

**RAILROAD ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

**Report No 3835**

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THE NEW YORK CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY

and

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY

RUSHVILLE, IND

JANUARY 12, 1959

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**INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION**

**Washington**

## SUMMARY

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DATE	January 12, 1959	
RAILROADS	Pennsylvania	New York Central
LOCATION	Rushville, Ind	
KIND OF ACCIDENT	Side-collision	
TRAINS INVOLVED	Freight	Freight
TRAIN NUMBERS	Extra 9142 North	78
LOCOMOTIVE NUMBERS	Diesel-electric unit 9142	Diesel electric units 1811 and 1810
CONSISTS	8 cars, caboose	62 cars, caboose
SPEEDS	Standing	18 m p h
OPERATION	Timetable special instructions	Timetable special instructions
TRACKS	Single, tangent, level	Single, tangent, level
WEATHER	Clear	
TIME	11 52 p m	
CASUALTIES	3 injured	
CAUSE	Failure properly to control the speed of a New York Central train approaching a railroad crossing at grade	

## INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO 3835

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

THE NEW YORK CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY

and

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY

June 2, 1959

Accident at Rushville, Ind , on January 12, 1959, caused by failure properly to control the speed of a New York Central train approaching a railroad crossing at grade

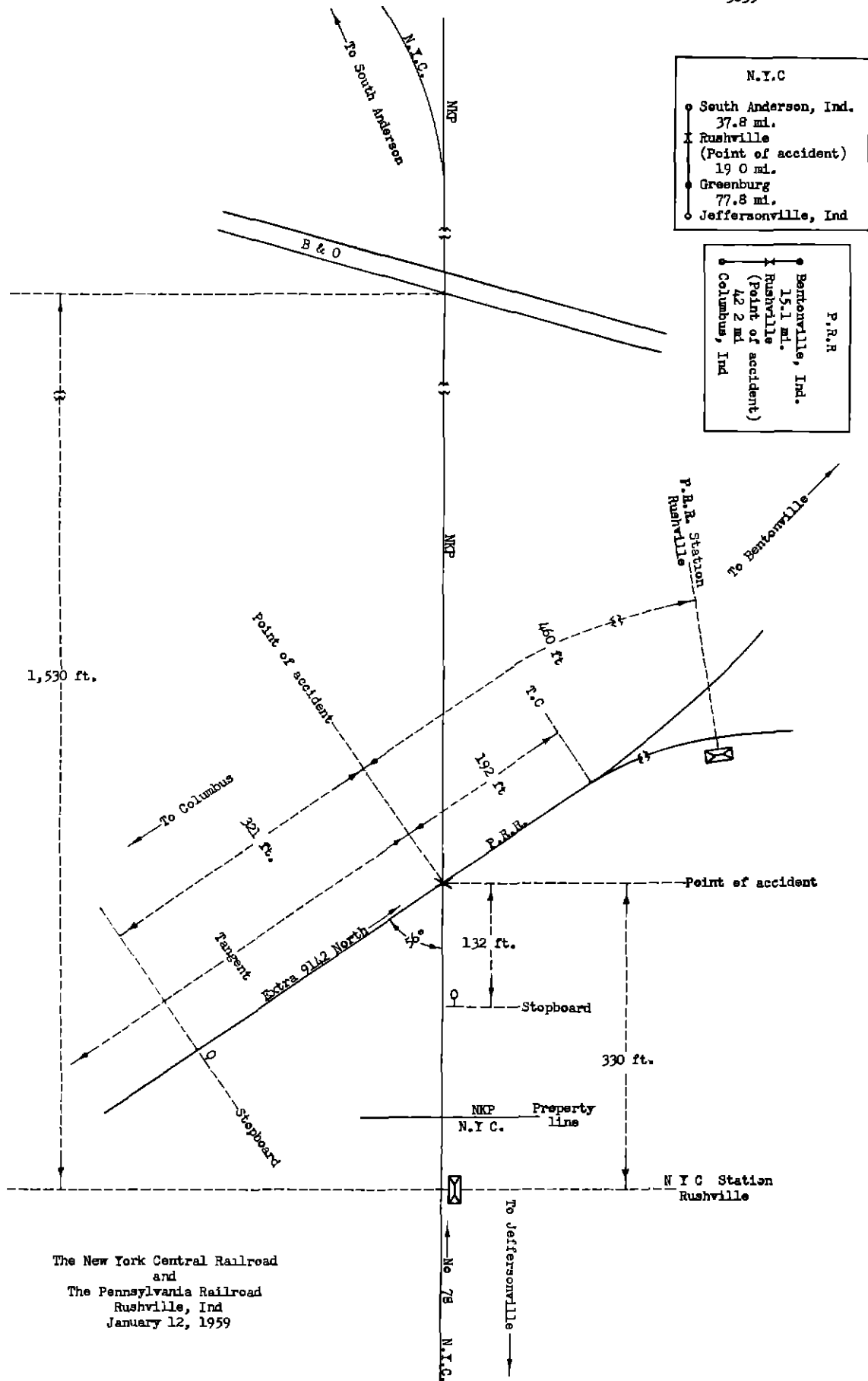
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

