

Lancashire
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Railway.

The guard sent with the cattle train in question was not provided with a watch, and hence would have been unable to comply with this regulation.

It would also appear, from the regulations of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, that all trains on arriving at stations are under the inspectors or porters in charge, who give orders to the guards as to the stopping, starting, &c.; there is not, however, among the regulations for *inspectors* or *porters in charge* any allusion made to the shunting of goods. &c., trains to make way for passenger trains. The only regulations on the subject are those quoted above for engine drivers and guards; and no time is anywhere mentioned for the line to be clear of a goods train before the expected arrival of a passenger train. It was stated by the officers of the company that the circumstances of each station were so different, on account of the gradients on the line, that what was suitable for one station would not be so for another, and that special instructions were required for each. The station master at Chorley, however, was not supplied with any written or printed special instructions; and I would remark, that the argument in question would appear to be equally applicable to regulations as to trains which arrive at stations within a limited time after other trains have started; and since it has been considered advisable by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to issue a general instruction to inspectors of stations on this subject (see No. 17, *inspectors* or *porters in charge*), one on the subject of the shunting of trains would also appear to be advisable.

I have, &c.

DOUGLAS GALTON,
Captain Royal Engineers.

*The Secretary of the
Railway Department, Board of Trade.*

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department Board of Trade,
Whitehall, January 12, 1854.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a report which they have received from their inspecting officer upon the accident which occurred at the Newton Heath station on the 29th ultimo, from a collision between two passenger trains, and to request you to call the attention of the directors to the remarks of the inspecting officer on the subject of the interval allowed between trains following each other and upon the same line of rails.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary of the

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

J. BOOTH.

SIR,

Manchester, January 10, 1854.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 30th ultimo, I have now 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 between two passenger trains on the 29th ultimo, at the Newton Heath station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The Newton Heath station is about two and three-quarter miles to the north-east of Manchester, and was only opened as a station on the 1st December last. There is no station signal at Newton Heath, but there is a distant signal in each direction; that towards Manchester being upwards of 500 yards from the station, and being visible 480 yards further. The only station between Manchester and Newton Heath is at Miles Platting, about half-way between the two.

It appears that on the 29th ultimo, a passenger train, stopping at Miles Platting and Newton Heath, left Manchester at 9.45 a.m. for Rochdale; and that a

second passenger train, not stopping at either of these places, left Manchester about ten minutes afterwards, for Oldham. These two trains reverse the same line to Middleton; and whilst the former was in the act of stopping at Newton Heath, the latter ran into it with great violence, killing a little girl, and severely injuring the guard and about ten passengers. The morning is described to have been so foggy that it was impossible to see more than twenty yards, and the driver of the Oldham train must therefore have been very near the Rochdale train before he was able to discern it.

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It is not possible to ascertain the exact interval between the departure of the trains, either from Manchester or Miles Platting, on account of the culpable negligence of the company's servants, in not consulting their clocks. The station master at Manchester observed that the Rochdale train started exactly at 9.45, as he happened to be opposite the clock at the time; and he allowed the Oldham express to follow it, at an interval which he considered to be more than ten minutes; but he did not take the trouble to look at the clock; and he states that it is his custom to start trains one after another, without ascertaining from the clock that there is the proper interval between them. The signalman at Miles Platting junction, whose duty it was to exhibit the danger signal for five minutes after the passage of the Rochdale train, did not look at the clock provided in his cabin, but believes that the Oldham train must have passed him ten minutes after the other train. The station master at Miles Platting, whose duty it is to see that the danger signal is exhibited for five minutes after the passage of a train, was not more particular, but states, that as nearly as he could judge, the Rochdale train left his station at twelve minutes before ten, and the Oldham train passed at two minutes before ten. The signal man, however, did think it necessary to make a sort of caution signal with his hand, which was received by the driver of the Oldham train as a caution signal, but which was thought by his fireman to mean "all right." The collision occurred at Newton Heath about 10.2, and 9.58 is therefore, probably, the latest minute, at which the Oldham train can have passed Miles Platting. The Rochdale train left Manchester at 9.45, and slipped a great deal in going up the incline, which, independently of other reasons of delay which are alleged by the driver to have occurred, renders it certain that this train could not have left Miles Platting until some minutes after 9.48; and makes it probable that there was less than five minutes, instead of ten minutes, as stated, between the two trains at Miles Platting. Up to the period of the accident, the times of the passage of trains were not registered at the Miles Platting station, but I am happy to learn that this has since been ordered to be done.

