

way, at the Lostock junction, where the line from Wigan unites with that from Boston to Manchester.

There is a station at Lostock junction situated in the fork of these two lines of railway, with ticket platforms for each, situated one on each side of the station buildings, and the ticket platform on the line from Wigan is situated on an incline falling 1 in 95 to Lostock junction.

The pointsman's box at the junction is at the foot of the incline, about 160 yards from the ticket platform.

On the 6th September an excursion train left Chorley for Southport at 6½ a.m., and had reached Lostock junction on its return from Southport at about 8·15 p.m. The train was composed of an engine and tender, guards van, one composite carriage, one third-class carriage, and 21 second-class carriages, of which five were provided with breaks. There were two guards with the train, of whom the under-guard, in coming from Southport, rode in the guards van next to the engine, and the guard in the last carriage, being one of the second-class carriages provided with a break.

As far as Lostock junction the train had come on the up main line from Southport to Manchester. To reach Chorley it was necessary that its direction should be changed to the down main line from Manchester to Preston, and this is usually effected as follows: After the tickets at Lostock junction have been collected, the station master desires the driver to hook off the engine, and the driver, after obtaining leave from the pointsman, passes through the points, and backs on to the up main line from Preston; there he waits till the carriages at the platform have been let down the incline beyond the points on to the up line to Manchester by easing the breaks. The engine then moves up behind them, and pushes them to a cross-over road, whence the engine leads the train, tender foremost, on the down line to Chorley.

There were about 600 passengers in this excursion train, and when it reached Lostock junction the ticket collectors were engaged at the other platform with another excursion train which had just arrived on the up line from Preston.

After several minutes delay, the guard and under-guard proceeded to collect the tickets, if not by order of the station master, who was on the platform, at all events with his cognizance.

While they were still so engaged the station master gave his usual instructions to the engine driver, "Hook off the engine, and go ahead through the points, and come back on the Preston line, and we will lower the train down past you."

The engine driver had gone through the points, and was coming back on the Preston line, tender foremost, when he heard the pointsman shouting, and saw the carriages approaching on the down line from

Wigan, and before he had time to avert the collision they met at the crossing. The left-hand buffer of the break-van which was in front struck the middle of the tender; the break-van was thrown over on its side, and the carriage next to it (a second-class break-carriage) was thrown off the line, some of the passengers in it being injured, but it is said not seriously. The other carriages remained on the line.

It appears that it had been the practice of the guards to turn their breaks off while waiting at the ticket platform, depending on the engine, when attached to the train, to prevent its fetching away down the incline, while the guards took care to be prepared at their breaks to control the train when the engine was detached.

On this occasion certainly one and probably both breaks were "off," as usual, and the guards were engaged collecting the tickets. On the engine being detached the train naturally started down the incline, and the guard, who rushed to the break-van, was too late to prevent the collision. The second guard occupied himself shutting the doors of the carriages as they passed, in doubt what was the matter, and the train being long the last carriage had not passed him when the collision occurred.

The station master and guard are old servants of the company.

There is some discrepancy in their statements, but the accident was doubtless immediately due to the employment of the guards on duties which did not belong to them, and which ought to have been performed by the ticket collectors; to their having left the train unbroken in a dangerous position; and to the station master having been hasty in desiring the engine to "hook off" before the collection of the tickets was nearly accomplished. The darkness of the night may have led him into error on this point.

I have also to remark, that the instructions under which the train in question was dispatched were to leave Chorley at 6½ a.m., and to leave Southport on return at 6·15 p.m.; no hours being fixed for the arrival in either direction of the train.

There are two ticket collectors at Lostock junction, and a lad to assist them. They were not free to attend to this train till it had been about ¼ an hour at the platform; and when they came it was actually in motion down the incline.

It may be questioned, therefore, whether, under the system in force, the number of ticket collectors is sufficient to meet the contingency of two crowded excursion trains arriving at the platforms at about the same time, as they happened to do on this occasion.

I have, &c.

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

*GEORGE ROSS,  
Captain, R.E.*

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
SIR, Whitehall, Dec. 21, 1858.*

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report made by Captain Ross, R.E., of his inquiry into the circumstances attending the collision which occurred on the 19th ult. at the Bellfield station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

My Lords direct me to state that they trust that the directors will take steps without delay to remove the source of danger pointed out by the inspecting officer, caused by running the coke train in such a manner as to interfere with the mail train.

I am, &c.,

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

*DOUGLAS GALTON,  
Captain, R.E.*

*Railway Department Board of Trade,  
SIR, Whitehall, Dec. 14, 1858.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, that in compliance with your instructions of the 24th ult. I have enquired into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred on the 19th November at Bellfield to the 9 a.m. up express train travelling from Normanton to Manchester.

Bellfield is three quarters of a mile north of Rochdale, and there is a siding there connected with a loading bank, which is reached from the down line by a through road crossing the up line.

Towards Normanton it is protected by a distant signal 580 yards from the crossing, and there is a pointsman in charge of the siding to work the points and signals. The railway is nearly level at that part, the fall to Bellfield being perhaps 1 in 800 or less.

