

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 3086
MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT
NEAR ENRIGHT, TEX., ON
MARCH 21, 1947

SUMMARY

Railroad: Missouri Pacific

Date: March 21, 1947

Location: Enright, Tex.

Kind of accident: Head-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: 70 : 395

Engine numbers: 1106 : 334

Consists: 47 cars, caboose : 6 cars, caboose

Estimated speeds: 20 m. p. h. : 20 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders.

Track: Single; tangent; 0.2 percent
descending grade northward

Weather: Clear

Time: 9:26 a. m.

Casualties: 6 injured

Cause: Overlapping of authorities of
two opposing trains

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 3086

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

MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY

April 16, 1947.

Accident near Enright, Tex., on March 21, 1947, caused
by an overlapping of the authorities of two
opposing trains.

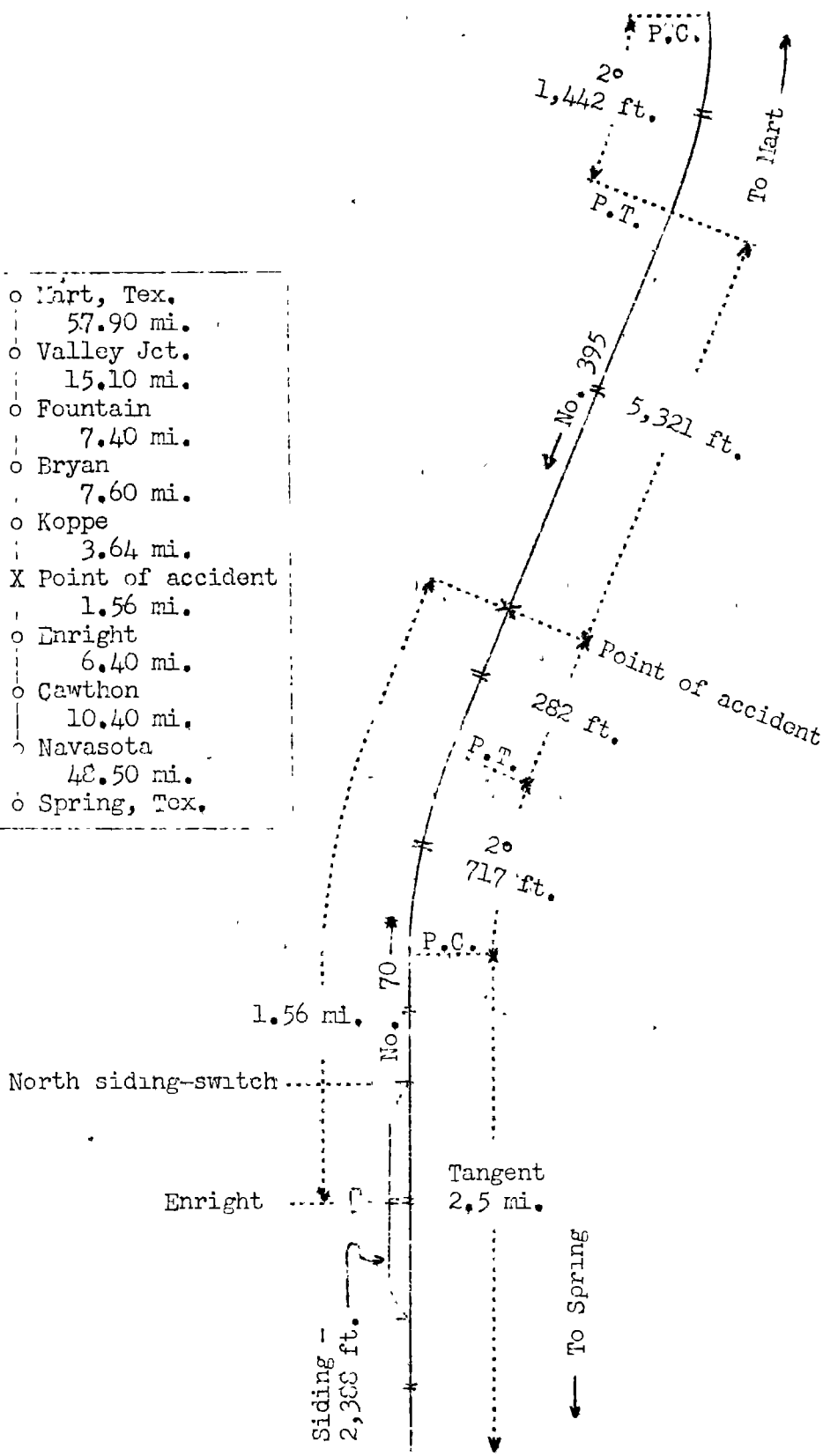
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On March 21, 1947, there was a head-end collision
between two freight trains on the Missouri Pacific Rail-
road near Enright, Tex., which resulted in the injury of
six employees.

