

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

7 August 1866

BoT Report into Accident at
Manchester Victoria.

(2 Pages).

drivers and guards were to be informed by the station masters "how long a preceding train had been gone away when not more than 15 minutes in advance." But this does not appear to have been attended to; and another, which stated that "the speed of these trains must not exceed 20 miles per hour, not including stoppages," was certainly not observed. Curiously enough the time allowed between Goole and Knottingly, 16 miles apart, for this particular train in these regulations is 30 minutes, necessitating that the train should average 32 miles an hour if it was meant to be punctual.

I have no doubt that the collision was occasioned by the neglect of the driver in not keeping a good look out as the excursion train approached the Crofton distant signal, and, in consequence, delaying too long in taking the necessary measures for retarding the speed of the train. The inspector informed me that if he had had the means of communicating with the driver, he would have made use of it, and would thus have prevented the collision.

The outside cover of the left cylinder and the front buffer plank of the engine were broken, and the foot plate on the left side of the boiler and all the

outside mountings and the steam taps of the engine were all swept off by the engine falling over on its left side down the embankment. The tender, which also fell over on its left side, was not much damaged.

The guard's break-van of the excursion train was broken to pieces, so that the guard had a very narrow escape; and the goods guard's break-van was also broken to pieces, and two other goods waggons were also a good deal damaged.

The Crofton distant signal is well seen for a considerable distance, but it is lost sight of for a short space at about 150 yards before it is reached. It would therefore be desirable to erect a distant signal about 800 yards from the Crofton station, and to make the present distant signal a repeating signal for the new one, as the distance of 475 yards at which it is placed is not sufficient to allow of a heavy train travelling at a high speed down the incline of 1 in 150 pulling up short of the Crofton station platform.

I have, &c.

*The Secretary of the
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.*

W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 25th August 1866.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred on the 7th inst. at the Victoria Station, Manchester, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

I am, &c.

T. H. FARRER.

*The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire
Railway Company.*

*Railway Department,
Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 21st August 1866.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 8th inst., the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended a collision that occurred on the 7th inst. between a passenger train belonging to the London and North-Western Railway Company and the engine of a passenger train belonging to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company at the entrance to the Victoria station, Manchester, of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on which occasion 15 passengers and the guard of the London and North-Western train were injured, the latter somewhat seriously.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company have recently determined that the traffic between Miles Platting and Victoria station, Manchester, should be worked with the assistance of the electric telegraph, on what is known as the block system, by which only one train or one engine is permitted to be between two adjacent telegraphic stations at one and the same time. The distance altogether is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and the line falls on a steep incline which varies from 1 in 49 to 1 in 59 from Miles Platting to Victoria station. Just before the bottom of the incline is reached there is a junction that leads into several docks, to and from which the branch trains of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company run, and five signal boxes have been put up between Miles

Platting and Victoria station provided with electric instruments for signalling the trains, and the usual out-of-door signals for controlling the drivers of trains, and No. 5 box, near the bottom of the incline, is placed opposite to this junction, and No. 4 box is about 600 yards up the incline reckoned from No. 5 box.

On the morning of the 7th instant, the 8.55. London and North-Western train from Huddersfield to Manchester, consisting of engine and tender, five carriages, and one break van, stopped on the incline 30 or 40 yards east of the station signal at No. 5 signal box, in consequence of that signal, and the distant signal, worked from about the middle of the platform being on at "danger," and the signalman at No. 5 box states that he blocked the line by telegraph at No. 4 box, and kept both his distant and station signals on at danger; that the London and North-Western train arrived about 10.13 or 10.14 a.m. as near as he could say, which is very near its proper time. It appears that this train was prevented from entering the London and North-Western passenger station on this morning, in consequence of the formation of the Lancashire and Yorkshire's Southport train being about four minutes late, and the line to the London and North-Western platform was blocked by two engines belonging to the other railway company engaged in forming up the Southport train. When the London and North-Western train had stood still three or four minutes, the 7.45 a.m. Lancashire and Yorkshire train from Rochdale, consisting of engine and tender and six carriages, five of which were coupled together to a guard's break van fitted with Fay's continuous breaks, were permitted by the signalman at No. 4 box to go past his box, notwithstanding that the line was blocked by telegraph, and the guard in the van next the engine having disengaged the van from the engine whilst it was approaching No. 5 signal box, the engine continued to run ahead and ran into the London and North-Western train at a speed which the driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train estimates at six miles an hour, but which was probably in excess of that rate, whilst the carriages behind the engine stopped about six yards behind it. The excuse given by the driver of the Rochdale train was that his attention was called off from the road on which he was running by hearing the guard in the van behind him stamping on the catch, for the purpose of unhooking his van from the engine, and he says he kept shouting to the guard that he was not to unhook so soon, and on turning

round he found that he was running rather fast, and saw the London and North-Western train 150 yards in front, and then he did all in his power to stop, by reversing his engine, turning on the steam the reverse way, and applying the tender-break. It appears to be the common practice to unhook the van from the engine while coming down this steep incline, so as to allow the engine to be turned into one dock and the train into another, but it is said not to be proper to do this as high up the incline as it was done on this morning. It was not a regular guard in the Rochdale train, but the night watchman who had occasionally acted as guard. The practice is a dangerous one, and should not be allowed. I do not, however, consider that the excuse given by the driver of the Rochdale train is sufficient to account for his neglect. If he had attended to his own proper duties, kept a good look-out, and regulated the speed of his train so soon as the other train in front became visible the collision need not have occurred.

