

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

BUREAU OF SAFETY

ACCIDENT ON THE

NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN AND HARTFORD RAILROAD

BARRINGTON, R. I.

NOVEMBER 13, 1936

INVESTIGATION NO. 2115

SUMMARY

Railroad: New York, New Haven and Hartford
Date: November 13, 1936
Location: Barrington, R.I.
Kind of accident: Derailment
Equipment involved: Passenger train : Motor truck
Train number: No. E-16 :
Engine number: Gas-electric :
motor car 9112 :
Speed: 35-50 m. p. h. : Low rate of speed
Track: Tangent and level. View restricted
by buildings and crossing.
Weather: Clear
Time: 8:04 a. m.
Casualties: 1 killed and 16 injured
Cause: Motor truck driven on private crossing
directly in front of approaching train

December 29, 1936

To the Commission:

On November 13, 1936, there was a derailment of a passenger train as a result of striking a motor truck at a private crossing on the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad at Barrington, R.I., which resulted in the death of the truck driver and the injury of 12 passengers and 4 employees, 3 of whom were deadheading.

Location and method of operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Providence Division extending between Providence and Bristol, R.I., a distance of 16.19 miles, this being a double-track line over which trains are operated by timetable, train orders and an automatic block-signal system. The accident occurred on the east-bound track, at a point where the tracks cross the south end of West Street, 1,938 feet west of the station at Barrington. Approaching this point from the west the track is tangent for a distance of 3,198 feet, this tangent extending for more than 1 mile beyond. The grade is level.

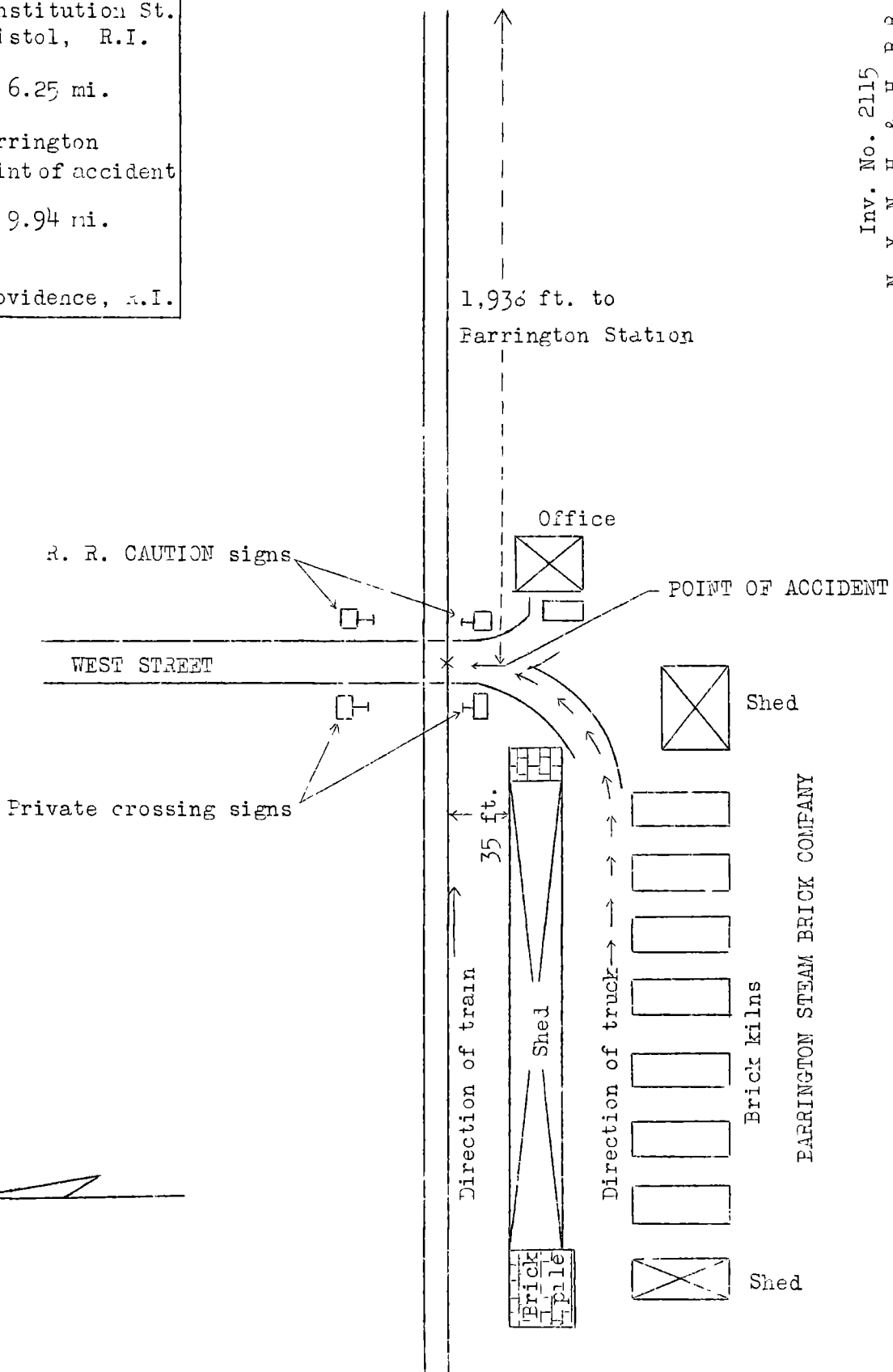
The Barrington Steam Brick Company's plant is situated just south of the tracks, at the southern end of West Street which crosses the tracks at right angles. The roadway then connects with a brick driveway which parallels the tracks and is situated between a shed 275 feet in length on the north and brick kilns on the south; the shed is 35 feet from the tracks. This is a private crossing, constructed of ballast, and is 18 feet in width and level with the rails and the road surface on each side. There are four warning signs at this crossing, two on each side, bearing the words "CAUTION R. R." and "THIS IS NOT A CROSSING. ALL PERSONS COMING UPON THE LOCATION OF THE RAILROAD COMPANY DO SO AT THEIR OWN PERIL." The view of the track had by the driver of a truck coming from the brick yard to the crossing is entirely obstructed until after passing the end of the shed and the truck is then but 25 feet from the track, from which point a clear view of an approaching east-bound train can be had for a distance of 3,198 feet.

