

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2637  
THE LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT YNIESERA, FLA., ON  
OCTOBER 19, 1942

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SUMMARY

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Railroad: Louisville & Nashville  
Date: October 19, 1942  
Location: Yniestra, Fla.  
Kind of accident: Head-end collision  
Trains involved: Freight : Freight  
Train numbers: 44 : 43  
Engine numbers: 379 : 160-296  
Consist: 36 cars, caboose : 35 cars, caboose  
Speed: Standing : 50 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable and train orders  
Track: Single; 3°06' curve; 0.42 percent  
descending grade southward  
Weather: Clear  
Time: 9:11 a. m.  
Casualties: 5 killed; 2 injured  
Cause: Accident caused by inferior train  
occupying the main track on the  
time of an opposing superior train  
Recommendation: That the Louisville & Nashville  
Railroad Company establish an  
automatic block system on the  
line involved in this accident

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2637

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

THE LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE RAILROAD COMPANY

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December 7, 1942.

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Accident at Yniestra, Fla., on October 19, 1942, caused by  
an inferior train occupying the main track on the  
time of an opposing superior train.

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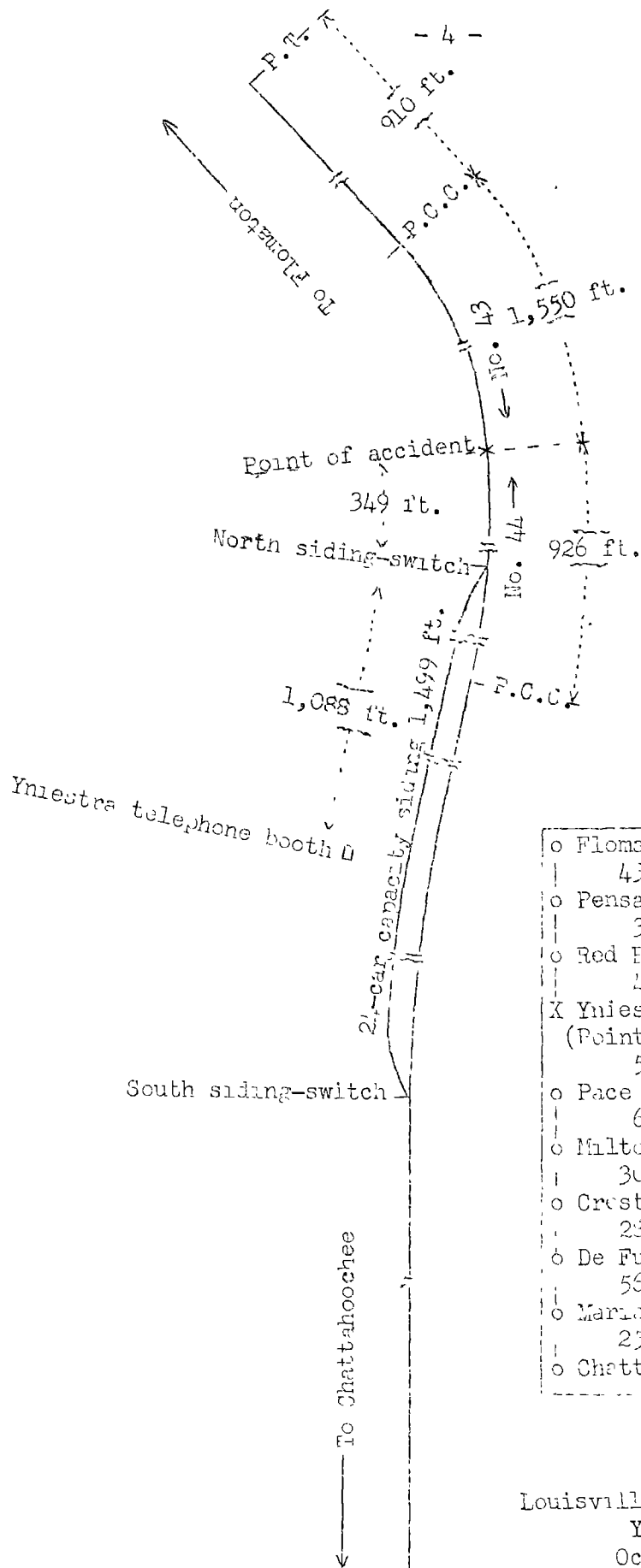
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On October 19, 1942, there was a head-end collision  
between two freight trains on the Louisville & Nashville  
Railroad at Yniestra, Fla., which resulted in the death of  
five employees and the injury of two employees.

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<sup>1</sup>Under 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.



o	Flomston, Ala.
	43.75 mi.
o	Pensacola, Fla.
	3.22 mi.
o	Red Bluff
	4.57 mi.
X	Yniestra
	(Point of accident)
	5.02 mi.
o	Pace Junction
	6.67 mi.
o	Milton
	30.63 mi.
o	Crestview
	23.82 mi.
o	De Funiak Springs
	56.19 mi.
o	Marianna
	25.55 mi.
o	Chattahoochee, Fla.

