

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade*  
(*Railway Department*),

SIR, *Whitehall, 3d February 1866.*

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for 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 Capt. Tyler, R.E., the officer appointed by my Lords to inquire into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred between a passenger train and a goods train, at the Chapel Town Station on the 13th ultimo.

I have, &c.,  
W. D. FANE.

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

SIR, *Manchester, 31st January 1866.*

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 17th 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 13th instant, between a passenger train and a goods train, at the Chapel Town Station, on the Bolton and Blackburn section of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

This station is about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the north of Bolton, and is approached from the south on a rising gradient of 1 in 75. There is a bridge over the line, 180 yards south of the up passenger platform, and the line being curved and in a cutting, the view of an engine driver is much obstructed. There are no platform signals, but there is a distant signal in each direction, that towards the south being on the slope of the cutting and north of the above bridge, so that the view of it is obscured by the bridge for some little distance.

On the day in question, the 8 a.m. passenger train from Manchester and Bolton approached Chapel Town, according to the engine driver, at 9·2, six or seven minutes late, composed of an engine and tender, four carriages, and a break van, the carriages and van having been coupled together with Fay's continuous breaks. The engine driver found the signal at all right, and was running forward with his steam on towards the down platform, when he suddenly saw a pilot engine "about thirty yards" in front of him. He shut off his steam, reversed his engine, and whistled for the breaks; but he came into collision with the pilot engine at a speed which he estimates at seven or eight, and the guard at ten miles an hour.

The shock was a sharp one. The guard, who had time fully to apply his breaks, was thrown down in his van and hurt in the side, and he has not yet been able to return to his work; but the engines were only slightly damaged, and fortunately only two passengers appear to have been injured. This result is attributable, partly to an effort made by the driver of the pilot engine to run forward, and partly to the steepness of the gradient; but principally to the action of the continuous breaks which the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company so wisely employ, and which, upon this occasion, prevented any violent rebound of the buffers from occurring after the collision, besides lessening the original shock to the passengers in each vehicle.

The pilot engine was standing about thirty yards to the south of the down platform, at the tail of a goods train which it had been assisting up the incline. This goods train consisted, when it reached Chapel Town, of an engine and tender (besides the

pilot engine), 25 waggons, and two break vans. Three of these waggons, the third, fourth, and fifth, were to be left at the station, and the train was brought to a stand at the down platform, to allow the engine and tender to go forward with the five leading waggons, to the points through which they were to be turned across the up line into a siding.

This train reached Chapel Town at 8·55, according to the head guard in charge of it, or 9 o'clock, according to the station master. It was  $3\frac{1}{4}$  hours late, of which time 1 hour and 40 minutes had been lost on its last trip, at Bolton, in waiting for the pilot engine, and the remainder in shunting. As the passenger train was due to leave Chapel Town at 8·56, it was actually due to arrive at that station when the goods train drew up to the platform on the same line of rails; and it would appear that the goods train must have then been left unprotected by the signal for six or seven minutes before the collision occurred.

The station-master was engaged in the booking office when the goods train arrived, and only ran out "about half a minute afterwards" to see the collision occur, after hearing "three sharp whistles" from the passenger engine.

His staff consisted of a passenger porter, a goods porter, and a telegraph boy.

The goods porter was away ill, and had been so for a week; and the telegraph boy was only due to arrive by the passenger train. The passenger porter, Jacob Downes, who alone remains, was in charge of the signals; but he was "100 yards north" of the station, letting down 12 or 14 coal waggons "from the north end of the coal siding to the south" of that siding, to make room for waggons brought "by the 5·20 Bolton (goods) train." He was, in fact, doing the goods porter's duty, and was thus prevented from attending to his signals. Unable to leave the coal waggons, he called out to a platelayer, who had given him occasional assistance during the previous week, and was then near the signal handles, to "put the signals on," and he had no doubt that he would do so. He heard the north signal turned on, and afterwards the crash of the collision while he was fastening down the breaks of the coal waggons.

The platelayer referred to, Ralph Kay, was engaged in scraping snow off the down platform when the goods train arrived. He neither saw nor heard anything of the passenger porter, Downes; but the head goods-guard came running past him and said "They're going across, put on the up (north) signal." After he had turned that signal to danger, he looked round and "saw a passenger train coming, which ran into the goods train." It was then of course too late to apply the south signal.

The head goods-guard knew on his arrival that the passenger train was due within a minute, and after applying his break, he jumped out of his van,—told Kay to apply "the up line (north) signal,"—saw him turn towards the handle of the down line signal, and thought he was going to turn that signal to danger,—and then ran forward to assist his 2nd guard in getting the waggons across. He states that he was unable to shunt his train out of the way of the passenger train, because the coupling was unhooked, and the engine and five waggons had gone forward to cross to the up line before he could, after applying his break, get out of his van. This is contradicted by the 2nd guard, who saw the head-guard out of his van after he had uncoupled the waggons, and before he moved forward with them; and, indeed, the head-guard stated himself, when

recalled, that he did not know where the waggons were when he first left his van. But it is clear that the train was divided, the engine and five waggons were sent forward, and the remainder was left standing in the way of the passenger train, not only without leave from any one in charge of the station, but also without any one being present to see that the south signal was turned to danger. The engine and three waggons are stated to have been on the crossing, in motion towards the siding, into which two waggons had entered when the collision occurred.

