

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 3144  
ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT ROXANA, ILL., ON  
NOVEMBER 16, 1947

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SUMMARY

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Railroad: Illinois Terminal  
Date: November 16, 1947  
Location: Roxana, Ill.  
Kind of accident: Rear-end collision  
Trains involved: Freight : Freight  
Train numbers: Extra 30 North : Extra 31 North  
Engine numbers: 30 : 31  
Consists: 85 cars, cabooses : 27 cars, cabooses  
Estimated speeds: Standing : 15 m. p. h.  
Operation: Operating rules and train orders;  
yard limits  
Track: Single; 3°54' curve; 0.03 percent  
ascending grade northward  
Weather: Cloudy  
Time: 5:31 p. m.  
Casualties: 2 injured  
Cause: Failure properly to control speed  
of following train moving within  
yard limits

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

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INVESTIGATION NO. 3144

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

ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

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January 20, 1948

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Accident at Roxana, Ill., on November 16, 1947, caused  
by failure properly to control the speed of the  
following train moving within yard limits.

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

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

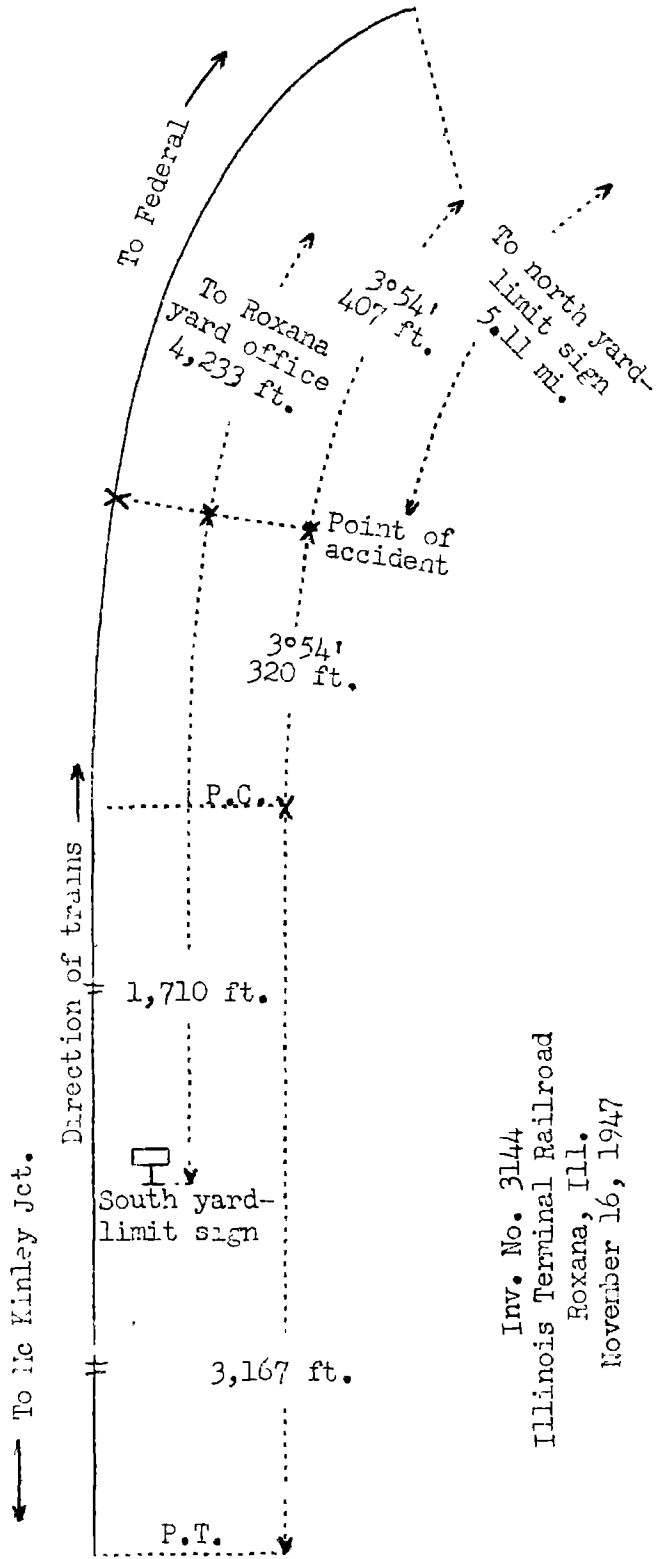
On November 16, 1947, there was a rear-end collision  
between two freight trains on the Illinois Terminal Rail-  
road at Roxana, Ill., which resulted in the injury of two  
employees.