The rules of the railroad company do not require the whistle to be sounded or the bell to be rung for private crossings. The speed for passenger trains is restricted to 50 miles per hour.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred at 8:04 a.m.

o	Constitution St. Bristol, R.I.
	6.25 mi.
x	Barrington
X	Point of accident
	9.94 mi.
o	Providence, R.I.

Inv. No. 2115
 N. Y. N. H. & H. R.R.
 Barrington, R. I.
 Nov. 13, 1936



Description

Train No. E-16, an east-bound passenger train, consisted of gas-electric motor car No. 9112, and was in charge of Conductor Towne and Motorman Tardie. This train departed from Providence at 7:45 a.m., according to the train sheet, on time, and on approaching Barrington struck a motor truck at the Brick Yard private crossing while traveling at a speed estimated to have been between 35 and 50 miles per hour.

The truck involved was a Sterling, 3-cylinder, 1929 model dump truck, chain drive, with dual rear wheels, owned and operated by the Campanella Construction Company of Providence, R.I. The weight of the truck was 11,750 pounds, registered to carry 10,000 pounds, and at the time of the accident was loaded with 17,000 pounds of brick. Driven by Albert Delfano, it had just left the Barrington Steam Brick Company yard and was moving over the crossing at a low rate of speed when its rear end was struck by Train No. E-16.

The truck was demolished and thrown to the left clear of the track. The motor car was derailed to the left at a point about 20 feet beyond the crossing and stopped in an upright position approximately 175 feet beyond and in general line with the track, with its front end badly damaged. The injured employee was the motorman.

Summary of evidence

Motorman Tardie, of Train No. E-16, stated that on approaching Barrington he was operating the motor car at a speed of 45 or 50 miles per hour and when about 100 or 150 feet from the private crossing he saw the front end of a truck on the track. He immediately applied the air brakes in emergency, shut off the engine and had just left his seat to get out of the way when the collision occurred. He was unable to estimate the speed of the truck but thought it was traveling at a pretty good rate; he did not remember whether or not he sounded the crossing whistle signal, although it is his practice to do so.

