

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

8 February 1877

BoT Report into Accident at
Hindley Junction.

(2 Pages).

signal off, and also the home-signal, but the junction down distant-signal was on. I saw no fog signalman near this signal. I passed it at three or four miles an hour, having seen it about 70 yards off. I was running steady down to the junction, intending to stop at the home-signals, when I ran over a fog-signal before I had seen anything of the passenger train. My speed was three or four miles an hour. I gave the break whistle, reversed the engine, but had no time to get on steam; my mate went to his break. We then struck the rear of the train, but were not knocked down, and no damage was done to my engine. Had there been a fog-signal down at the distant-signal, I should have been running more cautiously still. I was engaged looking for the home-signal when I ran over the fog-signal.

8. *Walter Wadsworth*, extra fireman two years, agrees with his driver, and says he had not time to get his break on before the collision, after running over the fog-signal.

9. *Mason Clark*, spare passenger guard at Mirfield. I accompanied the light engine from Wakefield to work a special yeast train from Normanton to Bolton. I took no particular notice of signals till I saw the junction distant-signal at danger as we passed it, the speed being three or four miles an hour. I saw nothing of the fog signalman near it. We then ran over a fog-signal, and the driver at the same time whistled for the break. I had no time to apply it before the collision. I was not knocked down or injured.

This collision was primarily due to inefficient fog signalling at Goosehill junction, where, during the prevalence of a dense fog, the driver of the engine which came into collision with the passenger train was allowed by the fog signalman at the junction down distant-signal on the Wakefield line to pass that signal at danger, not only without being warned by fog-signals placed on the rails, but even with the affirmative signal of a green flag (happily not seen by the driver), although the fog signalman had no knowledge whether the passenger train, which had passed only eight minutes previously, was or was not standing at the junction home-signals. With such extraordinary behaviour on the part of a fog signalman as this, (that of the fog signalman at the junction

home-signals, from whom the driver of the passenger train says that he received a green flag, although the home-signal was at danger against him, being—if the driver's statement is correct—equally reprehensible,) the driver of the yeast train engine is in my judgment deserving of very little blame. He was certainly proceeding cautiously towards the junction, and would have, no doubt, stopped at the home-signals had the passenger train, of which he had received no actual warning till he ran over the fog-signal, only 34 yards behind it, not been in his way. The rules relating to fog signalling are clearly laid down in the new rule book lately issued by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company, and means should certainly be taken to see that they are understood and obeyed by the men who are entrusted with the duty, and who in this case were following their own devices.

It is to be regretted that block telegraph working had not been in force between Wakefield and Normanton before the collision, as it could then hardly have occurred. It is, I understand, shortly to be brought into operation.

The signalling arrangements at Lock's siding (in connection with Goosehill junction) are also to be improved, and in doing so the up home-signal should be placed so as to be visible to the signalman.

It was not judicious on the part of the signalman at Normanton south junction to allow a coal train to cross into the goods yard at the very time the Lancashire and Yorkshire passenger train, of which advice had been received from Wakefield as running about five minutes late, was due.

It is true that, owing to the interruption of telegraphic communication from the snow storm on the 3rd between Armthwaite (on the Settle and Carlisle line) and Cudworth, near Barnsley, on the Midland line, it was not known how late the Midland up train, due to leave Normanton at 1.18 (and for which the coal train was shunted), was running, but still it was known to be late; and there was no good reason, therefore, for detaining the Lancashire and Yorkshire passenger train; and without this detention the collision would not have occurred.

I have, &c.,

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

C. S. HUTCHINSON,
Major-General, R.F.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 26th February.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR,

Dublin, March 5th, 1877.

In compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of 13th 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 8th ultimo, at Hindley junction, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Eight passengers are reported to have been hurt, but their injuries are believed to be slight.

This junction is about a quarter of a mile to the west of Hindley station. It is protected by the ordinary home and distant signals, which are interlocked with the junction and siding points. There are sidings on both sides of the main-line, and a cross-over-road between the down-line and the up-siding, with slip points on to the up main-line. The signal-cabin is close to the junction points, and there is a good view from it along the line.

On the day in question, a special goods train, which consisted of an engine and tender, one loaded, 56 empty waggons, and a break-van with the guard in charge at the tail of the train, started from Salford station, Manchester, at 8.20 p.m., and arrived at Hindley junction at about 9.45 p.m.

It was stopped at Hindley junction by the signalman, for the purpose of being placed in the

siding on the down side of the railway, in order to allow the 8.30 p.m. passenger train from Rochdale to Liverpool to pass.

As soon as the goods train was stopped, the pointsman gave a signal to the engine-driver to push it back into the down siding, but there were already 16 or 17 waggons in this siding, and the engine-driver could not succeed in pushing the whole of his train into the siding, which is on an incline of 1 in 97. The guard of the goods train and the junction signalman signalled to the driver four or five times to draw slightly ahead and then set back, for the purpose of trying to get the whole of the train into the siding, in which there was plenty of room, if he could succeed in pushing the 74 waggons up the incline. When the guard of the train found that the whole of the waggons could not be pushed in, he uncoupled the engine and about nine waggons from the rest of the train. Just as he had done this, the engine-driver got off his engine, came to where the guard was standing, and told him to go back and put the break on his van to hold the train, so that he might take that part of the train which he could not put into the siding across on to the up main-line. While the guard was away, the engine-driver uncoupled the engine and six waggons next to it from the rest of the train. He was not aware at

this time that the guard had previously uncoupled the nine front waggons; and the driver then gave his fireman, who was on the engine, a signal to draw ahead, which was done. The engine and nine waggons ran from the siding towards the main-line. The engine-driver did not perceive that the last three of these waggons were uncoupled from the six front ones, and he did not observe that three more waggons ran forward with the engine than he had uncoupled.

