

The
VIRTUAL MUSEUM
of the
LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

Accident Reports.

1 May 1871

BoT Report into Accident at

Oakenshaw Junction.

(2 Pages).

station at its proper time, 12h. 24m. p.m., and the driver received a signal to proceed at 12h. 26m.

It should be stated that this train brought a staff from Ventnor and dropped it at Sandown. The 11h. 20m. a.m. down train had been despatched from Ryde with a ticket, and the train staff for the portion of line between Ryde and Sandown was with the 12h. 10m. p.m. down train, which was approaching the Sandown station at the time the signal was given for the up train to proceed to Ryde, in accordance with the telegraphic message. Sandown station is protected on the north side towards Ryde by a distant signal placed rather more than 600 yards from the station, and this signal is well seen for a considerable distance by a down train advancing towards the station from the north. The line falls on a steep incline of 1 in 85 for about three quarters of a mile on leaving Sandown station, passing through a deep cutting and with a curve to the left, which commences close to the end of the cutting. The 12h. 10m. p.m. down train, consisting of a tank engine, five carriages, and a break van, left Brading station, which is one and three quarter miles from Sandown, and three and three quarter miles from Ryde, at 12h. 24m. p.m., and the driver of this train informed me; that as he approached the Sandown cutting he saw that the distant signal was on at "danger" against him, and he sounded the steam whistle and slackened the speed at which he was running, and which he estimated at 25 miles an hour. Immediately afterwards he saw the other train approaching, and he did all in his power to stop, and was almost at a standstill when the up train came into collision with his train, about 130 yards outside of the down distant signal.

The driver of the up train, which was sent forward in obedience to the telegraphic message, stated that he had just passed under an overbridge somewhere about 400 yards from the station, and was running down the incline at from 25 to 30 miles an hour, when he saw the steam from an engine over the side of the cutting, and he immediately shut off the steam, sounded the whistle for the break, while his fireman put on the engine break, and he then reversed the engine and turned the steam on the reverse way, and he thinks he was running six or seven miles an hour when his engine ran into the down train engine. Nothing was thrown off the rails, and the only damage that was done to the two trains was that the buffer plank of the down train engine was broken, and the draw-bar of one of the carriages also.

I understand that there were a large number of passengers in the two trains, perhaps amounting to 150 in number, and it is most fortunate that the collision was not attended with very serious results.

1. The collision could not have occurred if the regulations under which the Board of Trade sanctioned the opening in 1864 had not been broken, I presume, under the authority of the directors of the company; as the up train should have been detained in Sandown station until the down train which carried the train staff had arrived there, and in this instance this would not have involved a delay of more than five minutes. But I understand these regulations are frequently set aside altogether, in order to change the station at which up and down trains should pass each other, although there is only one properly constructed passing place, viz., Sandown, when there are irregularities in the arrival of the steam boats at Ryde, in order to avoid delays to the passengers, and also when there are special trains, as in this case, about to go on the line. These special trains appear to travel on the line without any reference to the train staff and ticket regulations, but with the assistance of the electric telegraph.

2. The collision would not have occurred if the inspector of traffic had not most unnecessarily and improperly told the Ryde station master to send a telegraphic message to Sandown. He says he has no recollection of having made use of Mr. Bourne's name; and it is certain that Mr. Bourne gave no instructions to send any message.

3. The collision would not, in all probability, have occurred if the Ryde station master had obeyed his instructions, and signed the order to the Sandown station master for the 12h. 24m. up train to proceed to Ryde, and the order which was sent might probably not have been sent at all, in the incomplete form in which it was worded, if the telegraph clerk had obeyed his instructions.

One of the passengers, who is, I fear, seriously hurt (Mr. Cooper), has complained that when he was thrown violently on to his head across the carriage, one of the heavy double chairs pitched on him.

This should not be possible; where chairs are used they should be fastened to the flooring or sides of the carriage.

I have, &c.

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

W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.

Copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 25th May.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade
(*Railway Department*),
12th May 1871.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 4th 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 accident that occurred on the 1st inst. at Oakenshaw junction, near Wakefield, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Eight passengers are reported to have complained of having received cuts and bruises.

On the day in question, the 10.45 a.m. train from Wakefield to Goole consisted of an engine and tender, a second-class carriage with a break compartment for the guard, a composite carriage, and two third-class carriages. The vehicles were coupled together in the order in which they are given. This train left Wakefield station at 10.58 a.m. It was kept waiting for the main-line train, which was late.

The train for Goole was followed at 11 a.m. by another up passenger train from Wakefield to Walton junction. The railway from Wakefield to Goole diverges from the railway from Wakefield to Walton at

Oakenshaw junction, which is about a mile to the south-east of Wakefield station.

The train for Goole approached Oakenshaw junction at a speed of about 20 miles an hour; the distant signal and the junction signal were lowered for it to pass.

The signalman on duty at Oakenshaw junction stated, that he did not put back the distant signal to danger as soon as the Goole train had passed the signal, as he saw the Walton train approaching, and he wished to allow the latter train to pass inside the distant signal before replacing it at danger.

The signalman also stated that he did not put back the junction signal to danger until after the whole of the Goole train had passed over the junction points. The junction home signals lock the points at Oakenshaw junction, and it would not have been possible for the junction signalman to move the points, as long as he kept the junction home signal lowered for the train to pass; but he could have moved them easily as soon as he had replaced the signal at danger.

