

In Re. Investigation of an Accident which Occurred on the Cincinnati, Indianapolis & Western Railroad at Maplewood, Ind., on Oct. 7, 1916.

November 16, 1916.

On October 7, 1916, there was a collision between a freight train and a locomotive on the Cincinnati, Indianapolis & Western Railroad at Maplewood, Ind., which resulted in the death of 2 employees and injury to 2 employees, one of whom afterwards died. After investigation of this accident, the Chief of the Division of Safety reports as follows:

The part of the Cincinnati, Indianapolis & Western Railroad on which this accident occurred is a single-track line, over which train movements are governed by time-table and train orders, while a manual block system is used for spacing trains. Westbound trains are superior to eastbound trains of the same class. The accident occurred 200 feet in on the passing track at Maplewood. Approaching the point of accident from the west there are six miles of straight track, and approaching from the east the track is straight for about eleven miles. The grade approaching Maplewood from the west is slightly ascending. There were no obstructions which would interfere with the view of either train crew. It was dark at the time of the collision, but the weather was clear.

Westbound extra 308, consisting of a locomotive, running backwards, and a caboose, was in charge of Conductor

Henderson and Engineman Taylor. This train left Moorefield, Ind., at 3:55 a. m., after receiving, among other orders, a copy of train order No. 4, reading as follows:

"Eng. 308 run extra Moorefield to Montezuma.
Extra 308 west meet Extra 209 East at Maplewood,
No. Ninety-nine Eng. 303 wait at Roachdale until
six 6 A. M. for Extra 308 West."

At Mitchellville, eight empty hopper cars were picked up and the train arrived at Maplewood at 4:30 a. m. The train was left on the main track, while the locomotive picked up six more empty hopper cars, placed them on the main line and then entered the passing track at the west switch, and was in the act of spotting two cars of coal when eastbound extra 209 entered the passing track at the open switch and collided with the tender of locomotive 308.

Eastbound extra 209, consisting of a locomotive and two coaches, was in charge of Conductor Cook and Engineman Owen. This train left Tuscola, Ill., at 11:00 p. m., October 6. At Roachdale, Ind., the crew received a copy of train order No. 4, reading as follows:

"Engine 308 run extra, Moorefield to Montezuma.
Extra 308 West meet Extra 209 East at Maplewood."

Extra 209 left Roachdale at 4:02 a. m., at that time consisting of 10 loaded cars, 1 empty car and 2 coaches. This train passed the west switch of the passing track at Maplewood, which was displaying a red indication, and while traveling at a speed of 20 or 25 miles an hour collided with the locomotive of extra 308.

The impact of the collision shoved locomotive 308 and the two cars of coal about 300 feet, but did not derail them. Locomotive 209 was derailed, turning partly over on its left side; the tender was buckled around and came to rest on its side at right angles to the engine, while the 3 head cars were so badly damaged that they were destroyed.

The fire-door on locomotive 209 was found to be open after the collision and the mechanism so damaged that it could not be closed. This would indicate that the fireman was putting in a fire when the accident happened. The body of Engineman Owen was found in front of the boiler head, indicating that he had left his seat, probably in an attempt to get off, while Head Brakeman Monce was found two car lengths west of the spot where the others were found, which seems to indicate that he either jumped or was thrown off the locomotive at about the time the collision occurred.

Conductor Henderson, of extra 308, stated that at the time of the collision he was standing between the main track and the passing track and saw extra 209 approaching when it was about at Mount Clair, a station 3.4 miles west of Maplewood. He also stated that he did not send a flagman ahead to protect his train, as the brakemen had had experience enough to know what the rules were. He stated that the lamp on the switch-stand at the west end of the passing track was lighted, displaying a red indication to extra 209, while there was one light on the locomotive of his train---a

white electric light on the right side. Conductor Henderson further stated that when the locomotive of extra 209 reached the west passing track switch it was working steam and his engineman sounded a warning signal on the whistle. It was the opinion of Conductor Henderson that the crew of extra 209 made no attempt to regard train order No. 4. He stated that he examined the locomotive of extra 209 after the accident, finding the reverse lever about two notches in the forward position, while the throttle was forward in the drifting notch. He also inspected the automatic and straight air valves and found them both in the running position.

