

Derby came up; it consisted of four carriages and two vans, one guard Midland Railway. accompanied the train, who was in the rear van. The driver states that it was very foggy, but that he saw the red light about fifty yards off, and that the explosive signals went off. He says that he instantly threw the engine into back gear, gave the signal for the guard to apply his break, and that the fireman put on the tender break. The train, notwithstanding, could not be brought up until it had pitched into the tail of the coal train. The part of the line where the collision occurred was on a long descending gradient of 1 in 330. The speed, the driver states, did not exceed thirty or thirty-five miles an hour. As 1000 yards ought to be ample space, under ordinary circumstances, to bring up a train of the weight of the one in question, travelling at the speed stated, the excuse offered for not being able to do so, was, that the rails were like ice; and as it was foggy, and both snowing and freezing at the time, there can be no doubt that the rails *were* in a bad state: and, coupled with the fact that the train at the time was travelling over a descending gradient, I think it probable that the driver was not proceeding much beyond his proper speed. Considering the state of the weather, the signal should have been sent further back, and the driver ought to have proceeded with greater caution. There appears, however, to be less matter for censure than is usual in such occurrences.

I have, &c.,  
*The Secretary of the  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.*
GEORGE WYNNE,  
Capt. Royal Engineers.

### LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, January 23, 1854.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the inclosed copy of a report which they have received from their inspecting officer upon the accident which occurred at the Bellfield cutting, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on the 4th instant.

Lancashire and  
Yorkshire  
Railway.

My Lords direct me to request you to call the particular attention of the directors to the remarks of the inspecting officer upon the desirableness of affording a constant means of communication with the guards and engine drivers of trains.

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

I have, &c.,  
JAMES BOOTH.

SIR, *Manchester, January 17, 1854.*

In compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 13th instant, 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 attending the collision which occurred on the 4th instant in the Bellfield cutting of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

It appears that as the 1.20 p.m. passenger train from Normanton was passing the Bellfield cutting on the 4th instant, the three last carriages and the break van were thrown off the line by a snow-drift; and that the van and two second-class carriages, being left standing across the other line of rails, were run into immediately afterwards by another passenger train proceeding in the opposite direction. As far as I can learn, there was only one passenger in the carriages which remained across the line— a gentleman who afterwards walked to Rochdale; but several passengers in the train which ran into them, were shaken.

The train from Normanton, consisted of two engines, eleven carriages and two vans. Of these, a van and two second-class carriages were thrown across the down line; whilst a first-class carriage, which left the line at the same time, was dragged after the remainder of the train, and its wheels torn off. The train was stopped at nearly a mile from the Bellfield cutting, and within 150 yards of the Rochdale station. The guard belonging to the van which was thrown across

Lancashire and  
Yorkshire  
Railway.

the down line, set a wire signal, which serves to protect a siding close to the scene of the accident, at "danger," but too late to stop the approaching train—and then ran back to stop any train that might be following on the same line. The other guard saw from his van, that a portion of his train had been left behind, and after an ineffectual attempt to cross the tops of the carriages, passed over the footboards to the driver, who had, however, already commenced to slacken his speed.

The train from Rochdale was about two hours after its time, having been detained by the snow, and having left the Manchester portion behind altogether. It was composed of two engines, four carriages and a van. This train must have been some distance within the distant signal from the Bellfield siding, at the time that that signal was set to "danger" by the guard of the other train, as it met the other train dragging its first-class carriage "off the line," at little more than fifty yards from the scene of the collision.

This collision appears to have been of a nature purely accidental; but it is one of those cases which points to the necessity of a means of communication between guards and drivers.

There happened to be a guard left in the train from Normanton, after the three last carriages had been detached; but as this guard had no good means of communicating with the driver, the train was allowed to run for nearly a mile from the scene of the accident, with the last—a first-class—carriage off the line; whereas, if the guard had possessed a more easy mode of transit by the foot-boards, or been able to apply a greater number of breaks, or been provided with a rope attached to a bell on the tender, or any other method of attracting the attention of the driver, a considerable amount of danger might have been avoided, not only to the passengers of this first-class carriage, and to the guard, but also to the passengers in the eight other carriages of the train.

To the Secretary of the  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,

H. W. TYLER, *Lieut. R.E.*,  
*Inspector of Railways.*

Sir,

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,*  
*Secretary's Office, Manchester, January 26, 1854.*

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, inclosing copy of a report from Lieutenant Tyler, R.E., upon the accident which occurred at the Bellfield cutting on the 4th instant. I have duly submitted the same to the directors of this company, and I have been desired to inform you, in reply, that the directors have at present under consideration the means proper to be adopted to secure a practicable and efficient method of communication between the guards and engine drivers.

To James Booth, Esquire,  
&c.            &c.

I have, &c.,

JNO. DUNSTAN, Junior,  
*Secretary.*

#### EASTERN COUNTIES RAILWAY.

Sir,

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,*  
*Whitehall, March 2, 1854.*

Eastern Counties  
Railway.

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to forward to you the enclosed copy of the report of the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into and report upon the circumstances attending a collision that occurred upon the Eastern Counties Railway, on the 5th January, near Thetford.

I am to observe that this accident would appear to have arisen from the inability of the inferior officers of the company to meet the emergency of a sudden obstruction of the line, when they no longer possessed the power of communicating with their superiors by means of the electric telegraph. It appears, however, to my Lords that the laxity and want of precision which characterised the orders which were given upon the occasion, and the violation of these orders by one of the superior officers of the company, must have been to some extent attributable to the want of a proper discipline on the railway; and my Lords