

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2942  
ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY  
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT  
AT MADISON, ILL., ON  
OCTOBER 25, 1945

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SUMMARY

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Railroad: Illinois Terminal  
Date: October 25, 1945  
Location: Madison, Ill.  
Kind of accident: Collision  
Equipment involved: Passenger train : Motor-truck  
Train number: 58 :  
Engine number: Electric-traction :  
car 103  
Consist: Electric-traction :  
cars 103-101  
Estimated speed: 20 m. p. h. : 20 m. p. h.  
Operation: Timetable, train orders and  
automatic block-signal system  
Track: Single; 3° curve; 0.39 percent  
ascending grade northward  
Street: Tangent; crosses track at angle  
of 48°30'; practically level  
Weather: Clear  
Time: 3:30 p. m.  
Casualties: 4 killed; 10 injured  
Cause: Motor-truck being driven upon  
highway grade crossing immedi-  
ately in front of approaching  
train

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

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INVESTIGATION NO. 2942

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS  
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 6, 1910.

ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

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November 30, 1945.

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Accident at Madison, Ill., on October 25, 1945, caused by  
a motor-truck being driven upon a highway grade cross-  
ing immediately in front of an approaching train.

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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION<sup>1</sup>

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On October 25, 1945, there was a collision between a passenger train on the Illinois Terminal Railroad and a motor-truck at a highway grade crossing at Madison, Ill., which resulted in the death of three passengers and one employee, and the injury of seven passengers, two employees and the truck driver. This accident was investigated in conjunction with representatives of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

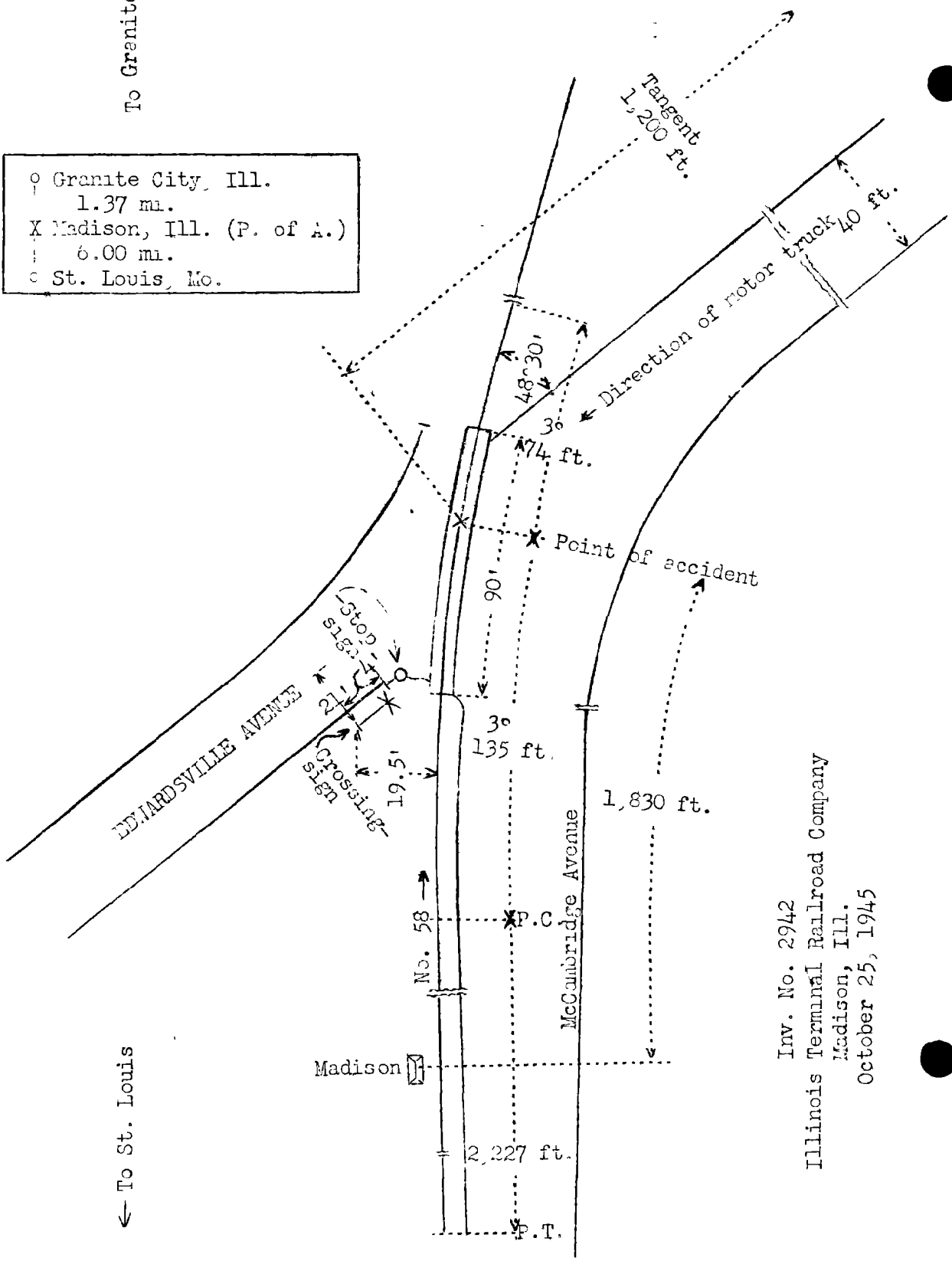
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<sup>1</sup>Under authority of section 17 (2) of the Interstate Commerce Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the Commission to Commissioner Patterson for consideration and disposition.

