

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, June 21, 1853.*

SIR,

Lancashire and  
Yorkshire  
Railway.

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you for the information of the directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, a copy of the report which has been made to their Lordships by the officer appointed to inquire into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred at Chorley, on the 21st ultimo.

My Lord direct me to observe that it appears to them most objectionable that passengers should be carried upon the railway in carriages without seats, and not properly constructed for that purpose.

My Lords have already observed in the correspondence which has passed with the company, relative to former accidents upon their railway, upon the grave responsibility which rests upon the directors if they encourage a traffic upon their railway without providing adequate means for conducting it in a safe and proper manner; and it is with much regret that they now observe that the company are continuing to promote excursion traffic without a sufficiency of properly constructed carriages for the accommodation of the passengers; and that to this cause is to be attributed the fatal accident under consideration.

My Lords would be most unwilling to discourage a traffic remunerative to the company, and very beneficial to the poorer classes of the community, when properly conducted. But considerations of safety must be paramount; and my Lords will not be prepared to sanction excursion traffic if the conduct of any company shall be such as to lead them to believe that the consequence will be danger to those who are invited to take part in these journeys of pleasure.

My Lords direct me also to call the attention of the Directors to the concluding paragraph in the report, and to observe, that they consider it most desirable that the company should, if possible in all cases, have an experienced guard with each train, using, when requisite, selected porters to perform the duties of underguard or breaksman under their directions.

*The Secretary of the*

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.*

J. L. A. SIMMONS,

*Capt. Royal Engineers.*

SIR,

*Manchester, June 1, 1853.*

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, that I this day inquired into the circumstances of the accident on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on the 21st ultimo, near Chorley, by which a passenger lost his life. The 20th ultimo was the date of the accident as reported in the return made of it to the Board of Trade; but this seems to have been an error on the part of the company.

It appears that, according to annual custom, an excursion train was run from Heywood to Fleetwood and back on that day, for the benefit of the schoolboys of the neighbourhood, accompanied by two guards in break-carriages, one at the front and the other at the rear of the train; and, as is usual on similar occasions on this railway, when the number of carriages is not sufficient to contain the passengers requiring to be conveyed, the ordinary cattle waggons were made to do duty as passenger carriages. On former trips, seats have been placed in the cattle waggons, but the carriage on which the accident happened had no seats in it, and a canvas cover was placed at the bottom of it, with which to cover it in case of rain. In returning from Fleetwood, and on arriving at the Bullfield station, about eleven miles on the further side of Chorley from Fleetwood, a passenger informed the guard in front that one of his companions had been caught and knocked down by a bridge near Chorley.

The guard in question, who occupied the break van at the front of the train, states that he was on the look-out down the train all the way from Chorley to Bullfield, but that he did not see anything of the accident nor see any of the passengers getting up on the tops of the carriage during that time, though he had seen them doing so at Chorley, and warned them of their danger. The other guard states, that he was sitting in his break carriage at the time, with his back to the train, and that the first he heard of the accident was from the

other guard at Bullfield. Both these guards were porters in the service of the company, and are only employed as guards in extraordinary cases. The station master at the Chorley station, and others, informed me that they had great difficulty in keeping the passengers in these excursion trains from getting on the tops of the cattle waggons. I am told also that the company themselves object to the employment of cattle waggons as passenger carriages, but that the applications they receive from great numbers of people who are ready to go in any sort of conveyance on excursion trips, have induced them to yield in this respect.

There are two stone bridges of similar dimensions almost immediately on leaving the Chorley station, in returning from Fleetwood, and it seems that it was against the second of these that the passenger's head was struck. I caused one of the cattle waggons that arrived in a train whilst I was at the Chorley station, to be passed under one of these bridges; and whilst there is sufficient space between the side of the waggon and the bridge, the space between the waggon and the top of the bridge is not enough to enable even a moderately sized boy to sit upright on all parts of the top of the waggon.

I beg to inclose copy of a note from the coroner before whom the inquest was held, to the superintendent of the Yorkshire and Lancashire Railway Company, by which it appears that the jury were satisfied that no blame could be attached to the company, as the deceased met with his death by his own imprudence in climbing on the bar across the top of the cattle waggon.

I cannot agree altogether in this opinion. I conceive that these cattle waggons are not suited, and ought not under any circumstances to be employed for the conveyance of passengers, particularly when unprovided with seats, as in the present instance. The facility they afford for climbing up the sides must be a temptation to schoolboys, and not the less so after a day of pleasure and excitement; and I think I am borne out in this opinion by the fact of a death having occurred under, I believe, precisely similar circumstances and at the same bridge, about two years since.