In the printed time bills of the company, for the month of December, the Oldham express was timed to leave Manchester five minutes after the Rochdale train, a most dangerous arrangement, to guard against which, the superintendent of the company ordered the station master at Manchester not to allow the Rochdale train to start first, if the express were in sight, or at the station. This precaution, as might have been expected, was not sufficient, under the circumstances of both trains being late (by which the express would be more hurried), and of any accidental delay to the Rochdale train. Both trains appear to have been made late, on this occasion, by a break van having got off the line at Middleton. In the time bills for the present month, the Rochdale train is timed to start five minutes after the Oldham express, and looking to the possibility of obstructions arising from the incline out of the Manchester station, and from the Miles Platting junction, I think it highly desirable that this interval should be increased.

The clerk in charge, who is the only servant of the company at the Newton Heath station, states that he set the distant signal towards Manchester at "danger" as soon as he heard the Rochdale train approaching, and when it was 150 yards from his station; but the driver and fireman of the Oldham train both assert that they saw this signal at "all-right" as they passed it. It is possible that the Oldham train may have passed the signal before it was thus set at "danger" by the clerk in charge; there is not, however, any further evidence on the subject; and the clerk in charge is proving that he did his duty in the one case, whilst the driver and fireman are equally interested parties on the other. The guard of the Oldham train, upon going back to protect his train, immediately

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afterwards found this signal at "danger," but that is not a proof of its having been set at "danger" at the proper time. I have, &c.,

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

*The Secretary of the
Railway Department, Board of Trade.*

LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, October 26, 1853.*

Sir,

London and
North Western
Railway.

I HAVE been directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a report they have received from their inspecting officer upon the accident which occurred at the Weedon station of the London and North Western Railway on the 29th July.

My Lords are desirous that you should call the particular attention of the Directors of the London and North Western Railway Company to the observations contained in this report.

First, As regards the method of starting trains from Rugby. Secondly, with respect to the suggestions which are made for working the line between Rugby and Weedon; and Thirdly, upon the description of breaks and the amount of break power with which the passenger train, to which the accident occurred, was furnished.

My Lords trust that the directors will carefully consider the suggestions made by their inspecting officer upon these points, and that they will not fail to adopt all the means in their power likely to guard against a recurrence of a similar accident.

I am, &c.,

JAMES BOOTH.

*To the Secretary of the
London and North Western Railway Company.*

Sir,

August 27, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have inquired into the circumstances which attended the accident which occurred on the London and North Western Railway, at the Weedon station, on the 29th ultimo, from a collision between a passenger train and a luggage train.

It appears that the luggage train which runs from Preston, and is timed to leave Rugby at 9.15 p.m., left on the day of the accident at 9.20 p.m., viz., five minutes late. It is stated to be customary for this train to follow the last express train from Rugby, this train is timed to leave Rugby at 9.10; the luggage train at that time being drawn up ready to start in a siding at the southern end of the station, at some distance from the passenger platform. The goods train usually arrives at Rugby at about 8 o'clock, and shunts for the up express trains; it is visited by the foreman of the goods department, who gives orders to the driver or guard, or notifies to him any necessary information concerning other trains; and, if no orders are given to the contrary, the train, being started by the guard, follows the 9.10 p.m. express train from the station. Upon the day in question, this luggage train was delayed five minutes, waiting for the express train to proceed; and when this latter train passed it, the driver perceived an extra tail light on the train. The driver of the goods train considered that this extra tail light was put on to notify that a special cattle train from Aberdeen would follow, as an engine was standing in the same siding with the luggage train which was waiting for the special cattle train.

The goods train, as stated above, left Rugby station at 9.20, it is timed to reach Weedon at 10.15; and the driver states that it had approached close to the station at that time, and had therefore run the distance in rather less time than that allowed in the time tables, when it was struck by a train from behind.

The Weedon station is approached through a cutting, which is curved. At about 220 yards from the platform there is a policeman, with a signal; and at