

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

Accident Reports.

26 October 1859

BoT Report into Accident at  
Ringley Road.

(2 Pages).

Immediately after leaving the Radcliffe-warehouse siding, however, the driver found that the cotter was loose on one of the cross-heads of his engine, and he, therefore, stopped the train, and knocked down the cotter with his hammer, to make it tight.

After proceeding about half a mile further, he heard the cotter striking against the axle, and thus discovered that he had knocked it down too far. He stopped again, to remedy this defect, by inserting a piece of sheet iron, as a lining, in the cotter-hole; and he supposes that he would have completed this operation in seven or eight minutes.

Before he had time to finish it, he heard a cattle train approaching from behind. He jumped on his engine, to try to move forward out of its way; but he had hardly started his train before it was overtaken, and struck by the cattle train. Two wheels of the engine, and the tender of the cattle train, were thrown off the line; and the van, and seven or eight waggons, in the goods train, were destroyed.

The tail of the goods train appears to have been 85 yards within the Whitworth signal, to which I have above referred, and 215 yards to the north of the station-platform, when the collision took place. This signal is connected with a *treddle* on the *up* line of rails, and is always turned to "danger" by the wheels of an engine passing it on that line. It was therefore at "danger" when the cattle train approached it. But the other signal, 350 yards to the north of it, is worked only by a lever, from the neighbourhood of the station, and had not been turned "on" before the collision, because the station porter was not aware of the goods train having come within it. He could not see the train from the station, in consequence of the curved condition of the line.

It is impossible to ascertain from the evidence the exact length of time that the goods train was standing on the line before the accident occurred. The most conclusive statement on the subject is that of a platelayer, who was walking from Radcliffe towards Bury. He met the goods train when he was 20 yards to the north of the Whitworth signal, before it came to a stand. It did not particularly attract his attention, because he thought it was simply going to stop at the station. He then walked five-eighths of a mile before he met the cattle train. He made no signal to the driver of that train, as he believed the other train to be far enough in front of him.

When the goods train came to a stand for the second time, the guard lighted his tail lamp, and put it on his break-van. He then went forward to the driver, and asked him how long he should be obliged to remain. The two men differ considerably in their statements of what passed between them; but shortly afterwards the guard heard the cattle train coming. He ran back to stop it, but he had hardly passed his own van when the collision occurred.

From the evidence of the platelayer above referred to, it would appear that, if this guard had been more active in the discharge of his duties, he might, at all events, have gone a considerable distance to the rear of his train, and have given the driver of the cattle train warning of the danger that awaited him.

This latter train consisted of an engine and tender, 25 waggons, and a van. It was a special train, running on Tuesdays only, during a certain season of the year. It left Bury at its usual time, 4.20 p.m. The driver found the distant signal from the station

at "all right," and it was only as he passed under a wooden bridge near that signal that he was able to see the Whitworth signal at "danger." He reduced his speed to about 15 miles an hour, and was very seriously injured in jumping from his engine shortly before the collision. His fireman, who also jumped from the engine, escaped unhurt.

The signals at this station are much in want of improvement. They are low and not easily seen. The Whitworth signal, in particular, has a brick bridge behind it, and it was not possible to see it from the other when I was on the spot, in a somewhat misty state of the atmosphere.

The further of the two signals should be removed to a better position, at a greater distance from the station; and it might with advantage be made to work upon the principle which has been adopted for the other. The present Whitworth signal should also be raised to the top of a bridge, or to some good situation, as it might thus be made far more useful. A return signal of some sort is wanted to indicate towards the station, the action of that which is more distant from it.

As it happened, it is a question whether the guard of the goods train might not have prevented this accident from occurring, if he had been more active in the discharge of his duty. But the want of a better arrangement for the working of the goods train is at the same time strongly shown.

As I have already stated, the goods train started first from Bury, and afterwards from the warehouse siding near Radcliffe, while the cattle train followed it from Bury. Now, there was no means of securing a proper interval between these two trains, between the warehouse siding and Radcliffe. The officer who started the cattle train from Bury could not, of course, be aware of the time at which the goods train would leave the warehouse siding. The goods porter of the warehouse kept his signal "on," while the goods train was standing near his post, but he turned it "off" again as soon as that train had gone out of his sight, and then went to his work, according to his usual custom.

Under this system, the cattle train, or any other train, might follow very closely behind the goods train as it leaves the warehouse, without any warning being given to the driver. Either this goods porter should be instructed to obey the ordinary rule, of keeping up his danger and caution signals, each for five minutes after the departure of the goods trains from his sidings; or else some other means of securing the necessary interval should be provided.

The goods train was on this occasion an hour behind its time, in consequence of the engine allotted to it having been detained in its work with a preceding train.

This is a line of constant curves and heavy gradients, on which it is exceedingly desirable that the telegraph should be more employed. No instrument has yet been furnished at the Radcliffe Bridge Station. But the establishment of telegraphic communication, and a proper system of train signals, are the best means that the Directors can employ for ensuring a proper interval between their trains.

I have, &c.

The Secretary of the  
Railway Department,  
Board of Trade.

H. W. TYLER,  
Captain R.E.

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
SIR, Whitehall, November 18, 1869.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the accident, that occurred on the 26th ultimo, near

the Ringley Road Station, on the East Lancashire Section of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

This station is 3½ miles to the south of Bury, and 6½ miles to the north of Manchester. It is approached on a sharp curve from Bury; and the gradients fall from it, 1 in 120 towards the north, and 1 in 96 towards the south.

