

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

17 July 1875

BoT Report into Accident at
Maghull.

(2 Pages).

whole of the evidence, I am of opinion that the accident was caused by a too high rate of speed over a road which was in process of re-laying, and which had not been thoroughly completed. I would recommend that, in the future, when drivers are approaching such incomplete portions of the railway, they should be cautioned by a signalman, who should be

stationed for the purpose at a proper distance from such imperfect portions of the line.

I have, &c.,
 F. H. RICH,
The Secretary,
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.
 Colonel R.E.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 9th August.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR,

Maghull, 3rd August 1875.

In compliance with the instructions contained in the order of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 17th July, at Maghull station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

A goods train from Leeds ran into a passenger train while it was at Maghull station. Some eight and twenty passengers and the engine-driver of the goods train were injured, but most of the injuries are believed to be slight.

Maghull station is about six miles from Liverpool. It is protected by distant signals in each direction, which are sufficiently far from the station, and can be well seen by drivers as they approach them. There are two sets of home signals; an up and down home-signal are placed at the level crossing gates at the south end of the station. These signals and the distant signals are worked by the man in charge of the gates. He has heretofore used the distant signals for the protection of the passenger lines, but he has only used the home signals at his gates, for the protection of vehicles passing over the crossing. The home signals which have been used for the station purposes are placed about the centre of the western platform, and are about 50 yards from the gate signals. The line as it approaches Maghull from the north falls on an incline of 1 in 170.

On the day in question the passenger train, which is run specially on Saturdays to carry the market passengers and market produce to Liverpool, left Ormskirk two minutes late at 4.12 a.m. It consisted of an engine and tender, 10 waggons of vegetables, three third-class, one first class carriage, and a break-van with guard. The vehicles were coupled together in the order in which they are given. The four last coaches were fitted with continuous breaks.

This train pulled up at Maghull station at its proper time, 4.30 a.m. It was detained there about seven minutes, in getting the passengers and the market produce into the train, and just as it was ready to start the guard observed a goods train approaching from the north. He heard the driver of the goods train whistling and he saw that it was not going to stop, so he at once gave the engine-driver of the market train a signal to start. The train got under way and had proceeded about 50 yards when it was run into by the goods train. The passengers also heard the alarm whistle which was given by the driver of the goods train, and many of them jumped out, and were hurt in doing so.

It appears that this market train was run into at Walton junction, exactly a year since, and as it carries almost the same people to market every Saturday most of them no doubt recollected the previous accident, and were alarmed by the whistle from the goods train, which is also the same train that ran into the market train at Walton junction on the 17th July 1874.

The goods train left Leeds at its proper time, 11 p.m., on the previous evening. It was delayed some 40 minutes at Low Moor, waiting for the Bradford goods train, and again at Stansfield Hall, where it had to be assisted up the incline by a bank engine, which was not ready as the train was out of time. It arrived

at Maghull station about an hour late, and was following the market train instead of preceding it, as it would have done if it had been running to its proper time. The goods train consisted of an engine and tender, 20 heavily loaded waggons, and a break-van with a guard at the tail of the train. As the engine-driver of this train approached Maghull station, he found the distant-signal at "all right," and the gate signals were also at "all right." The platform-signal can be seen for about 900 yards before the station is reached. This signal was at danger, but it is a low signal and does not stand out very distinctly from the station buildings, and overbridges.

The driver of the goods train failed to observe this signal or the train which was standing at the station till he had passed the distant-signal and got round the curve. He was travelling at a speed of 26 miles an hour down a falling gradient at the time. He shut off steam, reversed, put on steam, whistled for the guard's breaks, and his fireman applied the tender-break, but he was unable to stop his train in time to prevent a collision. The engine of the goods train struck the van at the tail of the passenger train at a speed of about 12 miles an hour. The driver and fireman of the goods train jumped off just before the collision. The driver was hurt in the forehead by falling on the rails. No part of the goods train was damaged, and none of the vehicles left the rails. The break-van and coaches in the passenger train were damaged, but no vehicle of this train left the rails except the waggon next the tender. Two of its wheels were knocked off the rails.

It appears that the station-master at Maghull and a head porter took the early and late duties of the station alternate weeks. On the day in question the head porter came on duty about 4 a.m. to attend to the market train. There was another porter on duty with him at the station, and the man in charge of the level-crossing gates at the south end of the station should also have been there to work the signals. The station-master, although it was not his week to be on duty at that hour, arrived at the station as the market train approached, and he assisted in the station work. The head porter placed the platform-signal at danger to protect the market train, but this man, as well as the station-master, failed to observe that the man in charge of the gates was not at his post, and that therefore no one was there to work the distant-signal for the protection of the passenger train. They did not observe that the distant-signal was at "all right" during the whole time that the passenger train was at the station.

