

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,  
1, Whitehall, London, S. W.,  
30th September 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 14th instant, the result of my inquiry into the causes of the collision which occurred on the 11th instant at Berry Brow, near Huddersfield, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, between two empty third-class carriages and some waggon; these carriages, upon being detached at Brockholes junction from the 12 o'clock (noon) train from Huddersfield to Holmfirth, in order to be attached to the 12.20 p.m. train from Brockholes junction to Clayton West, at once began to move backwards, and, spite of efforts to stop them, ran back on the up line (which is on a falling gradient) for 2 miles 244 yards, to Berry Brow, where they were turned into a siding on which the waggons were standing.

No personal injuries were sustained.

Both carriages were considerably damaged, and three waggons slightly so.

*Description.*

At Brockholes junction the lines from Holmfirth, Penistone, and the Clayton West Branch unite, and thence proceed to Huddersfield, the adjoining stations in the Huddersfield direction being Honley, 1,600 yards, and Berry Brow, 2 miles 244 yards, from Brockholes. At both of these stations there are sidings joining the up line with trailing points. The line falls from Brockholes towards Huddersfield on a gradient of 1 in 100, but notwithstanding this there are no runaway points below either Brockholes, Honley, or Berry Brow stations.

The line is worked on the absolute block system, and there is also communication by telephone between the signal-cabins.

*Evidence.*

1. *Alfred Roebuck*, station-master; 14 years in the service, and station-master at Brockholes 15 months. —On the 11th Sept. the 12.20 p.m. train from Clayton West was waiting in the down platform for the arrival of the 12 o'clock train from Huddersfield to Holmfirth. Until the latter arrived, I was not aware that there were any carriages on it to be attached to the Clayton West train. The train arrived at 12.17, and the driver told me that there were to be two carriages taken off from behind for the Clayton West train. I told him they should be left below the cross-over road so as to let the Clayton West train back on to them. I did not know at this time where the Clayton West train was standing. I then went down to the rear of the train and got one hand-scotch and two pieces of wood, and guard Wood directed the driver to set back four or five yards so as to set the two rear carriages clear of the cross-over road. The train stopped after setting back, and I put the hand-scotch between the off tyre of the hind wheel of the first carriage and the rail, and one piece of wood under the front off wheel of the first carriage, and a second piece of wood under the front wheel of the second carriage. The guard then called the driver back for porter Kaye to uncouple the carriages; he was standing in the 4-ft. space in front of the two carriages, and I was in the 6-ft., about opposite the first carriage. The driver set back, by the guard's direction, and Kaye uncoupled, and the carriages began at once to run back, as the hand-scotch broke in two, and the other wheels ran over the two pieces of wood. I ran alongside of the first carriage and tried, with a piece of the hand-scotch, to stop it by putting it between the wheel and rail some half-dozen times, and I then picked up a piece of iron about a yard long, and tried to use it as a lever between the side of the wheel and the axle guard, and ran along with this till I was exhausted; the speed when I left the

carriages, about half-way to Honley, was about six miles an hour. Driver Stott, of the West Clayton train, tried also to stop the carriages with a piece of iron which he put under the front wheel of the first carriage, but the wheel pushed it aside and he did not try again. Porter Kaye did nothing to try and stop the carriages. Neither did the driver, fireman, nor guard of the Holmfirth train; but the train went away directly they had been uncoupled, and the guard told me afterwards he had not seen them running away till he had got on to the Holmfirth branch. As soon as the carriages had started to run back, the signalman told me he had informed Honley on the telephone that two carriages were running back from the Holmfirth train, and that he repeated the message when they had got out of sight. The carriages had the ordinary break blocks, &c. for Fay's breaks, but there was no break wheel in either of them. The driver of the Clayton West train told me that he would have gone towards Honley to get in front of the carriages but he was not sure whether there was anyone in his van. When I saw that the Clayton West train was standing on the down line on the Honley side of the cross-over road, I had already arranged what to do with the two carriages, and it did not occur to me to let the Holmfirth train drop the carriages on the Clayton West train, which I now see would have been a safer mode of proceeding. There was no one in the carriages when they ran back, a Company's servant had arrived in one of them, but had got out immediately the train had stopped. I had got the scotches in before the driver set back, and I think the porter must have uncoupled just after this, though I had shouted to him not to hook them off, which he says he did not hear. I was station-master at Crofton for about 18 months before coming here. The guard went away without any permission from me, as I was out of sight in the 6-ft. space.