Engineman Taylor, of extra 308, stated that he did not whistle out a flag upon reaching Maplewood. He stated that extra 209, being inferior by direction to his train, it was required by rule to take the siding at Maplewood, and that it was the duty of the engineman of that train to approach Maplewood prepared to stop at the west passing track switch. When he saw that extra 209 was not going to stop before passing the switch he sounded one blast on his whistle as a warning signal. He stated that the lamp on the switch stand was displaying a red indication, and it was his opinion that Engineman Owen was asleep.

Fireman Duckworth, of extra 308, corroborated the statements of Conductor Henderson and Engineman Taylor, and stated that the locomotive of extra 209 was working steam at the time of the collision.

Brakeman Pierce, of extra 308, stated that he was

standing about 70 feet south of the switch when he saw extra 209 approaching, and when that train was about five car lengths from the switch he realized that it was not going to stop before passing the switch and he gave a stop signal to the engineman. The engineman paid no attention to his signal and Brakeman Pierce then yelled to him. He stated that he did not go out with a flag, as he was assisting with the work his train was performing.

Brakeman Ferguson, of extra 308, stated that extra 209 was supposed to stop at the west passing track switch, and he did not consider it necessary to protect his train by flag. He also stated that extra 209 was working steam when the collision occurred.

Conductor Cook, of extra 209, stated that when he received train order No. 4 he compared it with Engineman Owen, and that they both understood it correctly. He stated that approaching Maplewood he was in the rear coach, and judging from the speed of his train he thought extra 308 must be into clear. He stated that his engineman sounded no meeting point signal approaching Maplewood. He stated further that after the accident occurred he did not notice whether or not the light on the tender of locomotive 308 was burning, but noticed that the switch light was burning brightly, displaying a red indication. He stated that the fact that the fire door of the locomotive was open after the accident was evidence that the fireman of his train was putting in a fire at the time the accident occurred. He stated that the throttle attachment

was bent, making it impossible to tell whether or not the force of the collision had caused the throttle to close, and stated that the reverse lever was two or three notches in the forward position. He stated that although all of the cars of his train were equipped with air brakes in operating condition, it did not enter his mind to stop the train by means of the conductor's emergency valve until it was too late to do so.

This accident was caused by the failure of Engineman Owen, of extra 209, to have his train under control approaching Maplewood.

As the engineman, fireman and head brakeman of extra 209 were killed in the collision, the reason why Engineman Owen failed to approach the meeting point with his train under control, as required by the rules, can not be ascertained. However, the evidence seems to indicate that either Engineman Owen was asleep or he thought that the switch was lined up for him, and that extra 308 was into clear, the latter conclusions being the more probable.

The crew of extra 308 are also censurable for failing to take any measures to protect their train while doing work at Maplewood. Conductor Henderson stated that he could see extra 209 coming "almost to Mt. Clair," a distance of 3.4 miles, yet he gave no instructions to his flagman, although he had both tracks blocked and a collision was inevitable if extra 209 failed to stop before reaching the switch. Flagman

Pierce was assisting in doing the station work at Maplewood, and made no attempt to protect his train. He did not even give a stop signal to the approaching train until he saw that it was not going to stop, it then being only about five car lengths away from the switch. Engineman Taylor did not whistle out a flagman, and made no inquiry about the protection of his train. The situation of extra 308 at Maplewood was calculated to deceive the engineman of the approaching train, as the switch light indicated that the switch was lined up for the siding, and with the engine of extra 308, tender first, spotting cars in the siding, signals given by members of the crew of extra 308 might easily have been mistaken by Engineman Owen for signals calling him into the siding. It can hardly be assumed that all three of the men on the locomotive of extra 209 were asleep, or so inattentive to their duty as to deliberately ignore all precautions and rules for the safety of their train at a meeting point, and it is probable that had extra 308 been properly protected this accident would not have occurred.

Engineman Owen entered the service of the Cincinnati, Indianapolis & Western Railroad as fireman in March, 1906, and was promoted to engineman in December, 1910. In February, 1911, he was assessed with thirty demerit marks for his responsibility in connection with a collision at Moorefield, and in March, 1912, he was dismissed for his responsibility in connection with a derailment at Chrisman, Ill. In July,

1913, he was reinstated as engineman.

At the time of the accident the crew of extra 209 had been on duty about 10 hours and 40 minutes. Before going on duty on the day of the accident Engineman Owen had been off duty 8 hours and 10 minutes.