

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

Accident Reports.

14 March 1900

BoT Report into Accident at  
Miles Platting.

(5 Pages).

The stationmaster, however, on his own responsibility sent them to the two main line stations of No. 3 box, but, as the traffic on the Great Northern branch line is small, and as Signalman Garside had not asked for them, he did not send one to the one fogman's station on that line belonging to No. 3 box. Garside states that a few minutes subsequent to his conversation with the stationmaster, he heard that fogmen were being sent out to No. 4 box, so he then said that his "might as well be sent also." The stationmaster, however, denies receiving this message, and consequently no fogman was sent to this one post. Apart, however, from the fact of this message having miscarried, it should be noted the other two fogmen belonging to No. 3 box came out before 5 p.m., while the accident did not occur till past 7 p.m. During this interval Garside admits that he took no further steps to inform the stationmaster of this fogman not having arrived; this omission on his part, during the dense fog which prevailed, clearly renders him practically responsible for there being no fogman at this post when the goods train arrived at it.

Signalman Garside is, therefore, responsible both for the two trains being allowed to approach the junction simultaneously, and for there being no fogman at the regular fogman's post on the branch line near his box. On his shoulders, therefore, must rest the sole responsibility for this accident.

The Assistant Secretary,  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,  
P. G. VON DONOP.  
Lieut.-Col., R.E.

#### APPENDIX.

##### DAMAGE TO ROLLING STOCK.

###### *Great Northern Train.*

Brake Van, No. 34,854.—Footboard and irons broken; step and handrails damaged.

• Covered Goods Waggon, No. 24,066.—One end stud broken, and one drawbar damaged.

###### *Lancashire and Yorkshire Train.*

Engine, No. 671.—Foot framing on left side bent; right-hand trailing-spring broken; paint-work scratched.

Third-class Van, No. 1,596.—Bottom side damaged; headstock broken; buffer-head bent; steam-pipe fittings damaged.

Printed copies of the above Report were sent to the Companies concerned on the 13th February.

#### LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
7th April, 1900.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 19th March, 1900, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances under which a collision occurred about 5.49 a.m. on the 14th March near Miles Platting Railway Station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case, as the 4.45 a.m. London and North-Western passenger train from Huddersfield to Manchester, consisting of an engine, tender, four passenger carriages and a guard's van, was standing at the up home signal of the Ashton branch sidings signal-box, it was run into in rear by a goods brake-van which was being propelled by an engine of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway from Philips Park sidings to Miles Platting.

The front portion of the guard's van of the passenger train was wrecked, and the first compartment in the rear carriage was telescoped. The remainder of that train was only slightly damaged. No passengers were seriously injured, but 26 have sent in complaints of slight injuries sustained.

The goods brake-van which was being propelled by the Lancashire and Yorkshire engine was slightly damaged, but the engine was unhurt. The driver and fireman of this engine were both seriously hurt, but the guard escaped with a good shaking.

This latter engine was a six-wheels-coupled tender engine, fitted with automatic vacuum brake, working blocks on the six wheels of the engine and on those of the tender. This brake is reported to have been in excellent order. Details of damage to rolling-stock are given in Appendix. That to the permanent-way was nil.

### Description.

Ashton branch box, near which this collision occurred is the signal-box on the eastern or down side of Miles Platting Railway Station on the Manchester-Stalybridge branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The next block-box to it on the down side is Ardwick Junction box, distant from it 490 yards to the eastward.

Between these two boxes are four lines of rails running in directions which are approximately east and west. The two on the north side of the line are passenger lines, and those on the south are goods lines. This accident is solely connected with the up passenger line, which is the second from the north side of the line.

At Ardwick Junction there is a double junction between the above-mentioned passenger lines and lines approaching the junction from Ardwick in a north-westerly direction.

The next block-box beyond Ardwick Junction box in the direction of Ardwick is the Philips Park box, distant 594 yards.

