

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 2864
THE SPOKANE, PORTLAND & SEATTLE RAILWAY COMPANY
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT
AT PORTLAND, OREG., ON
JANUARY 29, 1945

SUMMARY

Railroad: Spokane, Portland & Seattle
Date: January 29, 1945
Location: Portland, Oreg.
Kind of accident: Side collision
Trains involved: S. P. & S. freight : N. P. T. yard
engine and cars
Train numbers: Extra 335 East :
Engine numbers: 335 : 10
Consist: Caboose : 10 cars
Estimated speed: 3 m. p. h. : 3 m. p. h.
Operation: Timetable and train orders;
yard limits
Track: Double; tangent; 0.2 percent
ascending grade eastward
Weather: Clear
Time: 7:14 a. m.
Casualties: 1 killed; 1 injured
Cause: Failure properly to control
speed of yard engine moving
within yard limits

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 2864

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

THE SPOKANE, PORTLAND & SEATTLE RAILWAY COMPANY

March 14, 1945.

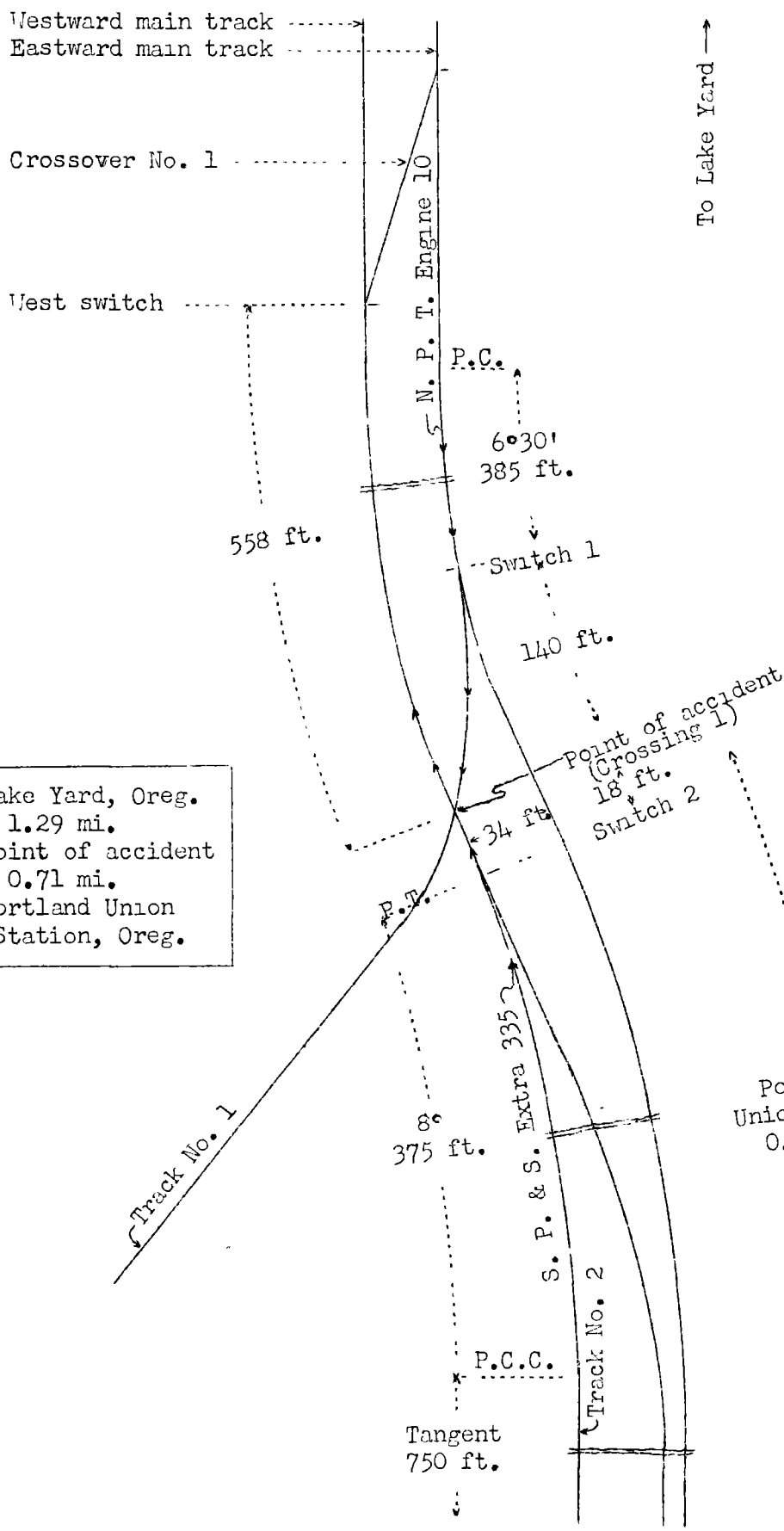
Accident at Portland, Oreg., on January 29, 1945, caused
by failure properly to control the speed of a yard
engine moving within yard limits

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On January 29, 1945, there was a side collision between a freight train and cars being pushed by a yard engine on the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway at Portland, Oreg., which resulted in the death of one employee, and the injury of one employee.