To Granite City →

○ Granite City, Ill.
1.37 mi.
X Madison, Ill. (P. of A.)
6.00 mi.
○ St. Louis, Mo.

← To St. Louis



Inv. No. 2942  
 Illinois Terminal Railroad Company  
 Madison, Ill.  
 October 25, 1945

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on the Granite City-St. Louis Terminal Division, which extends between St. Louis, Mo., and Granite City, Ill., 7.37 miles, a single-track line in the vicinity of the point of accident, equipped with an overhead trolley system for the electric propulsion of trains, over which trains are operated by timetable, train orders and an automatic block-signal system. The accident occurred about 6 miles north of St. Louis, at a point 1,830 feet north of the station at Madison, where the railroad is crossed at grade by Edwardsville Avenue. From the south on the railroad there is a tangent 2,227 feet in length, which is followed by a 3° curve to the right 135 feet to the point of accident and 74 feet northward. The grade is 0.39 percent ascending northward.

Edwardsville Avenue intersects the railroad at an angle of 48°30'. From the east the street is tangent about 1,200 feet to the crossing and a considerable distance westward. The grade is practically level. East of the crossing, the street is surfaced with brick to a width of 40 feet. The crossing is 90 feet wide. The area between the rails of the track and about 1 foot outside the east rail is surfaced with scrap rail laid parallel to the rails of the track. The spaces between the scrap rails are filled with asphaltum. Flangeways 2-1/2 inches in width are provided. McCambridge Avenue intersects Edwardsville Avenue immediately east of the crossing and parallels the railroad on the east southward from the intersection.

No form of warning to west-bound vehicular traffic is provided for this crossing. There is a standard cross-buck railroad-crossing sign located to the right of the direction of east-bound traffic, 19.5 feet west of the center-line of the railroad and 21 feet south of the center-line of the street. This sign bears the words "RAILROAD CROSSING" in black letters on a white background. At a point 4 feet east of the cross-buck sign there is an octagonal-shape sign on the south side of the street. This sign bears the word "STOP" in black letters on a yellow background.

