

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

23 May 1877

BoT Report into Accident at
Huddersfield.

(3 Pages).

mineral train to shunt. He was obliged to do so by the locking arrangements in his cabin.

At 7.3 a.m. he received the "be ready" signal for the passenger train from Oldfield Road, which is situated between Salford station and his cabin, and he replied to the "be ready" signal by giving "line clear."

According to the regulations he should not have done so until the mineral train, which was shunting at his cabin, had got clear into the sidings, but it appears to have been the practice with all the signalmen at this particular cabin to give "line clear" as was done on the present occasion, although the practice was not known to the officers of the company.

The engine-driver of the passenger train found the engine-shed junction distant-signal at danger as he passed it, at a speed of about 10 miles an hour. He whistled for the signal to be taken off, the guard put on the breaks, and the speed of the train appears to have been reduced to about six miles an hour when he came in sight of the home-signal, which he stated was standing as he thought "all right," although he admits that it was not thoroughly down to its proper position. On finding the home-signal as he thought "all right," he put on steam, ran forward to the junction, and failed to observe the mineral train, which was on the road in front of him, until he was within 50 yards of it, although he could have seen it, if he had been keeping a proper look-out, when he was 150 yards from it. He stated, that on seeing the

mineral train he reversed his engine and put steam against it, but he had not time to whistle for the guard's breaks before he ran into the tail wagon of the mineral train, at a speed of six or seven miles an hour. The mineral train was backing towards him at a speed of about three or four miles an hour.

The two leading wheels of the engine of the passenger train were thrown off the rails. The engine and van next to it were slightly damaged. Two empty cattle wagons at the tail of the mineral train were broken to pieces, and one other was damaged.

The accident was caused by the neglect of the driver of the passenger train, who did not exercise proper caution in approaching the Salford engine-shed junction, where the distant-signal was at danger, and where the home-signal was partly lowered, from not being in good working order, but it was not in a position to justify the driver in running on as he did.

The signalman on duty is to blame for not having observed the defective working of the home-signal, and he should not have given "line clear" while the goods train occupied the down passenger line at his station. He and the other men who take duty in the Salford engine-shed cabin have been told distinctly that the custom previous to the accident of giving "line clear" was wrong and contrary to the regulations.

*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 1st May.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
6th June 1877.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 23rd ult., the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred on the 19th ult., at Huddersfield station, between a passenger train belonging to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company and a portion of a goods train belonging to the London and North-Western Company.

In this case, as the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's 11.30 a.m. up passenger train from Bradford to Huddersfield was passing through the points leading from the up line to the Huddersfield platform, its engine came into collision with the van of the London and North-Western Company's 10.45 a.m. up goods train from Kirkburton to Manchester, this van, together with some waggons in front of it, having been set in motion backwards along the up line where they had been standing, by a blow from some other waggons which were being shunted against the waggons attached to the van.

Eleven passengers have complained of slight injury.

The engine of the passenger train had its buffer plank and off cylinder cover broken.

In the goods train, the break van and one waggon were slightly damaged.

In consequence of the want of accommodation at Huddersfield station, the marshalling of goods trains has to take place on the main line under circumstances dangerous to the passenger traffic, of which the present case is an illustration.

The station is, for the most part, on a gradient falling at 1 in 350 towards Mirfield, but for a distance of about 40 yards south of the fouling point of the up-line and platform line, this gradient changes from 1 in 350 to 1 in 105, still falling towards Mirfield. In consequence, goods trains, when stopped on the up

line to do work in the sidings which lie to the west of the down line, have to stand with their vans and some of their waggons on this falling gradient of 1 in 105, in order that there may be room to pass through the crossing leading from the up line to the sidings, the points of this crossing being only about 190 yards from the fouling point above referred to. Hence, there is the constant risk that in the process of shunting the van may be (as occurred in the present instance) pushed down this falling gradient and foul of the crossing through which a passenger train may be in the act of either entering or leaving the station.