2. *Charles Kaye*, porter ; 22 months in the service, 20 years old.—I have been three months at Brockholes. I was on duty when the 12 o'clock train arrived from Huddersfield on the 11th. I was told by the guard to uncouple the two rear carriages from the rest of the train. I went into the 4-ft. between the buffers to do so after the train had set back to clear the crossing. I first uncoupled the side chains, having unscrewed the coupling a little before the train had set back to clear the crossing, and the guard, seeing I could not loose the shackle without the engine setting back, called the driver back, and as soon as I could I lifted the shackle off the hook, and before I had seen that the carriages were moving back. I had seen the station-master in the 6-ft. scotching the wheels, and I saw a scotch under the wheel next me. Just as I got the shackle off the station-master said, "Hold on," but it was then too late to get it on again. On hearing the carriages running away I got one of the pieces of wood that the station-master had used, and tried to stop the first carriage for about 50 yards, after which I thought it was of no use. I had to run to keep up with the carriages. I saw the station-master trying to stop them for a long distance, and also the driver and stoker of the Clayton West engine tried to stop them with pieces of iron on the top of the wheels, but they went no farther than I did. I do not think the guard of the Holmfirth train knew the carriages were running away.

3. *George Heeley*, signalman ; 6 years in the service, 4½ years signalman.—I have been two years at Brockholes, where I came on duty on the 11th at 6 a.m. for 12 hours. The Holmfirth train arrived at 12.17 p.m., and I was not aware that there were two carriages to be detached till I saw them running back slowly with the station-master and driver of the Clayton West running after them and trying to stop them. Mr. Roebuck ran with them till I lost sight of him, but the driver did not go very far. On seeing the carriages running back I called the Honley signalman on the telephone, and said that "Two carriages are running back towards you," but whether I said on the right or wrong line I do not remember ; I also said, "If they reach Honley, which I do not think they will, be prepared to turn them into a siding." Honley at once replied that he could not see them. I then told him they had got down as far as the wooden bridge ; and then I said, "They are going out of my sight." There were no trains due in either direction for about half an hour. It did not occur to me to send the Clayton West train to Honley to get in front of the carriages. I had never thought they would reach Honley. After the carriages had passed Honley the signalman there told me they had run past. Having informed Honley on the telephone, I forgot to use the proper block signal. The carriages ran away about 12.21, and they reached Berry Brow at 12.32, as I heard by telephone. I do not know what time they passed Honley.

4. *Joseph Cockhill*, signalman ; 12 years in the service, 7 years signalman, all the time at Honley.—I came on duty on September 11th at 5.30 a.m. for 12 hours. The Holmfirth train passed up at about 12.14 p.m., and at about 12.25 I heard from Brockholes on the telephone that two carriages were running away, but not on which line ; I replied "All right," or something to that effect ; and I then went out of the cabin to see which line they were coming on. I was not out above a minute before I saw them coming. I then ran back as fast as I could, but before I got into the cabin they had passed at a speed of about 30 miles an hour. I was too late to turn them into either of the sidings or through the cross-over road. If I had been in time I should have turned them in at the siding nearest Brockholes. I only remember two messages from Brockholes. If I had received a proper block signal from Brockholes I should have had the siding points open to receive the carriages. I had not the presence of mind to ask Brockholes on which line

the carriages were running back. The carriages passed at 12.30. I called Berry Brow instantly on the telephone, and told him there were two carriages running away on the up line and to turn them into the siding. I did not think of sending also the proper block signal.

5. *Arthur Brooke*, signalman ; 14 years in the service, 9 years signalman.—I have been most of the time at Berry Brow, where I came on duty on the 11th at 5.5 a.m. for 12 hours. The Holmfirth train passed up at 12.10 p.m. I heard nothing more of it till 12.30 p.m., when I was called on the telephone and Meltham junction told me that some carriages were running away from Brockholes on the up line, and then I heard direct from Honley that this was the case. I made up my mind to turn them through the siding points leading from the up line through the down line to the goods yard, and, if possible, to throw them off the road at the slip points, thinking it better to do this should there be passengers in the carriages than let them run at full speed into the waggons which were standing in the siding. I was afraid to turn them on the down line as they would have run away to Huddersfield. The carriages arrived at 12.32 p.m. at a speed of about 30 miles an hour, not so fast as an express train would pass. I had already pulled over the siding-point lever and held the slip-road lever in my hand half over. I worked the latter lever as the carriages were passing over and I threw the second one off the road ; they both remained coupled together and went into the sidings among the waggons, and were about 25 yards past the cabin door of the main line and on their wheels.

