The

VIRTUAL MUSEUM

of the

LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

1 November 1875

BoT Report into Accident at

Bury.

(2 Pages).

with certain conditions in the permanent-way to produce that result in the present instance.

As regards the permanent-way, the insides of the off-rails were considerably worn away, on the curve approaching the junction, by the flanges of the wheels grinding against them; and a strong bias towards the mounting of the flanges of wheels was thus shown at the very joint where the flange of the wheel mounted. Such a tendency could not be counteracted by the super-elevation of the off-rail, in consequence of the positions of the points and crossings at both ends of the rail on which the engine mounted. It is admitted, further, that there was a little spring in the sleepers under that rail, and it is a question whether the fish-plates recently attached to it were properly screwed up. There was conflicting evidence upon this latter point. The London and North-Western engine-driver who went straight from his engine, as soon as it came to a stand, to the spot, maintained positively that only three fish-bolts had been inserted, and that two of them were quite loose; and Mr. Hughes, a permanent-way contractor of upwards of twenty years standing, found, a little later, four fish-bolts in the plates, three of which were loose. Mr. Hughes, the under-guard of the North-Western train, the engine-driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train, the inspector of the permanent-way, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Fairbrother, all saw some one at work screwing up at the joint in question after the accident. On the other hand, the foreman-platelayer, who did not give his evidence in a satisfactory manner, asserted that all the four bolts were in the fish-plate of the joint at which the engine-wheel mounted before the engine passed it, and that three of them were screwed up, and the platelayer who was working at the joint gave similar evidence. The greaser, Gray, saw the platelayers screwing up the fish-bolts before, and did not see them screwing them up after the accident. The inspector of permanent-way, also, on arriving at the spot some five minutes after the accident, found the four bolts in the fish-plates, and three of them tight. I am led, on the whole, to the conclusion that this fish-joint was not properly fastened as the engine passed over it, and that this also was a contributory cause of the accident.

There were thus defects, both in the engine and in the permanent-way, which fully accounted for the accident; and, obviously, the remedies necessary to prevent such accidents from occurring, are to employ engines with the weights on the wheels better adjusted, and with the leading springs of more uniform camber, on a permanent-way maintained in a thoroughly efficient condition, and well secured, in the course of repairs, before engines or trains are allowed to travel over it.

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

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

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Lancashire and Yorkshire and the London and North-Western Railway Companies on the 5th November.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR, *Liverpool, 20th November* 1875.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in your order of the 4th instant, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred on the 1st instant, about a quarter of a mile to the north of Bury station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, by which the driver, Joseph Taylor, of an express goods train lost his life.

It appears that on the day in question, an express goods train from Salford to Colne left Salford at 4h. 15m. a.m., stopped at Radcliffe for about 10 minutes, and then went forward to Bury station, and was detained by signal at the south block signal-box for about five minutes. It then entered Bury station and put off some waggons near the tunnel at the north end of the station, and then proceeded northwards to B. block signal-box, which is about 662 yards north of the south block signal-box, and placed opposite to the entrance of a siding called the Liverpool siding, on the western side of the down line, which is entered by a pair of trailing points on the down line, on which the train was running.

This express goods train had to bring out certain waggons from this Liverpool siding, and to take them on, and the driver (Joseph Taylor) stopped his train a short distance south of the B. signal-box, and the goods guard, Richard Parker, unhooked the coupling and left 16 waggons and the break-van standing on the main down line, while the engine, tender, and two waggons were then drawn ahead, and the signalman at B. signal-box having opened the trailing points leading into the siding, the engine, tender, and the two waggons were shunted back into the Liverpool siding, and were then hooked on by the guard to 13 or 14 waggons which were about to be taken on with the rest of the train, which had been left standing on the down main line.

It is necessary to explain that the portion of line up to and past the B. signal-box is constructed on a rising gradient of 1 in 377, and is on an embankment of about 25 feet in height. About 50 yards south of the trailing points there is a single switch or throw-off point on the outer or left rail of the siding, which is moved from B. signal-box by a lever, and about 10 yards further south there is a disc-signal lamp, lighted by gas at night, which is also worked from the same signal-box, the object of such single switch being to prevent any train standing in the siding from coming out on to the down main line, except by the express permission of the signalman in B. box, which permission is given to the driver of a train standing in the Liverpool siding by his turning off the "danger" signal, exhibited by the lamp, and showing the driver an "all right" signal.

Another goods train from Bury to Rawstenstall, a pick-up goods train, had left Bury a short time before this express goods train arrived, and when it had got to the B. signal-box, and had done its work, it was shunted to the up main line, to allow the express goods train to precede it; and it is stated that when the express goods train was passing from Bury to the B. signal-box, the driver gave some signals with his whistle to indicate that he was running through without stopping, and some words passed between the driver and the signalman on the subject, as the latter complained that he had both main lines blocked, and that there were passenger trains nearly due in each direction.

The points and signals at B. box are properly interlocked with each other, and the single switch or throw-off point is worked by one lever, and the disc-signal by another.

