

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

BUREAU OF SAFETY

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ACCIDENT ON THE

MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILROAD

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JAMESTOWN, KANS.

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JUNE 30, 1937.

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2184

SUMMARY

Inv-2184.

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Railroad: Missouri Pacific  
Date: June 30, 1937.  
Location: Jamestown, Kans.  
Kind of accident: Rear-end collision  
Trains involved: Freight : Freight  
Train Numbers: Extra 13 : Extra 101  
Engine numbers: 13 : 101  
Consist: 52 cars and : 40 cars and  
caboose : caboose  
Speed: Standing : 25 m.p.h.  
Track: 2° 20' curve; 1.06 percent ascending  
grade for 1,700 feet and then level  
for 100 feet to point of accident.  
Weather: Clear, moonlight  
Time: 2.20 - 2.25 a.m.  
Casualties: 2 killed, 1 injured.  
Cause: Failure to operate Extra 101 under  
control within yard limits.

August 18, 1937.

To the Commission:

On June 30, 1937, there was a rear-end collision between two freight trains on the Missouri Pacific Railroad at Jamestown, Kans., which resulted in the death of 1 employee and 1 trespasser and the injury of 1 employee.

#### Location and method of operation

This accident occurred on the Downs District of the Northern Kansas Division which extends between Concordia and Stockton, Kansas, a distance of 94.99 miles, and is a single-track line over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders, no form of block-signal system being in use. The accident occurred within yard limits at a point 2,626 feet east of the west yard-limit board. Approaching this point from the west yard-limit board the track is tangent for a distance of 1,849 feet, followed by a compound curve to the right 2,278 feet in length, consisting of a  $2^{\circ} 20'$  curve for a distance of 830 feet and a  $2^{\circ} 30'$  curve for 1,448 feet, the accident occurring at the eastern end of the  $2^{\circ} 20'$  curve. The grade for east-bound trains is 0.4 percent descending for a distance of 500 feet, 0.5 percent ascending for 400 feet, 1.06 percent ascending for 1,700 feet, and level for a distance of 100 feet to the point of accident.

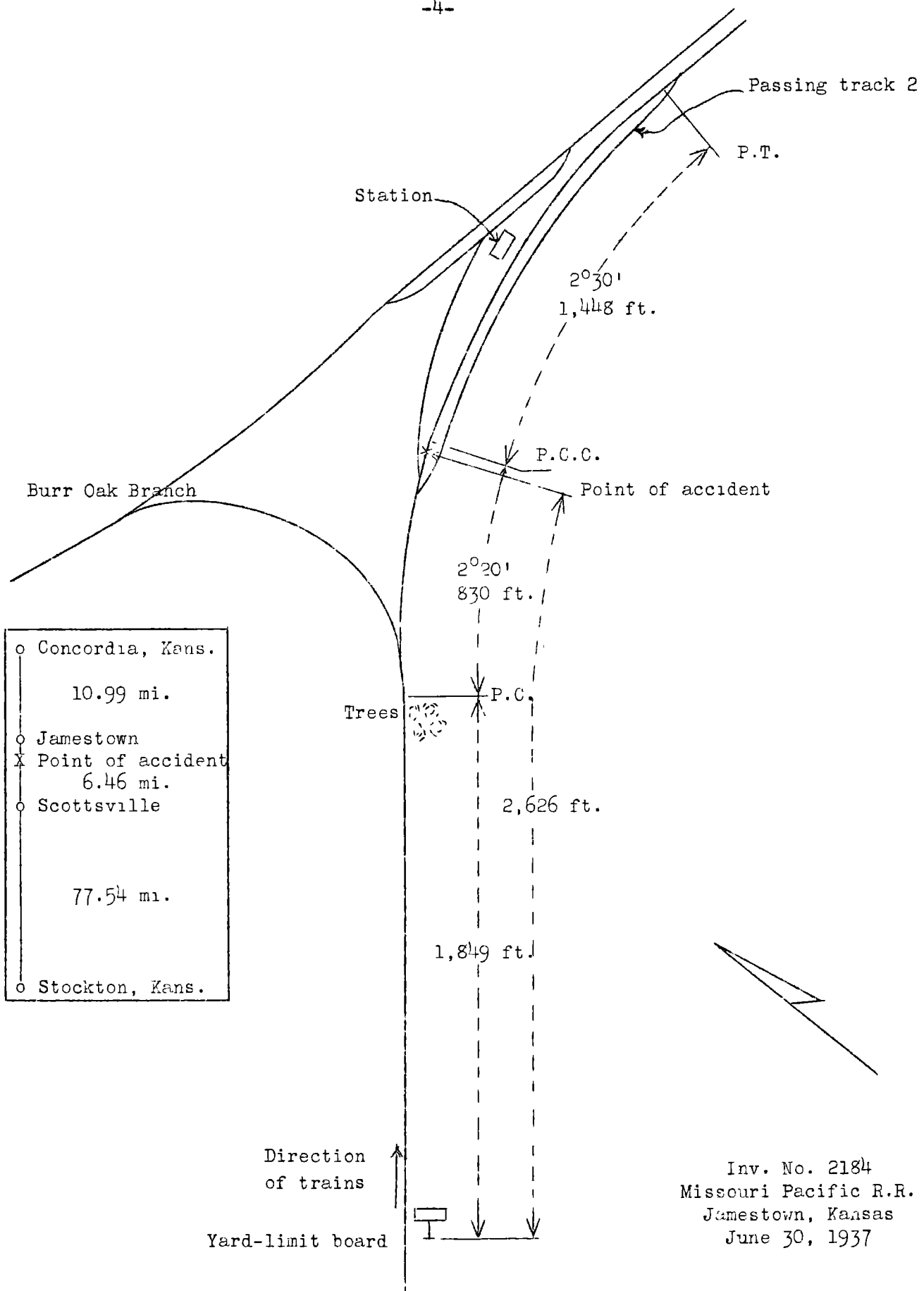
Jamestown is a junction point of the Downs and Burr Oak Districts and connections between these lines are made through Y tracks, the west leg of the Y connecting with the main line of the Downs District at a point 1,809 feet east of the west yard-limit board. Passing track No. 2, 1,668 feet in length, parallels the main track on the south side, the west switch being located 109 feet west of the point of accident, and at the time of the accident there were three cars on this track. The maximum authorized speed for freight trains is 40 miles per hour.

