

December 22, 1913.

In re Investigation of Accident on the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad near Mt. Union, Ohio, on November 6, 1913.

On November 6, 1913, there was a head-end collision between two freight trains on the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad, near Mt. Union, Ohio, resulting in the death of 3 and the injury of 2 employees.

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

The Alliance Division of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad, on which this accident occurred, is a single track line running north and south. The train dispatching system by telephone is used on this line, a manual block system being provided which affords protection for following movements only. The trains involved in this collision were south-bound local freight No. 7, consisting at the time of collision of engine 5810, 7 loaded cars, and a caboose, en route from Phalanx, Ohio, to Dillonvale, Ohio, and north-bound extra freight No. 8587, consisting at the time of the collision of engine 5587, 17 loaded cars, and a caboose, en route from Dillonvale, Ohio, to Alliance, Ohio.

At the point of collision the track is laid with 30 foot, 80 pound steel rails. The ties are oak, 18 to the rail and ballasted with granulated slag. The track and roadbed were in good condition. The speed restriction for freight trains is 30 miles per hour.

Approaching the scene of accident from the north there is a 5° 10' curve to the east 966 feet in length in a cut from 10 to 15 feet deep, followed by a tangent 630 feet long. This curve obscured the vision of the engineman on No. 7, and the banks of the cut obscured the vision of the fireman until they were within 570 feet of the point of collision. Approaching the scene of collision from the south there is a 4° curve to the right 790 feet long in a cut from 15 to 20 feet deep, followed by the above described tangent. This curve and the banks of the cut limited the vision of the engineman on the north-bound train to about 300 feet. The collision occurred on this tangent 60 feet from the south end, where there is a fill about 6 feet high, and a six-tenths of one per cent grade descending from the north. The weather was clear at the time of the accident.

South-bound train No. 7, consisting of engine 5598, 3 loaded cars, and a caboose, in charge of Conductor Josh and Engineman Price, left Khalanz, Ohio, at 6:30 a.m. on time. At North Benton, engine 5598 failed and engine 5510 was substituted. At Alliance Yard, Chief Train Dispatcher Miller gave Conductor Josh train order No. 51 reading as follows:

"No seven 7. will meet Extra fifty five Eighty seven 5597--north at Mt. Union."

Train No. 7 left Alliance Yard at 10:20 a.m., and after performing some work at Alliance freight house proceeded to and arrived at Mt. Union at 10:50 a.m., where the operator gave Conductor Josh an order to meet train No. 8 at Paris and a clearance card

reading, "No further orders for train Block is clear Proceed." At this time No. 7 consisted of 7 loaded cars and a caboose and left Mt. Union at 10:54 a.m., and after running 2.2 miles collided with north-bound extra No. 5587 at 10:58 a.m. The average speed of No. 7 between Mt. Union and the point of collision was 33 miles per hour.

North-bound extra No. 5587, consisting of engine 5587, 20 loaded cars, and a caboose, in charge of Conductor Gannon and Engineman Spriggins, left Dillonvale, Ohio, at 4:50 a.m. At Minerva, after setting out 3 cars, conductor Gannon received train order No. 51 stating that No. 7 would meet north-bound extra No. 5587 at Mt. Union. Extra No. 5587 left Minerva at 10 a.m. and passed Freeburg, the last telegraph station, 4.4 miles from the point of collision, at 10:50 a.m., covering the distance from Freeburg to point of collision in 8 minutes, at an average speed of 33 miles per hour.

Both locomotives and one tender were derailed but remained upright on the roadbed; the other tender, four destroyed cars, and 5 damaged cars were piled upon each side of the track below the level of the roadbed.

Conductor Josh, of train No. 7, stated that he received at Alliance Yard train order No. 51, form 31, directing that No. 7 meet extra north-bound 5587 at Mt. Union, an order stating that the Paris doubling track was blocked with cars with men in them, and a clearance card. He stated that he started toward the front end of his train with these orders in his hand, that while he was passing the rear car of his train Fireman Davis,