*FREAS, Commissioner*

On January 12, 1959, at Rushville, Ind , there was a side-collision between a freight train of the New York Central Railroad and a freight train of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which resulted in the injury of 3 train-service 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 Freas for consideration and disposition



### Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred at Rushville, Ind., at a non-interlocked intersection of the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) and the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad (NKP) and involved trains of the PRR and the New York Central (NYC) Railroads. Rushville is located on that part of the PRR Southwestern Region extending between Columbus and Bentonville, Ind., 57.3 miles, and on that part of the NYC Indiana Division extending between Jeffersonville and South Anderson, Ind., 134.6 miles. Timetable directions on the NYC and the PRR are north and south and these directions are used in the report. The tracks intersect at an angle of 56 degrees at a point 42.2 miles north of Columbus and about 460 feet south of the PRR station, and 96.8 miles north of Jeffersonville and about 330 feet north of the NYC station. Tracks of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) cross the NKP track at grade about 1,530 feet north of the NYC station. That part of the NKP main track extending from about 250 feet south of the PRR-NKP crossing to approximately 2,000 feet north of the B&O crossing is used jointly by NKP and NYC trains. In the vicinity of the intersection the PRR and the NKP are single-track lines over which trains are operated by timetable special instructions. NYC trains operating over the NKP track at Rushville are governed by NYC timetable special instructions.

From the south the PRR track is tangent for a considerable distance to the point of accident and 192 feet northward. From the south the NYC track is tangent for a considerable distance to the NKP main track and the NKP main track is tangent to the point of accident and a considerable distance northward.

The average grade for northbound NYC trains is 0.56 percent descending about 1.25 miles, 0.07 percent ascending about 1,260 feet, and 0.64 percent ascending about 230 feet to the PRR-NKP intersection.

Train movements over the intersection are governed by fixed signals. A stopboard governing northbound movements on the NKP is located about 132 feet south of the centerline of the intersection. It consists of a 12-inch x 15-inch sign mounted on a steel mast approximately 4 feet in height. The sign bears the word "STOP" painted in 5-inch red letters on a white background. A 5-inch red reflecting lens is mounted above the word "STOP". A stopboard governing northbound movements on the PRR is located about 321 feet south of the intersection.

Operating rules of the PRR read in part as follows:

**FIXED SIGNAL** - A signal of fixed location indicating a condition affecting the movement of a train or engine.

98. Trains must approach \* \* \* railroad crossings at grade, \* \* \* prepared to stop \* \* \*. Where required by law, trains must stop.

Special instructions in the PRR Southwestern Region timetable read in part as follows:

1098-A1. Movement of trains or engines on tracks of this region over non-interlocked railroad crossings at grade will be governed as follows:

LOCATION	TYPE	INDICATION OR POSITION	REQUIREMENTS
Rushville N Y C & S T L R R	Stop Board	Stop	Stop. It must be known that crossing is clear before using.

