

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 3065  
THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT WALTON, IND., ON  
JANUARY 27, 1947

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SUMMARY

Railroad: Pennsylvania  
Date: January 27, 1947  
Location: Walton, Ind.  
Kind of accident: Derailment  
Train involved: Passenger  
Train number: 207  
Engine number: 5377  
Consist: 8 cars  
Estimated speed: 60 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable, train orders and  
manual-block system  
Track: Single; tangent; 0.37 percent  
descending grade westward  
Weather: Hazy  
Time: 6:03 p. m.  
Casualties: 4 killed; 45 injured  
Cause: Obstruction on track

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 3065

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

THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY

February 28, 1947

Accident at Walton, Ind., on January 27, 1947, caused  
by an obstruction on the track.

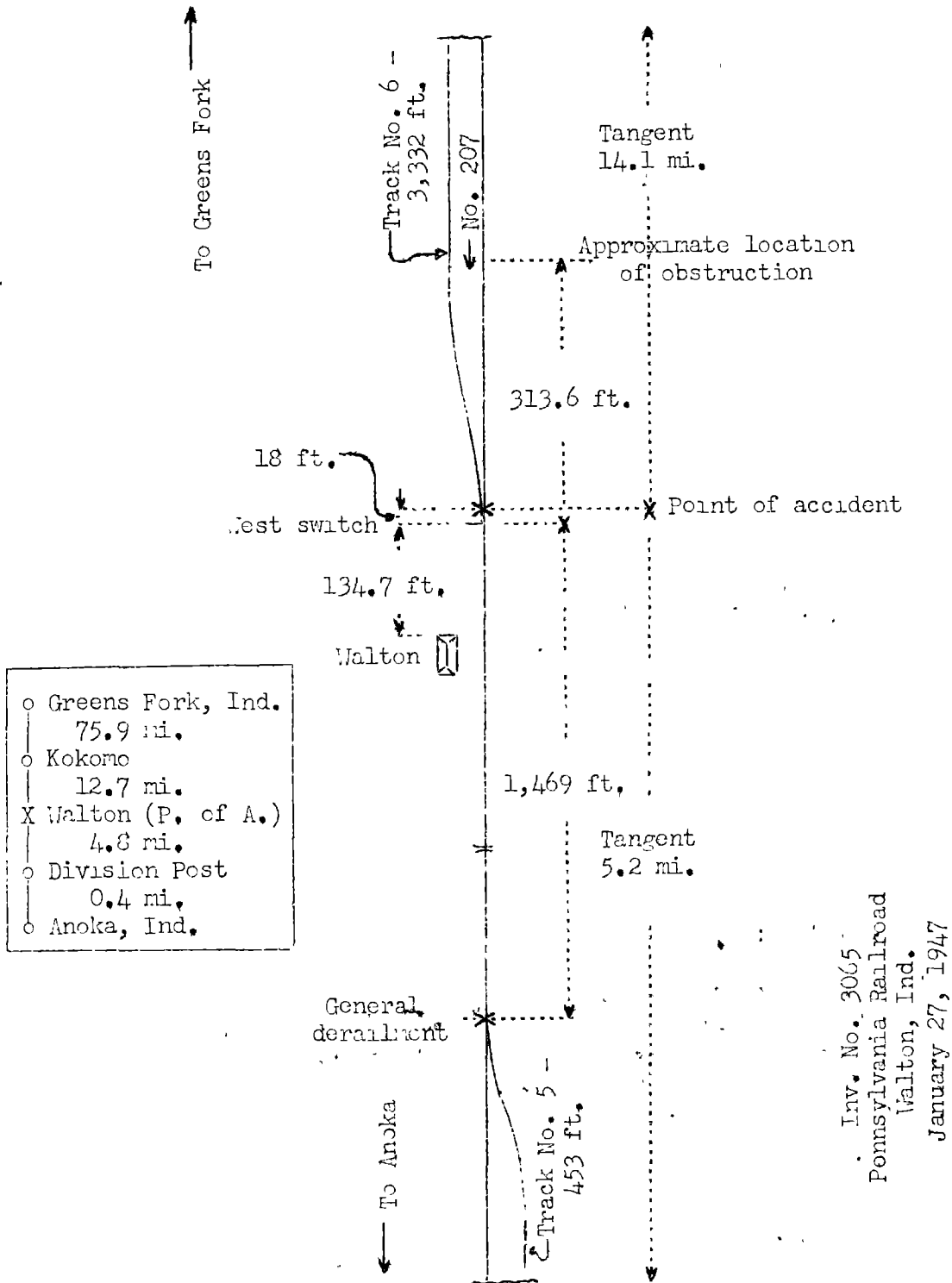
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On January 27, 1947, there was a derailment of a passenger train on the Pennsylvania Railroad at Walton, Ind., which resulted in the death of 3 passengers and 1 train-service employee, and the injury of 33 passengers, 9 dining-car employees and 3 train-service employees. This accident was investigated in conjunction with a representative of the Indiana Public Service Commission.

