

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3282
SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY
IN RE ACCIDENT
AT GLENN, N. C., CN
OCTOBER 4, 1949

SUMMARY

Date: October 4, 1949

Railroad: Southern

Location: Glenn, N. C.

Kind of accident: Rear-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: Extra 6271 East : 254

Engine numbers: 6271 : 4836

Consists: 3 cars, caboose : 40 cars, caboose

Estimated speeds: Standing : 10 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders; yard limits

Track: Single; tangent; 0.90 percent descending grade eastward

Weather: Clear

Time: 3:25 p. m.

Casualties: 2 injured

Cause: Failure properly to control speed of following train moving within yard limits

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3282

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

SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY

November 28, 1949

Accident at Glenn, N. C., on October 4, 1949, caused by
failure properly to control the speed of the following
train moving within yard limits.

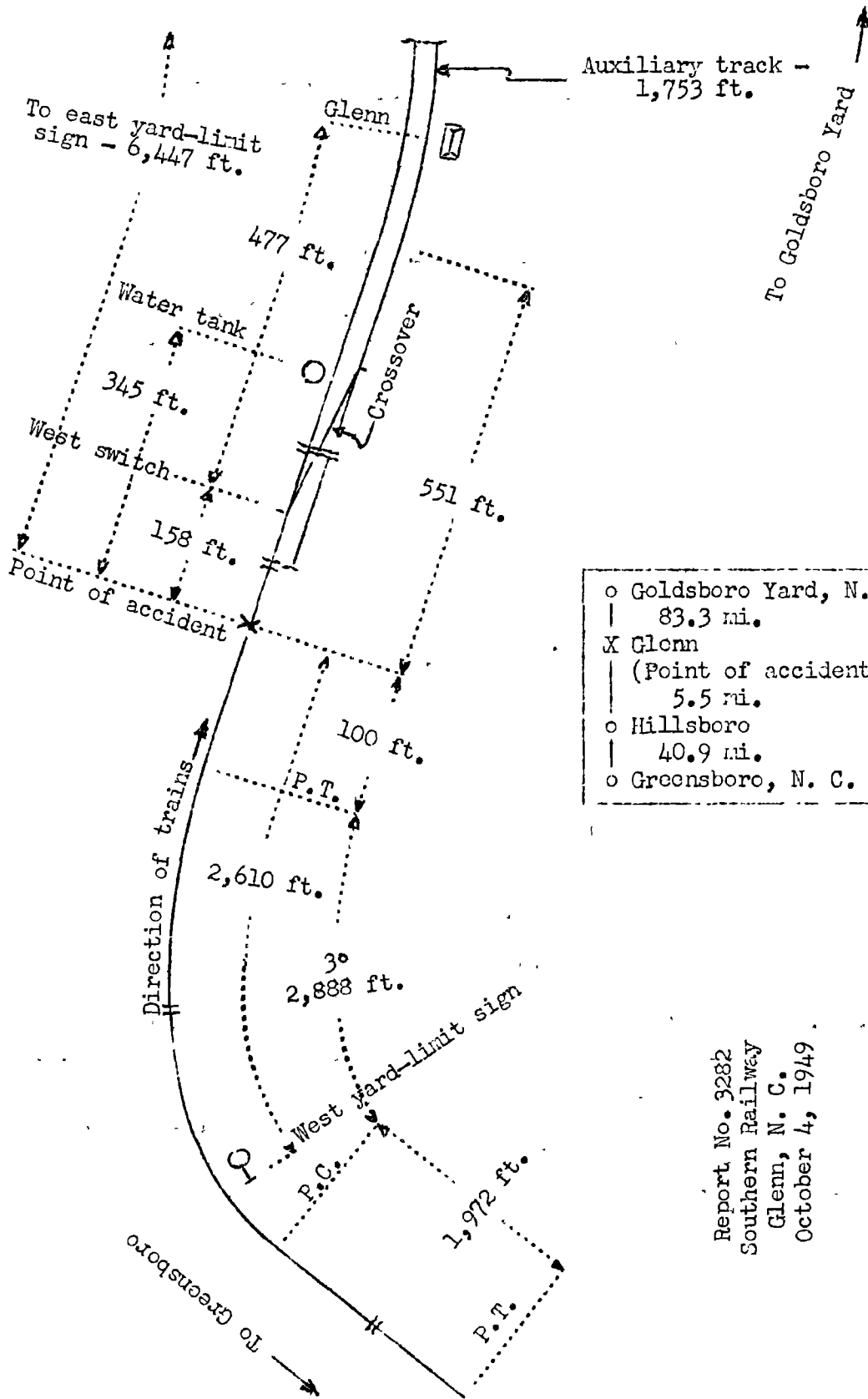
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On October 4, 1949, there was a rear-end collision
between two freight trains on the Southern Railway at Glenn,
N. C., which resulted in the injury of two 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 | Goldsboro Yard, N. C. |
| | 83.3 mi. |
| X | Glenn |
| | (Point of accident) |
| | 5.5 mi. |
| o | Hillsboro |
| | 40.9 mi. |
| o | Greensboro, N. C. |

Report No. 3282
 Southern Railway
 Glenn, N. C.
 October 4, 1949

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Danville Division extending between Greensboro and Goldsboro Yard, N. C., 129.7 miles. In the vicinity of the point of accident this is a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. Within yard limits at Glenn, 46.4 miles east of Greensboro, an auxiliary track 1,753 feet in length parallels the main track on the south. The west switch of a crossover which connects the main track with the auxiliary track is located 477 feet west of the station. This crossover is facing-point for east-bound movements on the main track. The accident occurred on the main track within yard limits at a point 2,610 feet east of the west yard-limit sign, and 635 feet west of the station at Glenn. From the west there are, in succession, a tangent 1,972 feet in length, a 3° curve to the right 2,888 feet, and a tangent 100 feet to the point of accident and 551 feet eastward. The grade averages 0.94 percent descending eastward throughout a distance of 1 mile immediately west of the point of accident, and is 0.90 percent descending at the point of accident.