¹Under 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.



o Lake Yard, Oreg.
 1.29 mi.
 X Point of accident
 0.71 mi.
 o Portland Union
 Station, Oreg.

To Lake Yard →

Portland Union Station
0.71 mi.

Inv. No. 2864
 Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway
 Portland, Oreg.
 January 29, 1945

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Terminals Sub-Division extending eastward from Portland Union Station to Lake Yard, Oreg., 2 miles. This was a double-track line, within yard limits, over which trains moving with the current of traffic were operated by timetable and train orders. There was no block system in use. Yard engines of the Northern Pacific Terminal Company of Oregon, hereinafter referred to as the N. P. T., were regularly operated in this territory. At a point 0.71 mile east of Union Station a spur track, hereinafter referred to as track No. 1, extended northwestward from the eastward main track and intersected the westward main track at an angle of 31 degrees. At the crossing, hereinafter referred to as crossing 1, the distance between the track centers of the main tracks was 34 feet. The switch which connected the eastward main track and track No. 1 was 140 feet east of crossing 1, and was trailing-point for east-bound movements on the eastward main track. This switch is hereinafter referred to as switch 1. In this vicinity a lead track, hereinafter referred to as track No. 2, which connected the westward main track and several yard tracks, practically paralleled the main tracks on the north. The east switch of the lead track was 18 feet west of crossing 1, and was facing point for west-bound movements on the westward main track. This switch is hereinafter referred to as switch 2. The west switch of a trailing-point crossover about 450 feet long, hereinafter referred to as crossover No. 1, which connected the main tracks, was 558 feet east of crossing 1. East-bound trains en route from track No. 2 to the eastward main track were authorized by special instructions to operate against the current of traffic on the westward main track from switch 2 to the west switch of crossover No. 1. The accident occurred at the fouling point of crossing 1 and track No. 1. From the west on track No. 2 to switch 2 and thence eastward on the westward main track there were, in succession, a tangent 750 feet, a compound curve to the left 375 feet, the maximum curvature of which was 8° , and a tangent 18 feet to crossing 1 and a short distance eastward. From the east on the eastward main track there was a $6^{\circ}30'$ curve to the left 385 feet to switch 1, and beyond this switch on track No. 1 there was a 20° curve to the right 140 feet to crossing 1. The grade was 0.2 percent ascending eastward.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

DEFINITIONS.

* * *

Restricted Speed.--Proceed prepared to stop short of train, obstruction, or anything that may require the speed of a train to be reduced,

* * *

93. * * *

* * *

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

* * *

Description of Accident

Extra 335 East, an east-bound S. P. & S. freight train, consisting of engine 335, headed westward, and a caboose, in the order named, was en route eastward from track No. 2 to the westward main track, and thence through crossover No. 1 to the eastward main track. While this train was moving over crossing 1 at a speed of about 3 miles per hour the engine was struck by the first car of a cut of cars being pushed by N. P. T. yard engine 10.

N. P. T. yard engine 10, headed westward, pushing 10 cars, moved westward on the eastward main track and entered track No. 1 at switch 1. While moving at an estimated speed of about 3 miles per hour it struck Extra 335 East.

The first car of the cut of cars being pushed by yard engine 10 and the tender of engine 335 were derailed. The left side of the cab of engine 335 was demolished.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 7:14 a. m.

The fireman of Extra 335 was killed, and the engineer was injured.

Discussion

As Extra 335 East was moving over crossing 1 the enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead. The headlight on the tender was lighted. The front brakeman, who was on the footboard of the tender, and the engineer said they were not aware of anything being wrong until the collision occurred.

The engine foreman of yard engine 10 was the only member of the crew of this engine who was in the immediate vicinity of crossing 1. The view of the crossing had by other members of the crew was materially restricted because of track curvature. The foreman said that he lined switch 2 for Extra 335 to proceed from track No. 2 to the westward main track, but he

thought this train would not proceed over the crossing ahead of the cut of cars being pushed by engine 10. When he observed that Extra 335 had entered upon the crossing he gave stop signals with a lighted white lantern, and the engineer of engine 10 immediately moved the brake valve to emergency position, but the first car struck the left gangway of engine 335 before the movement could be stopped.

Cause

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

Dated at Washington, D. C., this fourteenth day of March, 1945.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.