

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

4 February 1874

BoT Report into Accident at
Bury.

(2 Pages).

which he had to pass, which was plainly visible from where he was standing. This signal stood against him, and the engine of the goods train which he ran into must have been distinctly visible at the time that he started the passenger train. This man's neglect must therefore be attributed to carelessness, or absence of mind at the time that he started the passenger train, and to his total forgetfulness in not looking for the necessary signals.

It would be desirable that the junction signal-post at Accrington should be moved, so that the view should not be interfered with by the station buildings.

Accrington has the great defect of being a one-sided station; consequently, all trains from Preston and from Manchester have to be backed from the down to the up-line to reach the station platform; and these trains, when starting for Colne and the North, have to run through facing-points, and re-cross from the up to the down line by a cross-over road at the north side of the station.

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

I have, &c.,
F. H. RICH,
Colonel R.E.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 8th April.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR, *Queen's Hotel, Chester, 7th March 1874.*

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 4th ultimo at Bury station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The passenger train from Manchester, which is due at Bury (Lancashire and Yorkshire) station at 9.10 a.m., ran into a goods train which was standing on the line at the east end of the station. Eleven passengers are reported to have been shaken, and the guard of the passenger train was also slightly shaken.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company have two stations at Bury. They are distinguished as Bury station, Lancashire and Yorkshire, and Bury station, East Lancashire.

There are four lines of rails through Bury (Lancashire and Yorkshire) station. The loop lines which make up the four lines commence at the east junction cabin, which is about 400 yards to the east of the passenger station, and they extend to a junction cabin at the west end of the yard, which is called the west cabin.

A branch to the Bury station on the East Lancashire Railway, joins the main lines to Bolton, opposite to the west junction cabin. The points and signals in both the east and west cabins are arranged on the locking principle, and the facing points are provided with locking bars.

The sections of railway to the east and west of Bury (Lancashire and Yorkshire) station are worked on the block system, but the railway through the station and goods yard, which is a little over a quarter of a mile long, is not worked on the block. In clear weather there is an uninterrupted view from one end of the station yard to the other, and engine-drivers have a clear view of the signals and of any trains that may be on the railway between the east and west cabins.

The down home-signal in the east cabin serves as the down distant-signal for the west cabin, and the up home-signal in the west cabin serves as an up distant-signal from the east cabin. These signals are slotted, so that it requires both signalmen to place them at all right, but the signalman in either cabin can place them at danger.

On the day in question a goods train, which consisted of an engine and tender, 26 waggons, and a break-van, arrived at Bury (Lancashire and Yorkshire) station at 9.0 a.m. This train was two hours late in consequence of its having been delayed on the road by the fog. It was allowed to pass the east cabin as the passenger line was clear, but it was detained at the east end of the station, as the road was not clear for

it to go forward. The goods train had been turned on to the passenger line, as the goods line was occupied at the time with another goods train which had arrived there about three minutes before.

The 8.35 p.m. passenger train from Manchester consisted of an engine and tender, four carriages, and a break-van, with a guard in charge. Three carriages of the train were coupled to the break-van with continuous breaks.

This train left Manchester one minute late, and it arrived at and passed the Bury east cabin at 9.11 a.m. The signalman on duty there had lowered his distant-signal for the passenger train to approach and he had pulled over the lever of the home-signal with the intention of lowering it, but this signal remained at danger, as the man in the west cabin, who has also got control of it, did not pull the lever in his cabin which would have lowered it, as the line at Bury station was blocked with the goods train. The passenger train passed the east cabin at a speed which is stated to have been about seven or eight miles an hour. The engine-driver reversed his engine, whistled for the guard's breaks, and applied contrary steam as soon as he noticed the home-signal at the east cabin to be at danger; but he could not stop his train before his engine ran into the van at the tail of the goods train, which was standing about 150 yards inside the east junction home-signal. The speed of the passenger train at the time of collision is reported to have been reduced to about four miles an hour. No part of the passenger train left the rails, but the engine and two of the carriages were slightly damaged. The guard's van at the tail of the goods train was considerably damaged, and one wagon of the goods train, which was about the fourth from the van, was thrown off the rails. The guard of the goods train jumped out of his van just before the collision occurred.

The signalman on duty in the east cabin, when he lowered his signal for the passenger train to approach, was under the impression that the goods train, which had passed his cabin about 11 minutes before, had gone forward to Preston. This man stated that he saw the goods train pull up immediately after it passed his cabin, but that on looking for it, before he lowered his signal for the passenger train, he could not see it, and he thought that it had gone forward.

