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GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 14th December, 1868.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Great Western Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Col. Rich, R.E., the officer appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred at the Hatton station, on the Great Western Railway, on the 23rd ultimo.

I am, &c.
R. G. W. HERBERT.

The Secretary of the Great Western Railway Company.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 11th December, 1868.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 2nd instant, I have the honor 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 23rd November 1868, at Hatton station, of the Great Western Railway.

Two passengers are reported to have been slightly cut and bruised.

A goods train, which consisted of an engine and tender, twenty-nine loaded waggons, and a guard's van with a guard, left Didcot for Birmingham, about 4.30 a.m. on the day named.

The engine had not sufficient power to take the goods train up the incline, which is situated about a mile to the east of Hatton station. The goods train was therefore divided, and the front part of the train was taken to Hatton station, and placed in a siding to the south of the down line. The driver then went back for the rest of his train, which he also brought to Hatton station about 9.35 a.m., but he placed this second portion of the train on the up line of rails, by the direction of the Hatton station master.

The stoppage of the goods train had kept the down passenger train from Leamington to Birmingham about 20 minutes behind its proper time.

The station master at Hatton could not place the second portion of the goods train in the siding, without further delaying the passenger train, as a goods train from Norton had gone into the siding, after the first part of the Didcot goods train had been put in, and this Norton goods train was foul of the cross-over road leading to the siding.

The station master consequently directed the second portion of the Didcot goods train to be shunted on to the up line of rails, to allow the passenger train from Leamington to Birmingham to pass.

As soon as the passenger train had left for Birmingham, a goods train was despatched to Stratford, and then the driver of the Didcot goods train took his engine across, to get the front part of his train out of the siding at the down side of the line. He returned with that portion of his train to the up line, to get the second part of his train, which was coupled up to the front portion, and the Hatton station master then gave directions for this goods train to start. As the goods train was on the up road, it had to cross to the down line by a crossing at the north side of Hatton station. While doing so the station master heard the whistle of the engine of the up passenger train, due to leave Birmingham at 9.10 a.m.

He looked at the signals, which were at danger, but the up passenger train did not stop. The engine of the passenger train struck the third waggon from the tail of the goods train, and smashed the waggon which was the last but one of the train.

The engine of the passenger train had one buffer and the step broken. Neither the engine or any coaches of the passengers train were thrown off the rails or injured.

The passenger train consisted of a tank engine, travelling with the coal bunk to the front, one second-class, one composite, one first-class, a guard's van with a guard, and two third-class carriages, coupled in the order given.

The speed of this train at the time of the collision is stated to have been about three miles an hour, and that of the goods train, which it ran into, about six miles per hour.

The accident was caused by the neglect of the engine driver of the 9.10 a.m. up passenger train from Birmingham. He disregarded the signals.

The up station and distant signals at Hatton station are well seen for a safe distance.

The press of late have been urging the desirability of forming lines of rails for goods trains to run on, so as to keep the goods traffic altogether separate from the passenger traffic. This is, no doubt, very desirable; but in the present state of railway finances I doubt whether many companies could raise the capital to execute the work, even if they were willing to do so.

It is a most objectionable practice of Railway Companies to place such trains behind the engines, as they are just capable of drawing, if all the circumstances are favorable, and which they are quite incapable of drawing in the time given, if the rails are greasy, or if there is a contrary wind. It leads to a great number of accidents.

I doubt if the object of economy, which leads to this objectionable practice, is accomplished; and I would suggest, for the serious consideration of the Railway Companies, whether the increased regularity and safety, which would be the result of their dividing their trains, would not much more than compensate for the small additional cost of having to provide a second engine to convey these unwieldy trains, which are too large for the engine, and too large for the accommodation which is available at the stations.

I have, &c.
F. H. RICH,
Lieut.-Col. R.E.

The Secretary, Railway Department, Board of Trade.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade,
(Railway Department,)
Whitehall, 8th August 1868.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you to be laid before the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of a Report made by Colonel Rich, R.E., the officer appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the circumstances attending a collision that occurred on the 19th June at the North Dean Station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

I am, &c.
R. G. W. HERBERT.

The Secretary of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 31st July 1868.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 3rd 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 which attended the collision that occurred on the 19th June 1868, at North Dean Station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The branch line to Halifax joins the line from Normanton to Manchester at North Dean.