Due to trees and a side hill cut on the inside of the curve the view of the point of accident to be had by the engineman of an east-bound train, is limited to about 800 feet.

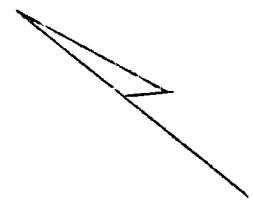
The weather was clear and the moon was shining at the time of the accident, which occurred between 2.20 a.m. and 2.25 a.m.

#### Description

Extra 13, an east-bound freight train, consisted of 52 cars and a caboose, hauled by engine 15, and was in charge of



o	Concordia, Kans.
	10.99 mi.
o	Jamestown
X	Point of accident
	6.46 mi.
o	Scottsville
	77.54 mi.
o	Stockton, Kans.



Inv. No. 2184  
 Missouri Pacific R.R.  
 Jamestown, Kansas  
 June 30, 1937

Direction  
 of trains ↑  
 Yard-limit board

Conductor Wolfe and Engineman Holmes. This train left Scottsville, 6.46 miles from Jamestown, at 1.30 a.m., according to the train sheet, stopped at Jamestown with the caboose standing on the main track at a point 2,626 feet east of the west yard-limit board, and while switching was being performed at the head end of the train, the rear end was struck by Extra 101.

Extra 101, an east-bound freight train, consisted of 40 cars and a caboose, hauled by engine 101, and was in charge of Conductor Brubaker and Engineman Huey. This train departed from Scottsville at 2.10 a.m., according to the statement of the conductor, and struck the rear end of Extra 13 while traveling at a speed estimated to have been about 25 miles per hour.

The caboose of Extra 13 was completely demolished. The engine, tender and first five cars of Extra 101 were derailed and piled up within a distance of 120 feet, badly damaged, the front end of the engine stopping about 230 feet beyond the point of accident. One car was thrown to the right against a car standing on the passing track, derailling and slightly damaging the latter car. The employee killed was the engineman, and the employee injured was the fireman, of Extra 101.

#### Summary of evidence

Conductor Wolfe, of Extra 13, stated that he had doubled his train into Jamestown and left the rear portion on the main track. The air brakes were left applied and the caboose was properly equipped with marker lights. No first-class trains were due and he was relying on Rule 93 for rear end protection. He saw the headlight of Extra 101 as it approached and from the sound of the train he realized that it was not going to stop before striking his train and he told his brakeman to go back and flag. He was standing about 30 car lengths ahead of his caboose at the time of the accident and did not know how far back his brakeman had gone, but he heard the engineman of Extra 101 answer the brakeman's signal. Conductor Wolfe placed the time of the accident at 2.20 a.m.

Brakeman Kelly, of Extra 13, stated that when Conductor Wolfe told him to flag Extra 101 he ran back and reached a point about one and one-half poles from the caboose when he flagged the approaching train which was then about 3 or 4 pole lengths from him. His stop signal was answered immediately and when about the third or fourth car passed him he noticed fire flying from under the train.