The singular independence which was thus displayed by the goods guard is, perhaps, partly to be accounted for by the extraordinary mode of working which is practised on this part of the line during the night, when passenger trains are not running. From 10 p.m. to 3.20 a.m., the goods trains do not stop at any station except where there is a watchman; but from 3.20 a.m. to 6.30 a.m. they stop at those stations where there is no watchman, Chapel Town amongst the number; and the guards then do all the station work themselves, attending to the signals, the switches, and the scotch-blocks.

The telegraph is employed by day, but not by night, for working the traffic on this line. But there is only a single needle instrument on the "magnetic" system, without a bell, at Chapel Town, and the wire on which it works is continuous from Bolton to Blackburn. The trains are telegraphed after they have started to Bromley Cross ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles) on the south, and to Entwistle ( $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles) on the north, for information only, to announce their approach. Neither the goods train nor the pas-

senger train was, however, telegraphed on the present occasion, because, as I have already stated, the telegraph boy was only due to arrive by the latter, from his home, which was some miles to the southward.

There are many improvements wanting on this line, and at this station, amongst the principal of which I may mention;—(1.) Shunting sidings generally. The goods train could only on this occasion have been shunted, if at all, from one main line to the other. (2.) Platform signals generally, and at Chapel Town the south signal to be moved to a greater distance, and a second north signal to be provided, for the protection (on a falling gradient of 1 in 75) of points about 300 yards from the station. (3.) Telegraph bells, with up and down instruments, separate wires as well as a through wire, and a better system of telegraph working. It is desirable also, that instruments and bells should be provided at King William, the next goods station south of Chapel Town. (4.) The employment of night inspectors at all stations where work is done by trains during the night.

I should explain, in conclusion, that the station-master at Chapel Town had made no report to his superiors of the absence of his goods porter, expecting him to return to work almost daily, and believing that he could, with occasional assistance from a platelayer, do without him in the meantime.

I have, &c.

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

H. W. TYLER,  
Capt. R.E.

## LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade  
(Railway Department),  
Whitehall, 9th February 1866.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Capt. Rich, R.E., the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred to a goods train from the falling of an under bridge near Beckenham on the 14th ultimo.

I have, &c.

W. D. FANE.

*The Secretary of the  
London, Chatham, and Dover  
Railway Company.*

SIR,

*Dulwich, 5th February 1866.*

IN compliance with your minute of the 18th ulto., 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, that caused the accident, that occurred on the 14th January 1866, in consequence of a bridge on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, near Beckenham, having fallen.

A goods train, consisting of an engine and tender, a guard's van, 30 goods trucks, and a second guard's van at the tail of the train, left Stewarts Lane at 1.30 a.m. for Ramsgate.

It passed Penge Junction, at a speed of about 12 miles per hour, at 3.54 a.m. When the train reached the bridge over the Chaffinch stream, which is about 120 yards beyond Penge Junction, the signalman in the junction box heard a great crash, which was the noise made by the bridge and a part of the train falling into the stream. The bridge consisted of two openings, one of 14 feet, over the stream, and the

other 18 ft. wide, over a kind of field road, or cattle track, on the bank of the stream.

The abutments, which were 3 ft. 9 in., besides counterforts, and the centre pier, which was 3 ft. thick, were built of brick. The girders were cast iron, each rail was carried on a longitudinal timber, bolted between two cast iron girders.

Half the bridge, which carried the down line, fell whilst the engine was passing over it. A goods train had passed over the same line about an hour and seven minutes previous. The foreman of platelayers had passed under the bridge at 4 o'clock on the previous afternoon; the signalman had passed over it at 9 o'clock the same evening; and neither of them perceived anything wrong. The stream, which is usually about 1 ft. deep, and 2 or 3 ft. wide, was swollen with the water from the southern side of Sydenham Hill, which flowed from it in torrents, caused by the melting snow. The signalman stated, that the whole plain was covered with water to a considerable depth; that both openings of the Chaffinch bridge were very full, and that the water was rushing through them with considerable velocity. He added that during the 16 years that he has lived in the neighbourhood, he has seen nothing like the flood, and his description does not appear to be exaggerated.

At the north side of the same hill the rush of water was very great.

The swollen stream under the Chaffinch bridge undermined the western abutment at the north end, and the northern half fell, under the weight of the engine of the goods train, which struck the centre pier in its fall, and carried away the northern portion of it.

One of the buffers left its mark in the eastern abutment of the bridge, and the engine was turned over on its side in the cattle pass on the right bank of the stream. The tender lay in the stream, and the