

The
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LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

8 February 1886

BoT Report into Accident at
Wakefield, Ings Junction.

(3 Pages).

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,)
1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
27th February 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 12th instant, the result of my enquiry into the causes of the collision which occurred on the 8th instant at Ings junction, near Wakefield (Kirkgate) station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case, the 7.22 a.m. Great Northern Company's passenger train from Kirkgate station to Westgate station, Wakefield, came into collision (engine with engine) on a junction crossing, with the 6.55 a.m. Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's passenger train from Barnsley to Kirkgate station.

In the Great Northern Company's train, which consisted of a tank engine, running chimney first, and five vehicles, all fitted with Smith's plain vacuum break, three passengers were injured.

In the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's train, which consisted of engine, tender, and four vehicles, the four vehicles being coupled together with Fay's continuous break worked from a break compartment in the rear vehicle, three passengers and the guard were injured.

The engine of the Great Northern train had its front buffer-beam, frame, and break gearing damaged.

The engine of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train had its buffer-beam and buffer-beam angle-irons bent.

None of the vehicles in either train were damaged, nor were any wheels knocked off the rails.

Description.

At Ings junction, about 215 yards from the Manchester end of Wakefield (Kirkgate) station, the branch to Westgate station joins the main line to Manchester. The junction home-signal for trains proceeding to the branch is situated 145 yards from the Manchester end of the platform, 70 yards from the junction facing-points, and 120 yards from the junction crossing, where the collision occurred; the down main line junction home-signal is situated 25 yards on the Kirkgate side of the end of the ticket platform at which the Lancashire and Yorkshire train had stopped, and 65 yards on the Manchester side of the junction crossing. The lines in the neighbourhood of the junction are nearly level.

Evidence.

1. *Robert Todd*, signalman; 12 years in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's service, nine years signalman.—I have been nine months working in Ings cabin, where I came on duty on the 8th at 6 a.m. for eight hours. I work block between Wakefield West junction, Hoist west, on the main line, and West Riding junction on the branch. I took the Lancashire and Yorkshire train from Barnsley "On line" from Hoist at 7.21 a.m., but took no signal off for the train as it had to stop at the ticket-platform, for which there is no rear-signal, the train being protected by the home-signal at Hoist, about 300 yards from the junction home-signal. I had never lowered the home-signal (No. 14) after taking the train "On line" nor before the collision. I saw the train arrive at the ticket-platform at 7.21 a.m., and I thought the engine stopped somewhere near the end of the ticket-platform. I took the Great Northern train "On line" at 7.21 a.m., but I did not set the points nor take off the signal for this train until I had brought it nearly to a stand at the home-signal, not being sure whether I could let the Great Northern train cross the junction to the advanced-signal before allowing the Lancashire and Yorkshire train to pass into the station. The latter train not having whistled, I decided to give the Great Northern train the preference, and at about 7.22 a.m. I set the road and lowered the signal for

the Great Northern train, at which time the Lancashire and Yorkshire train was still at rest. The Great Northern train came on at once, and the engine had passed the locking-bar and facing-points, when, hearing the driver give the break-whistle, I looked towards the Lancashire and Yorkshire train and saw it in motion, at which time I think its engine was about three carriage lengths past the home-signal. I could not see what either driver did towards stopping. I did not hear any break-whistle from the Lancashire and Yorkshire engine. I saw the engines come into collision just as both of them were nearly at a standstill, the off sides of the buffer-beams about meeting. I had no conversation with the driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train. There is no truth in the statement that No. 14 signal was ever lowered for his train. When the Lancashire and Yorkshire train was standing at the ticket-platform, No. 10 trailing-points were standing right for the main line, the position I always keep them in.

2. *John Wigfall*, driver; 28 years in the Great Northern Company's service, and 17 years driver.—I was in charge of tank-engine, No. 653, an eight-wheeled engine, four wheels coupled, and four wheeled trailing bogie. I started from Kirkgate on the 8th instant with the 7.22 a.m. passenger train for Westgate station.

It consisted of five vehicles, all coupled to the engine with Smith's plain vacuum break; the engine was running chimney first, the coupled wheels being also fitted with the vacuum break. When I started from the station, Ings junction home-signal was at danger, but I whistled for it and it was taken off when I was about half-way between the end of the platform and it. It remained off till I passed it, and I saw nothing of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train being in motion till I was about 30 yards short of the cabin, when from the right of the engine I saw the other engine moving past the junction signal, my speed being about 15 miles an hour. I immediately gave the break-whistle, shut off steam and applied the vacuum break as fully as possible; the speed was reduced and it was very slow, not more than two miles an hour, when the engines came into collision on the junction crossing, the right-hand corner of my buffer-beam catching the centre of the buffer-beam of the other engine. Both engines stopped dead; there was no rebound in mine. I could not say what the speed of the other engine was on collision. Neither I nor the fireman was hurt. We were just getting off as the collision occurred. There was nothing off the rails. The Lancashire and Yorkshire driver said immediately afterwards that he could not see his signal. My fireman was putting on coal when I saw the other train in motion. The morning was a little misty, but light enough to see the arms of the signals and not the lights.

