

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

20 June 1868

BoT Report into Accident at
Burscough Bridge.

(2 Pages).

fished at the joints; and with intermediate chairs weighing 36 lbs. each, and rectangular sleepers 2' 8½" apart in the intermediate spaces, and 2' apart at the joints, from centre to centre. Of 130 single miles requiring to be relaid on the loop line, about 15 have been completed, and it is proposed to relay about 20 miles in the present year.

For many years past the traffic upon this loop line has been light, but since the opening last year of the section from Doncaster to Gainsborough, from 17 to 9 coal trains have been passed over it daily, some of them weighing as much as 540 tons each, besides four passenger and three goods trains

in each direction. The permanent way is not suitable for so heavy a traffic, and I therefore recommend that arrangements be made for its more rapid renewal, and that the heavier part, at all events, of the coal traffic be run over the main line in the meantime. The fastenings also will require to be very carefully supervised, and a large proportion of spikes should be inserted in the trenails to ensure the safety of the lighter traffic.

I have, &c.

H. W. TYLER.

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

HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 29th May 1868.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Highland Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Hutchinson, R.E., the officer appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred to a passenger train at the Elgin station of the Highland Railway on the 12th ultimo.

I am, &c.

R. G. W. HERBERT.

*The Secretary of the
Highland
Railway Company.*

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 23rd May 1868.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, that I have, in obedience to your minute of the 22nd ultimo, inquired into the circumstances attendant on an accident which occurred on the 12th ultimo at the Elgin station of the Highland Railway, owing to a train leaving the rails.

There were, happily, but very few passengers in the train, and of these none are reported to have been injured.

The Highland line from Forres to Elgin is single, there being a loop at the Elgin station. Some yards to the westward or Forres side of the loop-points, there is another pair of points (facing points for trains from Forres) leading to the goods-shed sidings. At the time of the accident the heels of the switches were connected with the standard rails in large heel chairs, each chair being spiked to the sleepers with four spikes, and having a horizontal bolt running through its jaws and through a hole in the web of the switch.

The points leading to these goods-shed sidings are stated to have been locked right for the main line by the pointsman shortly before 7 p.m. on Saturday the 11th ultimo, soon after which they were passed over by a train from Forres to Elgin. The next train that passed over them was one at 10.30 on Sunday morning from Elgin to Forres. They were examined by a goods porter, who took the Sunday duty, at

2 p.m. on Sunday (nothing having passed over them since 10.30), and were to all appearance undisturbed. At about 2.20 on Sunday afternoon a passenger train from Forres, consisting of engine and tender, two carriages, and guard's van, was drawing up to the Elgin station at a speed of about four miles an hour. I was informed that the driver (who was not in attendance when I made my inquiry) stated that he saw the points leading to the goods-shed sidings lying right for the passenger line as he approached them, and that the left leading wheel of the engine mounted at the heel chair, the rest of the train following and apparently mounting at the same spot. The engine ran forward about 60 yards after mounting, and stopped with its right-hand wheels nearly in the centre of the passenger line. None of the couplings gave way, and the only damage done to the rolling stock was that the right life guard of the engine, the grease box of one of the tender wheels, and the step of one of the carriages were broken. Three or four rails were torn up, and several chairs and both of the point-connecting rods broken.

As to the cause of this accident, it was found that the heel chair at which the engine mounted was in halves, its bed plate having been broken (apparently for a long time previous to the accident) just under the centre line of the seat of the ends of the switch and adjoining rail, and that a chip had been taken out of the inner edge of the top flange of the butt end of the rail next the switch. The passing of one of the previous trains had probably created some disturbance at the joint, whereby the butt end of the standard rail had become sufficiently exposed to catch the flange of the left leading wheel of the 2.20 train and thus cause it to mount.

The position of the fracture in the chair would prevent its being seen in the ordinary inspection of the permanent way; and I imagine that the goods porter's examination at 2 o'clock was probably a very superficial one.

Since the accident the joints at the ends of all switches connected with the main line at this station have been fished.

I have, &c.

