

CULATED

IN RE INVESTIGATION OF AN ACCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED ON THE
TOLEDO, PEORIA & WESTERN RAILROAD NEAR PEORIA, ILL.,
ON DECEMBER 30, 1918.

February 12, 1919.

On December 30, 1918, there was a head-end collision between a passenger train and an extra freight train on the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad, near Peoria, Ill., which resulted in the death of 1 employee and injury of 12 passengers, 4 employees and 3 persons carried under contract.

The Eastern Division of the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad extends between Peoria and Effner, Ill., a distance of 111.1 miles. That portion of this division upon which the accident occurred is a single-track line over which train movements are governed by time-table and train orders, no block signals being in use.

The trains involved in this accident were a Lake Erie & Western westbound passenger train and a Toledo, Peoria & Western eastbound freight extra. The passenger train runs between Tipton, Ind., and Farmdale, Ill., over the Lake Erie & Western tracks scheduled as train No. 1, and between Farmdale and Peoria over the Toledo, Peoria & Western tracks scheduled as train No. 73.

Eastbound freight train No. 23 had completed a trip from La Harpe, Ill., to Peoria, and at Peoria the crew of this train received Form 19 train order No. 24, reading as follows:

Eng. 16 run Extra Peoria to LE&W Crossing and return to Peoria. No. 1 run 30 minutes late Gilman to Peoria. No. 73 meet Extra 16 east at LE&W Crossing. No. 87 is clear.

Extra 16, consisting of engine 18, 11 cars of cattle and a caboose in charge of Conductor Hilsabeck and Engineman Anderson, left Peoria at 9.12 p.m. LE&W Crossing is 2.6 miles east of Peoria. At 9.18, when extra 16 was about 1970 feet west of this crossing and running at a speed of about 20 miles an hour, it collided with No. 73.

Train No. 73, consisting of engine 4164, 1 baggage-mail-express car, 1 smoker and 1 day coach, all of wooden construction, in charge of Conductor O'Hierne and Engineman Haggerty, arrived at Farmdale, Ill., the junction of the Lake Erie & Western and the Toledo, Peoria & Western, 5.3 miles east of Peoria at about 9.07 p.m., 44 minutes late. At Farmdale the conductor and engineman of No. 73 received TP&W Form 31 train order No. 24, reading as follows:

No. 73 meet extra 16 east at LE&W Crossing.

This order was received by the conductor and engineman at the telegraph office in the tower at Farmdale, was understood by both men and on leaving Farmdale the conductor and engineman gave their orders to the brakeman and fireman respectively. When this train reached the east end of LE&W Siding where they were to meet extra 16, there was an engine on another track just beyond a train on an intermediate siding. The engineman apparently took this to be extra 16 and continued eastward on the main line, and at 9.18 p.m., while running at a speed of about 20 miles an hour, collided head-on with extra 16.

Engineman Haggerty of train No. 73 was killed. Both engines were considerably damaged. The head car in train No. 73, a combination baggage car, had its end crushed in. The second and third cars in this train were only slightly damaged. In extra 16 one stock car was destroyed and one had its end crushed and was considerably damaged. There was also some damage to track.

Approaching the point of collision from the east and beginning at LE&W Crossing, the track is tangent for about 1700 feet, followed by a long curve to the right of the following measurements; for the first 1,340 feet, 2 degrees, for the next 1,160 feet, 1 degree and 52 minutes; for the next 950 feet, 1 degree. The accident occurred about 250 feet from the east end of this curve. Approaching the scene of the accident the grade is .38% descending for westbound trains and .26% ascending for eastbound trains. The view is obstructed on the curve side of the track by high hills between the foot of which and the main track are located piles of lumber, buildings, and a house track which contained several cars at the time of the accident. The weather at the time was dark and hazy.

Engineman Anderson of extra 16 stated that he had an order to meet No. 73 at LE&W Crossing. He said that approaching the meeting point his engine was drifting. He whistled for the road crossing where the collision occurred, but did not slow up. The engine was traveling about 30 miles an hour. A little farther on he saw a light and leaned out of the window as far as he could, saw No. 73 coming and realized a collision

was about to occur. He applied the brakes in emergency and called to the fireman, who jumped immediately. The engineman jumped, and an instant later the crash came.

