

February 24, 1913.

In re investigation of accident on the Canadian Pacific
Railway near Onawa, Maine, January 21, 1913.

On January 21, 1913, there was a rear-end collision between two east-bound freight trains on the Canadian Pacific Railway near Onawa, Maine, resulting in the death of one employee and one passenger and the injury of two employees.

After investigation the Chief Inspector of Safety Appliances reports as follows:

The Moosehead subdivision of the Atlantic division of the Canadian Pacific Railway, upon which this accident occurred, extends between Megantic and Brownville Junction, Maine, a distance of 117 miles. It is a single track line operated under the train order system, no block signals being used.

The trains involved were regular third-class trains Nos. 72 and 74, scheduled to leave Megantic daily at 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. respectively.

On the date of the accident train No. 72, consisting of 14 cars and a caboose, hauled by engine No. 1594, left Megantic on time, in charge of Conductor Dolley and Engineman Grandall. Train No. 74, consisting of 19 cars and a caboose, hauled by engine No. 1018, left Megantic at 9:25 a.m., 25 minutes late, in charge of Conductor McCann and Engineman Fontaine with instructions to run as first No. 74. With respect to each other these trains were proceeding without orders on their schedule rights.

Train No. 72 was required to do local work, and had some difficulty in maintaining its schedule. However, it arrived at Greenville Junction, a station approximately 54 miles east of Megantic, on time, at 1:05 p.m. At this place Conductor Dolley received the following message from Trainmaster Ryan:

"Do not delay 1/74 as this train is required for No. 72 east."

Train No. 72 is due to leave Greenville Junction at 2 o'clock but did not get away from there until 2:30 p.m., 30 minutes late. Upon arriving at Elliott, a non-telegraph station, seven miles east of Greenville Junction, at 2:55 p.m., this train took the sidetrack and allowed train No. 74 to pass it, in obedience to the instructions contained in Trainmaster Ryan's message to Conductor Dolley.

Train No. 74 was not delayed en route, and was able to make up time. It passed Snow Brook, a station 79 miles east of Megantic at 1:57 p.m. on time. It left Greenville Junction on time, at 2:30 p.m., ten minutes after the departure of train No. 72, and passed

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that train in the side track at Elliott at 2:55 p.m., on time, train No. 72 being then 30 minutes behind its schedule time.

After the departure of train No. 74 from Elliott train No. 72 waited 10 minutes as required by the rules, and then proceeded on its way at 3:05 p.m., colliding with the rear end of train No. 74 at a point approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Onawa and $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Elliott at about 3:15 p.m., having covered a distance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles in ten minutes, or at the rate of about 37.5 miles per hour.

The collision occurred on a short tangent immediately east of a 4 degree curve, on a grade of 1% descending to the east. At the time of the collision train No. 74 was not exceeding its schedule speed, which between Elliott and Onawa is about 18 miles per hour. On account of the curve preceding the point of collision the engineer on train No. 72 could not see train No. 74 until he was almost upon it. From the left hand side of the engine train No. 74 could have been seen across the curve a distance of from 700 to 900 feet by the fireman or head brakeman had either of the employees been on the lookout. The head brakeman was in the caboose instead of being on the head end of the train where his duty required him to be, and the fireman was fixing his fire just previous to the collision. The weather was clear.

Rule 91 of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company's book of rules requires freight trains in the same direction to be kept at least 3 minutes apart. This rule was superseded on the Atlantic Division on December 28, 1911, by bulletin order No. 73395, reading as follows:

"One or two accidents occurred recently where freight trains have followed one another within the five minute limit and first train has met with trouble, and flagman was unable to get out a sufficient distance to stop the following train.

In no case will one freight train follow another in less than ten minutes. Conductors and engineers will be held responsible to see that this is carried out at stations where no agent or operator is on duty. Where an operator or agent is on duty, he will so use his order board that this amount of time will elapse between the departure of freight trains in the same direction."

East of Elliott a distance of 5.35 miles there is a non-telegraph station named Bodfish, where train No. 74 is due at 3:10 p.m. and train No. 72 at 3:40. Train No. 74 stopped at Bodfish and waited about 2 minutes for time. Under the direction of bulletin No. 73395 train No. 72 had no right to pass Bodfish before 3:30, but the crew of this train paid no attention to the schedule of train No. 74 and as a result overtook and collided with it approximately 2 miles east of Bodfish at about 3:15, or 5 minutes earlier than the time it had any right to pass Bodfish station under the rules in force.

Engineman Grandall of train No. 72 was killed in the collision. Conductor Dolley stated that he knew of the rule requiring freight trains to keep ten minutes apart, and observed it at Elliott, but after leaving Elliott he was busy at his desk in the caboose making out reports and did not observe the time that his train passed Bodfish. He said that he relied upon his engine-man and the crew he had with him to look out for the train while he was making out his reports.

Flagman Marsh of train No. 73 was rising in the cupola of the caboose, talking with Head Brakeman Kelley. He stated that he knew of the rule requiring freight trains to keep ten minutes apart, but did not think of train No. 74's schedule, and took it for granted that Engineman Grandall was observing the rule when he passed Bodfish. He said that he looked at his watch when his train was passing Bodfish and it was then 3:15 p.m., but he made no attempt to stop the train nor did he call the conductor's attention to the fact that they were encroaching on the time of train No. 74. Both flagman Marsh and Head Brakeman Kelley placed the time of the collision at between 3:20 p.m. and 3:23 p.m., but in this they were evidently mistaken, as a watch taken from the pocket of the passenger who was killed in the collision was stopped at 3:16. This passenger was a company doctor named Hayes, who was riding in the caboose of train No. 74.

This accident was caused by the crew of train 72 failing to observe the direction of bulletin order 73395, and permitting their train to encroach upon the time of train No. 74. For this failure to obey the rule Conductor Dolley and Engineman Grandall were primarily responsible, but Flagman Marsh and Brakeman Kelley are also blameworthy for not paying stricter attention to the movement of their train and calling Conductor Dolley's attention to the time when it passed Bodfish. Brakeman Kelley is particularly blameworthy for not being at the head end of the train where his duty and the rules of the railroad company required him to be. Had he been on the lookout at the head end of his train he might have seen train No. 74 in time to have warned Engineman Grandall of its close proximity and thus avert the collision.

Between Brownville Junction and Megantic, a distance of 117 miles, there are but 3 open telegraph offices. At these offices operators are required to space trains in the same direction ten minutes apart, but as these offices are a considerable distance apart this requirement does not furnish adequate protection. For example, there is no open office between Greenville Junction and Onawa, a distance of nearly 16 miles. Had there been an open office at Bodfish, and had the operator in charge held train No. 72 until 3:20 p.m., as required by the rules, this accident would not have occurred.

Conductor Dolley entered the service of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company as brakeman in 1895 and was promoted to conductor in 1897. He had been continuously employed as conductor since his promotion. Engineman Grandall entered the service as fireman in 1897 and was promoted to engineman in 1901. Both of these men

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were considered competent and reliable, and their service records were good. Flagman Marsh entered the service as a brakeman on December 1, 1912. He had had two years previous experience as a yardman. Brakeman Kelley had been employed as brakeman since December 1, 1911, and had had nearly four years experience on another railroad as fireman and brakeman.

No employee involved in this accident was working in violation of any of the provisions of the Hours of Service Law.