

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

2 December 1865

BoT Report into Accident at
Staleybridge MSLR.

(2 Pages).

same duty on the other side, and the speed was increasing again when the collision occurred.

The goods train was then on the curve above referred to which runs through a cutting at this spot, and the view was further obstructed by the bridge over the line, which has also been mentioned. The engine-driver and fireman of the passenger train assert positively that only one lamp was visible to them in the first instance at the (right hand) side of the goods train, though the fireman saw a second lamp on the other side (as soon as his position on the curve admitted of it) before the collision. But they did not see any tail lamp, though the 2nd goods guard states that he had transferred his tail lamp from the back of his break-van to the cattle truck which was improperly placed behind it.

The principal causes of this accident are similar to the causes of other accidents on which it has been my duty recently to report on this railway. A heavy and unpunctual goods train was sent forward for want of siding accommodation in front of a fast passenger train, and in this case it was caught up before it could get under the protection of any fixed signals. The mere ten minutes interval of time between the two trains was lost in little more than two miles; and the fast train came upon the slow train at a part of the line on which its lights were only visible for about 230 yards.

Considerable improvement has been effected at Ardwick since the period when this train, in common with many others, was made so late in passing through that junction. But further accommodation for working the traffic is still much required on other parts of the

line as well as at the Retford goods yard. And, as I have pointed out in previous reports, the telegraph ought to be employed for the purpose of ensuring an interval of *space* between the trains. There are 12 passenger trains and 19 goods trains passing each way over the line east of Retford in the 24 hours, and though this traffic is light when compared with the traffic on the west of Retford, it is still of sufficient importance to make it exceedingly desirable that the employment of the telegraph should be extended. There are already telegraph-instruments in the office at the Retford goods yard, but the wires are so constantly occupied by other stations that there is great difficulty in using them for ascertaining when a passenger or other train is likely to arrive. In the present instance the goods train must have been starting from the goods yard as nearly as possible at the time that the passenger train was coming into the Great Northern Station. The trains are already telegraphed through the Claborough Tunnel, and it would be a great advantage if the block system there employed were extended, as might easily be done, into Retford.

It is a smaller defect, but not the less an important one, that the foreman in the goods yard should have no means of ascertaining the correct time. I recommend that a clock be placed in a conspicuous position in the Retford goods yard.

I have, &c.

H. W. TYLER,
Capt. R.E.

W. D. Fane, Esq.,
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),

Whitehall, 22nd December 1865.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire [Lancashire and Yorkshire] Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, the officer appointed by my Lords to inquire into the circumstances connected with the fatal accident which occurred at the Staleybridge joint station on the 2nd instant, and to request that my Lords may be informed of any steps which may be proposed to be taken for ensuring the safety of the public using the station.

I have, &c.

T. H. FARRER.

The Secretary of the
Manchester, Sheffield,
and Lincolnshire
Railway Company.

The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire
Railway Company.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),

Whitehall, 22nd December 1865.

SIR,

WITH reference to the fatal accident at the Staleybridge joint station on the 2nd instant, to which you called attention in your letter of the 8th instant, I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, the officer who was appointed by my Lords to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident in question.

Copies of the report will be forwarded this day to the "Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire" and "Lancashire and Yorkshire" Railway Companies.

I have, &c.

T. H. FARRER.

James Sidebottom Esq.,
Mayor of Staleybridge,
Town Hall,
Staleybridge.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),

Whitehall, 16th December 1865.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 11th instant, that I have inspected the Staleybridge station, and inquired into the particulars of the fatal accident which occurred there on the 2nd.

I was met at the railway station by the mayor and town clerk of Staleybridge and by the officers of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, and Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway companies.

It appears that this station, when it was first opened in September 1846, formed a terminal station for the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, both for goods and passengers, and two lines of way were laid down, of which only one was used for the passenger traffic which arrived at and departed from a single low platform 14 inches in height situated on the north side of the railway. Some time afterwards the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company began to use this station as a terminal station for their passenger traffic; the London and North-Western Railway Company obtained Parliamentary powers for running over the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway at Staleybridge, for their Huddersfield