The gateman, who lives in the house at the gates, and who had only been appointed to the duty about two months previous to the date of my inquiry, had overslept himself. The accident was caused by this man's neglect in not getting up to work his signals, and by the station-master and foreman porter failing to observe his absence, and that the distant-signal was not put up for the protection of the passenger train.

The signals at the gates and the distant-signals are good signals, and are ample for the protection of the station. The company have intended for some time past to remove the platform signals altogether. The interlocking of the signals and

points, means of working the block-system, and the erection of a new signal-cabin, had been ordered for some time previous to the accident, and some of the materials for this work were on the ground at the time of the accident, but the work has not yet been completed. This, however, had nothing to do with the accident, which was altogether owing to neglect in not working the signals.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 1st September.

The block-system when adopted will assist in preventing accidents of the kind, but a larger proportion of break power should be provided for such trains as this goods train.

I have, &c.,
F. H. RICH,
Colonel R.E.
The Secretary,
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 19th June 1875.

SIR,

IN compliance with the Order of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 22nd ultimo, between Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith stations on the London and North-Western Railway.

An engine, which was stationed at Whaley Bridge during the Whitsuntide holidays to assist the trains up the incline towards Buxton, struck one of these trains while running to overtake and assist it up the incline.

Eight passengers and the guard of the train that was run into are reported to have been slightly shaken.

On the day in question the passenger train which is due to leave Manchester at 11.30 a.m. arrived in due course at Whaley Bridge. On leaving that station it consisted of an engine and tender, two coaches, a break-van with a guard, six more coaches, and a second break-van with a guard. The vehicles were coupled together in the order in which they are given. The coaches were well filled with passengers.

When this passenger train left Whaley Bridge the bank-engine had not returned from Babbington siding, up to which place it was assisting a preceding train; but as the 11.30 train reached the Peak junction, about 300 yards from Whaley Bridge, it passed the bank-engine, which was returning to Whaley Bridge. The driver of the passenger train whistled and signalled to the engine-driver of the bank-engine to follow the 11.30 a.m. train as soon as he could get back from Whaley Bridge.

The bank-engine, on arrival at Whaley Bridge, was put across on to the road to Buxton, and followed in pursuit of the passenger train. It overtook and ran into it about a mile on the Buxton side of Whaley Bridge station.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 23rd July.

The railway from Whaley Bridge rises on an incline of about 1 in 60 to Chapel-en-le-Frith, and thence to Babbington siding.

The passenger train was proceeding at about 12 miles an hour, and had just got out of a cutting at the time it was run into by the bank-engine. The driver of the bank-engine stated that he was running at a speed of about 18 miles an hour at the time.

He does not appear to have noticed the passenger train till his bank-engine was about 30 to 50 yards from it, and he was then running at such a speed that he was unable to pull up in time to prevent the collision.

The two buffers of the guard's van at the tail of the passenger train were damaged, no vehicles in this train left the rails, and no other injury was done to the train. The bank-engine was not damaged.

The accident was caused by the engine-driver of the bank-engine neglecting to keep a proper look-out for the passenger train which he was following in order to assist it up the incline towards Buxton. Had he been looking out he might have seen the passenger train for 400 yards before he reached it, and in ample time to reduce his speed sufficiently to prevent the accident.

This driver excused himself by stating that he mistook the speed at which the passenger train was going, and that when he got close to the passenger train, and became aware that he was running too fast, he was unable to check his engine sufficiently to prevent the collision in consequence of the very greasy state of the rails.

The practice of running engines after passenger trains, in order to assist in pushing them up inclines, is always attended with risk of accident such as the one which forms the subject of this report.

I have, &c.,
F. H. RICH,
Colonel R.E.
The Secretary,
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 7th June 1875.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 28th ultimo, I have the honor to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 25th ultimo, between Hednesford and Rugeley stations, on the London and North-western Railway.

A passenger train overtook and ran into a coal train.

The driver and fireman of the passenger train were injured in jumping off their engine. The guard of the passenger train was knocked down in his van and shaken, and seven passengers are reported to have been cut, bruised or shaken.

On the day in question, a coal train that consisted of an engine and tender, 23 loaded, 2 empty waggons, and a break van with a breakman at the tail of the train, was started from Hednesford station for Stafford at 8.17 or 8.19 p.m.

The rules of the London and North-western Railway Company direct that trains of the kind should not be started within 20 minutes of a passenger train; nevertheless the coal train was started from Hednesford station 10 minutes before the passenger train from Walsall was due to leave that station.

The passenger train from Walsall consisted of a tank-engine, with four wheels coupled together, and five passenger coaches.

The front and last coaches were each fitted with a break-compartment. A guard was riding in the last coach.