Driver Wigfall recalled: I had passed the home-signal before whistling for the breaks.

3. *William Morgan*, fireman; 5½ years in the Great Northern Company's service, six months fireman.—I agree with the driver's evidence except that I think we had not passed the home-signal when my driver gave the break-whistle. The speed of the Lancashire and Yorkshire engine was faster than ours. I did not jump off. I was not hurt. The morning was a little misty.

4. *Alfred Fox*, guard; 12 years in the Great Northern Company's service, 10 years guard.—I was in charge of the 7.22 a.m. train from Kirkgate to Westgate on the 8th instant. I was in the rear carriage break, the train consisting of five vehicles. We started to time, and slowed up to the junction signal, which I saw taken off when my break carriage was about half-way between the end of the platform and the signal. My break was about opposite the signal when I heard my driver give the break-whistle, the speed not exceeding seven miles an hour. I at once applied my wheel break, and I felt the vacuum break go on at the same time, and by the time I looked out the collision had almost occurred. We had not quite stopped. There was no rebound. I felt the collision very slightly. There were not more than 20 passengers in the train. I saw no one hurt, and heard no one complain. We got away after about five minutes detention.

5. *Thomas Heptonstall*, driver; 24 years in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's service, 14 years driver.—I commenced work at Barnsley at 6.15 a.m. on the 8th instant, having left off the previous night at 10.30 p.m. I started from Barnsley for Wakefield with the 6.55 a.m. train. It consisted of tender engine No. 13, and four carriages, including a break compartment in the rear vehicle. The engine was six-wheeled, four coupled, and a six-wheeled tender. I had had charge of it about three months for two days a week. The only break power on the engine was a hand break for the tender wheels. The whole of the vehicles were fitted with Fay's break. We started from Barnsley to time, lost two minutes at Horbury junction by signals, and reached Wakefield about two minutes late. On passing Hoist junction the home-signal was off, but Ings junction distant-signal, which is below the Hoist home-signal, was at

danger. Before reaching Hoist junction, I had seen the home-signal at Ings junction off, and when I came to a stand at the ticket-platform I saw it was still off; I stopped with the buffer plank at the front of the engine about opposite the home-signal. We stopped at the ticket-platform rather more than a minute, and on receiving a signal from the guard at the rear of the train, I started without looking at the home-signal, concluding it was still off. One of the fire-irons had been broken on the journey, and on arriving at the ticket-platform, the fireman got off the engine to get a waggon label to wrap round the fire-iron with the address to drop it at the end of Wakefield platform for repair, and this and getting some oil cans and other things to leave at Wakefield, took my attention from the signal for the moment. After passing the signal about 20 yards, something passed through my mind about the signal and I looked back at it, and saw it at danger, my speed not being more than four or five miles an hour. On looking round again I saw the Great Northern train just by the signal-cabin. I said to my mate "woa, woa," and shut off steam. I then pulled the reversing lever over and put steam on, but the reversing lever would not work properly in back gear, flew forward and carried me partly over with it. I then shut off steam, and the collision at once occurred before I had time to do anything more. On my saying "woa" to the fireman, he put on his break and had got it on as much as was possible before the collision. I did not whistle for the breaks, nor did I hear the Great Northern driver do so. The reversing lever had not been right for about six months. I do not know whether the regular driver had reported it. I know of no one who can corroborate my statement as regards the Ings junction home-signal having been off as I approached it. I think the speed was about five miles an hour on collision. I did not jump off. I was not hurt, nor was the fireman; he did not jump off.

The fireman had left the service before I held the inquiry, but the following is his evidence taken by the Company's officers.

