

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 2929
THE DENVER AND RIO GRANDE WESTERN
RAILROAD COMPANY
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT
AT GRIZZLY, COLO., ON
SEPTEMBER 7, 1945

SUMMARY

Railroad: Denver and Rio Grande Western
Date: September 7, 1945
Location: Grizzly, Colo.
Kind of accident: Rear-end collision
Trains involved: U. P. passenger : U. P. passenger
Train numbers: Extra 5017 West : Extra 2492 West
Engine numbers: 5017 : 2492
Consist: 20 cars : 19 cars
Estimated speed: Standing : 8 m. p. h.
Operation: Signal indications
Track: Single; 5°51' curve; 0.85 percent
descending grade westward
Weather: Clear
Time: 5:30 p. m.
Casualties: 49 injured
Cause: Failure properly to control speed
of following train moving on siding

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 2929

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 8, 1910.

THE DENVER AND RIO GRANDE WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY

October 22, 1945.

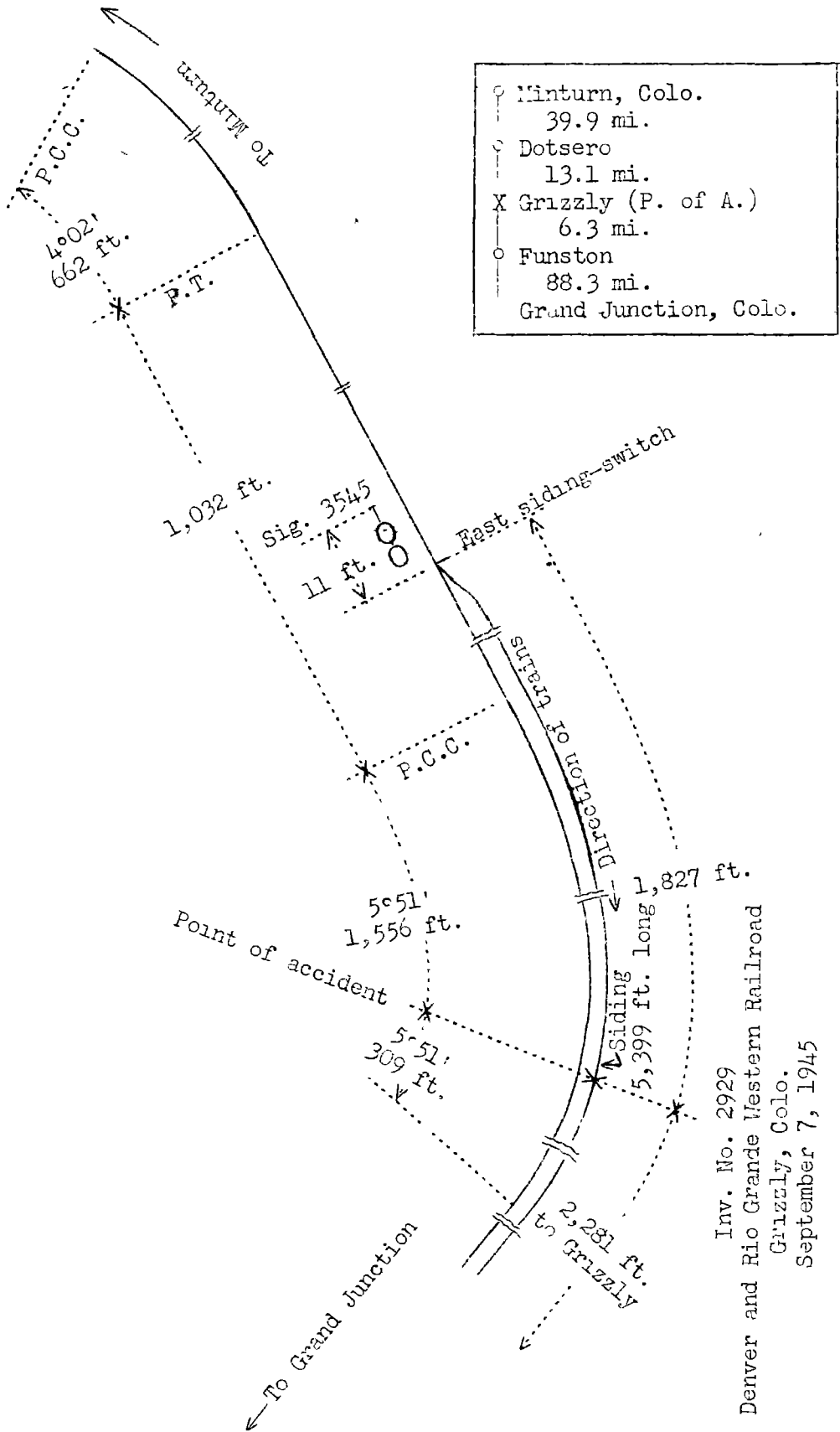
Accident at Grizzly, Colo., on September 7, 1945, caused
by failure properly to control the speed of the fol-
lowing train moving on a siding.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On September 7, 1945, there was a rear-end collision between two passenger trains of the Union Pacific Railroad on the line of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad at Grizzly, Colo., which resulted in the injury of 26 passengers, 1 Pullman employee, 18 dining-car employees, 2 train porters, 1 train-service employee off duty and 1 train-service employee on duty.