¹
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 Mart, Tex. 57.90 mi.
- o Valley Jct. 15.10 mi.
- o Fountain 7.40 mi.
- o Bryan 7.60 mi.
- o Koppe 3.64 mi.
- X Point of accident 1.56 mi.
- o Enright 6.40 mi.
- o Cawthon 10.40 mi.
- o Navasota 48.50 mi.
- o Spring, Tex.



Inv. No. 3086
 Missouri Pacific Railroad
 Enright, Tex.
 March 21, 1947

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Palestine Division extending between Spring and Mart, Tex., 158.5 miles, a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. The accident occurred on the main track 66.86 miles north of Spring and 1.56 miles north of the station at Enright. From the south there are, in succession, a tangent about 2.5 miles in length, a 2° curve to the right 717 feet and a tangent 282 feet to the point of accident and 5,321 feet northward. From the north there is a 2° curve to the right 1,442 feet in length, then the tangent on which the accident occurred. The grade is 0.2 percent descending northward.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

S-72. Trains of the first class are superior to those of the second; trains of the second class are superior to those of the third; * * *

* * *

204. Train orders must be addressed to those who are to execute them, naming the place at which each is to receive his copy, * * *

* * *

220. Train orders once in effect continue so until fulfilled, superseded or annulled. Any part of an order specifying a particular movement may be either superseded or annulled.

* * *

FORMS OF
TRAIN ORDERS.

* * *

S-E,

Time Orders,

(1) No 2 Eng 33 wait at H until 9 59 a m for
No 61 Eng 99.

The train first named must not pass the designated point before the time given, unless the other train has arrived. The train last named is required to run with respect to the time specified, at the designated point or any intermediate station where schedule time is earlier than the time specified in the order, as before required to run with respect to the schedule time of the train first named.

* * *

E.

Time Orders,

- (1) No 1 Eng 39 and No 3 Eng 47 wait at N until 9 59 a m

* * *

The train, or trains, named, must not pass the designated points, before the times given. Other trains receiving the order are required to run with respect to the time specified at the designated points, or any intermediate station where schedule time is earlier than the time specified in the order, as before required to run with respect to the schedule time of the train, or trains, named.

S-M.

Annuling Part Of An Order.

- (1) That part of Order No 10 reading No 1 Eng 35 meet No 2 Eng 45 at S is annulled.

* * *

On the line involved the maximum authorized speeds are 65 miles per hour for passenger trains and 45 miles per hour for freight trains.

Description of Accident

Train order No. 227, addressed to northward trains at Spring, 65.3 miles south of Enright, and to southward trains at Valley Jct., 35.3 miles north of Enright, was made complete at 5:49 a. m. and read in part as follows:

Motor Car R.O.1 works Extra 801 am
until 601 pm between Cawthon and
Fountain protect against second and
third class trains * * *
No 70 eng 1106 wait at Cawthon until
945 am Koppe 955 am.

Cawthon is 6.4 miles south of Enright, and Fountain and Koppe are, respectively, 20.2 miles and 5.2 miles north of Enright. There are sidings at Cawthon, Enright and Koppe. There is no siding between Enright and Koppe. Train order No. 231, addressed to No. 70 at Navasota, 16.8 miles south of Enright, and to No. 395 at Valley Jct., was made complete at 6:32 a. m. and read in part as follows:

No 70 eng 1106 wait at
Enright until 920 am
Koppe 930 am
* * *
for No 395 eng 334

Train order No. 238, addressed to No. 70 at Navasota and to Work Extra R.O.1 at Cawthon, was made complete at 7:46 a. m. and read in part as follows:

That part of order No. 227
reading No 70 eng 1106 wait at
Cawthon until 945 am
Koppe 955 am is annulled.
No 70 eng 1106 wait at
Enright until 920 am
Koppe 930 am
* * *
for Work Extra R.O.1

This order was not addressed to No. 395.