The signalman on duty in B. box, Valentine Atkinson, stated that he went on duty the previous night at 6 o'clock, and had to remain until 6 o'clock the next morning: that the Salford goods train was due to

leave his box at 5 o'clock, and the Rawtenstall train at half-past 5 o'clock, but this latter train preceded the Salford train, and arrived at 6h. 1m. a.m., while the Salford train did not get there till 6h. 24m. a.m.: that as the Rawtenstall train was shunting he received a warning that there was an express goods train in the rear, and in consequence he put the Bury and Rawtenstall train on the up main line: that he was not aware that in running up from the tunnel to the signal box that the deceased driver (Taylor) had whistled, and he did not find out what train it was until it arrived at the signal-box, and the main down line signals were off for the train to run through: that when the train came up some waggons were uncoupled and left on the main line, and he opened the points for the engine and front part of the train to go into the Liverpool siding: that when Taylor got into the siding, the single switch was right for him to come out, but the disc-signal would be on at danger against him: that he then went to the siding, and asked Taylor why he had signalled to run through, and Taylor said he had not done so, and he was a bit vexed at him: that he was not in the siding more than two minutes, and he shouted out to Taylor that if he had waggons to shunt he should be obliged to let the other goods train go on, as he had another train waiting at Fernhill cabin, the next signal-box to the north, as he had received the signal for it before he left his box to go to the siding: that he then went back to his box, and as he went he told the driver of the Rawstenstall train to come across from the up main line and go ahead: that he then moved the single switch and pulled over the cross-over road points, and called to the driver of the Rawtenstall train to come on: that he did not again alter the single switch when the cross-over points had been pulled over: that Taylor was something like six minutes altogether in the Liverpool siding, and the driver of the Rawtenstall train did not move ahead, but he observed Taylor slowly drawing up to the single switch, and he took no notice of his doing so, as it was in accordance with the usual practice to draw up to be ready to leave the siding: that Taylor was at first coming slowly, but when he was nearing the single switch he saw that Taylor had put more steam on, and he ran to the window of the signal-box and showed a red light towards the train, whistling at the same time with the signal-whistle, but he could not see whether Taylor took the steam off or not, and he then saw the engine passing through the switch. He also stated that he did not hear Taylor whistle to indicate that he was coming up previous to his drawing up towards the switch.

The guard of the express goods train, Richard Parker, stated that when the engine and the two waggons were shunted into the Liverpool siding, he walked down the siding to see what waggons he had to take on, and when Taylor brought the engine back he coupled the waggons together, and called out to Taylor to go further back that he might finish the coupling, and then he gave the driver (Taylor) the signal that all was right behind, and got into an empty Midland truck: that he saw the signalman about 40 or 50 yards from his box, whilst he was coupling up the waggons, and he was grumbling about the driver whistling for running "through" as they came up, but he told the signalman that he had not heard him do so: that he did not see the signalman when he got into the waggon, and he was in such a position that he could not see the disc-signal: that from the time he saw the signalman to the time that Taylor put on the steam was only about a minute and a half.

The fireman, Albert Cragg, stated that after the guard (Parker) had hooked on the waggons, he gave the signal for them to go on, right out as he understood: that the signalman came from the signal-box and said something about whistling to go through, and that if they did not look sharp he would send the Rawtenstall train away before them, and they were then about 80 yards down the siding: that he did not notice how the points were, and after the guard waved his lamp for them to go on, he commenced firing up, and he continued attending to the fire until he felt the engine leave the line: that it went off all of a sudden, and he jumped off: and that they were travelling at the rate of about four miles an hour at the time. The engine and tender, after getting off the line to the left by passing along the single switch, ran down the embankment, and the driver, Taylor, fell under the engine, as it rolled over him, and was killed on the spot about, 6h. 25m. a.m.

I was unable to obtain any distinct evidence about the disc-signal whether it was or was not at "danger," but from the interlocking of the points and signals, it is certain that a "danger"-signal must have been exhibited when the points were open for the train to leave the rails. The driver of the Rawtenstall train heard Taylor sound the two whistles for the signal to be taken off, and this signal-lamp was noticed to be at danger about ten minutes after the accident occurred. Two waggons also got off the rails, and one of them ran half-way down the embankment.

I have no doubt whatever that the driver (Taylor) lost his life from having failed to see, or to obey, the indications of the danger-signal, but in my opinion this would not have occurred if the requirement No. 7 of the Board of Trade had been properly carried out. The latter part of that requirement stipulates that there should be a blind siding, "or dead end, with the points (not the single point or switch)" closed against the passenger lines and interlocked with the signals. In such a dangerous position, at the edge of an embankment 25 feet in height, a pair of points should have been made use of, with continuous rails for the right and left wheels of the engines, and buffer stops, turned up rails, or a bank of earth at the end, to serve as the means of stopping the engine, in the event of the driver over-running those points.

In some instances, from the nature of the ground, it is not practicable to provide a pair of points with blind siding, or dead end; but wherever it is feasible, I think these requirements should be insisted on, and fatal accidents of this kind will not then be likely to occur.

I have, &c.,
W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.

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

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 3rd December.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(Railway Department,)
Whitehall, 4th December 1875.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in your order of the 6th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 5th ultimo, between a passenger train and a goods train, near the Wigan junction of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

It is stated that 12 persons have complained of having been injured on this occasion, but the injuries received are believed in all cases to be slight.

Wigan junction of the Wigan and Bolton branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway is about 30