Conductor Towne, of Train No. E-16, stated that he heard the motorman sound the crossing whistle signal for the crossing involved, and he estimated the speed of his train to have been about 35 miles per hour when he felt the air brakes being applied in emergency, followed in a very few seconds by the collision.

Baggagemaster Kingsley, of Train No. E-16, stated that he was in the baggage compartment of the car looking ahead through the front window when he saw the truck on the track about 3 or 4 seconds before the collision. His train was traveling at a speed of 35 or 40 miles per hour and while he was unable to state the speed of the truck it did not appear to him to be moving very fast. He heard the motorman sound the crossing whistle signal when about 500 feet from the crossing.

Alexander Cioe, an employee of the Barrington Steam Brick Company, stated that when Driver Delfano called at the office for the delivery slip on the morning of the accident, he talked with him for about 5 minutes and Delfano was in good spirits and normal in every way. Mr. Delfano then went down into the yard to get his truck and started out with his load from near the west end of the shed, about 375 feet from the crossing. Mr. Cioe stated that he was at the east end of the shed talking with a former employee of the company, when he heard the truck approaching. He saw the truck turn to the left toward the crossing at the shed, while moving at a speed of 5 or 10 miles per hour. The driver brought the truck almost to a stop, shifted gears and then looked first toward the right or east and then to the west, at which time the front end of the truck was nearly on the track. The driver then must have seen the train, as he increased speed, and the train struck the truck about 2 or 3 feet from the rear end. Mr. Cioe stated that he did not hear the whistle sounded nor did he hear the bell ringing, and he did not see the train until it passed the shed at which time he estimated its speed to have been 35 or 40 miles per hour.

Superintendent Anderson, of the Barrington Steam Brick Company, stated that the operation of the trucks is under contract and therefore the brick company has no rules or regulations covering the use of this crossing. They notify every new driver, however, to be careful in going over the crossing, and Driver Delfano had been using this crossing for the last 6 months. The crossing serves only as an outlet for the brick company, and the warning signs had been placed at the crossing by municipal authorities, under orders from the Police Department.

President Campanello of the Campanello Construction Company, a common carrier licensed under the Motor Carriers Act, stated that Albert Delfano had been in his employ for 5 years, with occasional seasonal lay-offs, and during the period of his employment he had been hauling brick from the Barrington Steam Brick Company plant approximately 3 or 4 times a month. During the last 4 months, however, he had

been making several trips each day and using the crossing involved each time. Mr Campanello stated that he had given Mr. Delfano, together with his other drivers, specific oral instructions to be careful while operating over this crossing. He considered Mr. Delfano one of his most competent drivers and very capable in this type of work. Mr. Delfano had been on duty 1 hour at the time of the accident. The truck was in good mechanical condition. A mechanic is regularly employed to make inspection and repairs to all of his motor vehicles. They are examined almost daily, and thoroughly examined and overhauled each week.

Discussion

The evidence indicates that Driver Delfano approached the crossing at a low rate of speed, and was moving very slowly when he first looked for approaching trains, at which time the truck had nearly reached the track. The driver then apparently saw the train, as he increased his speed in an attempt to cross ahead of it. Due to the location of the brick shed the view to be had of an approaching east-bound train by the driver of a motor vehicle is entirely obstructed until the vehicle is within 25 feet of the track, where a clear view can then be had for 0.6 mile. In view of this very dangerous condition the driver should have brought his truck to a complete stop and looked in both directions before proceeding upon the crossing. Had he done so, he no doubt would not have attempted to cross in front of the approaching train.

The crossing involved was a private crossing, used almost entirely to serve the Barrington Steam Brick Company's plant, and while there are no rules or regulations of the railroad company requiring motormen to sound the crossing whistle signal, the evidence indicates that it is frequently sounded for this crossing, and the conductor and baggage man stated that it was sounded by the train involved, on the day of the accident. Eyewitnesses of the accident, who were standing near the crossing, stated, however, they did not hear the whistle signal.

Conclusion

This accident was caused by a motor truck being driven upon a private crossing directly in front of an approaching train.

Respectfully submitted,

W. J. PATTERSON,
Director.