and Manchester branch which forms a continuation of the former from Staleybridge eastwards, and the passenger traffic was worked from this platform and a narrow platform between the rails for the London and North-Western Railway. About 6 years since, another platform was erected south of the railway and that between the lines removed, and another line of rails was added; this platform is 2 feet above the level of the rails, and on it there are booking offices and small waiting rooms, and this platform and the booking offices are now used for the trains of the three companies proceeding towards Manchester or Stockport. In order to do away with the necessity for passengers proceeding by trains in those directions or arriving at Staleybridge from Yorkshire by the London and North-Western trains, crossing the three lines of railway on the level, an approach to the south platform from a private road belonging to the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company passing through the coal yard below, was constructed up a long, narrow and steep flight of stone steps, 47 in number, which it is admitted by the railway authorities is but little used, and is certainly objectionable, and to elderly and infirm persons must be dangerous. This south platform is also very objectionable and dangerous, as it is only 6 feet wide for a length of about 71 feet, as it is at times crowded with people, as many as between 200 and 300 being booked to proceed by a single train, besides others waiting to proceed by other trains, and the steps for getting down off this platform in order to cross on the level to the north side are also dangerous.

No inspection by an officer of the Board of Trade appears to have been made of the alterations introduced about 6 years since, and if submitted they could not be allowed. There is a sufficient amount of platform accommodation on each side of the railway, but a great deficiency of shelter, and when the station ceased to be a terminal station for a single company, which at the present time only runs 13 in and 13 out passenger trains, with 3 goods trains in each direction, and was made to serve the purposes of a roadside station for the London and North-Western Railway Company, with 26 up and 27 down passenger trains, besides 24 goods trains in each direction, and also to be a terminal station for 12 in and 12 out passenger trains of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the station should have been carefully re-arranged in order to adapt it for the various kinds of traffic.

In reference to the accident which occurred at the station on the 2nd instant, I should state that it occurred to a passenger named Wright who had got out of a London and North-Western train from the east on to the platform at the south side of the railway, and he proceeded down the steps of this

platform and had walked across the three lines of railway, and was in the act of stepping up on to the low platform north of the railway, when he slipped down, and fell with his legs across the rail and his back against the steps, just as the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire train due at Staleybridge at 8h. 48m. P. M., arrived at 8h. 55m, when the engine and tender and several carriages passed over and nearly cut off his legs. They were so much mutilated that they were obliged to be amputated, and he died of the shock to his system on the following evening. He was 78 years of age. He gave as his reason for crossing on the level, that he saw a boy cross, and thought he would do the same. He admitted to the station master that he had seen the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire train coming in before he attempted to cross, and he would have succeeded in his attempt, if he had not accidentally slipped down. No servant of the company appears to have been aware of his intention to cross the rails on the level. The distance between the edges of the two platforms is about 32 feet.

The mayor of Staleybridge and the inhabitants of that town, which contains a population of about 25,000 persons, are anxious that the railway companies should construct an entirely new station on a different site, and I am informed that the subject has been under the consideration of the Directors of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies, and their respective engineers have been directed to prepare and submit a project on the subject; but there does not appear to be any immediate prospect of anything being done.

If the railway companies cannot determine to erect a new station, I would suggest the construction of an over bridge, so as to do away with any pretence for crossing on the level, and to raise the platform on the north side to the same level as that on the south side and thus remove the facilities for crossing; to remove the booking offices on the platform on the south side, and provide a platform with a clear width of about 12 feet, with proper shelter on both platforms.

This can be done on the ground now occupied by the present station without any necessity for acquiring more land, but it is questionable whether it would not eventually be more desirable to build another station.

Several other fatal accidents have occurred at this station, at the south platform, but they have all happened to persons when attempting to get out of trains before they have stopped.

I have, &c.

W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.

*The Secretary
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.*

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
19th January 1866.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Captain Tyler, R.E., the officer appointed by their Lordships to enquire into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred at the Woodhouse station on the 27th ultimo.

I have, &c.
W. D. FANE.

*The Secretary of the
Manchester, Sheffield, and
Lincolnshire Railway Company,
London Road, Manchester.*

SIR,

York, 17th January 1866.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your Minute of the 1st instant, 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 collision that occurred on the 27th December last, at the Woodhouse station of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway.

This station is on the west of the Woodhouse junction, and five miles east of Sheffield. The Midland Railway from Derby and Eckington, and the Birley (colliery) branch join the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway at this point. The line is level for about 1,000 yards in the station yard, but there is a falling gradient towards the station of 1 in 150 from the direction of Sheffield. There are main signals and distant signals for the Midland and Man-