

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

12 September 1871

BoT Report into Accident at
Miles Platting.

(1 Page).

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Manchester, 26th September 1871.
 SIR, In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 20th 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 12th of September, near the Miles Platting station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case the 8.45 p.m. passenger train from the Victoria station, Manchester, for Middleton, came into collision, while approaching a new junction cabin east of Miles Platting, with a goods train which was shunting out of a siding on the west of that signal cabin.

The Miles Platting station is a mile and a quarter on the east of the Victoria station at Manchester, and is a station of enormous traffic. Since the dates of my previous reports, further progress has been made in adding to and improving the siding accommodation on the east of this station, and a long siding has been constructed on the north of the main line, connected with a number of other sidings further to the northward. A new signal-cabin has been erected a quarter of a mile on the east of the Miles Platting station, and a locking-frame has been provided in it containing levers for working the necessary points and signals. This cabin and its connexions are, however, as yet only partially completed, and the present collision occurred in consequence of their incomplete condition.

The passenger train in question left Victoria station at 8.48 p.m., 3 minutes late, consisting of a tank-engine and 5 carriages, 4 of which were coupled together with continuous breaks. The engine-driver found the signals all right for him at Miles Platting, and after a short detention at that station he started again, also about 3 minutes late, for Middleton. The night was very dark, and the engine-driver, after leaving Miles Platting, increased his speed to about 15 miles an hour. He had no reason to suspect that the line was in any way obstructed before him, but while travelling at the above speed his engine came suddenly into collision with something on the main line, which he had not seen, and of which he had no notice. The passenger-engine was not damaged, except by the fracture of a footstep; nor was it thrown off the rails, any more than any of the carriages behind it. Two footsteps were broken off the carriage next behind the engine. Out of about 25 passengers who were riding in the train, none have, up to the present time, complained of injury.

The goods train which came thus in the way of the passenger train, left the Miles Platting station shortly before the passenger train, proceeded towards the signal-cabin above referred to, along

the main line, and backed near that signal-cabin into the new loop line. The train, consisting of an engine and tender, 24 waggons, and a break-van, was then divided into two parts; the one part, consisting of the engine and tender, 14 waggons, and the break-van, drawing out of the loop line, to go on with its shunting, while the remaining waggons were left standing in the loop line. The guard inquired of the signalman whether he might go on with his shunting, and the signalman gave him leave to do so. Their statements in regard to what happened do not entirely accord with one another, but it is plain that the signalman gave leave to the guard to go on with his shunting, and that the guard proceeded with his shunting accordingly, neither of them intending that the main line should be fouled by the goods train during the process. The signalman states that he told the driver particularly to beware of fouling the main line; but this the driver denies; and the engine-driver, obeying only the signals of the guard to proceed forward, and to stop when he had cleared the siding points, brought the train to a stand on seeing a red light exhibited to him by the guard from his hand-lamp for that purpose; but he had by that time fouled the main line; and, looking up, he saw that the main line signal had been turned off, and heard the passenger train approaching. The buffer-plank of the goods engine was partly knocked off, but neither the engine, the tender, nor the waggons were thrown off the rails.

It appears to have been the practice, previously, to go on with the shunting at this spot without stopping the main line trains; and such a practice was safely carried on while the trains were of such a length as to stand between the siding points and the fouling point for the main line, and as long as they were stopped short of that fouling point. But in this instance the portion of the goods train which was being shunted was, if not too long to stand between the siding points and the fouling point of the main line, too long, at all events, to have been properly shunted in the manner described, with so little margin between safety and collision.

The new work which is now being performed, and is nearly completed, at the signal-cabin, will prevent such a collision from again occurring, inasmuch as it will be impossible for the signalman to let a goods train out of the loop line in the direction of the main line at the same time that he lowers his signals for a passenger train to pass along the main line.

I have, &c.,
 H. W. TYLER.

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

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
 (Railway Department),
 24th October 1871.*

SIR, In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances attending the collision which occurred on the 2nd inst., at Blue Pits junction on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, between a passenger train and two goods waggons.

Five passengers are returned as having been more or less injured.

At Blue Pits junction, $8\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Manchester, the lines from Manchester and Bury unite, and thence proceed to Rochdale, Todmorden, and Yorkshire. The junction cabin and home signals are in the fork 160 yards on the Manchester side of the points, and

280 yards on that of the Blue Pits station signals. The junction home signals are close to the cabin, and there are distant signals towards Manchester and Bury, but none towards Rochdale. The junction points and signals are not at present interlocked; but I am informed that locking apparatus has been ordered for this and for a number of other junction cabins. The station is provided with a distant signal 510 yards from the home signal for trains approaching from Rochdale, and of this there is a long view. The junction home signal can be seen by trains approaching in this direction for a distance of only 440 yards, owing to an over-bridge and curve in the line. A siding joins the main line to Manchester 150 yards from the junction cabin, the signal for this siding being 56 yards nearer the cabin; another siding joins this first one 40 yards on the junction side of this signal; the siding points being worked from