All the vehicles of the Goole train appear to have passed safely through the junction points towards Goole, except the last carriage of the train. This carriage appears to have run on the rails towards

Walton, until it passed the first crossing beyond the junction points, and then it was dragged off the rails, and fell over on its side on the line of rails which lead from Goole to Wakefield.

The carriage next in front of the one that fell over had its two hind wheels pulled off the rails. The last carriage but one being pulled off the rails was no doubt caused by the cross pull from the last carriage of the train.

The engine-driver of the Goole train felt the jerk which was given by the accident, and on looking round he saw the dust flying. He shut off steam, reversed his engine, whistled to call the guard's attention; the fireman applied the tender break, and the train was stopped about 180 yards from the place where the last carriage was dragged off the rails. The coupling and one side chain of the last carriage gave way, but all the rest of the couplings held on. The last carriage was dragged on its side along the line of rails from Goole, while the train to which it was attached travelled on the line of rails which lead to Goole.

The Walton train was checked by the junction signals, but the junction signalman called the Walton engine-driver on with his hand, and this train went on to Walton, at which station it is timed to meet a Midland train.

There was no mark on the permanent way, or on the ballast, between the junction points and the first crossing, but the chairs, check rails, sleepers, and ballast showed distinctly, that the last carriage of the

Goole train had left the rails after it had passed the crossing. There appears to be no doubt that the junction signalman, in his anxiety to allow the passenger train for Walton to follow the Goole train as quickly as possible, raised the home signal and altered the points while the Goole train was passing over them, and by doing so, sent the last carriage of the Goole train on the rails towards Walton. The couplings would strain sufficiently to allow this carriage to keep the rails as far as the first crossing. It would then be pulled off the rails by the front part of the train which was on the rails which lead to Goole.

Accidents of this kind are certain to happen sooner or later, if the signalmen at junctions move the junction signals before trains have passed clear of the junction points, unless the points are further secured by Edward's locking bar, or some other mechanical contrivance to prevent such mistakes. The signalman on duty at Oakenshaw junction should have put up the distant signal as soon as the Goole train had passed that signal, instead of encouraging the engine-driver of the Walton train to follow the Goole train so quickly. His duty was to put up his distant signal, and to have kept it at danger until the Goole train had passed clear through Oakenshaw junction.

I have, &c.,
The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

F. H. RICH,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

Copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 22nd May.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

(Railway Department),
Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 7th June 1871.

Sir,

In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 8th ult., 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 5th ult., near Carnarvon station, on the London and North-Western Railway.

One passenger is reported to have been slightly hurt, and one of the company's servants, who was acting as guard, died from the injuries that he received.

On the day in question, a train arrived at Carnarvon from Afonwen at 7.50 a.m. This train was 20 minutes late in arriving at Carnarvon.

It had been detained by shunting and by taking up luggage at the stations on the road. When the passengers had got out of the train at Carnarvon station, the train was drawn forward, and the engine, a guard's van, and a cattle truck were unhooked from the train, with the object of being run round, so that the engine might be hooked on to the tail of the train to make up the train, and place it at its proper place ready to return to Afonwen at 9.45 a.m.

The train, when made up, was to be placed in a siding at the south end of the station, which is called the dock siding.

This dock siding is on a falling gradient of 1 in 260. About 20 yards to the south of where the siding joins the main line, the incline of the main line increases from 1 in 260 to 1 in 40, and the main line continues to fall 1 ft. in every 40 ft. for 350 yards, so that the railway may pass under the streets of the town of Carnarvon. There is a short piece of level line, at the bottom of this gradient, of 1 in 40, and then the railway rises as far as the junction of the Llanberis Railway with the Carnarvonshire Railway.

This latter railway goes to Afonwen. The points and signals at Carnarvon station are worked on the locking principle from a raised cabin, which is situated directly opposite to the station building.

The railway towards Bangor is a single line, which

is now being made into a double line. The railway from Carnarvon station, as far as the junction of the Llanberis Railway with the Carnarvonshire Railway, is a double line.

The passenger platform at Carnarvon station is at the down side of the railway, and there are dock lines at each end of the station for trains to start from, towards Llanberis and towards Bangor.

The engine driver of the train that arrived at 7.50 a.m. from Afonwen was delayed about 10 minutes at the north end of Carnarvon station, before he got leave from the signalman who was in charge of the station signals to run round his train. The lines were blocked with a Bangor goods engine and with a Bangor goods train.

As soon as the engine driver received the signal from the signalman he proceeded with his engine to the other end of his train. The engine (which was a tank engine) was hooked on to the tail of the train, and the engine-driver drew his train to a convenient place where he could again unhook his engine, and go into the dock siding at the south end of the station to bring out some coaches which were required to be attached to his train.

The driver ran forward with the intention of backing his engine into the dock siding.

Before doing so, he whistled for the station signalman to move the siding points, which was done; and then the driver observed that the four coaches and two vans that were in the dock siding were being let down the incline on to his engine by a porter. The rest of the Afonwen train, which consisted of two carriages and a van that had been left on the main line, were next let down by the same porter and attached to the train.

The engine-driver thought that his train was too heavy for him to be able to draw it forward over the dock siding points, and then push it back up the incline of 1 in 40, into the dock siding. He allowed his engine and train to run southwards to the bottom of the incline, and somewhat up the bank, with the object of getting a run, to push his train back into the dock siding.

The line from Carnarvon station towards the south