The following distances are noted :—

	Yards.	
Ashton branch sidings box to up home signal	... 52	to the eastward.
"    "    point where collision occurred	... 126	"
"    "    Ardwick Junction up starting signal	220	"
"    "    Ardwick Junction box	... 490	"
Ardwick Junction box to up home signal from Ardwick	... 66	"
"    "    Philips Park starting signal	... 286	"

The line between Ardwick Junction box and Ashton branch sidings box is almost straight, and a driver has an excellent view both of his signals and of the line in front of him. The gradient for an up train is a rising one of 1 in 300.

### Evidence.

*John Burrows*, driver, states :—I have been 29 years in the service of the London and North-Western Company, during 12 of which I have been a driver. I came on duty at 11.20 p.m. on the night of the 13th March to work until 10.30 a.m. on the 14th. I was driver of the 4.45 a.m. passenger train from Huddersfield to Manchester. On arrival at Ardwick Junction cabin the home signal was off, and on arrival at Ashton branch sidings I was brought to a stand at the home signal. This was about 5.48 a.m. After standing one minute or one minute and a half, we were run into in the rear by an engine and brake van. The shock was severely felt on my engine. My brake was on at the time so the engine was forced very little forward. The engine and train were fitted throughout with the automatic vacuum brake which was on at the time of the collision. It was a fine morning and daylight was just breaking. I could see easily 100 yards ahead of me. Just before the collision occurred the home signal had been lowered for me, and I had put my hand on the brake handle, but the train had not, as yet, moved at all. The first I knew of the collision was feeling the shock of it. My engine was a four-wheels-coupled tender engine.

Huddersfield to Manchester on March 14th. At 5.48 a.m. we were brought to a stand at the Ashton branch box home signal. I looked out of the window and saw nothing behind us, but when I returned to the van I heard the sound of an approaching train. On looking out I saw a white light approaching from behind us. It was, I estimate, at a distance of 12 or 14 yards from us. I stooped down to pick up my lamp in order to give a danger signal, but before I could do so the collision occurred. I was not seriously hurt and went to the signal-box to tell the signalman what had occurred and asked him to send for assistance. My train consisted of an engine, tender, and the following vehicles arranged in the order given :—

One composite.

One composite.

One third.

One third.

One large open brake-van.

The whole train was fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, which was in good order. I am not sure whether the driver had blown the brakes off at the time the collision occurred. The accident happened between 5.49 and 5.50 a.m. The front portion of the guard's van was staved in, and the first compartment in the rear third-class coach was also telescoped. The remainder of the train was only slightly damaged. Eleven passengers complained to me of injuries sustained.

*Samuel Warburton*, driver, states :—I have been in the service of the Lancashire and York-

*Lewis Turner*, guard, states :—I have been 10 years in the service of the London and North-Western Company, and have been passed to work as passenger guard for three years. I was in charge of the 4.45 a.m. passenger train from

shire Company for 20 years, during nine of which I have been a booked driver. I signed off duty at 9 a.m. on the 13th of March, and came on duty at 9.50 p.m. to work until 9.0 a.m. on the 14th. At the time of the accident I was propelling my van from Philips Park sidings to Miles Platting. I stood at Philips Park starting signal for about 10 minutes, and when it was lowered I proceeded to Ardwick Junction home signal, which was lowered just before I came to a stand at it. When I arrived at the Ardwick Junction starting signal that was off also. Just before coming to Ardwick Junction starting signal I saw the Ashton branch home signal drop, and I concluded we had a clear road to Miles Platting. I looked myself at the Ashton branch up home signal, but I did not notice that there was a train standing behind it. The only reason I can give for not having seen the train in front of me is that the van was between me and it. I saw nothing of the train in front of me until we actually struck it. I estimate our speed at the time of the collision at between three or four miles per hour. Steam was turned off at the time. I was knocked down by the collision and one of my knees and a shoulder were badly hurt. I was keeping a look-out all the time after leaving Ardwick Junction box. My fireman was having something to eat at the time, but he also was keeping a look-out. My engine was not hurt by the collision. The engine was a six-wheels-coupled tender engine fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, working blocks on all six wheels of the engine and on all six wheels of the tender. This brake was in good order.

