

INTERSTATE ~~COMMERCE~~ COMMISSION

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF SAFETY IN RE  
INVESTIGATION OF AN ACCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED ON THE  
LAKE SHORE ELECTRIC RAILWAY AT HAYES, OHIO, ON  
NOVEMBER 15, 1930.

November 28, 1930.

To the Commission:

On November 15, 1930, there was a head-end collision between a passenger train and a freight train on the Lake Shore Electric Railway at Hayes, Ohio, which resulted in the death of one employee, and the injury of four employees, three of whom were off duty. This accident was investigated in conjunction with the Ohio Commission of Public Utilities.

Location and method of operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Toledo Division extending between Toledo and Fremont, Ohio, a distance of 33.15 miles; in the vicinity of the point of accident this is a single-track electric line over which trains are operated by time-table and train orders, no block-signal system being in use. Hayes is located 5.33 miles east of Toledo, and the accident occurred on the main track at a point about 900 feet east of the facing-point switch for eastbound trains that leads to Hayes siding, the siding, which parallels the main track on the north is a spur track about 200 feet in length, Hayes sub-station being located on the north side of the siding and about midway thereof. The track is tangent for several miles in each direction from the switch, while the grade is practically level.

It was dark, and there was a heavy fog at the time of the accident, which occurred about 6.45 a.m.

Description

Eastbound passenger train No. 102 consisted of motor 163, of steel-underframe construction, and was in charge of Conductor Forgerson and Motorman Baker. At Glendale, 1.99 miles west of Hayes, the crew received copy of train order No. 17, Form 31, containing instructions to meet westbound extra 1059 at Hayes. Train No. 102 departed from Glendale at 6.40 a.m., three minutes late, passed the switch leading to Hayes siding, and had reached a point

about 900 feet beyond the switch when it collided with extra 1059 while traveling at a speed estimated to have been about 15 miles per hour.

Westbound freight train extra 1059 consisted of motor 1059, of steel-underframe construction, with wood and steel body, and was in charge of Conductor Rex and Motorman Thurston. At Genoa, 8.43 miles east of Hayes, the crew received copy of train order No. 17, previously referred to, extra 1059 departed from that point at 6.28 a.m. and was approaching the switch leading to Hayes siding when it collided with train No. 102 while traveling at a speed estimated to have been about 15 miles per hour.

Motor 163 telescoped motor 1059 a distance of about 4 feet, neither car was derailed, but they caught fire as a result of the accident, the flames consuming their superstructures. The employee killed was the motorman of extra 1059 and the employee on duty injured was the conductor of that train, the employees off duty who were injured were deadheading on train No. 102.

#### Summary of evidence.

Motorman Baker, of train No. 102, stated that he read train order No. 17, establishing the meet with extra 1059 at Hayes. After leaving Glendale, a stop was made at Stop 337, located approximately 2,250 feet west of the switch leading to Hayes siding, in order to discharge a passenger; no trouble was experienced in making this stop except that he started braking quite a distance from the stopping point. Approaching Hayes, the fog was so thick he could not find the siding, although he was familiar with the territory; he could not tell from the motion of the car when it passed over the switch and he did not see the switch light, and the first he knew of his exact location was when he saw the block light at Hayes, 50 feet or so beyond the switch, at which time he estimated the speed to have been about 20 miles per hour. Motorman Baker's statements as to what he then did toward stopping his train were very conflicting; in substance, however, they indicate that he reversed the motors, but did not at first apply the air brakes, that he found the wheels were sliding and opened the sanders, that he eventually did use the air brakes, and that when he saw he could not bring his car to a stop in time to prevent the collision, extra 1059 having come into view in the meantime, he jumped when the cars were about 5 feet apart, at which time he estimated that his car was sliding on the wet rails at a speed of about 15 miles per hour, its speed having been reduced only 5 miles per hour within a distance of 800 feet. Motorman Baker said that his car was equipped with automatic and