Inv-2637  
Louisville & Nashville Railroad  
Yniestra, Fla.  
October 19, 1942

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Montgomery, New Orleans and Pensacola Division designated as the Pensacola Sub-division and extending between Flomaton, Ala., and Chattahoochee, Fla., a distance of 204.42 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 Uniestra a siding 1,499 feet in length parallels the main track on the west. The north switch of this siding is 1,088 feet north of the station. The accident occurred on the main track at a point 349 feet north of the north siding-switch. Approaching from the north there is a tangent 910 feet in length, which is followed by a compound curve to the right 1,530 feet to the point of accident and 326 feet beyond. The curvature at the point of accident is "06'. The grade for south-bound trains is, successively, 0.90 percent ascending 1,500 feet, 0.10 percent descending 1,000 feet, and 0.42 percent descending 192 feet to the point of accident.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

5. Not more than two times are given for a train at any station; where one is given, it is, unless otherwise indicated, the leaving time; \* \* \*.

The time applies to the switch where an inferior train enters the siding; \* \* \*.

\* \* \*

35. The following signals will be used by flagmen:

Day signals--A red flag,  
Torpedoes and  
Fusces.

\* \* \*

86. Unless otherwise provided, an inferior train must clear the time of a superior train, in the same direction not less than five minutes; but must be clear at the time a first-class train, in the same direction, is due to leave the next station in the rear where time is shown.

S-37. An inferior train must keep out of the way of opposing superior trains and failing to clear the main track by the time required by rule must be protected as prescribed by Rule 99.

\* \* \*

S-88. At meeting points between trains of the same class, the inferior train must clear the main track before the leaving time of the superior train.

\* \* \*

Trains must pull into the siding when practicable; if necessary to back in, the train must first be protected as prescribed by Rule 99, \* \* \*.

99. When a train stops under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, the flagman must go back immediately with flagman's signals a sufficient distance to insure full protection. \* \* \*.

\* \* \*

99 (e). The front of the train must be protected in the same way when necessary by the front brakeman. If the front brakeman is not available, the fireman must be sent in his place with flagman's signals.

99 (k). Conductors and engineers are responsible for the protection of their trains.

#### FORMS OF TRAIN ORDERS.

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#### THE ORDERS

(1). No 1 Eng 409 run 50 fifty mins late A to G.

This makes the schedule time of the train named, between the stations mentioned, as much later as stated in the order, and any other train receiving the order is required to run with respect to this later time, as before required to run with respect to the regular schedule time. \* \* \*.

Time-table special instructions provide as follows:

Regular southward trains are superior to trains of the same class moving in the opposite direction.

The maximum authorized speed for freight trains is 40 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

No. 44, a north-bound second-class freight train, consisted at the time of the accident of engine 979, 36 cars and a caboose. No. 44 passed De Funiak Springs, 71.14 miles south of Yniestra, at 2:33 a. m., according to the dispatcher's record of movement of trains, 6 hours 53 minutes late. At this point the crew received a clearance, Form A, and copies of train order No. 33, Form 19, reading as follows:

No 4 Engs 193 and 178 coupled  
run 1 one hour late  
Chattahoochee to Pensacola

At Crestview, 42.32 miles south of Yniestra, the crew received a clearance, Form A, and copies of train order No. 45, Form 19, reading as follows:

No 91 Eng 1210 meet No 44 Eng 979  
at Yniestra No 91 take siding

No. 44 departed from Crestview at 5:15 a. m., 7 hours 45 minutes late, and departed from Milton, 11.69 miles south of Yniestra and the last open office, at 7:13 a. m., 8 hours 22 minutes late. At Yniestra No. 44 held the main track and met No. 91, then backed into the siding and stopped about 8:52 a. m. with the engine and first 8 cars standing on the main track north of the north siding-switch. At 9 a. m. the conductor copied train order No. 47, Form 19, reading as follows:

No. 4 Engs 184 and 178 coupled  
run 2 two hours and 20 twenty  
mins late Marianna to Pensacola.  
Order No. 33 is annulled.

At 9:11 a. m. No. 44 was struck by No. 43.

No. 43, a south-bound second-class freight train, consisted of engines 160 and 296, coupled, 33 cars and a caboose. At Pensacola, 7.79 miles north of Yniestra and the last open office, the crew received a clearance, Form A, and copies of two train orders, of which one was train order No. 47, Form 19, previously quoted. After a terminal air-brake test was made No. 43 departed from Pensacola at 8:45 a. m., on time, according to the dispatcher's record of movement of trains, and while moving at an estimated speed of 50 miles per hour it collided with No. 44.

From a south-bound engine the view of the point where the accident occurred is restricted to a distance of about 600 feet, because of vegetation on the west side of the track and track curvature.