6. *William Senior*, driver ; 20 years in the service, and 14 years driver.—I was driver of the 12 o'clock train on the 11th instant, from Huddersfield to Holmfirth. The train consisted of a tank-engine, running chimney first, and nine coaches. The engine and seven vehicles next it were fitted with the automatic vacuum break, but the two rear vehicles were not so fitted. Those two were to be detached at Brockholes to be attached to the Clayton West train. We started to time and arrived all right at Brockholes. I was there called back by the guard a few yards to set the two rear carriages clear the cross-over road, and then told again to ease my break, in order, as I supposed, to get the two coaches uncoupled. I moved back a few inches, not noticing what was being done to break the two rear carriages. I then got a green flag from the guard to proceed, and put my engine into forward gear, and gave steam before I let the fireman release the hand-break. After starting a short distance I looked back on the platform side, but saw nothing of the carriages moving back, but on getting over the junction I heard the break whistle from the engine of the West Clayton train. I then went over to the 6-ft. side and looked back and saw the carriages moving slowly back. I did not think it necessary or possible to do anything, but went forward on my journey. After setting back to ease the coupling the train was stopped with the hand-break, the vacuum break having been previously released.

7. *Samuel Wood*, guard ; 19 years in the service, foreman porter at Denby Dale, and occasionally acting as guard in the summer months.—I was guard of the 12 o'clock train from Huddersfield to Holmfirth on the 11th. It consisted of nine vehicles, seven regular vehicles fitted with the automatic vacuum break and two fitted with mechanical break appliances, but without the means of their being applied from either vehicle. We started punctually, and all went right to Brockholes. Here the train first moved back to set the two rear carriages clear of the cross-over road ; and then the porter went into the 4-ft. space to uncouple them, while the station-master went to scotch them with some pieces of wood. Thinking the station-master had had time to scotch the wheels, I told the porter to take the shackle off, but it was

tight, and he could not get it off till I told the driver to ease back. He did so, but not sufficiently to close the buffers between the rear of the train and the two rear carriages. The porter then took off the shackle, and I gave a signal to the driver to go on, not observing that the carriages were moving away till I got over the junction and was looking back, when I

saw them moving away and some people trying to stop them. I felt that I could do nothing, and allowed the train to proceed.

*Kaye* recalled.—The front part of the train struck the two carriages when the driver eased back.

#### *Conclusion.*

This collision, which was happily unattended by any personal injuries, was the result of a dangerous mode of working at Brockholes station, which is situated on a gradient falling towards Huddersfield at 1 in 100. In consequence of its being market day at Huddersfield it became necessary to add to the usual number of carriages forming the 1.15 p.m. train from Clayton West to Huddersfield, and two third-class carriages were accordingly brought out at the rear of the 12 o'clock (noon) train from Huddersfield to Holmfirth to be attached to the 12.20 p.m. train from Brockholes to Clayton West. The proper mode of proceeding would have been for the Holmfirth train, which arrived at Brockholes junction on the up line, to have set back with these two carriages through a cross-over road on to the front of the Clayton West train, which was standing on the down line, but instead of this the station-master having, as he thought, prevented the two carriages from running back by scotching the wheels with a hand scotch and two pieces of wood, allowed them to be uncoupled on the up line, in the act of doing which it became necessary for the engine to ease back to permit of the shackle being lifted off the hook; the front of the train having been eased back rather more sharply than was necessary, the two empty vehicles received a slight blow just as they were uncoupled; this blow caused the wheel to break in halves the hand scotch which was blocking it, and the porter being unable to re-shackle in time, the carriages began to move back, the other wheels jumping the pieces of wood which had been placed against them. The station-master followed the carriages a considerable distance (probably half a mile) trying to stop them with a broken piece of the scotch and a piece of iron he picked up, but at last became exhausted and was obliged to give up the attempt, though as long as he had continued his efforts he had managed to keep down the speed. The only other servants of the Company who made any attempts to stop the runaway vehicles were the porter who had uncoupled them and the driver and fireman of the Clayton West train; they used some small pieces of wood and iron for the purpose, but soon gave up their efforts. There was a timber yard close to the station but it does not appear to have occurred to any of these men to get a good-sized piece of wood from thence, or with the help of it the carriages might no doubt have been stopped before they had run any great distance.