Operating rules of the NYC read in part as follows

FIXED SIGNAL - A signal of fixed location indicating a condition affecting the movement of a train or engine

98 Trains and engines must approach \* \* \* railroad crossings at grade, \* \* \* prepared to stop, \* \* \* Where required by law, trains and engines must stop

Special instructions in the NYC timetable read in part as follows

#### 98 RAILROAD CROSSINGS AT GRADE

\* \* \*

Location	Railroad	Signals
Rushville	* * *	* * *
	P R R	Stop Boards

\* \* \*

#### A1 OTHER RAILROADS

\* \* \*

Rushville, N K P main track extending from the junction switch approximately 2,000 feet north of B & O crossing to approximately 250 feet south of P R R crossing will be used jointly by N K P and N Y C trains. Trains will run expecting to find other trains switching or occupying track \* \* \*

\* \* \*

#### B2 LAWS AND REGULATIONS

\* \* \*

Indiana Railroad crossings not protected by Interlocking Signals, trains or engines must come to a full stop not less than 40 feet nor more than 500 feet from a railroad crossing or drawbridge

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The maximum authorized speed for freight trains on the NYC in the vicinity of the point of accident is 40 miles per hour

#### Description of Accident

PRR Extra 9142 North, a northbound freight train, consisted of diesel-electric unit 9142, a caboose and 8 cars. The caboose was located between the locomotive and the first car. This train departed from Columbus at 5 20 p m, stopped about 50 feet south of the NKP-PRR crossing at Rushville, entered the intersection and stopped about 11 43 p m with the fourth car on the crossing. Approximately 9 minutes later it was struck by NYC No 78

NYC No. 78, a northbound second-class freight train, consisted of diesel-electric units 1811 and 1810, coupled in multiple-unit control, 62 cars, and a caboose. This train departed from Jeffersonville at 7:00 p. m., on time, left Greensburg, the last open office, 19 miles south of Rushville, at 11:05 p. m., 1 hour 5 minutes late, entered the NKP main track at Rushville, and while moving at a speed of 18 miles per hour, as indicated by the tape of the speed-recording device, it struck PRR Extra 9142 North at the NKP-PRR intersection.

The 4th, 5th, and 6th cars of PRR Extra 9142 North were derailed and stopped on or near the PRR and NKP track structures. The 4th car was destroyed, and the 5th car was considerably damaged. NYC No. 78 stopped with the front end 52 feet north of the crossing. The front truck of the 1st diesel-electric unit was derailed, and this unit was considerably damaged.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 11:52 p. m.

The engineer, the fireman, and the front brakeman of No. 78 were injured.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident the average daily movements over the crossing were 12 trains on the PRR, and 16 trains on the NKP.

### Discussion

As PRR Extra 9142 North was approaching the point where the accident occurred the engineer and the fireman were in the control compartment of the locomotive. The conductor, the front brakeman, and the flagman were in the caboose. Upon its arrival at Rushville, the train stopped about 50 feet south of the NKP-PRR crossing. About 11:43 p. m., it entered the crossing and stopped with the fourth car on the intersection. The conductor went to the station to obtain switching instructions, the flagman and the front brakeman remained in the caboose. After the conductor returned to the caboose, the members of the crew observed a train approaching the crossing from a short distance southward on the NKP track. They said that the collision occurred while the train was moving at a speed of 15 to 20 miles per hour and before they could take any preventive action.

As NYC No. 78 was approaching Rushville the enginemen and the front brakeman were in the control compartment of the first diesel-electric unit. The fireman, who was not a qualified engineer, was operating the locomotive. The conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. The brakes of this train had been tested and had functioned properly when used en route.

The enginemen of NYC No. 78 understood that the train was required to be stopped short of the PRR-NKP intersection at Rushville in accordance with timetable special instructions and Indiana State law. About one mile south of the crossing, the fireman initiated a service application of the brakes, and at a point approximately 3,900 feet south of the intersection the speed of the train was reduced to 32 miles per hour. The fireman said that he maintained the service application of the brakes. However, an analysis of the tape of the locomotive speed-recording device disclosed that the speed then increased to 34 miles per hour, indicating that the brakes apparently had been released. The engineer said that when the train was approximately 1,100 feet south of the crossing he realized that the speed had not been reduced sufficiently to permit stopping the train short of the intersection, and immediately instructed the fireman to apply the brakes in emergency. The fireman applied the brakes as instructed, and the enginemen then observed the PRR train occupying the crossing. The enginemen and the front brakeman alighted from the locomotive shortly before the collision, which occurred while the train was moving at a speed of 18 miles per hour.

The brakes of NYC No 78 were tested about three hours after the accident occurred, and the test disclosed no defective condition

**Cause**

This accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of a New York Central train approaching a railroad crossing at grade

Dated at Washington, D C , this second  
day of June, 1959

By the Commission, Commissioner Freas

(SEAL)

HAROLD D McCOY,

Secretary