I must remark also upon the circumstance of porters being taken to act as guards to excursion trains—that these would seem to be the trains, above all others, that require the presence of at least one of the best regular guards.

I have, &c.

Captain Simmons, R.E.

&c.                      &c.

H. W. TYLER,

Lieutenant Royal Engineers.

Inspector of Railways.

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,*

*Secretary's Office, Manchester, July 12, 1853.*

SIR,

I HAVE submitted to the directors of this company your letter of the 21st ult., enclosing a copy of the report of Lieutenant Tyler, R.E., upon the circumstances attending the accident which occurred upon this company's line of railway at Chorley, on the 21st May last.

The directors have been called upon so recently to enter at length into the general question of the provision necessary for the accommodation of excursion traffic on this company's line of railway, and have laid down such rules as have already had a beneficial effect, that it is thought best to confine their remarks to the two special points raised by your letter,—of the employment of carriages without seats and not properly constructed for passengers, and the employment of porters to act as guards of excursion trains.

With respect to the first point, it may be remarked that the employment of such vehicles has never extended beyond the Whitsun week, and then only owing to the pressure of schools wishing to be accommodated in that week, and that the number of such vehicles was not only limited on the last occasion, but much more limited than on previous occasions. The experience of this company has also furnished the fact, that in the case of open carriages and young children, the seats have offered facilities to the boys in particular, to amuse themselves by climbing up in the manner adopted by the boy whose death has been the subject of record; and in many instances where seats had been provided by the company, and everything had been done to contribute to the comfort and order of the trip, they were either removed or broken up by the passengers.

Lancashire and  
Yorkshire  
Railway

On the subject of the concluding paragraphs of your letter and Lieut. Tyler's report, I may state that the persons selected to act in the capacity of guards of excursion trains are taken from a "reserved list," embracing such of the chief porters or others as are qualified in the opinion of their superintendent to discharge the duties of a guard, or to undertake his responsibilities in cases of illness or emergency.

I am, &c.

*The Secretary of the*

*Railway Department of the Board of Trade.*

JOHN DUNSTAN, Junior,

*Secretary.*

## LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY.

London, Brighton,  
and South Coast  
Railway.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, May 4, 1853.*

SIR,

I AM desired by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, to transmit to you for the information of the Directors of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, a copy of the report which has been made to their Lordships by the officer appointed to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident, which occurred near the New Cross station on the 13th April, a guard of a train having been killed by coming in contact (when upon the footboard of a carriage,) with a bridge.

My Lords are desirous that the observations in this report as to the width of the carriages which traverse the railway, should receive the careful consideration of the Directors, as it appears to their Lordships of great consequence that the carriages should not be increased in width to such an extent as to cause unnecessary risk to the guards in the performance of their duties, or to the passengers by the trains which travel along the railway, even although the risk to these latter may be caused by indiscretion in protruding their bodies from the carriages.

I have, &c.,

J. L. A. SIMMONS,

*Captain, Royal Engineers.*

*The Secretary of the*

*London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company.*

SIR,

*April 27, 1853.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have inquired into the circumstances which attended the accident which occurred near the New Cross Station, of the Brighton Railway, from a guard having been struck by a bridge whilst standing on the step of his break van.

The train in which the accident occurred, was the two P.M. down train from London to Brighton and Hastings. It consisted of fourteen carriages, of which the three rear carriages, and a break van which was in front of them, were to be detached at Hayward's Heath for Hastings; the next carriage to this break van was a passenger carriage, with a break and guard's box, in which one of the guards of the through train rode, and another guard was in a break van next to the engine.

It appears that just after leaving the New Cross Station, the guard in the break van in front of the Hastings portion of the train, got out upon the step and handed a newspaper to the guard on the carriage in front of him, but as he turned round to get back to the door of the break he was struck by a piece of timber scaffolding which projected beyond the masonry abutment of a bridge. The line upon which the train was running has lately been relaid, and an alteration has taken place in the span of the bridge, to admit of four lines of rails being laid over this portion of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway. The man in charge of the workmen, stated that his instructions were, that no obstruction was to be allowed to come nearer the line than three feet from the rails; which is (as I was informed) a minimum distance allowed by the Company's regulations, between the rails and the bridges on this railway. On measuring the distance of the rail from the bridge, I found it to be 50 inches,