

It seems to have been a common practice for the booking lad in this box to work the levers in spite of the order prohibiting it, and, although the station-master and inspector declare that they were unaware of the practice, I cannot think that it could have escaped their notice if they had been alert and observant.

However this may be, it is admitted by them that the very common custom of putting a signal back to danger before the whole train has passed it was not unknown to them, and they are much to blame for not reporting to the proper authorities such cases of the infringement of a very necessary rule whenever they detected them.

The fact is that unfortunately this rule is on many lines almost a dead letter, and the safety which is aimed at by a proper system of interlocking, and can be secured if the rules of working are properly carried out, is thus very much reduced. When anything happens from the disregard of the rule the signalman is blamed, but if no accident occurs it is too often the case that no notice is taken; and it is this want of a strict system of discipline which is the primary cause of far too many casualties.

The signalman and booking lad bear very good characters, the former having no entry against him during a period of 28 years' service.

He had been on duty for 4½ hours when the collision took place.

The continuous break with which the passenger train was fitted seems to have acted well, and being fortunately one with automatic action remained on after the collision, instead of being rendered useless by the division of the train, as would have been the case if it had been a non-automatic break.

The Assistant Secretary,  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,  
F. A. MARINDIN,  
Major.

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APPENDIX.

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DAMAGE TO ROLLING STOCK.

*Engine No. 909.*—Coal bunker, tank, and framing damaged; buffer-plate and hand-railing bent; main vacuum-pipe, drip-valve, and bunker lamp stand damaged.

*Break-van No. 37.*—Projection damaged, buffer-rod bent.

*Composite No. 294.*—One headstock, 1 bottom side, 2 doors, 6 standing pillars, 20 panels, 4 handles, 6 quarter lights, 1 bearing-spring, 16 axle-guard bolts, 2 axle-boxes, and 1 buffer-head broken.

*Third-class No. 1,630.*—Generally broken up.

*First-class No. 57.*—Buffer-rod bent.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 18th September.

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LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,)  
1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
22nd September 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 11th instant, the result of my inquiry into the causes of the collision which occurred on the 8th instant near Todmorden station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case, the 4.40 p.m. passenger train from Blackpool for Leeds and Bradford, due at Todmorden at 6.20 p.m., came into collision (a short distance to the west of the station) with the rear portion of the 2.35 p.m. goods train from Liverpool to Openshaw, due at Todmorden at 6.8 p.m.

One passenger has complained of his arm being bruised. The front guard of the passenger train was hurt in the back, and the rear guard in the face.

In the passenger train—which consisted of engine and tender, and a train of 11 vehicles, all (but one) fitted with the automatic vacuum break—the engine and three front vehicles were damaged.

In the portion of the goods train which was run into—consisting of 25 waggons and a break-van—the train was broken into two parts, and the five rear waggons and the break-van were destroyed. The front of the engine of the passenger train mounted on the débris of the van and waggons, and the tender wheels and the front wheels of the first vehicle left the rails.

*Description.*

The approach to Todmorden from the west is protected by two signal-cabins, Dobroyd and Todmorden west, the down home-signals of which are 306 yards apart. The Dobroyd down distant-signal, which also acts as the down distant-signal for Todmorden west cabin, is 715 yards from the down home-signal, and is visible for about a quarter of a mile, the Dobroyd down home-signal being visible before the down distant-signal is reached. Todmorden west cabin has also a down distant-signal under the Dobroyd down home-signal. Block-working is in force, the signal-cabin to the west of Dobroyd being Walsden east. In consequence of the short distance (306 yards) between the down home-signals at Dobroyd and Todmorden west, a train is not accepted at Dobroyd from Walsden east if a goods train is shunting at Todmorden west, as, according to rule, the tail of the shunting train must be a quarter of a mile beyond the home-signal to justify the signalman in accepting another train. The collision occurred at about 6.25 p.m. about 250 yards inside the Dobroyd down home-signal, or 56 yards outside the Todmorden west down home-signal, on a falling gradient from west to east of 1 in 180. The line between the two cabins is curved, and the van of the goods train was not visible from an approaching engine for more than 270 yards.

*Evidence.*

1. *Richard Taylor*, signalman; seven years in the service, nine months signalman.—I have been all the time employed at Dobroyd cabin, Todmorden, where I came on duty on the 8th instant at 6 p.m. for 12 hours. I work block between Walsden east towards Manchester and Todmorden west. The Openshaw goods train passed the cabin at 6.20 p.m., but it did not clear the next station. At 6.21 p.m. I received the "Be ready" for the Blackpool passenger train. I accepted the signal at the same time under the impression that the goods train, the van of which was about 250 yards from the cabin, was going forward on its journey. Had I known that the goods train was going to stop between my cabin and Todmorden west I should not have accepted the signal, the rule requiring the train to be a quarter of a mile beyond the home-signal if it is shunting. As a rule this goods train does not stop once in a month to shunt at Todmorden west, but runs forward through the station to shunt at the loop line for the passenger train to pass. At 6.24 p.m. I received "Train on line" for the passenger train, my signals, both home and distant, being at danger. I had not observed that the goods train was standing at Todmorden west cabin between the time of my receiving the "Be ready" and receiving "Train on line," but I did so when I accepted "Train on line." Had I noticed this before I should have blocked back so as to cancel the "Be ready" signal. I had given the "Be ready" to Todmorden west on receiving it from Walsden east, but it had not been accepted. I offered it again on receiving "Train on line," and on looking round to see why it had not been accepted, I saw the goods train standing on the line. The sight from my cabin towards Todmorden is not good, being blocked by a house. The passenger train passed at 6.25 p.m. at a speed of 12 or 14 miles an hour, instead of stopping at my home-signal. I saw no effort being made to stop the train; steam was shut off. I shouted to the driver as he passed, "Bill, why don't you stop?" and gave him an arm signal. He was looking at me, and I was on the same level as the driver, and not more than six feet from him. Notwithstanding this, I did not notice the breaks being applied till the engine was close to the van of the goods train. I could not see the rear guard as the van passed. It was a very bright evening, and still quite daylight. The driver of the passenger train could give no explanation to me afterwards of his conduct. I have never before known him or any other driver to run past my signals.