6. *George Glover*, fireman.—I have been a fireman about 6 years on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. On the 8th instant I was fireman with the 6.55 a.m. passenger train, Barnsley to Wakefield. On approaching Ings junction I noticed that the distant-signal was at danger, but I did not observe the position of the home-signal. I had some fire-irons to put off at Wakefield for repairs, and seeing a waggon label on the ground, I got off the engine on the six-foot side to pick it up to attach to the fire-irons. I then borrowed a pencil from my driver and was directing the label when the train was started from the ticket-platform. I did not hear the driver whistle before starting, neither did I notice the position of the home-signal. When we had gone a few yards the driver shouted out, "Look out, Jack, we are into the Great Northern train," and in a second or two afterwards we came into collision with it. I just had time to get my tender break on when the collision happened. The morning was not particularly foggy. Immediately after the accident I looked back at the signals and saw they were at danger. I asked my driver after the accident if he had seen the signal, but he did not reply, being in a confused state of mind.

7. *Henry Carbatt*, guard; 20 years in the Lancashire and Yorkshire service, 19 years guard.—I was in charge of the 6.55 a.m. train from Barnsley to Wakefield on the 8th instant. The train consisted of 4 vehicles all coupled with Fay's break applied from a break compartment in the rear carriage, in which I was travelling. We left Barnsley one minute late and Horbury junction (the last station) a minute late also. On approaching Ings junction I saw that the distant-signal was at danger, and the home-signal also. At this time my break compartment was near the Hoist west home-signal. We then ran up

to the ticket-platform, when I got out of my break but I did not notice the signal. After the tickets were collected, which took about 2 minutes, the ticket collector said "right," and I gave the driver a flag signal from near the break. I did not notice the home-signal, my signal merely meaning that the train was ready to start, there being no rule requiring me to observe the state of the starting-signal. I then got into my break, and after arranging some parcels, I was in the act of getting into the raised part of the van, when the collision occurred. I was knocked off on to the platform, and was hurt in the head and arm and had some teeth loosened. I had heard no break whistling before this. There were 15 to 20 passengers in the train at the time of the collision. The collision occurred about 7.23 a.m. I do not

think my engine had been standing beyond the end of the ticket-platform.

8. *John W. Walker*, ticket collector; 2½ years in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's service.—I was on the ticket-platform when the 6.55 a.m. train from Barnsley arrived. I saw that the home-signal was at danger as the train was coming in; it had not been taken off and put to danger as the train was approaching. The train stopped without any carriages being beyond the ticket-platform. I did not notice that the train started without the signal being lowered. The tail of the train was about the home-signal when I heard the break-whistle and shouting.

Conclusion.

This collision was entirely due to the carelessness of the driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train, who started from the ticket-platform (where his attention had been distracted by a conversation with his fireman about a broken fire-iron) without observing that the starting-signal, which is also the junction home-signal, close in front of his engine, was at danger. Just before he started the signalman had set the road and lowered the signal for the Great Northern train to cross the main line on its way to Westgate, and it was not until the driver of the latter train gave the break-whistle that the signalman observed the Lancashire and Yorkshire train in motion, too late for him to reverse the facing-points and turn the Great Northern train along the main line, as its engine had already passed beyond the locking-bar.

The driver (Wigfall) of the Great Northern train was fortunately keeping a good look out ahead, and observed, when close to the facing-points, that the other train was in motion and passing the starting-signal, the engines being then about 100 yards apart and about equi-distant from the junction crossing. Wigfall, who estimates his speed at this time at about 15 miles an hour, at once gave the break-whistle, shut off steam and applied the vacuum break, and thinks his speed was reduced to about 2 miles an hour when the buffer-beams of the two engines came into collision, on the crossing, both stopping dead. But for Wigfall's prompt action the engine of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train would probably have come into collision with one of the carriages of the Great Northern train, in which case the consequences might have been most serious; he is accordingly deserving of commendation.

Heptonstall, the driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire train, after passing the starting-signal about 20 yards, had a misgiving about it, looked back and saw it at danger, and then looked forward and saw the Great Northern train approaching the junction just by the signal-cabin. His speed at this time was about 4 or 5 miles an hour. He at once had the tender break applied and reversed the engine, but on giving it steam the reversing lever flew back, and he had just again shut off steam when the collision occurred, the speed being still about 5 miles an hour. Heptonstall says that there was something wrong with the reversing lever catch, which caused the lever to fly forward, but its doing so was most likely to be attributed to his being excited and not having notched it properly. His statement as to the starting-signal having been off when he arrived at the ticket-platform, and having been subsequently put to danger, was not corroborated by any other witness. Even had this been the case, though it might have somewhat extenuated his fault, it would still have left him much to be blamed. Heptonstall has been 14 years a driver, had been on duty about an hour when the collision occurred, and had left work about 10.30 the previous night. Had his train been fitted with a good continuous break, which he could have himself applied, he would very probably have been able to stop his train short of the junction crossing.

The Assistant Secretary,
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

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

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Lancashire and Yorkshire and Great Northern Railway Companies on the 22nd March.