

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3336

THE YOUNGSTOWN AND NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY

IN RE ACCIDENT

NEAR YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, ON

JUNE 25, 1950

SUMMARY

Date: June 25, 1950

Railroad: Youngstown and Northern

Location: Youngstown, Ohio

Kind of accident: Head-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: Extra 220 North : Extra 231 South

Engine numbers: Diesel-electric unit 220 : Diesel-electric unit 231

Consists: 10 cars, caboose : 15 cars, caboose

Estimated speeds: 5 m. p. h. : Standing

Operation: Train orders

Track: Single; 2° curve; 0.25 percent descending grade northward

Weather: Clear

Time: 1:20 p. m.

Casualties: 2 injured

Cause: Train occupying main track without authority

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3336

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

THE YOUNGSTOWN AND NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY

August 21, 1950

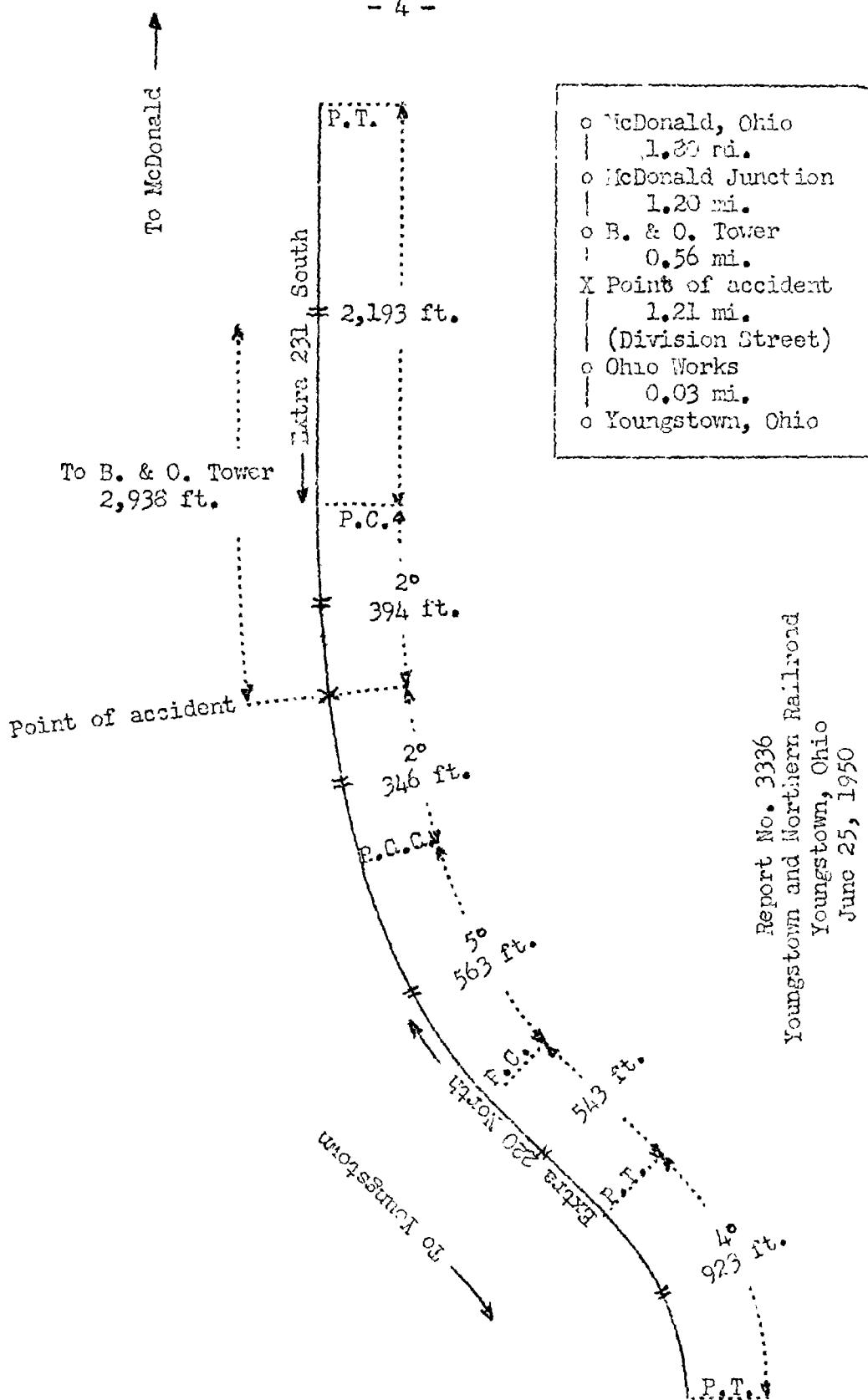
Accident near Youngstown, Ohio, on June 25, 1950, caused
by a train occupying the main track without
authority.

