

The  
**VIRTUAL MUSEUM**  
of the  
**LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY**

Accident Reports.

21 January 1892

BoT Report into Accident at

Preston.

(3 Pages).

## NORTH UNION RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,  
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
8th February 1892.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in your Minute of the 27th January, the result of my enquiry into the collision that occurred at Preston station, on the North Union Railway Company's line, on the 21st January.

On this occasion the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's passenger train, which left Manchester at 5.40 p.m., was standing at the home-signals of the goods line cabin outside Preston station, when it was run into in rear by a London and North-Western engine, with a cattle truck attached, which was on its way from No. 1 siding to the down slow line.

Six passengers are reported to have complained at the time of being shaken, but only one has since communicated with the railway authorities.

The passenger train consisted of engine, tender, a third-class brake, two composites, a third-class brake, and last of all an eight-wheeled brake composite.

It was fitted throughout, including engine and tender, with the automatic vacuum-brake, and the usual hand-brakes. There was one guard with the train, who was in the brake compartment of the last carriage.

The second engine was a six-wheeled tender goods engine, with six wheels coupled. It was fitted with a tender hand-brake only.

No damage was done to the passenger train, passenger engine, or permanent way, and the injury to the goods engine, which was running tender first, was confined to the breaking of the right-hand tender-buffer casting.

*Description.*

The passenger train was standing on the down slow line at the home-signals on the south side of Preston station. These signals, which are two in number, are worked from what is known as the goods cabin. They protect the junction which gives access from the down slow line to the up and down platform. The left-hand signal refers to down slow line, which runs outside the station, while the right hand signal, which is controlled from No. 2 cabin in the station, refers to the up and down platform line. The facing-points at this junction are worked from the goods cabin, but are also controlled from No. 2 cabin, so that the signalman in the goods cabin can neither set the points nor lower the signal for a train to approach the up and down platform without the permission of the man in No. 2 (platform) cabin.

The points are provided with facing-point lock and bar, and are properly interlocked with the signals.

The traffic through Preston station is worked on the permissive block-system in accordance with the following rules:—

*Permissive Block.*—Is in operation for all trains and engines on all lines between Corporation Bridge and Dock Street, except on the new platform single line, on which absolute block must be worked.

*Permissive Working.*—For permissive working additional discs have been provided, numbered two to six; and when a train or engine is already in the section, and another train or engine is required to be sent forward into the section, the signalman must give the "Be ready" signal to the box in advance, and the signalman there will reply by one stroke on the bell or gong, and until this is received the second train or engine must not be allowed to enter the section. When the train or engine is allowed to pass, the signalman will give the "Train entering section" signal (two strokes on the bell or gong), and will move the disc forward one number.

*Working of Signals for Permissive System.*—If the indicator of the block instrument from the cabin in advance shows "Train on line," you must bring a following train to a stand at your "home" signal, when, if you have received the proper reply to your "Be ready" and "Train entering section" signals, the home-signal may be lowered for the driver to proceed. A green flag or hand-lamp must be shown to the driver as he passes the cabin.

## Evidence.

*A. Kefford*, signalman, states: I have been in the North Union Company's service 3½ years, and all the time signalman. I have been employed in No. 1 cabin, Preston, four months, and for the last two months I have been in charge. On the 21st January I came on duty at 2 p.m. for an eight-hour shift. The Lancashire and Yorkshire train from Manchester (5.40 p.m.) was offered to me at 6.25 p.m. from Ribblesdale Bridge cabin, and accepted same time. Given on line at 6.28, and passed me at 6.29. I did not notice that the train was stopped at the home-signals, worked from the goods cabin. There were at this time a London and North-Western Railway goods engine and cattle truck standing in No. 1 siding, waiting for the passenger train to pass, to go along the down slow line. I was busy at the time with four other trains, and as soon as I had a moment to spare I gave the driver of the engine a hand-signal, showing him a white light with my hand lamp. This was not according to rule; I ought to have shown him a green light. At 6.32 I gave the "Go ready" for this engine and truck to the box in advance (the goods line cabin), and it was accepted at the same by one stroke on the bell, which signified that the section ahead was blocked, and that it might proceed under the permissive arrangement. As soon as I gave the driver the white light, he went ahead, and about one minute after he had passed the box I heard the noise of the collision. I had not noticed the tail lights of the passenger train standing at the signals, and did not know the train was there. I had offered the Lancashire and Yorkshire train to the box in advance at 6.25, and it was accepted at the same time by one stroke on the bell, the indicator showing "Train on line." I cautioned the driver of the passenger train, and gave him a green light. I have no explanation to offer for having given a white light to the engine, except that I was very busy, and I made a mistake.