The driver, fireman, and guard of the Holmfirth train seem to have been unaware that the carriages were running back till their train had proceeded some little distance on its journey, and they then thought it useless to go back and try to overtake them.

Had the Brockholes signalman or the driver of the Clayton West train acted with judgment and promptitude when they saw the ineffectual efforts of the station-master to stop the carriages, the Clayton West train, which was standing on the down line, might have proceeded to Honley, the next station, have there crossed on to the up line, and have probably been in time to receive the runaway carriages on the front of the engine before they had acquired any great speed.

The Honley signalman seems to have lost his presence of mind upon receiving information on the telephone from Brockholes that the carriages were running back. Instead of remaining in his cabin and turning them into a siding, which he could easily have done before their speed had become very great, he went out to look for them, and on seeing them coming says that he could not get back in time to open the siding points. He complains that he did not receive the block signal from Brockholes of vehicles running away on the wrong line or he would have had the siding-points ready to turn them into the sidings. It was of course an omission of duty on the part of the Brockholes signalman not to have given the proper block signal to Honley in addition to using the telephone, but I doubt whether the Honley signalman would have acted differently had he received it.

The Berry Brow signalman acted with intelligence in first turning the runaway carriages, which he thinks had acquired a speed of 30 miles when they reached his cabin, off the up line on to the crossing, and then by means of the slip-points on the

crossing in throwing them partly off the rails so as to check their speed before they dashed into the siding and came into collision with the coal waggons standing in it. The conduct of this signalman therefore deserves special commendation.

This collision would not have occurred had there been proper runaway points on the up line a short distance on the Huddersfield side of Brockholes junction: these no doubt will now be provided, as well as below Honley and Berry Brow.

Nor would the collision have occurred had the runaway vehicles, like the rest of the train to which they had been attached, been provided with automatic break appliances, as the breaks could then have been applied before they had been uncoupled from the train. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Company have, however, been making good progress in fitting their rolling stock with automatic break appliances. During the six months ending 30th June 1886 they had so fitted 44 engines and 331 vehicles, making the total thus fitted at that date 309 engines and 1,328 vehicles. In addition to this they have a large number of vehicles still fitted with Fay's or Newall's continuous (mechanical) breaks.

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 Company on the 21st October.

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## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department.)  
1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
November 3, 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 15th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the causes of the collision which occurred on the 12th ultimo at Bolton Junction station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case, while the 12.5 p.m. coal train, from Ince, viâ Bolton, for Entwistle was crossing from the main up goods line to the down line of the Blackburn branch at Bolton station it was run into by a special cattle train from the North Docks Liverpool, viâ Bolton, for Wakefield.

Complaints of injuries have been received from seven cattle drovers, who were travelling in a carriage in front of the rear van of the cattle train; the driver, fireman, and guard of the cattle train were also injured.

In the coal train, five waggons were broken up, and three others damaged. In the cattle train, the engine was thrown partly over on its right side and damaged; the drovers' carriage was also slightly damaged.

The collision occurred at 1.56 p.m.

### *Description.*

At Bolton Junction station the lines from Wigan and Blackburn unite near the centre of the station, through which there are four lines of rails, viz., two platform lines and two goods lines; the four Wigan lines merge into two, before reaching the mouth of the first of a series of short tunnels, 170 yards from the junction, but the four Blackburn lines become two in a much shorter distance. There are cross-over roads on both the Wigan and Blackburn lines close to and just beyond where the four lines merge into two.

The junction is properly signalled, the levers working the points and signals being interlocked in a raised cabin situated in the fork of the junction, and about 100 yards from the mouth of the tunnel on the Wigan line. The only signals to which it is necessary here to refer are the junction up home-signals for the Wigan line, situated at the eastern mouth of the series of short tunnels and visible for about 155 yards; the first up distant-signal, 620 yards from the up home-signals, close to the western mouth of the tunnels, and visible for nearly a quarter of a mile; and the second up distant-signal, 125 yards beyond the first one, and underneath the Bullfields East cabin up home-signal, and also visible for nearly a quarter of a mile. The line is worked on the absolute block system, and had one of the two trains which came into collision been a passenger train, the Bolton signalman would not have been justified in giving