

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade,
14th February 1872.*

Sir, In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 23rd ulto., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances that attended the collision that occurred on the 20th ulto. at Ravensthorpe station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

The guard and driver of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's passenger train and eight passengers are reported to have been hurt, but it is believed that the injuries are not serious.

Ravensthorpe goods yard is situated at the east side of the railway. There are junctions between the lines in the goods yard and the passenger lines at the north and at the south side of the station. These junctions, which are about a quarter of a mile apart, are protected with home signals and distant signals, which are interlocked with the points.

On the day in question, an "up" goods train, which consisted of an engine and tender, six loaded, twenty-seven empty waggons, and a guard's break-van at the tail of the train, arrived at Ravensthorpe station from Bradford about 7.25 p.m. It was stopped clear of the points at the south end of the station, which lead to the goods yard.

The engine was detached from the train and taken into the goods yard to fetch three waggons that were to be taken on with the goods train.

These three waggons were behind six other waggons, so that it was necessary for the goods engine to draw the nine waggons out on to the main line, and push them backwards towards the goods train, so that the three waggons that were to be taken on should be attached to the goods train.

While the engine driver was in the act of pushing the nine waggons back, the goods train was run into by the "up" passenger train from Bradford to Dewsbury, that is due to pass Ravensthorpe station about 6.56 p.m. The passenger train consisted of an engine and tender, a composite, a break-carriage with a guard, a second, a first, another second, and a third-class carriage.

The vehicles were coupled together in the order in which they are given. The break-carriage and three carriages in rear of it were fitted with continuous breaks.

The passenger train was running at a speed of 8 to 10 miles an hour when it struck the goods train.

Two wheels of the break-van at the tail of the goods train were knocked off the rails, the end was broken in, and the whole of the goods train was driven forward.

The buffer beam of the engine of the passenger train was broken, and the two carriages next to the engine were damaged, but none of the vehicles in this train left the rails.

The passenger train left Bradford at 6.50 p.m. It was 20 minutes late, having been detained, by waiting for trains that were late, in consequence of the evening being very foggy.

The goods train left Heckmondwike station, which is a mile and a half to the north of Ravensthorpe station, at 7.22 p.m., and the passenger train left Heckmondwike at 7.34 p.m. The driver and guard of the passenger train were cautioned by the station master at Heckmondwike that the goods train had left about 15 minutes before the passenger train, and they were directed to keep a sharp look-out, as it was very foggy about Thornhill junction, which is three quarters of a mile to the south of Ravensthorpe station.

28875.

The foreman of porters was in charge of Ravensthorpe station at the time that the goods train arrived.

He had given leave to the day signalman, who was stationed at the Ravensthorpe south signal cabin, to go home at 7 p.m. The night signalman, who should have come on duty at 7 p.m., did not arrive till 8 p.m., so that the foreman of porters was the only man available to work the signals, assist in making up the goods train, and attend to all the duties at the station. The signals at the north cabin of Ravensthorpe yard are only worked when the crossing to the goods yard at that end of the station is used.

Two platelayers had been to the Ravensthorpe south signal cabin about 5 p.m., previous to their going out fog signalling.

One of these platelayers got a lamp and fog signals, and proceeded towards Thornhill junction, the other got a hand lamp and proceeded to the north signal cabin. He had one fog signal in his pocket and he neglected to get any more.

This man considered that he should wait at the north cabin until a train arrived, so as to pay attention to the gates of a private road, which crosses the railway at this place, and that he should only proceed to the south cabin up distant signal, when the station was obstructed with a train.

He signalled the goods train in, but when it stopped close to his cabin he did not put his up distant signal to danger, as the goods train was not going to be shunted at the north end of the yard. After some slight delay, he appears to have proceeded northwards towards the up distant signal, but before he reached the up distant signal that is worked from the south cabin, he heard the passenger train coming. He stated that he held up his hand lamp with the red light, but he did not attempt to put down the only fog signal that he had.

The driver of the passenger train had observed that the up distant signal, which is worked from Ravensthorpe north cabin, was at "all right" as he passed it. He missed seeing the up distant signal, that is worked from the south cabin, which stands high on the top of a bank, and was hidden by the fog.

He was preparing to stop at Ravensthorpe station, when he suddenly observed the lights at the tail of the goods train about six yards in front of his engine, and had no time to do anything before his engine ran into the goods train.

The fogman at the north side of Ravensthorpe station seems to have been ready and willing to do his duty.

He went to Ravensthorpe station without being sent for, to assist in fog signalling, but although he has been employed before on the same duty, he appears to have had a very imperfect and confused notion of what that duty consisted.

