

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

1 April 1872

BoT Report into Accident at
Berry Brow.

(2 Pages).

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitchall, 29th April 1872.*

Sir, IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 4th inst., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 28th ult. at Kirkdale junction, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Kirkdale junction is about one mile to the east of Sand Hills station.

On the day in question, the passenger train which is due to leave Ormskirk at 10.25 p.m. for Liverpool, approached Kirkdale junction about 11 p.m. It consisted of an engine, which was running with the tender in front, a composite, a second, a first, a guard's van with a guard, and two second-class carriages, at the tail of the train.

The coaches were all fitted with Fay's continuous breaks.

This train was stopped about 150 yards to the east of Kirkdale junction cabin, as the signalman on duty thought that it was a goods train that required to cross to the dock line, which is at the west side of his cabin, and at the north side of the passenger lines.

The dock line was occupied at the time with another goods train, that had just moved across the passenger lines on to it.

The Kirkdale junction signalman was misled into thinking that the passenger train was a goods train, as it carried only one head light, which is the case with goods trains on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, whereas passenger trains carry two head lights, and he also thought that he had received the gong signal for a goods train from the signalman at the east side of his cabin. The passenger train had only just stopped, when an inspector told the Kirkdale junction signalman that it was a passenger train, and the junction signalman lowered the junction signal for the train to proceed. He forgot that the points of the cross-over road, from the passenger line to the dock line, had not been altered,

since he had allowed the goods train to go into the dock line.

The passenger train passed Kirkdale junction cabin at a speed of about 10 miles an hour, and as soon as it reached the points of the cross-over road, which are about 30 yards to the west of Kirkdale junction cabin, the engine-driver felt his engine take the crossing. He shut off steam, reversed, whistled for the guard's breaks, but he could not stop his train before it struck, at a speed of about 8 miles an hour, the goods waggons that were standing on the dock line. Two goods waggons were knocked off the rails and damaged, and the loading wheels of the tender of the passenger train were also thrown off the rails. The guard of the passenger train was the only person that was injured. He was hurt in the head and back, but not seriously.

The engine-driver of the passenger train excused himself for not having two head lights on the tender of his engine, by saying that he had shifted one lamp from the front of the engine to the tender, before he started on the return journey, and that he thought that his fireman had moved the other lamp, but it appears that the fireman neglected to do so.

Passenger trains should not run with the engine tenders in front.

The accident was caused by the signalman at Kirkdale junction, forgetting to put the points right, before he lowered the signal for the passenger train.

This man is an experienced signalman and bears a good character. All signalmen are certain to make such mistakes at sometime or another, unless they are provided with signals and points that are properly interlocked, which renders such mistakes impossible.

This is not the first accident of the kind that has occurred at Kirkdale junction, and I am glad to report that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company are now re-arranging the junction and are fitting it with a locking apparatus.

I have, &c.,
F. H. RICH,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

*The Secretary,
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.*

Copies of the above report were sent to the Company.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitchall, 25th April 1872.*

Sir, IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 3rd inst., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision which occurred on the 1st inst. at Berry Brow station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Sixteen passengers are reported to have been hurt, but it is believed that their injuries are not serious.

Berry Brow station is situated on an incline of 1 in 100, falling towards Huddersfield, and on a curve of 30 chains radius. It is protected by a distant-signal at the Penistone end. The distant-signal is placed about 650 yards from the station, but as it cannot be seen from the station there is a repeater 250 yards from the station. The distant-signal at the Huddersfield side of the station is about 500 yards away; it also has a repeater, which is about 200 yards from the station. There are no station signals. The levers that work the distant-signals are on the platform at the east side of the line opposite the station building. The approaches to Berry Brow station from the north and south sides are through deep rock

cuttings which confine the view to about 200 yards on each side of the station.

On the day in question a train, which consisted of an engine and tender, a guard's van with the guard, a second-class, a first-class, a second-class, and three third-class carriages, which were coupled together in the order in which they are given, arrived at Berry Brow station. The van and three carriages next to it were fitted with Fay's continuous break. The train left Penistone at 10.50 p.m. It was 40 minutes late, in consequence of delays on the up journey, owing to the heavy traffic of Easter Monday, and it was delayed a little at Penistone station. The train stopped at all stations, and arrived at Berry Brow at 11.20 p.m., 42 minutes late. The signals at Berry Brow were at "all right" for the train to run into the station. The train had pulled up about half a minute at Berry Brow station when it was run into by a single engine which was going to Mirfield. The two last carriages of the train were broken to pieces, and two others were more or less injured. The man who has charge of the signals at Berry Brow station was in the station office when the passenger train arrived. He had to get to the platform at the opposite side of the station in order to put up the signals to protect the passenger train. When he reached the opposite platform he

perceived an engine coming round the curve and approaching the station at speed. It was an empty engine from Holmfirth that was proceeding to Mirfield. It ran into the passenger train.