When the fireman had drawn the front part of the train on to the main down-line clear of the cross-over-road, he stopped, and in obedience to signals, backed it across on to the up-road. In doing so, he did not observe that he had left three of the waggons at the junction of the siding with the down main-line. The night was dark, and the junction signalman and engine-driver, who were standing close to the junction, were also ignorant that these three waggons had not been taken on to the up-line with the front portion of the train.

The passenger train from Rochdale, which consisted of an engine and tender, four passenger coaches, coupled to a break-van, with Fay's continuous breaks, and the guard in charge in the van at the tail of the train, had been kept waiting at Hindley station for about 12 minutes while the shunting operations were being carried on at the junction; but as soon as the junction signalman believed the line to be clear, he lowered the signal for the passenger train, which then left Hindley station, ran up to the junction at a speed of about 20 miles per hour, and struck the three waggons, one of which appears to have been on the down main-line, and the two others between it and the siding.

The engine-driver, fireman, and guard of the passenger train were not aware of the danger till the engine of their train struck the waggons, one of which was thrown forward into the six-foot in front of the passenger train engine, and the other two on to the down side of the line. The engine of the passenger train, two passenger coaches, and the three waggons, were seriously damaged; the rest of the coaches in the

passenger train were slightly damaged, but no part of it left the rails. The engine-driver reversed his engine, the guard of the passenger train applied the breaks the moment that they felt the shock, and the train was brought to a stand about 70 yards from the point of collision. The Company's servants with the passenger train remained at their posts and were not injured.

While the goods train was being shunted, the signalman had told the men in charge that the passenger train was detained at Hindley station, and the goods engine-driver, in his anxiety to get the line clear for the passenger train, sent the guard back to his break-van and undertook what was the guard's duty of uncoupling the front part of the train so as to send it across on to the up line.

The rules of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company are very plain, that a driver on the main line, shall not leave his engine and this man should not have done so; he should have sent his fireman to see what was the matter, instead of going himself, when he thought that something was wrong.

The real cause of this and many other accidents appears to be the difficulties which the servants of railway companies often have to encounter, when they are placed in charge of trains of such unwieldy length as the special goods train in question, and which, under the circumstances above reported, could not be put into the siding which was intended for the purpose. The men in charge seem all to have been desirous of discharging their duty to the best of their ability. The junction signalman should have ordered the train to be divided and part of it sent across to the up side of the line as soon as he found that the driver could not push it back into the siding, and more particularly so as he was aware that the passenger train was detained in consequence at Hindley station.

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 19th March.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR, *Dublin, March 5th, 1877.*

In compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 14th ult., 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 12th ult., at Accrington station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

A passenger-train ran down the incline, and met the engine which was proceeding towards it for the purpose of being coupled to it, to convey it to Preston.

Ten passengers are reported to have been injured.

Accrington station is situated at the foot of an incline which rises towards Manchester on a gradient of 1 in 40. The passenger lines to and from Preston and the lines to the goods yard join the railway from Manchester to Colne at the south end of the station. All these lines are at the west side of the platform, and there is a dock line for passenger trains at the east side of the platform. The junction signal-cabin is situated at the south end of the station, close to the junction. The signals and points are worked from this cabin, and are interlocked with each other.

On the day in question a train of empty coaches was brought from Preston and put into the dock siding, at the south-east end of the Accrington station. This train was timed to return to Preston at 10.5 a.m.

It consisted of a pilot engine, which had brought the train from Preston, and which was at the dead-end of the dock-line, and four passenger-carriages coupled to a break-van at the tail end of the train with continuous breaks.

When the train was ready to start, the signalman at the junction-cabin took off the signal for the pilot engine to push the train back out of the dock and up the gradient of 1 in 40 towards Manchester. As soon as the train was pushed up the line towards Manchester, sufficiently far to be clear of the cross-over points from the up to the down line, the pilot engine was detached from the train and went back into the dock siding. The guard who was in the rear-van should have put on the breaks to hold the train on the incline until the engine, which was to take the train to Preston, and which was standing on the down line at the station, was put back and attached to the train. The guard in charge had worked for about five years with this train, taking his regular turn of duty, which came once in every four weeks. It was customary for the pilot engine, instead of being in the front of the train, as it was on this occasion, to be generally attached to the back of the train, to pull the train out from the dock siding on to the incline; and as soon as the breaks were applied, or the proper engine had backed on to the front of the train, the pilot engine was detached from it. On other occasions the regular engine was in front. It backed the train out and then went away with it to Preston. It appears that the guard who was in charge (according to his own statement) had never known the pilot engine to be in front, as it was on this occasion. He mistook the pilot engine, which was a Preston engine, and had brought the train from Preston for the regular engine, which was to take the train back to Preston, and he did not contemplate the