*William Wheelton*, fireman: I have been with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company nearly nine years, and have been fireman 3½ years. On the 21st January I signed on at Newton Heath at 4.15 p.m. to fire for driver Hilton. The engine was No. 868 passenger engine; eight-wheeled engine, with four wheels coupled and leading bogie. We are due at Preston at 6.30 p.m., but I think we were about one minute or so late. We were pulled up at the home-signals just outside the station on the slow line. We were nearly brought to a stand at the home-signal of No. 1 cabin. The signal was lowered just as we approached it. We did not receive any caution from the signalman as we passed the box, nor did he show us any light. The cabin was on my side. As a rule we get a green light there, but I did not see one on this occasion. We were travelling very slow, and we were pulled up at the next home-signals. I think we were standing there about a minute, when something ran into us behind. My engine was driven forward about five or six yards. We had taken the brake off, so as to be ready to go away as soon as the signal was lowered. I went back by the driver's orders to see what had happened, and I found the guard of my train on the ground, and he was then taking the number of the London and North-Western engine that had run into us. When we pulled up at the home-signals,

we were five yards clear of them, and I am sure we were not past them. When we were driven forward the chimney of the engine was just past the signal. When I got back to the engine, an inspector came up to say that we were foul of the locking-bar, and that the signal could not be pulled off, and he was to hand-signal us forward into the platform. The inspector did not know till we told him, that some one had run into us. He then examined the train, and then finding it was all right, he drew us forward into the platform. Neither my mate nor I were hurt by the shock; we were not thrown down. My driver is away sick.

*Thomas Sutcliffe*, passenger guard, states: I have been with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company as guard 30 years. I came on duty at 8.18 a.m. on the 21st January, and I joined the 5.40 p.m. train at Victoria station, Manchester. We reached Preston at 6.29 p.m. We were checked at the home-signals of No. 1 cabin. I cannot say whether the signalman in No. 1 gave any caution to my driver. We were pulled up at the home-signals of the goods line cabin at 6.29. We had been standing there about two minutes, when I felt something run into the carriage in which my brake-compartment was. I was thrown down and slightly bruised. I jumped out at once to ascertain what had happened. I could not see that any damage had been done to my train. Several passengers complained to me. When we reached the platform I ascertained that one passenger had been injured. I think my train was driven forward three or four yards. The shock was not very severe, but it threw me down; I was standing up at the time. I am quite certain the engine of my train was not on the locking-bar before the collision. My train consisted of engine and tender, third-class brake, two composites, a third-class brake, and eight-wheeled brake composite. The train was fitted with the automatic vacuum-brake throughout, including engine and tender.

*Thomas Lyons*, driver, states: I have been with the London and North-Western Company 17 years, and four years driver. I signed on at 5.30 p.m. on the 21st January at Preston. My engine was No. 1,037, six wheeled coupled tender goods engine, fitted with tender hand-brake only. We were shunting up to about 6.29, and we then drew up to No. 1 points, where we were stopped for two minutes. The signalman gave us a white light to draw forward, and I understood from that, that the road was clear up to the home-signals for the goods line cabin, and I expected to have to stop at those signals. We were going very slowly, and were running tender first. I could see the signals at danger, but I could not see the tail lights of the train in front. And the first I knew of a train being in front of me was when I ran into it. The shock was very slight, and I was not knocked down or hurt in any way. I had one cattle truck on behind the engine. The shunter was on the engine. My engine forced the train in front forward three or four yards. I was not talking to anyone when we drew out of the siding, but I was watching the signals; and I did not see the train lights.