Operating rules read in part as follows:

14. ENGINE WHISTLE SIGNALS

NOTE--The signals prescribed are illustrated by "o" for short sounds; "\_\_\_" for longer sounds.  
\* \* \*

Sound	Indication
* * *	
(1) ___ ___ o ___	Approaching public crossings at grade. To be prolonged or repeated until crossing is reached.
* * *	

The maximum authorized speed for the train involved was 25 miles per hour.

#### Description of Accident

No. 58, a north-bound first-class passenger train, consisted of electric-traction passenger cars 103 and 101, in the order named. These cars were of all-steel construction. This train departed from St. Louis, the last open office, at 3:15 p. m., on time, and while moving at an estimated speed of 20 miles per hour it struck a motor-truck on a grade crossing 1,830 feet north of the station at Madison.

The motor-truck involved consisted of a tractor and a semi-trailer, owned by Ralph Truss, Indianapolis, Ind., and operated under lease by Roadway Express, Inc., Akron, Ohio. The owner was driving the vehicle when the accident occurred, and he was the sole occupant. The tractor was a 1939 International Harvester D500 model, and bore 1945 Indiana license No. TR2807. It was equipped with an enclosed steel cab, dual tires on the rear wheels, and hydraulic brakes. The semi-trailer was a Fruehauf closed-top model, and bore 1945 Indiana license No. ST1793. It had dual tires on its wheels, and was equipped with air brakes. At the time of the accident the cargo with which the semi-trailer was loaded weighed 26,065 pounds. This vehicle was moving westward on Edwardsville Avenue at an estimated speed of 20 miles per hour when it proceeded upon the crossing and was struck by No. 58.

The tractor was torn loose from the semi-trailer and stopped about 25 feet north of the point of collision and about 15 feet west of the track. The semi-trailer was demolished and stopped on its right side about 60 feet north of the point of collision. The fuel tanks of the tractor were punctured, and escaping gasoline became ignited. The front truck of the first car of No. 58 was derailed to the left, and the car stopped about 60 feet north of the point of accident. The front end of the first unit was crushed inward 9 feet 9 inches, and the interior of the car was damaged by fire.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 3:30 p. m.

The motorman of No. 58 was killed, and the conductor of each car was injured.

During the 2-day period preceding the day of the accident, the average daily movement over the crossing was 50.6 trains. During the 24-hour period beginning 6 a. m., October 30, 1945, 453 automobiles and 406 trucks passed over the crossing.

Discussion

No. 58 was approaching the crossing at a speed of about 20 miles per hour in territory where the maximum authorized speed was 25 miles per hour. The motorman was at the control station at the front end of the first car, one conductor was midway of the first car and the other conductor was in the rear car. The first that either conductor was aware of anything being wrong was when the collision occurred. The brakes of this train had functioned properly en route. It could not be determined when the motorman first became aware that the motor-truck had entered upon the crossing, as he was killed in the accident. If the motorman saw the motor-truck proceeding toward the crossing, he could not determine whether the vehicle would proceed across the crossing or enter McCambridge Avenue. Evidently, a lookout was being maintained as both conductors heard the whistle signal sounded for the crossing. Apparently, the motor-truck proceeded upon the crossing immediately in front of the train, as no application of the brakes was made immediately prior to the accident.

No form of warning to west-bound vehicular traffic is provided for the crossing involved, because local authorities considered the operation of the carrier's trains within the corporate limits of Madison to be similar to street-car operation, and the omission of cross-buck signs at certain crossings was authorized. The driver of the motor-truck was an experienced driver and was familiar with the route. The weather was clear and the driver could have seen the approaching train throughout a distance of about 2,000 feet immediately south of the crossing. It could not be determined why the motor-truck entered upon the crossing immediately in front of the approaching train, as the driver was so seriously injured that he could not be questioned during this investigation.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a motor-truck being driven upon a highway grade crossing immediately in front of an approaching train.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this thirtieth day of November, 1945.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,  
Secretary.