On the 26th ultimo, the 7.40 p.m. passenger train

from Ramsbottom left that place punctually, with eight carriages, of which one was a break carriage, for Bury and Radcliffe Bridge, and started from the latter station a minute after its time, at 6 minutes past 8 o'clock.

Between the Radcliffe Bridge and Ringley Road Stations, which are a mile apart, there is a rising gradient of 1 in 120, and the line is much curved. The wind was very high, and against the train. The rails were very slippery, and the wind blew away the sand which the driver attempted to apply to them. It was raining; and the engine was travelling tender first.

The engine was a powerful one, with 16" cylinders, and 20" stroke. It had six wheels, and its driving and trailing wheels, six feet in diameter, were coupled together. It is stated, also, to have been in very good order; but it began to slip soon after the train left Radcliffe Bridge, and the causes above stated, combined together, prevented it from attaining a greater speed, in its progress towards Ringley Road, than seven or eight miles an hour.

When it was travelling thus slowly, within about 200 yards of the Ringley Road platform, it was run into from behind by an engine, with considerable violence. One of the passengers sustained a concussion of the brain, and four others were injured.

The only signal towards Radcliffe Bridge from Ringley Road is at 220 yards from the platform of the latter station. The tail of the train is stated to have been about 15 yards outside this signal when it was struck. The signal appears to have been turned to "danger" almost as the collision occurred. The porter in charge of the station saw the passenger train coming, and was standing by the side of the signal-handle, ready to work it as the train came within it. He believes that he had turned it "on" a few seconds before he heard the noise of the collision.

The engine that thus ran into the passenger train, was on its way from Bury to Manchester. According to the driver, it left Bury at 8-12, and the collision occurred at 8-20. The distance being nearly four miles, he would, therefore, have been travelling at a speed of 30 miles an hour. He was returning home without a train, because there was no van to attach to the waggon that he would otherwise have taken with him; and he has been fined by the Directors for running at a greater speed than he was timed to travel at with a train. He found the signal from Ringley Road at "all right" as he approached it; and only saw the lights at the tail of the train, as he rounded the curve upon which the station is approached. He was able to slacken his speed to a very slight extent only before the collision occurred.

The porter at the Radcliffe Station watched the passenger train for half a mile, as it went slowly away from him, and out of his sight. He then took his signal "off" as he believes, 8 or 10 minutes after it started. He states that he stood on a form, as the engine passed the station, 10 or 11 minutes after the train, and showed it a green light, as a caution signal, from his hand-lamp; but the driver and fireman saw nothing of this signal, any more than the guard, who, having no van, was riding with them. The driver and the guard were looking to the other side of the station, as they passed it; but the fireman says that he was looking to the right-hand side, on which

the porter describes himself to have been; and he adds that the porter could not have been there with a light without his seeing him. After noticing the difficulty with which the train had proceeded towards Ringley Road, this porter ought, by way of precaution, to have kept up his fixed signal for a longer period.

This collision happened on a tempestuous night, in fact, on the occasion of the first of the severe gales by which the country has lately been visited. The state of the weather, no doubt, was a cause of delay to the passenger train; but there are, nevertheless, many points brought to light that call for remark with reference to the management of the line.

The engine was travelling tender first, for want of a turn-table at Ramsbottom, from which station it started. If trains are started, as they appear to be, regularly from that station, a turn-table should be supplied there.

The break-carriage of the passenger train was not at the rear of it, as it ought to have been, but was next behind the engine. The guard who was riding in it knew nothing, of course, of the engine that was following until the collision occurred. It would appear, if the times given—namely, 8-6 for the starting of the train from Radcliffe, and 8-20 for the collision—are correct, that the train took 14 minutes to travel less than a mile. The guard states that the speed was not so much reduced as to enable him to go back for the protection of his train without a risk of being left behind. But if the train only travelled, as would appear, at a speed of less than four miles an hour, it was clearly his duty to have done so. He would have been more likely to do so if his break had been at the tail of the train, or at all events he would not have remained in his break-carriage, if only for his own personal safety. The last carriage in the train, which was broken to pieces during the collision, was fortunately empty.

A distant signal should be supplied at Ringley Road, at a greater distance from the station than the present signal, and in a better position. The latter might then be placed nearer to the station, and be made to act as a station signal.

In my report of yesterday, upon the accident at Radcliffe Bridge, on the 18th ultimo, I had occasion to recommend that a telegraph instrument should be supplied at that station, and that means should be provided for telegraphing the trains from station to station on this portion of railway. I have now to repeat the same suggestions with regard to Ringley Road. No record, even, is kept, as yet, of the passage of the trains past these stations; but it is to be hoped that the Directors will accept the warning that has been conveyed to them by the occurrence of these two collisions, so close to each other, both in regard to time and space. As I said before, this portion of railway, on which the view is so much obstructed by curves, and on which the gradients are so heavy, is peculiarly one where the aid of the telegraph is required. These collisions could not, of course, have happened, if only one engine or train had been allowed to travel at the same time between any two telegraph stations.

I have, &c.,  
 H. W. TYLER,  
*The Secretary of the Railway Department,*  
*Board of Trade.* *Captain R.E.*

#### LONDON AND BLACKWALL RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,*  
 Sir, *Whitehall, August 20, 1859.*

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, that in compliance with your instructions, I have inquired into the circumstances attending a collision which occurred, upon the 1st

instant, between a North Woolwich passenger train coming into the Fenchurch Street Terminus of the London and Blackwall railway and an Eastern Counties engine on its way to the turntable.

The passenger traffic for which accommodation is provided at Fenchurch Street Terminus is of two kinds, which are kept distinct from each other.