The 19th November was a day of extraordinary fog for many miles round Manchester, and it is said that the rails were slippery besides with a fall of sleet or snow.

A regular goods train with coke had left Manchester as usual at 8.40 a.m., and the driver of it had reached Bellfield about 10.40 a.m., and was with his engine on the crossing engaged shunting some waggons into the siding, when the 9 a.m. up express train from Normanton ran into it.

Some platelayers employed near the distant signal which covers Bellfield siding towards Normanton saw the signal at danger, and knew that shunting was going on. They heard the express train coming through the fog, and succeeded in warning the driver before he reached the distant signal.

He could not have received this notice at less than 700 yards from the crossing, and it is in evidence that he at once whistled for the guards break, and applied his own tender break, and that he reversed his engine, but the collision that ensued was a serious one, seven passengers and the two guards and fireman of the express train having received injuries.

Their Lordships are aware that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company has been one of the foremost in extending the application of break power to their carriages, and all their new stock is being fitted with Fay's patent break.

This train was unfortunately not composed of carriages so provided. They were eleven in number, with two ordinary break vans, and one of these breaks was not worked, owing to the driver's whistle not having been heard by the guard. This may have been due to the fog deadening the sound, for the man seems to have been at his proper post of look out.

The Bellfield pointsman states, in explanation of his having proceeded with the shunting before the up express train passed, that when the coke train arrived the *down* mail train was due to follow it in a few minutes, and that the rails being slippery, and there being waggons in the siding, he had to allow more time than usual for the shunting to be performed.

The working time tables are in fault for this, and blame cannot, I think, properly attach to the pointsman.

The working time tables provide for the arrival at Bellfield by 9.50 a.m. of the 8.50 a.m. down coke train from Manchester.

If it adhered to its time it would be out of the way of the up express and of the down mail trains, which pass that spot between 10.40 and 11 a.m., but in practice the time lost by the coke train in doing its shunting on the road generally throws it so late that it reaches Bellfield either just before or just after the mail train.

In the former case it is liable to collision, as occurred in this instance, with the up express train.

The remedy is a simple one, viz., to time the coke train always to *follow* the down mail train from Rochdale; and I was given to understand that this will be done.

I have, &c.,  
*The Secretary,* GEORGE ROSS,  
*Railway Department,* Captain, R.E.  
*Board of Trade.*

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,*  
*Secretary's Office,*  
*Manchester, Dec. 24, 1858.*

SIR,

I HAVE submitted to the directors of this company your letter of 21st instant, and the copy of Captain Ross's report as to the collision at Bellfield on 19th ult., which accompanied same.

I have the pleasure to inform you that the directors had already issued such instructions as will, they hope, have the effect of securing the object recommended by Captain Ross in his report.

I have, &c.,  
*The Secretary,* J. M. S. LAWN,  
*Railway Department,* Secretary.  
*Board of Trade.*

#### LONDONDERRY AND COLERAINE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,*  
 SIR, *Whitehall, 7th Feb. 1859.*

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report made by Captain Ross, R.E., of his inquiry into the circumstances attending an accident which occurred on the 31st December last to a goods train at the Magilligan station of the Londonderry and Coleraine Railway.

My Lords trust that the directors will take steps without delay to cause the points leading into sidings which face the traffic on their lines to be supplied with signals attached to them, visible by day and night, and that they will cause these points to be kept *locked* in position, except when required to be opened for the passage of trains.

My Lords also trust that the directors will cause the very dangerous and objectionable practice of pushing waggons in front of trains to be at once discontinued.

I am, &c.  
 DOUGLAS GALTON,  
 Captain, R.E.  
*The Secretary to the*  
*Londonderry and*  
*Coleraine Railway*  
*Company.*

SIR, *Coleraine, 1st Feb. 1859.*  
 I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, that, in compliance with your instructions, I have inquired into the circumstances attending an

accident which occurred at Magilligan, ten miles from Coleraine, on the 31st December 1858.

The stations on the Londonderry and Coleraine Railway, a single line, are mostly what are called "flag stations." The business done at them is so insignificant that the trains do not stop at them except by signal. The road is level, and the driver at a distance of a little more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from each station sounds his whistle, and is answered by the guard of the train and by the station man, who show respectively a white flag by day and a white light by night when there is neither passenger nor package to set down or to take up at the station.

Magilligan is a station of this description, with one station man, and there is a blind siding to the east of it, about 120 yards in length, the switch of which forms facing points to trains proceeding from Coleraine to Londonderry.

The station man at Magilligan had despatched a waggon out of his siding by the last train on the 30th December. The next morning he came to his duty, and lighted his hand lamp just in time to wave his white light for the first train from Coleraine (a goods train) to pass.

He had not examined the points, and they proved to have been set for the siding, and into it the goods train ran.

The switch is a self-acting one, weighted for the main line. The station man admits that he had not examined it after the waggon passed out of the siding the previous evening. He *should* have done so, and he should at the same time have fixed a key by which the points are secured in their position when set for