This carrier's operating rules read in part as follows:

DEFINITIONS

Yard Speed--A speed that will permit stopping within one-half the range of vision.

93. Within yard limits the main track may be used without protecting against second and inferior class, extra trains and engines.

Second and inferior class, extra trains and engines must move within yard limits at yard speed.

* * *

In case of accident, the responsibility will rest with the approaching train.

Note-- * * * Location of yard limits are shown in time tables and by "Yard Limit" signs.

The maximum authorized speed for freight trains was 45 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 6271 East, an east-bound freight train, consisted of engine 6271 and a caboose. This train stopped on the main track at Glenn at 2:55 p. m., where the engine was detached from the caboose. Three cars were assembled from the auxiliary track and coupled to the caboose, and were left standing on the main track 158 feet west of the west crossover-switch. About 3:25 p. m. the caboose was struck by No. 254. At the time of the accident both crossover switches were lined for entry to the auxiliary track.

No. 254, an east-bound second-class freight train, consisted of engine 4836, 40 cars and a caboose. This train passed Hillsboro, the last open office, 5.5 miles west of Glenn, at 3:17 p. m., 2 hours 52 minutes late, passed the west yard-limit sign at Glenn, and while moving at a speed of about 10 miles per hour it struck the rear end of Extra 6271 East.

The rear end of Extra 6271 East was moved eastward through the crossover and it collided with a cut of nine cars on the auxiliary track. The west end of the most westerly car of this cut was 209 feet east of the west crossover-switch. The caboose of Extra 6271 East was demolished. The three cars coupled to the caboose were derailed and stopped in various positions on or near the track. They were badly damaged. The most westerly car of the cut of cars which was standing on the auxiliary track was destroyed. The other eight cars were moved eastward a distance of 150 feet, but were not derailed or damaged. A water tank located 345 feet east of the point of accident and 15 feet north of the center-line of the track was demolished.

The engine, the tender, and the first seven cars of No. 254 were derailed. The engine stopped on its left side, with the front end about 3 feet and the rear end about 15 feet north of the center-line of the main track. The tender, which remained coupled to the engine, stopped upright, across and at an angle of approximately 45 degrees to the main track. The derailed cars stopped in various positions on or near the track. The engine, the tender, and the first, second, fourth, fifth and sixth cars were badly damaged. The third car was destroyed. The seventh car was slightly damaged.

The engineer and the fireman of No. 254 were injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 3:25 p. m.

The engine of No. 254 was equipped with No. 6-ET brake equipment. The brake-pipe feed valve was adjusted to supply brake-pipe pressure of 70 pounds. The caboose and 8 of the cars were equipped with K-type brakes, and the other 32 cars were equipped with AB brakes.

Discussion

During a period of about 30 minutes prior to the time the accident occurred, the crew of Extra 6271 East was engaged in switching cars at Glenn. Three cars were assembled and coupled to the caboose. These cars were left standing on the main track west of the crossover, and the engine moved eastward to perform switching near the east end of the auxiliary track. Both switches of the crossover were lined for movement through the crossover. The crew of Extra 6271 East did not observe the approach of No. 254 until that train was about 1,100 feet from their caboose. When the accident occurred the flagman of Extra 6271 East was near the station and the other members of the crew were in the vicinity of the engine.

As No. 254 was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 45 miles per hour. The engine-men were in their respective positions on the engine, the front brakeman was in the brakeman's booth on the tender, and 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. When the engine was about 1,500 feet west of the west yard-limit sign, the engineer made a 10-pound brake-pipe reduction, which was not released. Because of track curvature to the right, the view of the point where the accident occurred from the left side of the cab of an east-bound engine is obscured, and the view from the right side is restricted to a distance of 1,167 feet. The engineer observed the caboose of Extra 6271 East when it first could be seen from the cab of the engine. He immediately placed the brake valve in emergency position and placed the reverse gear in position for backward motion. However, the distance was too short in which to stop the train before the collision occurred.

The engineer was injured in the accident and could not be questioned during the investigation. Other members of the crew estimated that the speed of the train was between 20 and 30 miles per hour at the time the emergency brake application was made, and was about 10 miles per hour when the collision occurred. The conductor said that after the accident occurred he inspected the portion of the train which was not derailed and observed that the air brake on each car was applied. The air brakes on this portion of the train were tested after the accident occurred. The piston travel on one car was found to be excessive. The air brakes on the other cars functioned properly. The air brake equipment of the engine of No. 254 was removed and tested after the accident and was found to be in proper operating condition.

This accident occurred within yard limits, and, under the rules, No. 254 was required to be operated in such manner that it could be stopped short of a train or an obstruction.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of the following train moving within yard limits.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-eighth day of November, 1949.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.