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

o	Federal, Ill.	6.00 mi.
o	Roxana	0.80 mi.
X	Point of accident	6.70 mi.
o	Le Claire	19.49 mi.
o	Mc Kinley Jct., Ill.	



Inv. No. 3144  
 Illinois Terminal Railroad  
 Roxana, Ill.  
 November 16, 1947

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the railroad extending between McKinley Jct. and Federal, Ill., 32.99 miles, a single-track line in the vicinity of the point of accident, over which trains are operated by operating rules and train orders. There is no block system in use, and there are no timetabled schedules in effect. The accident occurred within yard limits on the main track at Roxana, 26.19 miles north of McKinley Jct., at a point 1,710 feet north of the south yard-limit sign, 4,233 feet south of the yard office and 5.11 miles south of the north yard-limit sign. From the south there are, in succession, a tangent 3,167 feet in length, and a 3°54' curve to the right 320 feet to the point of accident and 407 feet northward. The grade is 0.03 percent ascending northward.

This carrier's operating rules read in part as follows:

DEFINITIONS.

\* \* \*

Fixed Signal.--A signal of fixed location indicating a condition affecting the movement of a train.

Note.--The definition of a "Fixed Signal" covers such signals as \* \* \* yard limit boards, \* \* \* or other means for displaying indications that govern the movement of a train.

\* \* \*

19. The following signals will be displayed to the rear of every train, as markers, to indicate the rear of the train:

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

Rear of train by day. Marker lamps not lighted \* \* \*

\* \* \*

Rear of train by night \* \* \* Lights \* \* \* showing green to the front and side and red to the rear.

\* \* \*

93. Within yard limits the main track may be used, protecting against first class trains.

Second and third class and extra trains must move within yard limits prepared to stop unless the main track is seen or known to be clear. In case of accident the responsibility rests with the approaching train.

#### Description of Accident

Extra 30 North, a north-bound freight train consisting of engine 30, 85 cars and a caboose, stopped on the main track at Roxana about 3:10 p. m., with the rear end standing 1,710 feet north of the south yard-limit sign. About 2 hours 21 minutes later, the rear end of this train was struck by Extra 31 North.

Extra 31 North, a north-bound freight train consisting of engine 31, 27 cars and a caboose, departed from Le Claire, the last open office, 7.5 miles south of Roxana, at 5:15 p. m., passed the south yard-limit sign at Roxana and while moving at an estimated speed of 15 miles per hour it collided with Extra 30 North.

The caboose and the rear two cars of Extra 30 North, and the engine of Extra 31 North were derailed and damaged.

The engineer and the fireman of Extra 31 North were injured.

It was cloudy and dark at the time of the accident, which occurred about 5:31 p. m.

#### Discussion

About 2 hours 21 minutes after Extra 30 North, a north-bound freight train, stopped on the main track at Roxana the rear end was struck by Extra 31 North, a north-bound freight train, at a point 1,710 feet north of the south yard-limit sign. When the accident occurred the engine of Extra 30 North was performing switching some distance northward in the vicinity of a yard track, and the members of the crew of this train were in the vicinity of the engine. They were not aware of anything being wrong until after the collision occurred. When this train arrived at Roxana it was daylight. At the time of the accident it was dark, and the marker lamps on the rear of the caboose were unlighted.

As Extra 31 North was approaching Roxana the speed was about 30 miles an hour. The headlight was lighted brightly, and the enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. The front brakeman was in the brakeman's booth on the tender. The conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. There was no condition of the engine that obscured the vision of the enginemen or distracted their attention. The engineer said that when the engine was in the immediate vicinity of the south yard-limit sign he made a 6-pound brake pipe-reduction. This brake application was not released, and the engineer thought the speed was reduced to about 15 miles per hour. When the engine was about 200 feet south of the point where the accident occurred the engineer saw the caboose of the preceding train, and he immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the collision occurred before the train could be stopped. The brakes of this train had been tested and had functioned properly en route.

The accident occurred within yard limits, and, under the rules, Extra 31 North was required to be operated in such manner that it could be stopped short of a train or an obstruction.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of the following train moving within yard limits.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twentieth day of January, 1948.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,  
Secretary.