Fireman Kennedy, of Extra 101, stated that on leaving Scottsville they proceeded down the grade at a speed of between

25 and 30 miles per hour and the engineman made two 6-pound brake pipe reductions which slightly checked the speed of the train, the second reduction being made west of the west yard-limit board. The engineman sounded a whistle signal for the crossing located west of the yard limit, followed by the station whistle signal. Upon rounding the curve on which the accident occurred, at a speed of about 25 miles per hour, the air brakes were applied in emergency, reducing the speed only slightly before the collision occurred. While it sounded like an emergency exhaust, he did not know whether there had been sufficient time to fully recharge the train line after the second brake application had been made west of the west yard-limit board. The brakeman who was sitting ahead of him, called a warning which he thought was after the emergency application had been made, and Fireman Kennedy stated that on looking through the front cab-window he saw the marker lights of the caboos about 10 car lengths ahead. He did not hear the engineman answer a flag, nor did he recall hearing him answer any signal. Fireman Kennedy stated that this was his first trip on this district. Engineman Huey appeared to be normal in every way.

Head Brakeman Kilmer, of Extra 101, stated that the train line was coupled and the air brakes were working properly; the engineman made a brake application on descending the grade, and from the speed at which the train was traveling he had no idea when they entered yard limits. He saw a switch, and on rounding the curve he leaned out of the window and thought he saw a marker light and on leaning farther out both markers came into view and he called a warning. He thought that the engineman applied the air brakes in emergency when the train was about 6 or 8 car lengths from the caboos. He did not see a flagman nor did he hear the engineman answer a flagman's signal. He did not hear any whistle signal except one given for a road crossing just after leaving Scottsville. Brakeman Kilmer further stated that he is an Omaha Division man and is not familiar with the Downs District, having made only one trip prior to the trip involved.

Conductor Brubaker, of Extra 101, stated that before leaving Scottsville he went to the head end of the train and told the engineman and head brakeman to stop at Jamestown to let a following stock extra pass and to back in on the long track if it was clear, if not, to back in on the Burr Oak Branch. He thought he heard the engineman reply that his train could go as far as the stock train could, but he told him it was his opinion that the stock train was wanted at Concordia ahead of his own train. He thought Extra 13 left Scottsville about 20 minutes ahead of his own train. The air brakes were not tested before leaving Scottsville but the brakes were set on the rear

portion of the train and after picking up 14 cars and coupling the air hose, the brakes were released and the air gauge in the caboose registered 70 pounds. He heard a whistle signal sounded at some point between Scottsville and Jamestown but approaching Jamestown he did not hear a whistle signal. He thought that the train traveled a distance of about 1 or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles between the time an application of the air brakes was made on descending the grade and the time the brakes were applied in emergency just prior to the accident. Both he and Engineman Huey were familiar with this territory, but he did not realize that they were so close to Jamestown, and had it not been for the confidence he placed in the engineman he would have taken some action himself to bring the train under control. He was working at his desk in the caboose at the time of the accident.

Flagman Spaulding, of Extra 101, stated that he inspected the rear portion of his train, consisting of about 26 cars, while the engine was picking up cars at Scottsville and the train started to move when he was about 2 cars from the caboose. He estimated the speed of his train to have been about 30 miles per hour on approaching Jamestown and about 25 miles per hour at the time of the accident. He did not hear the engineman sound any whistle signals on approaching Jamestown.

Engineman Manwarring, who was in charge of Extra 101 from Downs to Scottsville, stated that the engine was in good condition and the train brakes functioned properly. He talked with Engineman Huey who relieved him at Scottsville, and he appeared to be in a normal condition.

Master Mechanic Kilbury arrived at the scene shortly after the accident. He found that the engine cab had been forced ahead approximately 20 inches. Both the automatic and independent brake valves were broken off and practically everything was stripped from the boiler head. The throttle was in closed position and the power reverse gear in forward motion. Highly colored flat spots, about 2 inches long, on the driving wheels indicated that the wheels had slid on the rails. The right back driving brake shoe also showed a high heat coloration.

#### Discussion

Rule 93 of the operating rules provides that within yard limits the main track may be used, protecting against first-class trains. Second and inferior class and extra trains must move within yard limits prepared to stop unless the main track is seen or known to be clear.

Engineman Huey was operating his train at a speed of at least 25 miles per hour on approaching Jamestown and no reduction was made on entering the yard limits, the train continuing at that speed until it entered the curve when an emergency application was made, but too late to avert the accident. From the position of the wrecked equipment and the damage sustained, the speed had apparently been reduced but very little at the time of the accident. Due to trees and a side-hill cut on the inside of the curve the view was very much restricted and Engineman Huey should have brought his train under such control that it could have been stopped short of an obstruction. Brakeman Kelly, of Extra 13, went back to flag when Extra 101 was heard approaching, but he was unable to get back a sufficient distance to enable the engineman to stop before striking the train.

While the fireman and brakeman of Extra 101 were not familiar with this territory, Engineman Huey was an experienced employee on this line, thoroughly familiar with this territory and appeared to be normal in every respect on the night in question.

No air brake test was made on the train after the 14 cars were picked up at Scottsville; however, the evidence indicates that the brakes functioned properly when applied on the grade after leaving Scottsville.

#### Conclusion

This accident was caused by failure to operate Extra 101 under control within yard limits.

Respectfully submitted,

W. J. PATTERSON,

Director.