The signalman stationed in the east cabin has a bell communication to the west cabin, by which means he notifies to the man on duty in the west cabin, when trains pass the east cabin going westward; but the man in the west cabin does not communicate to the east cabin when these trains have passed the west cabin and gone forward, as under ordinary circumstances the whole of the line between the two cabins is distinctly visible. On the day

of the accident it had been foggy during the morning, but it was stated that the fog only became dense after the arrival of the first goods train. Fogmen were sent out at this time; one was placed half-way between the east and west junction cabins; another within sight of the east junction cabin home-signal, and a third at the east junction cabin down distant-signal, but these men had not properly got to work at the time the collision occurred. The signalman at the east cabin should not have lowered his signals for the passenger train to pass, until he had satisfied himself that the line was clear between his cabin and Bury station.

There was a fogman close to his cabin and one between his cabin and the station, who were available for obtaining any information that he required, when he found that in consequence of the fog he could not see what was on the line between his cabin and the station.

The engine-driver of the passenger train is also to blame for having approached the east cabin at such a speed that he was unable to pull up at the home-signal, when he found that signal at danger. The fact of his having found the down distant-signal at "all right," would no doubt induce him to believe that the line would be clear up to the east cabin; but according to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's regulations, he was bound at all times, to approach that signal at such speed as to be able to stop at any moment after he reached it. If he had done so, the accident would not have occurred; and it was particularly necessary that he should approach the east junction cabin carefully when there was a dense fog.

The home-signals at the west cabin at Bury station appear to be placed in such positions, as to make it difficult for anyone not intimately acquainted with the station to understand what lines they apply to; and I would suggest that those at the left side of the railway should be applied to the railway to the left, which goes to Bolton, and that those at the right side of the line should be applied to the branch railway to the right which leads to Bury station, on the East Lancashire Railway. This arrangement would be more plain and simple. The signals in themselves are excellent; and the arrangements at Bury station appear to be all that can be desired for the proper protection of the station, and they in no way contributed to the accident, which forms the subject of this report. It was caused by incautious driving on the part of the engine-driver of the passenger train, and by the signalman in the east cabin not having availed himself, as he should have done, of the services of the fogmen placed at his disposal to ascertain whether the railway was clear between the east and west junction cabins, and by these fogmen not having performed their duty as expeditiously as they might have done.

These men were told off to their work, were provided with fog signals and flags, and they no doubt intended to perform their duty, but the passenger train arrived, and the accident occurred while they were thinking of what they should do, instead of doing it as expeditiously as they should have done.

I have, &c.

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

F. H. RICH,
Colonel R.E.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 8th April.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
7th February 1874.*

Sir,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 9th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred on the 3rd ultimo at Shap station on the London and North-Western Railway.

The passenger train due to leave Preston at 8.5 a.m. ran into the goods train which is due to leave Ingleton at 7.0 a.m.; the last train had been stopped at Shap station to deposit some coal waggons in a siding at that station.

Shap station is protected by home and distant-signals; there are sidings at both sides of the line, and a cross-over road at the station; the points and signals are interlocked, and are worked from a raised cabin which is placed at the south end of the down platform. The signals are good signals, well placed, and can be plainly seen by engine-drivers approaching from each side.

On the day in question the goods train left Ingleton two hours and twenty minutes late, owing to its having been delayed on the up journey. It stopped at Tebay to do some work there, and when it left that station for Shap it consisted of an engine and tender, 41 waggons, partly loaded and partly empty, and a break-van at the tail of the train with a breaksmun. This train reached Shap station at 11.7 a.m. It was stopped at the south end of the station, as it had five waggons of coal to put into the siding at the down side of the line. The yard shunter at Shap uncoupled

the engine and two front waggons from the train, and he sent them forward to pull two other waggons along the siding by means of a tail rope, so as to get these two waggons in a convenient position, before putting the coal waggons into the same siding. As soon as the engine-driver had completed this first operation, the passenger train was telegraphed from Shap Summit block station, which is about two miles south of Shap station. The signalman on duty called to the yard shunter to couple the detached engine and waggons on to the rest of the train at once, and to put the train on to the up road, so as to get it out of the way of the passenger train as fast as possible. The breaksmun of the goods train coupled the engine and two waggons on to the goods train which had been left on the down line, and gave the engine-driver a signal to move forward with his train. The goods train had just got under way, and the engine had reached the north end of the station, when this train was run into by the passenger train from Preston. According to the evidence of the signalman at Shap station, the collision occurred at 11.12 a.m., but there must be some mistake in the time given by this man, for the arrival of the goods and for the arrival of the passenger trains at Shap station, as there was an interval of 15 minutes between the times when these trains passed Shap Summit, which is only two miles distant. The passenger train was registered by him as having passed Shap summit at 11.12, and if this is correct its time of arrival at Shap station would have been about 11.17 a.m.

The passenger train consisted of an engine and tender, a break-van with a guard, a composite carriage, four third-class carriages, another composite, and a