

# Lackawanna Limited

## Accident Reported

Fatal collision at Wayland, N.Y., resulted from lax enforcement of rules

The cause of the side collision on the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western at Wayland, N. Y., August 30 was, according to the report of the investigation conducted by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the failure of the road's operating officers "to adhere to and enforce operating rules which are essential to safety."

The circumstances of the accident were described in *Railway Age* of September 4, page 388. It resulted in the death of 26 passengers and a supervisor of locomotive operation and the injury of 107 passengers, 3 Pullman employees, 1 dining car employee and 3 train service employees.

The accident occurred within yard limits on the double track main line of the Lackawanna, where trains moving with the current of traffic are operated by timetable, train orders, and an automatic block and cab signal system. It involved train No. 3, the westbound "Lackawanna Limited," and Extra 1248 West, a freight train which had stopped clear of the main track at Wayland about 4:30 p.m.

At a point 1,362 ft. west of the station at Wayland a lead track connected with several industry tracks joins the westward main track through a trailing point switch of the hand-throw low-stand type. The top of the stand was level with the rail, and it was not fitted with a target or light. During switching operations, the engine and six cars of the freight train moved along the lead track toward the switch. This occurred about 53 min. after this train had reached Wayland, and about 10 min. after No. 3 was due to pass that station.

According to the report of the investigation conducted under the supervision of Commissioner Patterson, the conductor of Extra 1248 had been informed by the dispatcher that No. 3 had passed Bath, a station about 25 miles east of Wayland, about 10 min. late, but he did not give this information to the members of his crew as he expected No. 3 to be practically on time at Wayland. The front brakeman of the freight, who was in the vicinity of the lead track switch, said that he gave signals for the engineer to stop when the engine was about 350 ft. east of the switch, or around 165 ft. east of the clearance point. The engineer, however, thought the switch was lined for his engine to move to the main track, and proceeded until, at a point about

80 ft. east of the switch, he saw the front brakeman's stop signals. He immediately reversed the engine, but it had not had time to get into motion when it was struck by the engine of No. 3.

Approaching Wayland from the east, the tracks are practically level, and a tangent 1.48 miles in length extends to a point west of the station and 582 ft. east of the point of the accident, where a 1 degree curve to the left begins. The authorized speed for No. 3 in this locality is 80 m.p.h., and the train was moving at about that speed when it passed the last automatic signal, 3,200 ft. east of the point of the accident. This signal displayed proceed. The engineer of No. 3, however, made an 8 lb. brake application in the vicinity of the Wayland station to test the brakes. Some 600 ft. west of the station a restricting indication was displayed by the cab signal. The engineer at once moved the brake valve to emergency position, and the speed of No. 3 was reduced to around 50 m.p.h. when the collision occurred.

No. 3 consisted of engine 1151, a mail-baggage car, 2 Pullmans, 4 coaches, a dining car, and 3 coaches, in that order. All cars were of steel construction. As a result of the collision, the locomotive was derailed and badly damaged, coming to rest on its left side. The first six cars were derailed and considerably damaged, and the sixth car came to rest against the side of the derailed and badly damaged freight locomotive in such position that steam and water escaping from broken connections entered the car, causing most of the fatalities that occurred.

After detailing these circumstances, the report points out that the road's rules and timetable provisions require that an inferior train must clear the time of No. 3 at least 10 min. However, it continues, it had been the practice for a considerable time, according to the testimony of officers of the road, for dispatchers to "give time" on first class trains, either orally or by message, instead of issuing train orders, as required by the rules, and without notifying the superior trains that time had been issued against their trains. Under such authority inferior trains had been using the main track on the time of the superior train. Without such authority on the occasion of the collision, the report points out, Extra 1248 was required by the rules to clear the westward main track by 5:03 p.m., since no train order had been issued restricting the authority of No. 3, yet it fouled the main track at 5:23 p.m., when the accident occurred.

"This accident," the report concludes, "was the direct result of the long-standing practice of inferior trains using the main track on the time of superior trains without procuring authority in the manner prescribed in the book of operating rules. The rules had not been rescinded or modified, but practices not provided for or authorized thereby were commonly followed. Operating officials are responsible for such practices. If they had conformed to the practices prescribed by the rules, the crew of the inferior train in this case would not have permitted their train to foul the main track on the time of No. 3 without protec-

## General Chairmen of Big Five Consider Wage Award

The 600 general chairmen of the five transportation brotherhoods convened at Chicago on October 22 to decide whether to accept or reject the 4-cent an hour increase in pay recommended by an emergency board, as reported in the *Railway Age* of October 2.

tion. Similar accidents may be expected to occur as long as operating officials fail to conform to the practices prescribed by their rules. The unsafe conditions disclosed by this investigation should be corrected immediately."

## Another Proposed Revision of Civil Aeronautics Act

Representative Reece, Republican of Tennessee, has introduced H. R. 3491 which proposes a comprehensive revision of the Civil Aeronautics Act. Another proposed revision of the act, H. R. 3420, was introduced previously by Chairman Lea of the House committee on interstate and foreign commerce, as noted in the *Railway Age* of October 16, page 621. Mr. Reece's bill is understood to embody views of the committee minority on the matter.

## House Approves Investigation of Air Commerce

The House on October 19 approved House Resolution 307 which authorizes its committee on interstate and foreign commerce "to conduct an investigation and study of such matters related to the present and probable future conditions and developments in and affecting air navigation and domestic and foreign air commerce as it may deem advisable." The resolution was sponsored by Representative Bulwinkle, Democrat of North Carolina.

## New Officers for Welding Society

At the conclusion of the 24th annual meeting of the American Welding Society, Hotel Morrison, Chicago, October 18-21, the following officers were elected for the 1943-44 season: President, David Arnott (American Bureau of Shipping, New York, N. Y.); first vice-president, Isaac Harter (vice-president, Babcock & Wilcox Co., Barberton, Ohio); second vice-president, A. C. Weigel, (vice-president, Combustion Engineering Co., Inc., New York); District vice-presidents and directors-at-large were also named.

## Railroads' Fare Increase in New York City Upheld

On October 14, the New York State court of appeals unanimously held the New York Central, the Long Island and the Staten Island Rapid Transit entitled to a 10 per cent increase in non-commutation passenger fares in New York City under a January 21, 1942, order of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The decision reversed a lower court ruling sustaining an action by the Transit Commission to prevent the railroads from putting the in-