Engine 979, its tender, and the first 4 cars of No. 44 were driven backward a distance of 98 feet. Engine 979 was derailed and badly damaged. The front end and the cab were destroyed. The fifth to the eighth cars, inclusive, were buckled and stopped at various angles to the track and the wreckage was contained within a distance of 43 feet. The ninth car was slightly damaged. Engine 160, the first engine of No. 45, was derailed to the west and stopped on its right side with its front end on the roadbed and 70 feet south of the point of accident. The front end was badly damaged and the cab was destroyed. Engine 296, the second engine, stopped about 20 feet south of the point of accident, across the track and at right angles to it. It leaned toward the right with the tender of the first engine against its right side and its own tender against its left side. The front end was badly damaged and the cab was destroyed. The first 10 cars of No. 45 were derailed and stopped in various positions on the track and near it, and the wreckage was contained within a distance of about 50 feet. The eleventh and twelfth cars were slightly damaged.

It was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred at 9:11 a. m.

The employees killed were the engineer and the fireman of No. 44, the fireman of the first engine of No. 45 and the engineer and the fireman of the second engine of No. 45. The employees injured were the engineer of the first engine of No. 45 and the front brakeman of No. 45.

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During the 50-day period preceding the day of the accident, the average daily movement in the vicinity of the point of accident was 20.6 trains.

#### Discussion

The rules governing operation on the line involved provide that an inferior train must keep out of the way of opposing superior trains. At meeting points between trains of the same class the inferior train must clear the main track before the leaving time of the superior train. If an inferior train fails to clear the time of an opposing superior train, flag protection must be provided. All surviving employees involved understood these requirements.

No. 4, a north-bound second-class train, backed into the siding at Yniestra at 8:53 a. m. Because the siding was not of sufficient length to accommodate the entire train, the engine and first 10 cars of No. 44 occupied the turnout at the north siding-switch and the main track. No. 4, a first-class north-bound train, was due to leave Page Junction, the first station south of Yniestra, at 8:50 a. m. on order No. 33. No. 45, a south-bound second-class train due at Yniestra at



9:10 a. m., was superior to No. 44 by direction. Under the rules, No. 44 was required to provide flag protection against No. 43, which struck the front end of No. 44 at 9:11 a. m.

As No. 43 was approaching the point where the accident occurred, the speed was about 30 miles per hour, both engines were using steam and the enginemen of both engines were maintaining a lookout ahead. No train orders affecting the movement of No. 43 with respect to No. 44 had been issued. The engineer of the first engine of No. 43 said that when his engine was about 600 feet north of the point where the accident occurred he saw the engine of No. 44 and immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the collision occurred before the brakes became effective.

The front brakeman of No. 44 said that when his engine stopped on the main track after the rear portion of the train was backed into the siding he remained on the engine with the engineer and the fireman. No mention was made of No. 43 and the front brakeman thought his train was waiting for No. 4. He had a timetable in his possession, but did not consult it. He understood that his train was required to clear the time of opposing superior trains, but he forgot No. 43. He entered the employ of the railroad on April 27, 1942, and had had no previous experience in train service. The engineer and the fireman of No. 43 were killed in the accident and it could not be determined why they failed to take action to provide protection for their train. The conductor said that when his caboose stopped in the siding the flagman was to the rear protecting against No. 4. The conductor communicated with the operator at Pensacola and copied order No. 53, which was completed at 9 a. m., and the operator informed him that No. 43 was on time. Because the siding would not accommodate his train, the engine and first 8 cars occupied the main track. He understood that front-end protection was required against No. 43, but he was depending upon the enginemen and the front brakeman to comply with the rules. He was proceeding northward when he heard No. 43 approaching, but the accident occurred before he had reached his engine. If front-end protection had been provided for No. 44, this accident undoubtedly would have been averted.

On the line involved in this accident trains are operated by timetable and train orders only. Recently the Commission investigated five other accidents which occurred on the line of this carrier in territories on which trains are operated by timetable and train orders only. Three of these accidents occurred on the Sub-division on which the accident at Ynicestra occurred. Of these three accidents, the first, which resulted in the death of 1 person and the injury of 11 persons, was a head-end collision between a freight train and a passenger train near Harold, Fla., on September 20, 1941. The second, which resulted in the injury of 3 persons, was a rear-end

collision between two freight trains near Harold, Fla., on July 21, 1942. The third, which resulted in the death of 1 person and the injury of 5 persons, was a rear-end collision between two freight trains near Cypress, Fla., on July 29, 1942. The reports of the Commission covering the investigation of all five of these accidents recommended the establishment of an adequate block system on the lines involved. In the present case, if an adequate block system had been in use on the line involved, the accident would not have occurred.

#### Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by an inferior train occupying the main track on the time of an opposing superior train.

#### Recommendation

That the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company should establish an adequate block-signal system on the line involved in this accident. A rule to show cause was issued by the Commission on November 5, 1941, and was served on said carrier in connection with the accident which occurred on the same Sub-division on September 20, 1941.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this seventh day of December, 1942.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

W. P. BARTLE,

(SEAL)

Secretary.