Honley station is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south of Berry Brow station. It had been shut up for the night, and the signals were at "all right" when the empty engine passed. The signals at Berry Brow were also at all right as the engine driver of the empty engine approached. He did not perceive the lights at the tail of the passenger train, which was standing at Berry Brow station, until he was within about 200 yards of the place where the passenger train was standing. He was running with tender in front at a speed of about 20 miles an hour at the time. The steam was shut off, and he tried to reverse, but failed in doing so. His fireman put on the break, and then the driver succeeded in reversing, and put on steam against his engine, but he could not pull up before he struck the passenger train at a speed of seven or eight miles an hour. The engine driver of the empty engine dropped off just before the collision and hurt his thumb slightly. The fireman remained on his engine and was slightly shaken at the time. The

empty engine and tender were slightly damaged. None of the vehicles left the rails. The engine driver of the empty engine could not be aware that there was anything on the road in front of him, as he received no caution or danger signals before he struck the passenger train.

The driver of the passenger train stated that he had been about one minute at the station when he heard the guard call out "Are you right?" and the porter immediately said "Go on, go on," sharply, as he saw the empty engine coming. He got the regulator open, and had just got the train in motion when it was run into by the empty engine. When he felt the collision he shut off steam and stopped the train. It had run about three or four carriage lengths from the place where it had been standing.

The accident was caused by the want of proper means to protect Berry Brow station. This can only be done by the adoption of the block-telegraph system. Station signals should also be provided.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary,
(*Railway Department,*)
Board of Trade.

F. H. RICH,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

Copies of the above report were sent to the Company.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(*Railway Department,*)
Whitehall, 29th April 1872.

SIR,

In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 2nd instant, at Miles Platting, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Miles Platting is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Victoria station, Manchester. It is at the summit of a steep incline.

There are five telegraph cabins on the incline. No. 1 cabin is at the bottom of the incline in Victoria station, and No. 5 cabin is at the summit at Miles Platting.

This section of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway is worked on the absolute block system, with Tyer's block telegraph instruments. The signalmen appear to allow single engines to break the block.

About 12.20 a.m., on the 2nd instant, a Lancashire and Yorkshire goods train, that consisted of an engine and tender, 42 waggons, a break-van, and an engine at the tail of the train, left Victoria station to proceed towards Ardwick. It was allowed to run past No. 4 telegraph cabin on the Miles Platting bank, but it was stopped by the distant signal from No. 5 cabin which was at danger.

The distant signal at the Manchester side of No. 5 cabin was kept at danger, as the line was blocked between No. 5 and No. 6 cabins.

About seven minutes after the goods train had passed No. 4. cabin, the signalman on duty there, received notice that a single engine was coming towards his station from Victoria station. As the line between No. 4 and No. 5 cabins remained blocked for about seven minutes after the goods train had passed No. 4 cabin, the signalman at the latter station thought that the goods train was too heavy for the engines that were attached to it, and he allowed the single engine to run up to and pass his station, so that it might go to assist in pushing the goods train up the bank.

A few minutes after the single engine had gone forward, the London and North-Western mail train, that is due to leave Victoria station, Manchester, at 12.25 a.m., was signalled to No. 4 cabin.

No. 4 signalman stated that he telegraphed it to No. 5, and received the obstruction signal in reply.

About two minutes later he again telegraphed the mail train to No. 5, and received "line clear" in reply. No. 4 signalman then allowed the mail train, which he had stopped, to go forward. As the last carriage of the mail train passed his cabin he again received the obstruction signal, but it was too late for him to stop the mail.

The mail train ran forward at a speed of about 10 miles an hour. The night was dark and wet. As the engine-driver approached No. 5 cabin distant signal, he heard an engine whistle, and at the same moment he observed the engine at the tail of the goods train. He shut off steam, reversed, and whistled for the guard's break, but he could not succeed in stopping the train before it struck the empty engine at the tail of the goods train, at a speed of about five miles an hour. The engine-driver of the London and North-Western train could not see the distant signal of No. 5 cabin, which was at danger, in consequence of the steam and smoke of the two engines, which were standing close to the distant signal at the tail of the goods train.

The mail train consisted of an engine and tender, a guard's van with a guard, two composite carriages, and a van with the mail bags and a post office guard at the tail of the train.

The buffer plank of the engine of the mail train, and the buffer castings of the empty engine were damaged, but none of the vehicles of either train left the rails, and no persons were hurt.

The signalman on duty at No. 5 cabin gave very circumstantial, and (at the time) apparently truthful, evidence of the telegraph signals that had passed between himself and the signalman at No. 4 cabin. It was to the effect, that he had kept the block on for the whole time, against the mail train, in reply to the messages from No. 4. In cross questioning, subsequently, both the signalmen and the telegraph boy who was employed at No. 5 cabin for the purpose of registering the time that trains passed the station, it transpired that the signalman on duty at No. 5 cabin had been absent from his cabin during the greater part, if not during the whole of the time, that No. 4 signalman was telegraphing the mail train.

The signalman at No. 5 cabin had gone across to the opposite side of the line to make arrangements for clearing the line at the east side of his cabin, so that he might allow the goods train that had been stopped on the bank to proceed forward.

While he was away for this purpose, the telegraph boy,