straight air brakes which were in good operating condition, however, he thought he could make a better stop by reversing the motors. Motorman Baker further stated that Conductor Forgeron pulled the cord sounding the bell signal when the front end of his motor car was about half way past the block at Hayes, this being at about the same time that the motorman reversed the motors; the conductor gave him no other signal after that time, nor did he pull the emergency cord. Subsequent to the accident, and on the day thereof, while in the dispatcher's office, Motorman Baker told General Superintendent Burge that he forgot the order, however, at the investigation he maintained that things were plainer in his mind and that he did not forget the order entirely, saying that he was trying to find the siding in the heavy fog, but that he missed the disk marked "Hayes siding", which would have shown him that he was 500 feet from the switch, and was looking up in the air when he saw the block light, with the result that he had not seen the switch lamp.

Conductor Forgeron, of train No. 102, stated that it was as foggy at Stop 337 as it was at Hayes siding, he was riding on the back platform of his car approaching Hayes siding, saw the switch light, and at once rang the bell three times as a signal for the motorman to stop immediately. At this time the car was about at the end of the siding, right by the station or train-order signal, traveling at a speed of about 40 miles per hour, the conductor thought that the motorman immediately applied the air brakes and also reversed the motors, and estimated the speed to have been about 15 miles per hour when the collision occurred. Conductor Forgeron thought that it was quicker to give the motorman a warning of danger by ringing the bell than to go inside the car and pull the emergency cord. He also said that there was a breaker, located about 2,000 feet west of Hayes siding, and when the car passed the breaker the motor cut out and the lights brightened and the motorman should have been able to tell as well as any one else that the car had passed the breaker.

Conductor Rex, of extra 1059, stated that he was riding in the front vestibule, left side, approaching Hayes siding, he saw the headlight of train No. 102 through the fog, about 300 feet distant, but thought that it was waiting for his own car to arrive and back in on the siding. On definitely realizing that train No. 102 was coming, however, Conductor Rex shouted to Motorman Thurston to jump, at the same time doing so himself; the motorman applied the air brakes, at which time the speed of extra 1059 was about 15 miles per hour, but did not jump and was caught in the wreckage.

### Conclusions

This accident was caused by failure to obey a meet order, for which Motorman Baker, of train No. 102 is responsible.

There is considerable conflict between the testimony of Motorman Baker and Conductor Forgeron. Conductor Forgeron said there was a breaker, located 2,000 feet west of Hayes siding, and that when the car passed the breaker the motor cut out and the lights brightened in the car. This should have apprised Motorman Baker as to his exact location and he should have approached Hayes siding under full control, particularly in view of the heavy fog, and brought his train to a stop a sufficient distance west of the switch to allow extra 1059 to pull by it and then back in. Train order No. 17 was received about 5 minutes prior to the accident, at Glendale, about 2 miles west of Hayes siding. Motorman Baker at first stated that he forgot about the meet order, but later maintained that he had not forgotten it entirely, saying that he was trying to find the siding in the fog, but missed the disk marked "Hayes siding" and was not aware of his location until he saw the block light. The conductor said the train was traveling 40 miles per hour when he signaled the motorman, while the latter said it was 20 miles per hour, it is believed the conductor's estimate is more nearly correct, in view of the distance traveled while the motorman was trying to stop. For the thirty-day period prior to the accident there was a total train movement of 735 westbound trains and 751 eastbound trains over this portion of the road, or an average daily movement of slightly more than 50 trains per day. In view of this volume of traffic on single-track, the carrier should give careful consideration toward providing adequate block-signal protection.

The employees involved were experienced men. It is to be noted, however, that Motorman Baker had overrun meet orders on two previous occasions, namely, February 25, 1927, and April 8, 1927. At the time of the accident the crew of train No. 102 had been on duty less than 2 hours, and the crew of extra 1059 had been on duty about 8 hours, prior to which both crews had been off duty 10 hours or more.

Respectfully submitted,

W. P. BORLAND

Director.