C. S. HUTCHINSON,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

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

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 30th July 1868.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the Report made by Colonel Rich, R.E., the officer appointed to inquire into the circum-

stances connected with the collision which occurred on the 20th ultimo at Burscough Bridge junction on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

I am, &c.,

R. G. W. HERBERT.

*The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire
Railway Company.*

*Palatine Hotel, Manchester,
24th July 1868.*

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 3rd 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 20th June 1868 at Burscough Bridge junction on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

An excursion train, which consisted of an engine and tender, a guard's van, 10 third-class carriages, and another guard's van, coupled in the order given, left Manchester for Southport at 7.45 a.m. on the 20th ultimo.

The three front and the three last carriages of this train were fitted with Newall's continuous breaks, and there was a guard in each van.

As the excursion train approached Burscough Bridge junction, which is at the east end of the station, the driver found the distant and junction signals at danger.

He whistled for them to be taken off, but they were not lowered, and he stated that he ran on towards the junction with steam shut off. The breaks were applied, and the speed of his train was reduced to about three or four miles per hour, when he got about 300 yards from the junction.

He saw a train standing on the up line of rails at Burscough Bridge station, which is at the west side of the junction, but as he thought that this train was to proceed towards Manchester, he again put on steam to run past Burscough Bridge junction and station, although the signals were still kept at danger.

The train that was standing at Burscough Bridge station consisted of an engine and tender, a second-class, a first-class carriage, and a break van, coupled in the order given; both carriages were fitted with Newall's patent breaks, and a guard was travelling in the van.

This passenger train left Southport at 8.56 a.m. of the same day. It was one minute late in leaving Southport, and it reached Burscough Bridge station about 9.13 a.m., three minutes late. The station-master at Burscough Bridge and the guard of the train gave the signal for it to proceed, about a minute after it pulled up at the station; and the Burscough Bridge junction signalman, who is stationed at the east end of the up platform at Burscough Bridge station, lowered the signal for this train to proceed up the branch towards Burscough junction, which is situated on the main line between Liverpool and Preston. This up passenger train had, therefore, to cross the down line of rails between Manchester and Southport, on which the excursion train was travelling.

The driver of the up passenger train and the signalman at Burscough Bridge junction, although they observed that the excursion train was still moving towards the junction, stated that they thought that the excursion train would pull up before it got sufficiently near to foul the junction.

The driver of the up passenger train, as soon as he had started, observed the excursion train coming towards him with steam on. He thought he could not pull up in time to prevent a collision, and so he put on steam, to endeavour to get his train across the down rails before the excursion train reached the point of crossing.

The engine of the excursion train struck the back end of the first-class carriage, and smashed the guard's van of the up passenger train. The guard's van was knocked off the rails, and the end of the first-class carriage was damaged.

The guard was knocked down, stunned, and shaken.

The buffer plank of the engine of the excursion train was broken.

Both trains were running at a speed of about three to five miles per hour at the time of the collision.

It is stated, that none of the passengers have complained of being injured.

The driver of the excursion train stated that, when he perceived that the up passenger train was crossing the line on which he was travelling, he did his best to stop his train. The head guard of this train, who was in the rear van, stated that he had never taken off his break from the time that he passed the distant signal that was at danger.

The second guard, who was in the van next the excursion engine, stated that he had applied his breaks on passing the distant signal, which was at danger, but that he got a signal from the driver, and took off the breaks, when the train was about 200 yards from Burscough Bridge junction, and when the driver put on steam again. He had not time to re-apply them before the collision took place.

The accident, which might have been most serious, was caused by the driver of the excursion train completely disregarding the signals. This man has been a driver for 18 months; he bears a good character. He acknowledged his offence.

The junction signalman and the driver of the up passenger train showed a want of proper care in starting the up passenger train while the excursion train was so near, and still moving on towards the junction.

The Burscough Bridge junction signals are locked with the points.

I have, &c.,

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

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

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 13th July 1868.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the London and South-Western Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, the officer appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred to a passenger train at the Windsor station on the 7th ultimo.

I have, &c.

*The Secretary of the
London and South-Western
Railway Company.* R. G. W. HERBERT.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 9th July 1868.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of the Board of Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 19th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended a collision that occurred on Sunday, the 7th June, at the Windsor terminus of the London and South-Western branch line to that town, between a passenger train and the fixed buffers at the end of the down platform, when three of the passengers were injured, but it is hoped that none of the injuries may prove serious.

The 8.30 a.m. down passenger train from Waterloo road station, London, to Windsor, consisting of eight carriages and a break van placed fourth from the engine, with one guard riding in it, reached the ticket platform at