Fireman Reese of train No. 73 stated that both he and Engineman Haggerty had read and understood order No. 24. He said that as No. 73 passed the east end of the siding where they were to meet extra 16 he heard the steam of an engine over there. It seemed on the back track behind some cars on an intermediate siding. No. 73 rolled on down to the crossing beyond the rear end of the train and as a stop was made the fireman asked if the train they passed was the one No. 73 was to meet, to which the engineman replied that it was and added that the operator had said the extra would be in the clear. The engineman then whistled over the crossing. The fireman put in a fire and sat down again. He looked ahead and about three or four car lengths distant saw the extra coming. He called to the engineman and started to get off. He said that he did not think the engineman succeeded in setting the air although he saw him make an attempt to do so. The fireman jumped just before the two engines came together. He further stated that he and Engineman Haggerty had attended a train rules examination on L. E. & W. rules within the past three weeks and had been instructed to determine positively at meeting points that the train specified in the meet order was the train met, but said that in this instance, having asked Engineman Haggerty if the train on the siding was extra 16 and having received assurance that it was, he accepted the statement as a fact.

Conductor O'Bierne of train No. 73 stated that before leaving Peoria Engineman Haggerty read back order No. 24 to him. They both checked up the register and the operator told them that Peoria wanted them to hurry in as the depot was blocked. They came out together and the conductor gave his order to the brakeman who read it. He said that as the train drew near to LE&W Crossing the engineman shut off the steam, then worked steam again. He said he was not sure but thought the engineman had sounded the meeting point whistle. When the train reached the east end of the passing track where they expected extra 16 to be, he and the brakeman went out on the rear end of their train. By the time they got out on the rear end they had passed the engine of a train on the back track and were passing the caboose. The engineman did not stop and although the conductor could not see the number of the engine, he took it for granted that the engine crew had seen and knew that this was the train to be met. He went inside and sat down permitting his train to continue. No. 73 stopped for the crossing, started and suddenly stopped again. Conductor O'Bierne got off and discovered that his train had collided with extra 16. He did not notice any application of the brakes just prior to the collision.

Brakeman Shafer on train No. 73 stated that he had read order No. 24 and knew his train was to meet extra 16 at LE&W Crossing. He said that the engineman had shut off steam and that he and the conductor were out on the rear platform when their train passed the siding where they expected to find extra 16.

They passed the rear end of a train and markers were burning. He noticed an engine on the back track doing some work and presumed that train was the extra his train was to meet. Both he and the conductor went back into the car and a short time later the train collided with extra 16. He stated that although he did not hear the meeting point whistle sounded, he assumed that the engineman had not overlooked the meet, but had seen the engine on the side track and knew it to be the extra they had orders to meet.

The accident was caused by the failure of train No. 73 to wait at LE&W Crossing until the arrival of extra 16, for which Engineman Haggerty and Conductor O'Bierne are responsible.

Both the engineman and conductor had read and understood train order No. 24 and expected to meet extra 16 at that point. Engineman Haggerty apparently assumed that another train which he saw on the siding was the train to be met and the other members of the crew relied upon him. Under the rules the conductor is equally responsible with the engineman for the safety of his train.

Rule 90 of the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad reads in part as follows:

The engineman will give signal 14(n) at least one mile before reaching a schedule meeting point with a train of the same or superior class, or a point where by train order the train is to meet or wait for an opposing train. Should the engineman fail to give signal 14 (n) as herein provided, the conductor must take immediate action to stop the train.

The conductor should have known whether the engineman complied with this rule, and if he did not comply with it, it was the

conductor's duty immediately to take measures to stop the train. Not knowing whether or not the meeting point whistle had been sounded, he could not have been certain that the engineman had not overlooked the meet. He was unable to see whether the train on the siding was the train to be met, yet he relied entirely upon the engineman and failed utterly to take proper precautions for the safety of his train. He was extremely negligent in the performance of his duty.

The brakeman was familiar with the requirements of order No. 24 and knew that neither he nor the conductor had identified the train on the siding as the extra to be met and he was not positive that the engineman had sounded the meeting point whistle. Had he protested, it is possible the conductor might have taken measures to stop the train.

The three other members of the crew of train No. 73 relied upon the engineman. Had any one of them insisted upon identifying the train on the siding the accident would probably have been prevented.

All the employees involved in this accident were experienced men with good records. The crew on extra 16 had been on duty 12 hours and 18 minutes after being off duty 15 hours and 15 minutes.

Engineman Haggerty and Brakeman Shafer of train No. 73 had been on duty 8 hours and 3 minutes, and Conductor O'Bierne 8 hours and 8 minutes after periods of from 3 to 12 days off duty. Fireman Reese had been on duty longer than the statutory period, having performed an aggregate service of 18 hours and 18 minutes when the accident occurred.

A.H.C.