*Oliver Carrington*, fireman, states:—I have been in the service of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company for 10 years, during five of which I have been a fireman. I was fireman for driver Warburton on the 14th March, and came on duty the same time as he did to work the same hours. I had been off duty for 12 hours previously. We stood at Philips Park starting signal for about 10 minutes, and when this was lowered we started to propel our van towards the home signal for Ardwick Junction, which came off as we got near to it. The starting signal for Ardwick Junction was off when we got to it. After passing the Ardwick Junction starting signal I saw the home signal for Ashton branch box, and it was off. I saw the Ashton branch home signal myself, but I did not see the train standing between me and it. My explanation for not seeing it is that we had a brake-van in front of us. I was eating my dinner when going from Ardwick Junction cabin to the point where the collision occurred and had just put my basket away. I was keeping a look-out the whole time. We were travelling about four miles per hour at the time of the collision. My ribs and a leg were hurt, and they are not quite right yet. I was looking at the signals, and I did not keep any look-out on the line ahead of me.

*Donald Dallas*, goods guard, states: I have been 27 years in the service of the Company, during 22 of which I have been a guard. I came on duty on the night of March 13th at 10.15 p.m., to work until 9 a.m. on the 14th. On the 13th I had gone off duty at 9.55 a.m. I was returning in my van from Philips Park sidings to Miles Platting. We were detained at the Philips Park starting signal for about seven minutes. It was lowered for us at 5.46 a.m., when we went ahead. Just as we were arriving at the home signal for Ardwick Junction it was lowered, so we did not

actually stop at it. On passing the junction I saw that the Ardwick Junction starting signal was off for us. Having satisfied myself that this signal was off I went to make out my journal. Just as we arrived at the Ardwick Junction starting signal I looked out of my van window again and saw the Ashton Branch home signal just drop. At the same time I noticed, for the first time, that we were close to a passenger train. We were not more than seven yards from it when I first noticed it. I am acquainted with the Company's rule that "Where propelling brake vans on the main line is authorised, guards must keep a constant and strict look-out all the distance the vans are propelled," but I admit, that owing to not having this rule in my mind at the time, I did not strictly adhere to it. I was knocked completely over and got a good shaking. My van was severely damaged. I do not think we were going above 10 miles per hour at the time of the collision. The morning was clear and there was nothing to have prevented my seeing the train after passing Ardwick Junction box.

*Daniel Dagger*, signalman, states: I have been 30 years in the service of the Company, during 15 of which I have been a signalman. I have been in Ardwick Junction box for about seven years. On March 13th I came on duty at 10 p.m. to work until 6 a.m. on the 14th. I had been off duty previously for more than 48 hours. I had a Lancashire and Yorkshire Ashton passenger train passing my box and it was signalled as follows:—

	a.m.
Is line clear offered	5.37
Accepted	5.37
Train entering section received	5.41
Train passed box	5.42
Train offered to box in advance	5.37
Accepted by box in advance	5.37
Train out of section given by me	5.42
Train out of section given by box in advance	5.43

After this a London and North-Western passenger train was the next train to pass my box. It was signalled as follows:—

	a.m.
Is line clear offered	5.42
Ditto accepted	5.42
Train entering section received	5.42
Train passed box	5.45
Train offered to box in advance	5.43
Accepted by box in advance	5.43
Train out of section given by me	5.45
Train out of section received from box in advance	5.46

I did not make the entries in the book myself, but I distinctly remember receiving "Train out of section" signal from Ashton Branch box for this London and North-Western train. An engine and brake-van was the next train which passed my box on the up line. I had received "Is line clear" signal for it at 5.34 from Philips Park Junction. I accepted it at 5.45 a.m. when the London and North-Western train had passed my box and was proceeding forward. I believe that at that time the London and North-Western train was a  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a mile beyond my home signal. The engine and van passed my box at 5.45. I offered the train to Ashton Branch box at 5.46 a.m., that is, as soon as I had received "Train out of section" signal for the London and North-Western train. Ashton Branch box accepted it at 5.46, and I gave "Train out of section" signal to Philips Park for it at 5.48. "Train entering section" signal was sent to Ashton Branch box at 5.48 and he acknowledged