¹
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On June 25, 1950, there was a head-end collision
between two freight trains on the Youngstown and Northern
Railroad near Youngstown, Ohio, 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.



Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on the main track of the Youngstown and Northern Railroad, which extends between Youngstown and McDonald, Ohio, 4.8 miles. In the vicinity of the point of accident this is a single-track line, over which trains are operated by train orders. There is no block system in use. The accident occurred 1.24 miles north of Youngstown and 1.02 miles north of Division Street. From the south there are, in succession, a 4° curve to the left 923 feet in length, a tangent 543 feet, a 5° curve to the right 563 feet and then a 2° curve to the right 346 feet to the point of accident and 394 feet northward. From the north there are, in succession, a tangent 2,193 feet in length, and then the curve on which the accident occurred. The grade is 0.25 percent descending northward at the point of accident.

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

S-87. * * *

Extra trains * * * will be governed by train orders with respect to opposing extra trains:

204. * * *

* * *

Enginemen must show train orders to firemen and when practicable to forward trainmen. Conductors must show train orders when practicable to trainmen.

210. When a "31" train order has been transmitted,
* * *.

The conductor or engineman and others addressed must read it to the operator and then sign it, and the operator will send their signatures preceded by the number of the order to the dispatcher. The response "complete," and the time, with the initials of the dispatcher, will then be given by the train dispatcher. Each operator receiving this response will then write on each copy the word "complete," the time, and his last name in full, and then deliver a copy to each person addressed, except that when the order is signed by the conductor, he must personally deliver a copy of it to each engineman; the engineman will then read the order to the conductor before proceeding.

FORMS OF TRAIN ORDERS

G

Extra trains.

(1.) Eng 99 run extra A to F.

* * *

The maximum authorized speed for freight trains was 30 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra 220 North, a north-bound cinder train, consisted of Diesel-electric unit 220, 10 cars and a caboose. At the yard office of the Ohio Works of the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, 2,250 feet south of Division Street, the crew of this train received a copy of train order No. 26 authorizing the movement of their train from Ohio Works to McDonald Junction after the arrival of Extra 231 South. This train departed from Ohio Works at 1:10 p. m., and without awaiting the arrival of Extra 231 South, entered the main track at Division Street, and while moving at an estimated speed of 5 miles per hour it collided with Extra 231 South at a point 5,386 feet north of Division Street.

Extra 231 South, a south-bound freight train, consisted of Diesel-electric unit 231, headed northward, 15 cars and a caboose. At McDonald Junction the crew received copies of train order No. 25 authorizing the movement of their train from McDonald Junction to Ohio Works. This train departed from McDonald Junction at 1:11 p. m., passed B. & O. Tower, the last open office, at 1:16 p. m., and stopped on the main track with the front end of the train 2,938 feet south of the tower. A few seconds later it was struck by Extra 220 North.

Diesel-electric unit 220 was derailed and stopped upright and approximately in line with the track. The front wheels of the truck at the south end of Diesel-electric unit 231 were derailed to the left. Both Diesel-electric units were somewhat damaged.

The conductor of Extra 220 North and the fireman of Extra 231 South were injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 1:20 p. m.