of No. 7, who had just left the caboose, passed him and took from his hand the 3 orders and clearance card. He further stated that he directed Fireman Davis to deliver the orders and clearance card to Engineer Price who was at that time sitting in the cab window. He stated that he saw Fireman Davis give Engineer Price the orders, and that he saw Price open and read them, after which he and the engineer exchanged signals and the train started. While at the Alliance freight house, about six-tenths of a mile from Alliance Yard, and about 24 minutes before the collision, Conductor Josh claims he called the attention of Fireman Davis to the meet order at Mt. Union, and that Davis said, "O, yes." Conductor Josh stated that he was sure that he gave to Flagman Patrick the order to meet No. 5587 at Mt. Union, but Flagman Patrick absolutely denies that he ever saw the order or that he had any information whatsoever concerning No. 5587 until after the collision. Conductor Josh stated that after he had unloaded some freight at Mt. Union he received a clearance card and the order to meet No. 8 at Paris. He handed this order and clearance card to Brakeman Lowery, who was working the front end of the train, to deliver to Engineman Price, and claims that he saw Price receive them from Lowery. Josh stated that Engineman Price then whistled off and that he allowed him to proceed, he having entirely forgotten his meet order with Extra 5587. When the collision occurred his first thought was that his train had collided with No. 8, and that he did not think of the order to meet extra 5587 until he took his orders from the hook in the caboose and read them. He stated that he then placed his orders in his pocket from which he lost them after the collision.

Brakeman Lowery stated that Engineman Price did not show

him the order to meet extra 5587 at Mt. Union, and that he did not know that any such order had been received until after the collision. Brakeman Henderson, of No. 7, stated that Conductor Josh did not show him the meet order for Mt. Union, and that he did not know anything about it until after the collision.

About six hours after the collision Round-House Foreman Foster, in the presence of Superintendent Watkins, took from the order book in the cab of engine No. 5510, the order directing No. 7 to meet extra 5587 Mt. Union. This fact, in addition to the statement of Conductor Josh, is the only evidence that Engineman Price ever received this order. If engineman Price did receive and read this order, both he and Conductor Josh forgot it at apparently the same time.

Operator Baker at Mt. Union stated that he did not know that No. 7 was to meet Extra 5587 at Mt. Union and that, owing to a curve in the track which obstructed his view at that point, he could not tell whether No. 7 was pulling out or just moving down to the lower end of the yard.

The direct cause of this collision was the failure of Conductor Josh and Engineman Price to comply with the order fixing Mt. Union as the meeting point of these trains. A contributing cause was the violation by them of that part of rule 210 which requires the conductor personally to deliver to the engineman, and the engineman to read aloud to the conductor, all orders on Form 31 before proceeding.

This company's rule No. 208 reads as follows:

"A train order to be sent to two or more offices must be transmitted simultaneously to as many of them as practicable. The

The several addresses must be; first, the operator at whose station the trains are to meet, and next, in the order of superiority of trains, each office taking its proper address. When not sent simultaneously to all, the order must be sent first to the superior train."

In this instance this rule was not complied with. While order No. 51 was sent simultaneously to the two trains at Alliance Yard and Minerva, the dispatcher did not address the operator at Mt. Union, the meeting point fixed by the order. If the dispatcher had sent order No. 51 to the operator at Mt. Union also, as required by rule No. 208, this accident undoubtedly would not have occurred. While Superintendent Watkins of this division stated that that part of this rule which required the operator at the meeting point of trains to be furnished a copy of meet orders was not and had not been in force for about 7 years, and this statement was verified by other employees, no mention of this rule is made in the special instructions in the timetable where modifications and changes of a number of rules are noted; furthermore, it appears that the book of rules, from which the foregoing rule is quoted, was printed in the year 1910, and if any changes in the rules had been made prior to that date such changes should at that time have been incorporated in the printed rule book. The requirements of rule No. 208 are absolute and mandatory; such rules should be strictly adhered to and rigidly enforced. Rules which were not expected to be obeyed should not be permitted to appear or to remain in the rules of a railroad company.

The train and engine crew of train No. 7 had been on duty 4 hours and 58 minutes at the time of the collision. The train crew had been off duty 12 hours and 45 minutes, and the engine crew had been off duty 12 hours and 25 minutes prior to the commencement

of the trip. The engineman and fireman on No. 7 were killed in the collision.

The train and engine crew of extra No. 5557 had been on duty 15- $\frac{1}{2}$ hours at the time of the collision, the train crew having been off duty 11 hours and 5 minutes and the engine crew 19 hours and 50 minutes preceding the trip.

Conductor Jesh entered the service as brakeman August 25, 1909, was promoted to extra freight conductor Nov. 27, 1911, and had a good reputation and clear record. He had worked but two days on the local freight before the date of the collision. Engineman Price entered the service as engineman Dec. 6, 1903, was a man of good reputation, and considered by his superiors as an efficient engineman. During his employment he had been suspended 35 days and reprimanded once for infractions of the rules. All other employees on this train were experienced men with good records.