A goods train from Halifax arrived at North Dean Station about 8·20 p.m. on the 19th June 1868. After doing some shunting in the yard, the guard of the goods train gave the driver a signal by hand to draw some waggons out of the sidings on to the main down line to Manchester. Thomas Whiteley, who was the night watchman and shunter on duty, was assisting in shunting and making up the goods train.

The shunting was done under Whiteley's control.

When the goods train was drawn out on to the main down line, five waggons were detached. Whiteley held the points of a cross-over road, between the up and down main line, and the goods guard and Whiteley both signalled to the driver to push back, which he did, and the five waggons that were detached were pushed across on to the up lines to Manchester.

A special train from York to Bolton was due at North Dean Station at the time, and the junction signalman, not being aware of the night watchman's intention to shunt the goods waggons on to the up line, had previously taken off the main line signals for the special train.

The first goods waggon had just reached the up line of rails, when the special train, which consisted of an engine and tender, a second-class with break compartment and guard, 12 passenger carriages and another second-class carriage with break compartment and a second gaard, coupled in the order stated, came round the curve, at the east side of North Dean Station at a speed of about 17 miles per hour.

Elland Tunnel is situated on the line from York to Bolton at about a quater of a mile to the north-east of North Dean Station. On emerging from the tunnel, the driver of the special train found the North Dean distant signal all right for him to proceed. When his train had got about half way between the tunnel and North Dean Station he heard an engine driver on the down line whistling. He shut off steam, but on looking forward he saw the station signal all right, and he only observed the goods waggons that were shunted across on to the line on which he was travelling when he was about 40 yards from the goods waggons. He reversed his engine at once and whistled for the breaks, but although Newall's patent breaks were fixed to six of the carriages in the train, besides the break carriages in which the guards were travelling, it was impossible to stop the train.

The engine of the special train ran into the waggons. Four of them were smashed, and the leading wheels of the engine of the special train were lifted three or four inches on to one of the waggons.

The engine and tender of the special train were very much damaged. The second-class break carriage next to it and the passenger carriage next to the second-class break carriage were also damaged.

One passenger is reported to have been slightly hurt.

None of the carriages left the rails, and the engine of the special train came to a stand about 85 yards from the point of collision.

The driver of the special train could not observe the goods waggons at any great distance before he struck them, as there was a coal train on the down line which impeded the view, in consequence of the curve in the road between the mouth of Elland Tunnel and North Dean Station. The accident was caused by the neglect of watchman Whiteley. He has been dismissed from the company's service, and I did not see him.

It appears that he was perfectly aware that the special train was due at the time at North Dean Station, and that he shunted the goods waggons on to the up line when the signals for that line were takeu off for the special train.

I recommend that all the signals and points connected with the junction of the Halifax branch with the Normanton and Manchester main line be worked from an elevated signal box, and that the points of all sidings and crossings connected with the main line, and all signals controlling the sidings, be worked from the same hut, and that they be arranged on the locking principle.

The company are now laying a second line of rails on the branch to Halifax, and they propose to carry out this arrangement in connexion with the new line, but I recommend that it be done at once.

I have, &c.
F. H. RICH,
Lieut.-Col. R. E.

The Secretary,
Board of Trade,
Railway Department.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 31st July 1868.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Board of 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 Rich, R.E., the officer appointed to inquire into the circumstances connected with the collision which occurred on the 30th June at the Mirfield Station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

I am, &c.
R. G. W. HERBERT.

The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire
Railway Company.

Board of Trade
(Railway Department),
Whitehall, 29th July 1868.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 3rd 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 which attended the collision that occurred on the 30th June 1868, at Mirfield Junction, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

A passenger train which consisted of an engine, travelling with the tender in front, a guard's van, two second-class, two composite, and a third-class carriage, coupled in the order given, left Bradford at 1.52 p.m. on the day named.

Three of the carriages in the train were fitted with Newall's patent breaks. The train left Bradford two minutes late. It approached Mirfield about its proper time, 2.25 p.m.

The driver whistled for the signals as he approached Mirfield Junction, which is close outside the station. The signals were taken off, and as he was running round the curve, within 100 yards of the junction, at a speed of about 10 miles per hour, an engine coming from the coal sheds, and going into the engine sheds, ran