it at the same time. I am quite positive of having received and sent all these signals. I pulled off my home and starting signals just before the engine arrived at my home signal, as I had at that time received line clear from Ashton Branch box. I never heard anything about the accident until 6 a.m., when Inspector Dudley came to the box and told me about it. It was a clear morning, and if there had been no trains between me and Ashton Branch box I could have seen the London and North-Western train. There was a down Midland goods train which was offered to me by Ashton Branch cabin at 5.43 a.m. I accepted it at 5.54 a.m. This was the only other train about which I was having communication with Ashton Branch box at the time, and I feel confident that I did not confuse these signals with those for the engine and van.

*Thomas Shaw*, train booker, states: I am 15 years of age and have been in the service of the Company for three years, during 18 months of which I have been in Ardwick Junction box. I came on duty on the 13th at 10 p.m. to work until 6 a.m. on the 14th. The figures in the book relating to the London and North-Western train and the engine and van were entered by me. I made these entries myself from hearing the bells, looking at the clock, and seeing the trains pass, and without any instructions from the signalman. I remember myself the signal for "train out of section" for the London and North-Western train being received from Ashton Branch box, and I am also quite confident of having received all the signals shewn for the engine and van in my book. I remember seeing the engine and van pass my box, and I am quite sure that before it passed the box line clear had been received for it.

*Herbert Bottomley*, signalman, states: I have been in the service of the Company 10 years, during four of which I have been a signalman. I have been at Ashton Branch box for two years. I came on duty at 10 p.m. on the 13th to work until 6 a.m. on the 14th. On the 13th I had

gone off duty at 6 a.m. I remember the Lancashire and Yorkshire Ashton train passing my box. It was signalled as follows:—

Is line clear offered	...	...	a.m.
Accepted	...	...	5.39
Train entering section received	...	...	5.44
Train passed box	...	...	5.45
Accepted by box in advance	...	...	5.44
Train out of section given by me	...	...	5.45
Train out of section received by me	...	...	5.49

My next train was the London and North-Western passenger train which was signalled as follows:—

Is line clear offered to me	...	...	a.m.
Accepted	...	...	5.45
Train entering section received by me	...	...	5.47
Train arrived at my box	...	...	5.48

When this train arrived I stopped it at my home signal, as I had not received line clear for it. At 5.49 I had received line clear for it and then lowered the home signal for it. I saw it did not move, and could not make out what had happened until the guard came and told me an engine and van had run into his train in the rear. I had received no signals at all from Ardwick Junction for the engine and brake, and knew nothing of it at all until I heard of the collision. I absolutely deny having sent the "train out of section" signal for the London and North-Western train or having received or sent any signals for the engine and brake-van. There was a Midland goods train on the down line, which was accepted by Ardwick Junction box at 5.55 a.m. I can throw no light on the cause of this accident, but I am confident that I did not admit the engine and brake into the section. The entries in my book are made by myself. The Midland goods train left my box at 5.55 a.m. Just previous to the goods train starting I had a short conversation with the driver, but it did not last more than half a minute. I am quite sure that if any signals had been received from Ardwick Junction at this time about the engine and brake, I should have heard them.

### Conclusion.

From the above evidence it is clear that this collision was due, firstly, to the fact of the engine and brake-van having been admitted to the section between Ardwick Junction and Ashton branch sidings boxes before the London and North-Western train had left it; and secondly, to the fact of the guard, driver, and fireman of the former having all failed to see that there was a train ahead of them on the line on which they were travelling.

As regards the admission of the engine and brake van to the section, signalman Dagger, who was on duty in the Ardwick Junction box at the time, fully admits that he pulled off the signals at his box for it to do so; no blame in this respect attaches therefore to the driver of the engine propelling the brake van.

Dagger states that he received from Ashton branch box the "train out of section" signal for the London and North-Western train; that he then offered that box the engine and van; that Ashton branch box at once accepted it; that he then lowered his signals for it, and sent the "train entering section" signal to Ashton branch box, and that this latter signal was duly acknowledged by that box.