The rules of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway state that the station master is responsible for giving proper instructions to the fogmen. The station master at Ravensthorpe is permitted by the Company to absent himself on alternate weeks from 4 p.m. on Saturday till Monday morning. He had left the station on the evening in question, and the foreman of porters was in charge.

The fogmen had gone out fog signalling before the foreman of porters returned from his tea at 5.20 p.m., so that he did not see them, but he supposed that they knew what they had to do.

The primary cause of the accident was the ignorance of the fogman at the north side of Ravensthorpe station, who though evidently willing and ready to do his work, did not know what to do.

The platelayers who came voluntarily to their work,

set an example which the station master will do well to follow on future occasions. He should not have gone away before he had seen that the safety of the station was properly provided for. It is evident that he has neglected to train the platelayers in the proper use of fog signals.

The foreman of porters should not have allowed the day signalman to leave his post until the arrival of the man whose duty it was to relieve him.

The day signalman evinced carelessness in not see-

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 5th March.

ing that the fog signalmen were provided with the fog signals necessary for their work.

The accident has brought to light very great carelessness in the performance of the duties at Ravensthorpe station.

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

To the Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR, *Manchester, 16th February 1872.*

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the collision that occurred on the 26th ultimo at Victoria station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Two passengers are reported to have complained of being hurt.

On the day in question the train, which is timed to leave Staley Bridge at 7.15 a.m., for Manchester arrived, and stopped just outside Victoria station, Manchester, about 7.50 a.m.

The train consisted of an engine and tender, a composite carriage, with a break compartment and a guard, a first-class, a second and two third-class carriages. The vehicles were coupled together in the order in which they are given. All the carriages were fitted with continuous breaks. The engine and tender were attached to the train with a slip coupling, so that the guard in the break compartment, which was next to the tender, could detach the engine whenever he wished to do so.

He appears to have done so just before the train arrived at No. 2 signal cabin, which is about 70 yards to the east of Victoria station, Manchester.

The train stopped about 40 yards to the east of No. 2 cabin, as the home signal was at danger. This home signal was lowered about half a minute after the train stopped. The train was detached from the engine before it stopped.

The approach to Victoria station from the east is on a gradient, which falls 1 in 49 towards the station.

When the home signal at No. 2 cabin was lowered, the engine-driver allowed his engine to move forward towards the station, and the guard of the train, by loosening his break, allowed his train to follow. There was an interval of 10 or 12 yards between the train and the tender of the engine.

It is customary at Victoria station for the engines of the local trains to move into the station by one road, and for the trains to follow down the incline, and to be turned into the several dock lines which are appropriated to them.

The engine and tender of the train from Staley

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 5th March.

Bridge was intended to move forward on the main line towards Salford, whereas the carriages of the Staley Bridge train were intended to be turned, by the signalman in No. 2 cabin, into No. 2 dock line, which is appropriated to the Staley Bridge trains.

This is done to enable the engines to get immediately to the other end of their trains, and be ready to proceed at once on the return journey.

On the occasion in question the signalman in No. 2 cabin pulled the lever of a pair of points on the up line, instead of the lever of the points on the down line. These levers are next to each other in a lever frame, which contains 24 levers.

The signalman noticed his mistake as soon as he saw that the train was taking the wrong road. He called to the guard of the train to hold on, but the latter could not get his breaks to act, with sufficient quickness to prevent a slight collision with the tender of the engine that had brought the train to Manchester.

No part of the train left the rails, but one carriage body was slightly shifted on its frame.

The accident was caused by the mistake of the signalman in No. 2 cabin.

The signals and points in No. 1 and No. 2 cabins at the east end of Victoria station, Manchester, are not interlocked.

The mistake made by the signalman in No. 2 cabin is certain to occur, sooner or later, with the best of men. A much more serious mistake, such as moving the points while the train is passing over them, is likely to occur at any time, unless the points and signals are arranged on the locking principle, that separate signals are established for each separate line, and that no engine or train is allowed to advance, until the signal is lowered for the line on which it is to proceed.

The points and signals should be interlocked, so that the points must be properly set, before the signal can be lowered.

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

The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR, *Normanton, 27th January 1872.*

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 12th inst., I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances attending the collision which occurred on the 8th inst. near Attercliffe station, on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, between a passenger train and a portion of a goods train.

Five passengers are reported to have been shaken.

Attercliffe is the first station out of Sheffield, on the line to Rotherham and Doncaster. It was opened in July last, and is situated on a descending gradient of 1 in 100 towards Rotherham, without any protection against danger from runaway vehicles.

About 460 yards east of the east end of the up platform a siding called "Brown's Siding," for the accommodation of some new steel works, joins the up