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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.



### Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Cincinnati Division extending between Greens Fork and Division Post, near Anoka, Ind., 93.4 miles, a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable, train orders and a manual-block system. At Walton, 88.6 miles west of Greens Fork, an auxiliary track 3,332 feet long and designated as track No. 6 parallels the main track on the north. The west switch of track No. 6 is 134.7 feet east of the station. A spur track, 453 feet long and designated as track No. 5, parallels the main track on the south. The switch of track No. 5 is facing point for west-bound movements, and is 1,469 feet west of the west switch of track No. 6. The accident occurred on the main track at the west switch of track No. 6 and the general derailment occurred at the switch of track No. 5. The main track is tangent throughout a distance of 14.1 miles immediately east of the point of accident and 5.2 miles westward. The grade is 0.37 percent descending westward.

The structure of the main track consists of 130-pound rail, 36 feet in length, laid on 22 ties to the rail length. It is fully tieplated, single-spiked, provided with 6-hole angle bars, an average of 8 rail anchors per rail length, and is ballasted with stone and gravel to a depth of 12 inches. The west switch of track No. 6 and the switch of track No. 5 are provided with No. 10 turnouts.

The maximum authorized speed for passenger trains is 60 miles per hour.

### Description of Accident

No. 207, a west-bound first-class passenger train, consisted of engine 5377, a 4-6-2 type, one baggage car, two coaches, one sleeping car, two coaches, one dining car and one sleeping car, in the order named. All cars were of steel construction. This train departed from Kokomo, the last open office, 12.7 miles east of Walton, at 5:47 p. m., 2 minutes late, and while it was moving at an estimated speed of 60 miles per hour the engine, the first five cars and the front truck of the sixth car were derailed.

The engine stopped in reverse direction on its right side, south of the main track and at an angle of about 15 degrees to it, with the front end 1,787 feet west of the point of derailment. The tender became detached from the engine and stopped upright, off its trucks, about 15 feet north of the main track and at an angle of about 20 degrees to it. The first car stopped on its left side, on top of the tender and at an angle of about 45 degrees to the track. The second to fifth cars, inclusive, stopped upright, across the main track and at various

angles to it. The engine, the tender and the first four cars were badly damaged, and the fifth and sixth cars were considerably damaged. The engine and the second and third cars of No. 207 struck five freight cars that were standing on track No. 5, and the freight cars were damaged.

The fireman was killed; The conductor, the engineer and the front brakeman were injured.

The weather was hazy and it was dark at the time of the accident, which occurred about 6:03 p. m.

### Discussion

No. 207 was moving at a speed of about 60 miles per hour, in territory where the maximum authorized speed was 60 miles per hour; when the derailment occurred. The headlight was lighted brightly, and the enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. The conductor and the front brakeman were in the second car and the flagman was in the sixth car. Prior to the time of the accident, the engine and the cars had been riding smoothly. The first that any member of the crew knew of anything being wrong was when the engineer felt an unusual movement of the front of the engine. He immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the general derailment occurred before the speed of the train was materially reduced. The brakes of No. 207 had been tested and functioned properly en route.

The first mark of derailment was a flange mark extending diagonally across the top of the head of the south rail of the main track in the immediate vicinity of the west switch of track No. 6. Westward from this point a distance of 1,487 feet to the spur-track switch, wheels marks appeared on the ties inside the north rail and outside the south rail. The track was torn up from this point westward to the point where the engine stopped. Throughout a distance of 313.6 feet immediately east of the west switch of track No. 6 there were scraping marks on the track structure between the rails and outside the south rail of the main track.

The investigation disclosed that about 30 minutes before the accident occurred two boys, 10 and 11 years of age, had moved a roll of woven-wire fencing 22 inches in diameter and 48 inches in length, a 2-by-8-inch pine board 10 feet long, a piece of pine wood 3 by 3 inches by 3 feet long, and several pieces of pipe of various lengths, all of which was property of the railroad company, from a place on the right-of-way in the immediate vicinity of the point of derailment to the main track. The roll of wire was placed on the main track in such manner that it extended from the approximate centerline of the track southward across the south rail, and the boards and the pipe were placed across the rails. The marks on the track structure

immediately east of the point of derailment and westward from the west switch of track No. 6 to the spur-track switch indicate that the roll of wire became wedged under the pilot of the engine and was moved westward to the west switch of track No. 6, where the wire became wedged between the rails of the switch and the main track. At this point the left front engine-truck wheel was raised high enough by the roll of wire for the flange to mount the south rail. Then the flange continued on top of the rail to the point where the left wheel dropped outside the south rail and the right wheel dropped inside the north rail. These wheels continued in line with the main track to the facing-point switch of the spur track, then the general derailment occurred.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by an obstruction on the track.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-eighth day of February, 1947.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

W. P. BARTEL,

(SEAL)

Secretary.