## Conclusion.

On this occasion the up and down platform line was already occupied by a train, when the Lancashire and Yorkshire train arrived at the goods cabin home-signal, and therefore the signalman in No. 2 cabin had not withdrawn his lock from that signal and from the points protected by it. Consequently the signalman in the goods cabin was unable to set the points or lower the signal for the Lancashire and Yorkshire train to draw up to the platform, and the train therefore was pulled up at the signal, and was waiting for permission to enter the station.

In accordance with the rules given above for permissive block-working, the signalman in No. 1 cabin was justified in allowing the goods engine and cattle-truck to enter the section behind the passenger train, he having received the proper reply (*viz.*, one stroke on the bell), when he gave the "Be ready" signal to the goods cabin. But unfortunately, when giving the hand-signal to the driver of the goods engine to pass the box, he showed the latter a white light instead of green one. The driver understood this to mean that the section was clear up to the next signals, and in drawing forward he appears to have kept his attention fixed on the signals ahead, instead of looking out to see if there was any train in front of him in the same section. The result was that he ran into the tail of the Lancashire and Yorkshire passenger train, before he knew it was there.

The blame for this collision must rest primarily on signalman Kefford in No. 1 cabin, who acknowledges that he made a mistake in giving the driver of the goods train a white light instead of a green one. He had been on duty  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours at the time of the collision. He gave his evidence in a very straight-forward manner, and I have no doubt his mistake was due to a momentary act of forgetfulness.

At the same time, I am unable to absolve driver Lyons of the goods engine from all responsibility. It is true that he was misled by the white light shown him by the signalman, but there is a general rule that, "the engine-driver must not trust entirely to signals, but must on all occasions be vigilant and cautious." It was his duty therefore, especially in such a busy place as Preston, to have looked ahead in order to make sure that there was nothing in his way, instead of keeping his whole attention fixed on the signals, as he says he did. Had he looked ahead, it seems hardly possible that he could have failed to see either the tail-lights of the passenger train or the lights in the carriages in time to have stopped his engine. He had been on duty about one hour at the time of the collision.

Permissive block-working may be necessary in a busy place such as Preston, but traffic can only be carried on with safety under such conditions by the strictest possible adherence on the part of all concerned, to the rules laid down.

The Assistant Secretary,  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,

H. A. YORKE,  
Major, R.F.

Printed copies of the above Report were sent to the North Union, the Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the London and North-Western Railway Companies on the 29th February.

### SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department.)  
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
3rd February 1892.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Orders of the 8th and 21st ultimo, the result of my enquiries into the circumstances connected with the accidents which occurred on the 7th and 18th ultimo at Borough Market junction, between London Bridge and Cannon Street stations, on the South-Eastern Railway.

In the accident of the 7th ultimo, as the 2.35 p.m. up express train from Hastings for Cannon Street and Charing Cross, consisting of an engine, tender, brake-van, two composite eight-wheeled bogie-carriages, one third-class, one composite 12-wheeled bogie-carriage, one composite, one third-class, and two brake-vans, nine vehicles in all (counting as 12), fitted throughout with the automatic vacuum-brake, was passing round the curve on the west line to Cannon Street nearly opposite the Borough Market signal-cabin, the fourth, fifth, and sixth vehicles from the engine left the rails, the fifth (the 12-wheeled bogie-carriage) stopping nearly on the rails of the line to Charing Cross, the fourth vehicle (third-class carriage No. 2.113) being turned nearly completely over on its left side, having its centre compartments destroyed by their coming into collision with and knocking down the up distant-signal post of Cannon Street cabin No. 2, and remaining suspended by the couplings of the carriages in front and rear of it against one of the girders of the bridge over York Place.

In the accident of the 18th ultimo as the 9.30 p.m. up passenger train from Tunbridge (*viâ* Red Hill) for Cannon Street and Charing Cross, consisting of engine, tender, one third-class carriage, one composite 12-wheeled bogie-carriage, one first-class carriage, and two brake-vans, five vehicles in all (counting as six), the whole, with the exception of the brake-vans, being fitted with the automatic vacuum-brake, was