

No. 517  
September 26, 1914.

IN RE INVESTIGATION OF ACCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED ON THE TENNESSEE  
CENTRAL RAILROAD NEAR GREEN HILL, TENN., ON AUGUST 13, 1914.

On August 13, 1914, there was a derailment of a passenger train on the Tennessee Central Railroad near Green Hill, Tenn., which resulted in the injury of 20 passengers and 2 employees. After investigation of this accident the Chief Inspector of Safety Appliances reports as follows:

Eastbound train No. 6 was en route from Nashville, Tenn., to Monterey, Tenn. It consisted of one combination mail and baggage car, one combination coach, and one coach, hauled by locomotive No. 204, and was in charge of Conductor Dean and Enginemen Barbee. It left Nashville at 4:00 p.m., passed Green Hill at 4:51 p.m., on time, and at about 4:52 p.m. was derailed at a point about one-half mile beyond Green Hill while running at a speed estimated to have been from 25 to 30 miles per hour.

The engine remained upright on the track, with the driving wheels off the rails. The tender and all of the cars were derailed and remained upright until they had nearly stopped moving, when they slowly turned over on their sides. None of the equipment was badly damaged, while the track was not torn up to any great extent.

This part of the Tennessee Central Railroad is a single track line. No block signal system is in operation, trains being operated by train orders and time-card rights. The track is laid with 60-pound rails, 30 feet in length, with about 17 oak ties under each rail, single-spiked. On all curves there are four braces to each rail. The track is well ballasted with crushed limestone, and had been resurfaced and relined about two weeks prior to the accident. Approaching the point of derailment it is straight, with a slight descending grade, followed by a curve to the right of 3 degrees. The derailment occurred about 550 feet east of the western end of this curve. The weather was clear.

Engineman Barbee stated that he was standing on the deck of the locomotive and noticed the derailment at the tender. He at once applied the emergency brakes and reversed the locomotive.

Careful examination was made of the wheels and flanges of the tender, but no defects could be discovered. The wheel which climbed the rail had been in service only two months. All bearings were in good condition. This tender had a full load of coal and water before leaving Nashville.

Examination of the track showed that the left forward tender truck wheel had mounted the outside rail on the curve, about 10 feet beyond a rail joint, and after traveling a distance of about 14' 3" on the ball of the rail had dropped off on the

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outside. The first mark made on the ties by the right tender truck wheel was on the 5th tie east of where the left hand wheel had mounted the rail. The marks of the right hand wheel upon the ties became more and more distinct as the truck swung to the left, until it reached the center of the track, where it bunched the ties and tore up the track for about 50 feet.

The distance from the point where the forward tender truck wheel first mounted the rail to the point where the forward end of the tender rested after the derailment was 428 feet, which would seem to bear out the statements of employees that the train was not traveling at an excessive rate of speed.

The track at the point of derailment was considered to be the best on this part of the road. Only a short time previous to the accident a freight train had passed over the track, at which time it was apparently in good condition. There were no speed restrictions in effect.

This accident was due to the forward tender truck wheels mounting the rail on the outside of the curve. The cause of the derailment of these wheels was not definitely ascertained.