

December 30, 1912.

In re investigation of accident on the Southern Railway in Mississippi, at Carrollton, Mississippi, on November 27, 1912.

On November 27, 1912, there was a derailment on the Southern Railway in Mississippi at Carrollton, Miss., which resulted in the death of 2 engineers and 1 fireman, and the injury of 1 fireman and 2 brakemen. After investigation of this accident the Chief Inspector of Safety Appliances reports as follows:

West-bound freight train No. 31 is a regular fast freight running from Columbus, Miss., to Greenville, Miss. On the date in question the train consisted of 30 loaded cars and 15 empty cars hauled by engines Nos. 113 and 3048. The train was in charge of Conductor Holbert and Engineers Hammond and Coburn. It passed the telegraph office at Winona, Miss., at 4:40 a.m., and was derailed by striking some cattle at about 5 a.m. at a point about 1200 feet east of the station at Carrollton, which is 12.8 miles east of Winona.

Both engines were derailed and thrown to opposite sides of the track with their cabs and the rear ends of their boilers against each other. The tender of the first engine broke away and slid on its side to a point about 135 feet east of the engines. The first 10 cars of the train were derailed and piled in a heap about the two engines. The speed of the train is believed to have been about 25 miles per hour.

About 40 rail lengths east of the station at Carrollton there is a small culvert 8 feet 8 inches across. On either side of this culvert were some cattle. When the head engine struck a cow on the east side of the culvert the animal was thrown to the right side of the track; it then struck a cow on the west side of the culvert which was thrown under the pilot of the engine and dragged for several rail lengths. Finally catching in a frog leading to a side track, where it jammed and caused the derailment.

The Southern Railway in Mississippi is a single track line, train being operated by the double train order system and spaced 10 minutes apart at all open telegraph offices. The track at the point of the accident is straight with a slight descending grade for east-bound trains. The point of accident was within the town limits and the right of way is not fenced.

The engineer of the second engine stated that his engine was working steam until he heard the engineer of the leading engine whistle the stock alarm. He at once shut off steam on his engine and in a few seconds the accident occurred. The train was not going to stop at Carrollton. The stock alarm was given just after the engineer of the leading engine sounded the regular station whistle.

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There is a law in the state of Mississippi prohibiting cattle running at large, but it seems that after the cotton crop is gathered, stock is turned out to roam at will. Beside the track at this point there is a cotton seed mill and cattle usually gather here to pick up waste seed at the seed houses. The railway company's records show that many cattle have been killed on this division, while during the previous week three were killed at this particular point.