The despatch and receipt of these signals are all duly entered in the Ardwick Junction box book, and the booking clerk, who made the entries, asserts that he made them at the time on hearing the different signals passing between the two boxes, and without any verbal instructions from the signalman on the subject.

Signalman Bottomley, who was on duty at the time in the Ashton branch sidings box, gives, however, a totally different version of what occurred.

He states that he stopped the London and North-Western train at his home signal on account of the next section being blocked, and that he never gave the "train out of section" signal for this train at all. He further asserts positively that he never received or sent any signals at all connected with the engine and van, and that he knew absolutely

nothing about this latter until the collision had occurred. There are no entries in his book regarding these signals which he denies having received.

It might be mentioned, that after making allowances for an evident two minutes difference of time between the clocks in the two boxes, the entries in the two books are thoroughly in agreement up to the point where, as shown above, they are entirely at variance.

Also, about the time when the signals for the engine and van are said to have passed, the only other signals passing between these boxes were about a goods train on the down line; these signals are entered in both books and agree entirely, so it is evident that there were no signals being interchanged which Dagger could have taken by mistake to refer to the engine and van.

The statements and the books of the two signalmen are thus absolutely at variance, and the evidence of one of these men is false; either Bottomley accepted the engine and van when he had no right to do so, and omitted to make the entries in his book, or Dagger allowed the engine and van to enter the section before he had received "line clear," and made fictitious entries in his book to cover his having done so.

The only evidence to support either signalman is that of the train booker in the Ardwick Junction box, a boy of 15 years of age. This boy entirely supports the statement of the signalman in his own box, but under the circumstances I do not consider that much weight can be attached to his evidence, and there is therefore practically no evidence to support or to disprove either signalman's statement.

One of these two signalmen is responsible for this accident and is very greatly to blame for it, but there is nothing to justify the formation of a definite opinion as to which of the two it is.

At the time when the collision occurred, 5.49 a.m., day was breaking, and it appears from the evidence that at the time there was no difficulty in seeing to a distance of two or three hundred yards. In spite of this fact, neither the guard, driver, or fireman of the engine and van saw the passenger train until they were within a few yards of it, though they were running along the straight towards it for a distance of over 300 yards.

As the van was being propelled it is the guard who is mostly responsible for this omission, the Company having a rule that all the time that a van is being propelled the guard should keep a look-out. Guard Dallas honestly admits that he knew this rule and that at the time of the collision he was not doing so. He must, therefore, be held largely responsible for this accident.

Driver Warburton and fireman Carrington assert that they were both keeping a look-out, but that owing to the brake-van being in front of them they did not see the passenger train. The fireman, however, admits that it was only the signals that he was looking out for, and that he was not attempting to watch the line ahead of him; this was very likely the case with the driver also, both of them probably trusting to the guard to keep a watch on the line. It was, however, their duty, as well as that of the guard, to have done so, and both must be held to blame for their omission.

The Assistant Secretary,  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,  
P. G. VON DONOP,  
*Lt.-Col. R.F.*

#### APPENDIX.

##### DAMAGE TO ROLLING STOCK.

###### *London and North Western.*

Brake Van, No. 524.—Body end broken and side damaged; also axle boxes, buffer castings, scroll iron brackets and lamp irons broken. Carriage sole bar and headstock bent; also buffer rods, plates, step irons and axle guards bent.

Third Class, No. 781.—Door damaged; buffer rods bent; five axle boxes and 12 quarter-lights broken.

Third Class, No. 796.—Body end, seats, quarter-lights and axle boxes broken; also roof, floor, side and door panels damaged; and brake pipes

broken; buffer rods, axle guards, draw bars couplings and buffer knees more or less bent.

Comp. site, No. 529.—Axle box and quarter-light broken; and buffer rod bent.

Composite, No. 1089.—Axle boxes, quarter-light and door-light broken; and buffer rods bent.

###### *Lancashire and Yorkshire.*

Brake Van, No. 18190.—Two end lights and one inside casing board broken; fire extingueur box displaced.