The evidence bearing on this collision is as follows:—

1. *Law Tweedale*, driver 23 years in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's service.—"I was driving the 11.30 a.m. passenger train from Bradford to Huddersfield, due at Huddersfield at 12.26. I had last stopped at Bradley station by signal, and was approaching Huddersfield station at a speed of about 10 miles an hour; the signals were on, but on reaching a point half way between the distant and home signals, the latter was taken off in answer to my whistle: as I passed the home signal the crossing into the platform was clear, but on reaching the cross-over road just beyond the home-signal, the pointsman threw up his arms; seeing this, I reversed my engine and got steam against it, and told my mate to apply his break; and I also whistled for the guard's breaks. I think our speed had been reduced to about five or six miles an hour when the right-hand buffer of my engine caught the left buffer of a goods break van, which was moving back slowly towards my engine. I could not say whether the breaks were on the van, but I think they were, or it would have been moving faster. We neither of us jumped off, nor were we hurt. We stopped dead just after we struck. My engine did not leave the rails, but the van was thrown off the rails. I was not travelling much more than

“ 10 miles an hour at the home signal, notwithstanding that I had continuous breaks on my train.”

2. *Shadrack Wilkes*, guard 25 years with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company.—“ The 11.30 a.m. train from Bradford consisted, on the 19th ult., of seven vehicles ; of these three were coupled to the break van, which was at the front of the train next the engine. There were three loose carriages at the tail of the train. We were approaching Huddersfield 16 minutes late, having lost time from signals at Lightcliffe, Hipperholme, and Bradley junction. The first intimation I got of danger was hearing the driver give the break whistle, when within 20 or 25 yards of the point of collision ; at this time our speed was about 16 miles an hour. I had just time to get my break on as we struck. I was not knocked down. The collision occurred at 12.43 ; we were due in at 12.26. I did not see the van coming back on us, but expected what had happened, as I had seen the goods break standing on the up line. None of the vehicles received damage. No passengers were cut, only shaken. Nothing was off the road in my train.”

3. *Samuel Barnes*, driver 5 years with the London and North-Western Company.—“ I started from Kirkburton with the 10.45 a.m. goods train for Manchester. We did work on the road, and reached Huddersfield at 12.20 p.m., night time, being due away at 12.50. We arrived here with a fish truck, 15 waggons, and the break van. I stopped by direction of the middle pointsman, and put the fish truck on to the platform line : I then returned to the train, and went with eight waggons into the warehouse siding, and brought out the same eight and 15 more on to the up line. The guard then unhooked these 15 ; I cased back about half an engine's length, and then got back again into the warehouse siding with the same eight waggons, and I was still there when an inspector came running up, and said that there had been a collision, and that I was to back on to my train as soon as I could. The rails were very greasy at this time. Only the fireman was on the engine when I set back with the 23 waggons.”

4. *Samuel Manley*, fireman 4 years with the London and North-Western Company.—“ I agree with the driver's evidence, except that I think we eased back with the 23 waggons about four or five waggons' lengths, when the breaksman uncoupled us at the eighth waggon, and the 15 waggons ran gently back against the train, while we went again into the warehouse line, and were engaged there when the collision took place. The breaksman stopped us after unhooking the waggons.”

5. *George Barrand*, pointsman about 2½ years, all the time at No. 3 ground cabin, Huddersfield ; in the service of the London and North-Western and Lancashire and Yorkshire Companies.—“ The points and signals are not interlocked at my box. I have up home and up distant signals (applying both to the main line and platform line), and a down home signal. I came on duty at 6 a.m. for eight hours. The London and North-Western goods train arrived at 12.22, two minutes late. The van stopped about opposite the lamp-post, well clear of the crossing to the platform ; this is the usual place where the vans stop. The van of which the break was on, had been moved back a yard or two previously to the shunt just before the collision. I had not pulled the distant signal off for the Lancashire and Yorkshire train (which had been given on from Millhouse), because I could not get clear from the middle signalman, until the train was approaching the up home signal, which I lowered before the train had reached it. I was standing at the cabin door, and the passenger train