No. 70, a north-bound second-class freight train, consisted of engine 1106, 47 cars and a caboose. The crew of this train received copies of train order No. 227 at Spring, and copies of train orders No. 231 and No. 238 at Navasota. No. 70 departed from Spring at 7:20 a. m., 2 hours 15 minutes late, departed from Navasota, the last open office, at 8:55 a. m., 2 hours 5 minutes late, passed the north siding-switch at Enright about 9:24 a. m., and while moving at an estimated speed of 20 miles per hour it collided with No. 395 at a point 1.56 miles north of the station at Enright.

No. 395, a south-bound third-class freight train, consisted of engine 334, 6 cars and a caboose. The crew of this train received copies of train orders No. 227 and No. 231 at Valley Jct. No. 395 departed from Valley Jct. at 7 a. m., 30 minutes late, departed from Bryan, the last open office, 12.8 miles north of Enright, at 9:01 a. m., 46 minutes late, passed the north siding-switch at Koppe about 9:15 a. m., where it would have been required to enter the siding to meet No. 70 if copies of train order No. 238 had been received by the crew, and while moving at an estimated speed of 20 miles per hour it collided with No. 70 at a point 3.64 miles south of Koppe.

The engines of both trains, the first car and the fourteenth to sixteenth cars, inclusive, of No. 70, and the first and second cars of No. 395 were derailed and damaged.

The conductor, the engineer and two brakemen of No. 395, and the engineer of No. 70, and a trainmaster who was on No. 395, were injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 9:26 a. m.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident, the average daily movement in the vicinity of the point of accident was 12.3 trains.

Discussion

Train order No. 227 authorized Work Extra R.O.1 to work between Cawthon and Fountain and included the requirement for No. 70, a north-bound second-class train, to wait at Cawthon, 6.4 miles south of Enright, until 9:45 a. m. and at Koppe, 5.2 miles north of Enright, until 9:55 a. m. This train order was sent to the operator at Cawthon for delivery to the crew of Work Extra R.O.1, to the operator at Spring for delivery to the crews of north-bound trains, including No. 70, and to the operator at Valley Jct. for delivery to the crews of south-bound trains, including No. 395, a third-class train. This order did not name any train for which No. 70 was required to wait at the specified points and, under the rules, unless the order was annulled it required No. 70 to wait at these points until the expiration of the time specified at each point. Later, train order No. 238, which, among other things, annulled that part of train order No. 227 requiring No. 70 to wait at Cawthon until 9:45 a. m. and at Koppe until 9:55 a. m., was sent to the operator at Cawthon for delivery to the crew of Work Extra R.O.1 and to the operator at Navasota for delivery

to the crew of No. 70. Train order No. 238 was not sent to the operator at any office for delivery to the crew of No. 395, and this failure resulted in an overlapping of the authorities of No. 395 and No. 70, as the crew of No. 395 held copies of train order No. 227 authorizing its train to use time until 9:45 a. m. to proceed to Cawthon to meet No. 70, and the crew of No. 70 held copies of train order No. 238 annulling that provision of train order No. 227. These trains collided about 9:26 a. m. at a point 7.96 miles north of Cawthon and 1.56 miles north of Enright. Because of vegetation on the inside of the curve immediately south of the point where the accident occurred, the members of the crew on the engine of each train were unable to see the other train more than a few hundred feet. The collision occurred before effective action could be taken to stop either train.

The train dispatcher understood that under the rules the annullment order was required to be sent for delivery to the crews of all trains holding copies of the train order to be annulled. He said that when he issued the annulling order he forgot that the crew of No. 395 held copies of train order No. 227. He did not discover his error until after the accident occurred.

Trains are operated in this territory by timetable and train orders only. If an adequate block system had been in use, these opposing trains would not have been permitted to occupy the same block simultaneously, notwithstanding the failure to address the annulling order involved to No. 395.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by an overlapping of the authorities of two opposing trains.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this sixteenth day of April, 1947.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.