

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

16 July 1872

BoT Report into Accident at
Liverpool Exchange.

(1 Page).

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Sir, *Edinburgh, 21st August 1872.*

In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 19th ult., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my enquiry into the circumstances connected with a collision which occurred on the 16th ult. at the Exchange station, Liverpool, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, between a passenger train and an engine.

Two passengers have complained of slight injury, and the fireman of one of the engines was shaken.

The arrival and departure of trains from the Exchange station is regulated by a signalman who occupies an elevated cabin (called the "middle" cabin) situated about 150 yards from the end of the platforms. In this cabin there are collected together, but not interlocked, seven point and seven signal levers. Outgoing trains depart from various platforms, provided with starting signals, worked from a cabin at the end of the centre platform; but no starting signal is lowered until the middle cabin signalman, in response to the whistle of the engineman wishing to come out, has lowered his main line signal. Every departing train has to pass over at least three pairs of facing points, one of which pairs, situated 25 yards outside the middle cabin and leading to a water column and turntable, is provided with an indicating arm fixed to the side of the cabin and visible from the platform lines.

The driver of the 1.30 p.m. train from Liverpool to Crosby, consisting of tender, engine, seven coaches and a van, the last five coupled with continuous breaks, whistled for the starting signals at about 1.30, and both platform and main line signals having been lowered he started at 1.31, not having noticed, by his own acknowledgment, the condition of the indicating signal attached to the points leading to the turntable; for as there are two other pairs of points without indicators he was in the habit, he says, of looking at the points themselves and taking them all in at one glance. On the present occasion, however, from some reason which he could not explain, he did not look at the points at all. He had just passed the middle signal cabin, having attained a speed of about 10 miles an hour, when he found his engine was entering the turntable line; he at once used every means in his power to stop, but before he could do so his engine came into collision with another engine standing at a water

column 35 yards from the points. The latter was driven over the turntable and against a pair of buffer stops at the other side of it, which it partially broke down, bulging a retaining wall which holds up the railway yard above the level of a street running beneath it. Had these buffer stops not been firmly secured the engine would no doubt have gone over into the street below. The engine attached to the train followed the other one up and remained close to it. Both engines had their buffers broken.

The fireman of the first engine was shaken, and his driver knocked down.

The signalman on duty in the middle cabin (Brown) had taken duty there for five years. He had commenced his work on the 19th ult. at 7 a.m. for an 8 hours spell; at about a quarter past one a train had arrived from Yorkshire, and to allow the engine of this train to go to the turntable Brown had propped over the turntable points with a stick, so as to leave him at liberty to attend to a pilot engine. When the Crosby engine-driver whistled for the starting signals, Brown quite forgetting that the turntable points were propped over, lowered his main line signal and only saw his mistake when the engine was entering the turntable siding.

The signalman on duty in the platform cabin lowered the starting signal for the Crosby train as soon as he saw the main signal fall. He did not notice what the point indicator was showing, as he was very busy at the time.

This collision was caused by the mistake of the signalman in the middle cabin in omitting to set the turntable facing points right for the main line before lowering his main line signal for the Crosby train. This mistake could not have been made had there been a properly arranged set of interlocked signals. These have I am informed been ordered for some time and will shortly be put up, and I would strongly recommend that, in carrying out the alterations, some of the existing facing points should be got rid of.

There was negligence on the part of the driver of the Crosby train in not looking ahead to see the condition of the facing points he was about to pass over.

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

I have, &c.,
C. S. HUTCHINSON,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
(Railway Department),
15th August 1872.*

Sir,

In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 6th inst., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 31st ultimo, near Accrington station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

A bank engine, which was employed to run after trains and assist them up the incline towards Manchester, ran into a passenger train by going at too great speed. Several passengers are reported to have been shaken.

Accrington station is situated at the foot of an incline which rises 1 in 40 towards Manchester for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

When the trains that are going to Manchester consist of more than four or five coaches, they are assisted up the incline by what is called a bank engine.

The bank engine is stationed in the cattle siding at the east side of the railway. The Manchester trains

start from the opposite side of the platform to where the bank engine is kept waiting.

As soon as the passenger train gets clear of the platform on its road to Manchester, and before it attains much speed, the bank engine is intended to run out of the siding where it is kept, overtake the passenger train, and push it to the top of the bank.

On the day in question, the passenger train which is due to leave Accrington at 5.5 p.m. for Manchester consisted of an engine and tender, a guard's van with a guard, a first, a second, three thirds, a break-van with a second guard, a first, and a second-class carriage, coupled together in the order in which they are given. The two coaches in rear of each of the guard's vans were attached to them, with continuous breaks.

The train was five or ten minutes late in leaving Accrington. It came to a stand on the incline, when it had got about 700 yards from the station, as the bank engine had not got up to it at that time, and the engine in front of the train could not pull it any further.

The engine-driver of the bank engine had gone to fetch his tools off another engine that he had been