“ was just at the home signal, when, hearing a rattle, I looked at the goods van, and seeing it begin to move, I ran towards it, intending to get into it and put the break harder on ; but, on second thoughts, I thought it would be better to try and stop the passenger train, which I endeavoured to do by holding out my arms, and showing a red flag. The driver did not see me at first, but as soon as he did he reversed and checked his speed, and did not strike the van at more than three or four miles an hour, the van running back at about the same speed. I did not see anybody trying to stop the waggons ; but I was on the platform side of them. The Lancashire and Yorkshire driver was not coming more than seven miles an hour before he saw me. He whistled for the breaks on seeing me. It is not an uncommon thing for vans to be knocked back a yard or two, but I never saw them sent back so far as in the present instance. The collision occurred about 12.45 p.m.”

6. *Thomas Pearson*, pointsman about four years ; all the time in the middle cabin at Huddersfield ; joint servant.—“ I came on duty at 6 a.m. on the 19th for eight hours. I remember the Kirkburton train arriving at about right time. The shunting went on much as previously described, but the engine was stopped before the 15 waggons were uncoupled from it, the driver having set back till about five waggons were on the Mirfield side of the points, when the 15 waggons were uncoupled by the guard. The whole of the waggons were then again set back at a speed of perhaps four or five miles an hour till the engine had nearly reached the points, when the guard stopped the driver ; there was then a gap between the two sets of waggons. I am quite sure the driver had to draw forward again before setting back into the warehouse siding. I did not think the waggons that were running back would set the others in motion. As I was turning the engine into the yard I saw the van jump, which made me know there had been a collision. I was on the platform side, and the guard and shunter were both on the other side of the train.”

7. *Thomas Shepherd*, foreman shunter six or eight years in the London and North-Western Company's service.—“ I agree with the former evidence, except that the driver stopped with the eight waggons clear of the points, and did not follow up the 15 waggons further. They were not knocked back at all sharper than usual. I put one break on one of the 15 waggons, and the breaksman put on another. I had no fear about their knocking the van back, and judging from what occurred, I think the van break could not have been tight on.”

8. *William McIvor*, breaksman 12 months with the London and North-Western Company.—“ I started from Kirkburton with a train for Manchester, and reached Huddersfield with a fish truck, 15 waggons, and the break van, in which I was alone. We arrived at 12.20 right time. We left the van about opposite the lamp-post. I left the break on, hard on, and with the chain on it. The first thing was to put the carriage truck into the platform siding. The engine then took eight waggons into the warehouse siding, and brought these eight with 16 others out on to the main up line, three or four waggons' lengths clear of the points. The driver then moved back four or five waggons' lengths by my direction, and I then hooked off the 16 waggons while the train was moving back : I then sent the driver ahead again. The driver had stopped when the last of the eight waggons was clear of the points. The waggons were running back very steady against the van. I did not see the 16 waggons hit the others, nor did I see the collision take place, as I was then in the warehouse sidings. I have often done the same thing

" before, but have never moved the van back above a waggon's length. I looked at my break after the collision; I do not think the break gearing was injured, but somebody had taken the break off. The break worked well before the collision. I put down the break of one of the 16 waggons as they were moving back."

The station-master said that the iron plate supporting the break pinion of the goods van was freshly broken; probably either by collision with the engine, or by the blow of the waggons which ran back.

It appears, then, that this collision was caused by the rear portion (consisting of seven waggons and a van) of a goods train, which had been left standing with its van and some of the waggons on a falling gradient of 1 in 105, having been put into backward motion by a blow from 16 waggons (which had been allowed to drop too sharply against the others), and then coming into collision with a passenger train which was entering the station. The guard of the goods train had allowed the driver to set back too far before uncoupling the waggons and stopping him, and the velocity acquired by these waggons thus overcame

the holding power of the break van, of which there is no reason to suppose the breaks had not been applied.