¹Under 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.



- Minturn, Colo. 39.9 mi.
- Dotsero 13.1 mi.
- X Grizzly (P. of A.) 6.3 mi.
- Funston 88.3 mi.
- Grand Junction, Colo.

Inv. No. 2929
Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad
Grizzly, Colo.
September 7, 1945

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Grand Junction Division which extends between Minturn and Grand Junction, Colo., 147.6 miles, a single-track line in the vicinity of the point of accident, over which trains are operated by signal indications. Because of a burned bridge on a line of the Union Pacific Railroad, trains of this railroad were being operated over the line on which the accident occurred. At Grizzly, 53 miles west of Minturn, a siding 5,399 feet in length parallels the main track on the south. The east switch of this siding is 4,108 feet east of the station. Entry to the siding at the east switch is made through a No. 15 turnout. The accident occurred on the siding at a point 1,827 feet west of the east switch. From the east on the main track there are, in succession, a compound curve to the right 662 feet in length, the maximum curvature of which is 4°02', a tangent 1,032 feet and a compound curve to the right, the maximum curvature of which is 5°51', extending 1,556 feet to the point of accident and 309 feet westward. From the east siding-switch to the point of accident, the gradient on the siding varies from 0.77 to 1.25 percent descending for west-bound trains, and it is 0.85 percent at the point of accident.

Semi-automatic signal 3545, governing west-bound movements entering the turnout of the east siding-switch, is 11 feet east of the switch. The involved aspect and corresponding indication and name of this signal are as follows:

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Indication</u>	<u>Name</u>
Red-over-yellow	Proceed at restricted speed not to exceed eight miles per hour prepared to stop.	Slow Speed Signal.

Signal 3545 and the east siding-switch are controlled by a centralized-traffic-control machine at Funston, 6.3 miles west of Grizzly.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

DEFINITIONS

* * *

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

105. Trains using a siding must proceed, expecting to find it occupied.

* * *

Description of Accident

Extra 5017 West, a west-bound U. P. passenger train, consisted of engine 5017, two baggage cars, one Pullman sleeping car, two Pullman tourist cars, one Pullman sleeping car, one lounge car, one dining car, one Pullman sleeping car, one Pullman tourist car, five coaches, one dining car, one Pullman tourist car, one troop sleeping car, one Pullman sleeping car and one Pullman tourist car, in the order named. All cars were of steel construction. This train stopped into clear on the siding at Grizzly about 5:16 p. m., with the rear end standing 1,827 feet west of the east siding-switch. About 14 minutes later the rear end was struck by Extra 2492 West.

Extra 2492 West, a west-bound U. P. passenger train, consisted of engine 2492, one express car, five Pullman tourist cars, one lounge car, two dining cars, four Pullman tourist cars, two dining cars, one Pullman tourist car, one troop sleeping car, one Pullman tourist car and one Pullman sleeping car, in the order named. All cars were of steel construction. This train passed Dotsero, the last open office, 13.1 miles east of Grizzly, at 4:58 p. m., passed signal 3545, which displayed proceed-at-restricted-speed, entered the east siding-switch at Grizzly and while moving at an estimated speed of 8 miles per hour it struck the rear end of Extra 5017.

The front truck of the twelfth car and the rear truck of the rear car of Extra 5017, and the engine of Extra 2492 were derailed. The rear car of Extra 5017 and the front end of the engine of Extra 2492 were considerably damaged.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 5:30 p. m.

The engineer-pilot of Extra 2492 West was injured.

Discussion

The east siding-switch at Grizzly was lined for three west-bound trains to enter the siding to meet an east-bound train, and the controlling signals were displaying proper indications for these movements. The second west-bound train, which was Extra 5017 West, stopped on the siding about 5:16 p. m., with its rear end 1,827 feet west of the east siding-switch. It was struck by Extra 2492 West at 5:30 p. m.

As Extra 2492 West was approaching signal 3545, in the vicinity of the east siding-switch at Grizzly, the speed was about 8 miles per hour. This train was in the charge of a conductor-pilot and an engineer-pilot, who were employees of the D. & R.G.W. The engineer-pilot was operating the engine.

The engineer-pilot, the engineer and the fireman were maintaining a lookout ahead. Signal 3545 displayed proceed-at-restricted-speed and the route was lined for Extra 2492 to enter the siding. Because track curvature was to the right for west-bound movements and an east-bound passenger train was stopped on the main track with the engine standing about 800 feet west of the east siding-switch, the view had by the enginemen of Extra 2492 of the preceding train on the siding was materially restricted. When the engine was about 800 feet east of the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 15 miles per hour, and the engineer-pilot saw stop signals being given by a member of the crew of the train standing on the main track. Then the engineer-pilot moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the collision occurred before the train could be stopped. The average gradient on the siding was more than 1 percent descending for west-bound trains. The air brakes had functioned properly at all points where used en route. Under the rules, Extra 2492 was required to be operated prepared to stop short of a train or an obstruction while it was moving on the siding.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of the following train moving on a siding.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-second day of October, 1945.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.