During the 30-day period preceding the day of the accident the average daily movement in this territory was 48 trains.

Discussion

Under the rules of this carrier, train order No. 26 authorized the movement of Extra 220 North from Ohio Works to McDonald Junction after the arrival of Extra 231 South at Ohio Works. The rules also provide that when a Form 31 train order is signed by the conductor he must personally deliver a copy of it to the engineer, who is required to read the order to the conductor before the train proceeds. The engineer must show train orders to the fireman and, when practicable, to the front brakeman. The conductor must show train orders when practicable to brakemen.

The fireman of Extra 231 South received two copies of train order No. 25 from the operator at McDonald Junction at 1:01 p. m. This order authorized the movement of Extra 231 South from McDonald Junction to Ohio Works. This train was delayed at McDonald Junction because track maintenance forces were making repairs to a switch. It departed southward from McDonald Junction at 1:11 p. m. As the train was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 20 miles per hour. The enginemen and the front brakeman were maintaining a lookout in the direction of movement from the cab of the Diesel-electric unit and the conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. The view of the track ahead from the fireman's side of the engine was materially restricted by track curvature and the auxiliary hood of the engine. The engineer said he first observed Extra 220 North when it was about 300 feet distant. He immediately initiated an emergency application of the brakes and the train was stopped before the collision occurred.

Extra 220 North was assembled in the yard at Ohio Works. At 1:02 p. m. the conductor copied train order No. 26, Form 31, at a telephone at the yard office. He then delivered a copy of the order to the engineer, and told him that their train was not to proceed before the opposing train arrived. The engineer did not read the order to the conductor, and did not show it to the fireman. The conductor then proceeded to the caboose where he informed the flagman that their train was not to proceed before the arrival of

Extra 231 South. He did not show the train order to the flagman. While the conductor was obtaining the order, the front brakeman proceeded the train to line switches on the ascending grade in the yard, and waited at the switch where Extra 220 North was to enter the main track. The train then proceeded northward on the yard track. When it was closely approaching the main-track switch the front brakeman gave a proceed hand signal and then boarded the engine. When the train passed the switch the flagman reminded the conductor that their train should wait for the arrival of an opposing train. The conductor said he assumed that the employees on the engine had information that the opposing train had arrived, and therefore took no action to stop the train or to determine if the opposing train had arrived. After the front brakeman boarded the engine he was not shown a copy of the train order, and there was no discussion among the employees on the engine concerning the order. As the train was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 15 miles per hour. The engineer said he then recalled that his train was to meet Extra 231 South at Ohio Works and immediately read the order. He then observed the opposing train at a distance of about 500 feet. An emergency application of the brakes was made immediately, and the speed of the train was reduced to about 5 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

The investigation disclosed that the crews of south-bound trains leaving the Youngstown and Northern track at Division Street and entering the yard at Ohio Works failed frequently to report to the dispatcher that their train was into clear at that point. A register is not provided, and the nearest telephone for communication with the dispatcher is located about 1,000 feet south of Division Street. Firemen and trainmen frequently were not shown copies of train orders affecting the movement of their train. It was customary for the front brakeman of a north-bound train originating at Ohio Works to line switches on the ascending grade to the switch where the train was to enter the main track. If an opposing train was to be met at that point the front brakeman would be so informed by the engineer. Before proceeding, the front brakeman would determine, either by observation or by information obtained from other employees in that vicinity, that the opposing train had arrived. In the instant case, the front brakeman preceded the train while the conductor was copying the order authorizing its movement. The front brakeman and the fireman were not shown a copy of the order, and they were not informed that the movement of an opposing train was authorized. Both

the conductor and the flagman were aware that their train was required to wait at Ohio Works until the opposing train arrived but they assumed that the employees on the engine had information that the opposing train had arrived. The engineer said he read the order when it was delivered by the conductor and then overlooked, until immediately before the collision occurred, the provision requiring his train to remain at Ohio Works until the arrival of the opposing train.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a train occupying the main track without authority.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this eleventh day of August, 1950.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,

Secretary.