So long as Huddersfield station is allowed to remain in its present unsatisfactory state, (about which state there is but little difference of opinion,) shunting on the main line must go on, and the recurrence of similar collisions to the present be expected. The danger would, however, be diminished if it were made a *strictly enforced* rule that no waggons should be "kicked" back on the up line, but that the engine should in all cases accompany them to the train of which they are to form part. The only thoroughly effectual remedy is the enlargement of the station.

The formation of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's train which had three loose carriages at its rear without any break-van behind them, was defective, especially considering the nature of the gradients upon which it had to travel.

I have, &c.,
C. S. HUTCHINSON,
Major-Gen. R.E.

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 3rd July.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),

6th June 1877.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in the order of the 30th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred on the 23rd ultimo, at Lowmoor station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway between two passenger trains, one belonging to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company, and the other to the Great Northern Company.

In this case the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's 9.40 a.m. passenger train from Bradford to Manchester due to leave Lowmoor at 9.50 a.m. was (while standing at Lowmoor platform) run into at the rear by the Great Northern Company's 9.32 a.m. passenger train from Laister Dyke to Halifax due to leave Lowmoor at 9.42 a.m.

No passengers have complained of injury. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's van was slightly damaged.

The approach to the up platform lines at Lowmoor is protected by two home signals 280 yards on the Laister Dyke side of the down end of the platform, one of these signals applying to the main line and the other to a loop line leading to the back of the platform and entered by facing points. The signal cabin (C) is 180 yards from the up home signals and 100 yards from the down end of the platform. At the up end of the platform there are junction signals (which act also as starting signals) for the lines to Halifax and Heckmondwike. The line through the station falls towards Halifax on a gradient of 1 in 290, and curves to the right. The collision occurred at a point 110 yards from the down end of the up platform.

Except through the station the line is worked on the absolute block system, but as many following trains have to interchange passengers at Lowmoor, a train following another already at the platform should be stopped at the home signal, then called on by the signalman, and the driver communicated with as it passes his cabin.

The evidence is as follows:—

1. *Joseph Clough*, signalman eight years, all the time at Lowmoor.—I came on duty in C cabin at

6 a.m. for an eight hours shift. I do not register the trains. There is block working between cabin C and cabin D about 500 yards on the Bowling junction side of cabin C, but not through the station to the junction. The Bradford train was a few minutes late, having been detained by a special train in front. I kept my home signal against it, the platform being occupied by the special train, and drew it in by green flag. The driver had been completely stopped. He drew up behind the special train, and then drew forward after the special train had gone away. The Great Northern train arrived about four minutes after the Lancashire and Yorkshire train. I stopped it at the home signal and then drew it past with a green flag. I did not speak to the driver, though I looked out of the window as he passed by slowly. He was running tender first, and though there was a train standing on the other line, I think he could have seen the Lancashire and Yorkshire train had he been looking out. The engine of the train on the down line was taking water at the time. I did not hear or see the collision take place. I had not noticed whether the signal from cabin A (the junction cabin) was off for the Lancashire and Yorkshire train before the collision. It was an unusual thing for the Great Northern train to run in behind this Lancashire and Yorkshire train, though it often runs in behind a branch train. It is not customary to turn main line trains into the loop, and I was not certain whether the loop was clear, and I had no idea the Great Northern train would overrun.

2. *Frederic Shaw*, foreman porter at Lowmoor since last October.—I was on the up platform when the collision occurred, shutting some second class doors. The Lancashire and Yorkshire train was ready to start, when the Great Northern train came up at a speed of about five miles an hour when it was about 30 yards off. Seeing it was not stopping I ran back and shouted, waving my hands. I could not see that the fireman got to the break till the tender was a yard from the van. I did not hear the break whistle given. There was no steam on the engine. The Lancashire and Yorkshire train was knocked forward a carriage length or so. Our station master was in the van, but not the guard, I think.