But it could never have happened at all, except for the gross misconduct of the signalman on duty at No. 4 signal box.

The instructions for working the traffic on the block system between Miles Platting and Victoria station were directed to come into operation on the 16th July, and did then do so, but the signalman at No. 4 signal box informed me that they continued to work according to those instructions only between a week and a fortnight, and then a change was made at No. 4 signal box. He says that one of the signalmen at No. 5 box kept saying, "Let the trains down and don't wait till I give 'line clear' by the telegraph," and he states that he and his mate did so on their own authority, but the signalman at No. 5 distinctly denies that anything of the kind ever occurred, and says that he had no authority to make any such change. He should, however, have reported it, if he was not instrumental in causing it to be made, and if he was concerned in making the change that

would not justify the signalman at No. 4 signal box in making such an important alteration without the authority of the superior officers, and I was therefore very much surprised at finding when I made my investigation that he was still permitted to perform this duty. The telegraphic superintendent (who signed these instructions as well as the superintendent of the line) noticed the change that had been made in the course of the previous week, and says he spoke of it to the station master, and the assistant to the superintendent, but nothing was done about it; and it appears to me that he made a great mistake in not having made a written report on the subject to the superintendent of the line, under whom the men were all employed. All the passengers who are said to have been slightly injured were all seated in the London and North-Western train. The guard was in the van at the tail of the train engaged in getting his parcels ready, and he did not hear the engine coming until he says it was too late for him to jump out. He laid down in the bottom of the van, but was thrown against the wheel of the break, and was hurt in the head, shoulder, and elbow.

The entrance to this station from the east is a very dangerous one, with a junction on this steep incline, and the lines to the several docks so short that it is constantly necessary for trains to come out on to the main lines and to foul them, in order to get from one dock to the others. It also appears that the distant signal up the incline worked from No. 5 signal box and distant 440 yards from it, is seldom taken off, so that engine drivers coming down the incline cease to pay any attention to it and run past it although it may be standing at "danger." This is very objectionable, as it virtually teaches engine drivers to disregard danger signals altogether.

I have, &c.

*The Secretary,
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.*

*W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.*

LONDON AND BLACKWALL RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),*

Whitehall, 25th August 1866.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the London and Blackwall Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Capt. Tyler, R.E., the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred near the London Dock Junction on the London and Blackwall Railway, on the 18th ultimo.

My Lords trust that the recommendations of Capt. Tyler will receive the careful consideration of the Directors.

*The Secretary of the
London and Blackwall
Railway Company.*

T. H. FARRER.

SIR,

Hampton Court, 15th August 1866.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 18th July near the London Dock junction on the Blackwall Railway.

The London Dock branch joins the main line of the Blackwall Railway about half a mile from the Fenchurch Street station. There is a raised stage at the junction, from which a signalman works five pairs of points and six signals, but without a locking

apparatus. The trains follow each other very closely over this part of the line.

The 9.7 p.m. North London Company's train from Broad Street to Fenchurch Street, left the former station at 9.15, eight minutes late, on the evening in question, and approached the London Dock junction at 9.46 or 9.47, also 8 or 9 minutes late, at a speed of 10 or 15 miles an hour. It consisted of a tank engine, two first-class carriages without breaks, four carriages fitted with Clark's patent continuous break, and four others behind them. The signals were lowered for it to proceed forward to Fenchurch Street, and the engine-driver was passing through the junction in due course when he suddenly found his engine turning to the left instead of going forward along the straight road. His steam was already shut off. He whistled for the breaks and opened his sand box, but he had no time to do more than half reverse his engine before it struck a goods break-van, with an engine in front of it, 110 yards from the junction points on the dock branch.

The goods van was broken to pieces with the exception of its roof. The leading wheels of the passenger engine were thrown off the line, and the bogie frame to which they were attached was strained and bent. The first carriage had both ends, and the second carriage its leading end smashed in; and the third (break) carriage had its leading end damaged against a corner of the second carriage. The leading and trailing wheels of the tender were thrown off the rails, its break was destroyed, and its buffers were damaged. There were fortunately no passengers in the two first carriages; but out of thirty who were