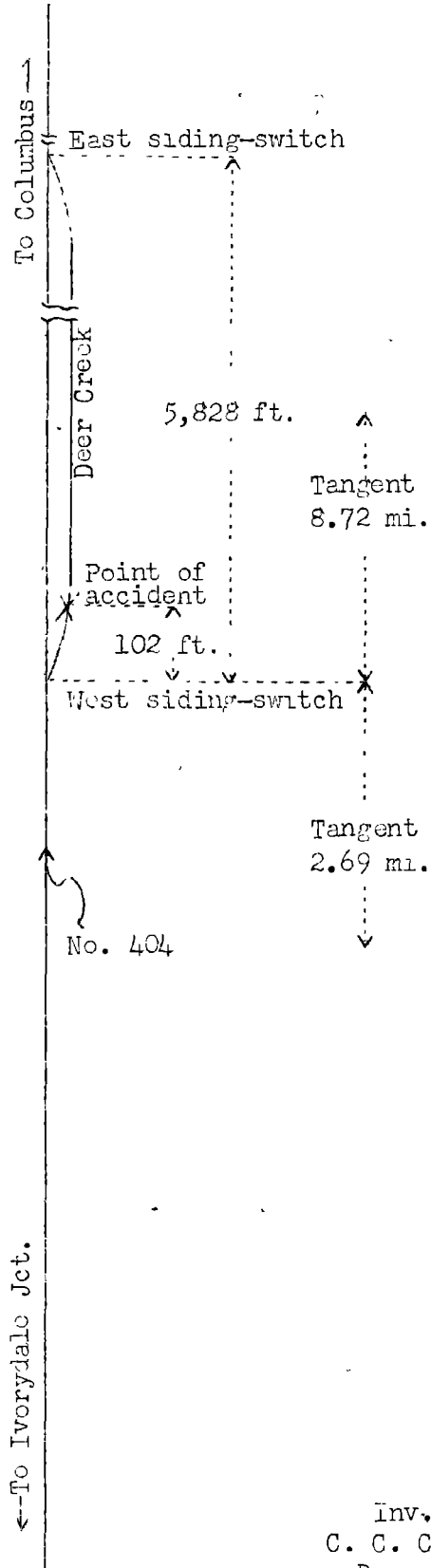
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Chairman:

On April 7, 1944, there was a derailment of a passenger train on the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railway at Deer Creek, Ohio, which resulted in the death of 2 train-service employees, and the injury of 11 passengers, 6 dining-car employees and 1 train-service employee. This accident was investigated in conjunction with a representative of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

¹Under 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 Columbus, Ohio
20.89 mi.
- x Deer Creek (P. of A.)
4.61 mi.
- o London
91.40 mi.
- o Ivorydale Jct., Ohio



Inv. No. 2789
 C. C. C. & St. L. Ry.
 Deer Creek, Ohio
 April 7, 1944

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Ohio Division extending eastward from Ivorydale Jct. to Columbus, Ohio, 116.9 miles. In the vicinity of the point of accident this was a single-track line over which trains were operated by timetable, train orders and a manual-block system. At Deer Creek, 96.01 miles east of Ivorydale Jct., a siding 5,828 feet long paralleled the main track on the south. Entry to the siding at the west switch was made through a No. 10 turnout. The accident occurred on the turnout of the siding 102 feet east of the west switch. From the west the main track was tangent 2.69 miles to the west siding-switch and 8.72 miles eastward. At the point of accident the grade for east-bound trains was 0.35 percent descending.

The switch-stand of the west siding-switch was of the hand-throw, intermediate-stand type, and was provided with an oil lamp and two targets. The centers of the lenses and the targets were, respectively, 10 feet 2-1/2 inches and 8 feet 2-13/16 inches above the ties, and 7 feet 2-1/4 inches south of the gage side of the south rail of the main track. When the switch was lined normally a green diagonal target, 36 inches long and 12 inches wide, and a green light were displayed. When the switch was lined for entry to the siding a red horizontal target, 36 inches long and 16 inches wide, and a red light were displayed.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

104a. The normal position for all switches * * * is that which leaves the main tracks clear for the safe passage of trains. * * *; main track switches * * * when in normal position must be locked; * * *.

* * *

The maximum authorized speed for passenger trains was 80 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

No. 404, an east-bound first-class passenger train, consisted of engine 5332, of the 4-6-4 type, 1 express car, 1 passenger-baggage car, 5 coaches, 1 dining car and 2 Pullman sleeping cars, in the order named. All cars were of steel construction. This train passed London, 4.61 miles west of Deer Creek and the last open office, at 2:53 p. m., 12 minutes late, and while moving at an estimated speed of 70 miles per hour it entered the siding at Deer Creek at the west switch and was derailed.

The engine and the first 6 cars were derailed and damaged. The engine and the first car stopped on their right sides, south of the siding and parallel to it, with the front end of the engine 435 feet east of the point of derailment. The second to sixth cars, inclusive, stopped practically upright, in various positions across the main track and the siding. The front truck of the seventh car was derailed.

It was misting at the time of the accident, which occurred about 2:57 p. m.

The engineer and the fireman were killed, and the baggage-man was injured.

Discussion

No. 404 was moving on tangent track at an estimated speed of 70 miles per hour, in territory where the maximum authorized speed was 80 miles per hour, when the engine and the first 7 cars entered the turnout of the west siding-switch at Deer Creek and were derailed. As the train was approaching Deer Creek the conductor was in the fifth car and the other members of the train crew were located in other cars of the train. The first these employees knew of anything being wrong was when the brakes became applied in emergency about 10 seconds prior to the derailment. Examination immediately after the accident disclosed that the west siding-switch was lined for entry to the siding. It could not be determined when the enginemen first became aware that the switch was improperly lined, as they were killed in the accident. It was estimated that, under the weather conditions prevailing at the time the accident occurred, the switch target was visible from a distance of only 800 feet.

The investigation disclosed that about 25 minutes prior to the occurrence of the accident, the west siding-switch at Deer Creek was used by a section force, consisting of a foreman and four men, to move a track motor-car from the siding to the main track but, after the movement was completed, the switch was not closed and locked in normal position. The section force understood that, under the rules, they were required to see that the switch was properly lined and locked. The foreman said that when the motor-car was moved from the siding to the main track he had intended to lock the switch in normal position, but his attention was attracted to the condition of a telephone booth near the siding, which was in need of repairs. He placed a support under the booth, then forgot about the position of the switch. The other members of the section force did not give any attention to the position of the switch.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a train entering an open switch at a high rate of speed.

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

By the Commission, Chairman Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.