2. *Hugh Roberts*, signalman; six years in the service, 18 months signalman.—I have been employed

at Todmorden west cabin since December last, and I came on duty there on the 8th at 6 p.m. for a 12 hours' shift. At 6.19 I received "Train on line" for the Openshaw goods train, and I took off my signals for it to run through the station. The engine passed my home-signal, but pulled up at the end of the platform without my knowing it was going to do so. At 6.20 p.m. (actually 6.21), just as the goods train was stopping, I received the "Be ready" for the down express. I did not accept it, but I allowed the goods train to proceed with shunting two waggons of cattle into the sidings on the up side of the line, telling guard Williamson to look sharp, as there was both an up and down express due. I then opened the points to allow the engine to send the waggons across, but they did not clear the siding-points, and I then gave directions that the engine should push the waggons into the siding, and remain there till the York up express had passed. This had been offered to me at 6.23 p.m., and I accepted it at 6.24, when the engine was in the siding. The collision occurred about 6.25, and seeing the up line fouled I put my up signals to danger, and blocked the line against the York express. The last time the down goods train had stopped at my cabin was about August 14th. Had the engine disposed of the cattle waggons without delay there would have been time for the goods train to have been taken into the loop at the east end of the station before the passenger train would have arrived. I heard through the telephone circuit, just before the goods train arrived, that the passenger train was passing Littleborough, and I therefore thought that there would be time to clear the goods train without detaining the passenger train.

3. *Samuel Williamson*, goods guard; 15½ years in the service, and 15 years goods guard.—I was in charge of the 2.35 p.m. goods train from Liverpool to Openshaw on the 8th September. We left Liverpool at right time, but were 10 minutes late leaving Rochdale. At Littleborough five minutes more were lost in attaching two waggons of cattle, one for Todmorden, and another for Gisburn, and the train then consisted of engine and tender, three waggons of cattle, 24 waggons of goods, and a break-van. At Littleborough I informed the driver that he was to stop at Todmorden to detach the two waggons of cattle (next the engine) which had been put on at Littleborough. We reached Todmorden at 6.18 p.m. by my watch, the passenger train being due, I believe, at 6.22 p.m., the signal at the west cabin being off for us to proceed. On the train stopping, the shunter unhooked the two cattle waggons, and the engine

took the waggons over the points and kicked them back, but not far enough to fairly enter the siding, and the engine had to follow them back and push them clear. The signalman then ordered the engine to remain in the siding till the up express had passed, and while the engine was standing in the siding, the collision occurred. It moved the front of the train forward, and broke it into two parts, the front going forward towards Todmorden. The up express was stopped at the platform, the up line being fouled.

4. *William Whalen*, driver; 26 years in the service, 13 years driver of both goods and passenger trains, and accustomed to run between Rochdale and Yorkshire for seven or eight years.—I joined the 4.40 p.m. passenger train from Blackpool for Leeds on the 8th instant at Blackpool. I had come on duty at 9.25 a.m. and should have reached Leeds at 7.20 p.m. My engine was an eight-wheeled engine, with a four-wheeled leading bogie and four coupled wheels, a six-wheeled tender, and a train of 11 vehicles, the coupled wheels of the engine, the tender wheels, and four wheels of 10 vehicles being all fitted with the automatic vacuum break; the vehicle not so fitted was in the middle of the train, with break pipes under it. I have been accustomed to this break for about three years. The break was in good order, and I had last used it for stopping at Rochdale, when it had acted properly. After leaving Rochdale I got clear signals till I sighted the Dobroyd distant-signal, about 100 yards off, at danger; I was troubled with the injector, which prevented my seeing it sooner. The speed might have been about 40 miles an hour, steam having been shut off from Walsden station. I applied my break and reduced the speed, and passed the distant-signal at about 35 miles an hour. After passing the distant-signal about 100 yards I saw the Dobroyd home-signal arm looking, as I thought, "off." I still kept the break slightly on, but being occupied with the injector I did not again look at the home-signal. I had noticed that the distant-signal from Todmorden west was at danger, and I was looking out on the 6-ft. side of the engine as I passed Dobroyd cabin for the home-signal, which I saw was at danger. On passing the cabin I heard the signalman shout, but did not hear what he said; I looked back and saw him motioning me to stop. I had seen the goods train after having passed Dobroyd cabin. I at first thought it was in a siding, and only realised it was on the main line when about 70 yards off, the speed having then been reduced to about 12 miles an hour, I then applied the break as hard as I could, and reversed the engine and put steam against it, and the speed was reduced to about 10 miles an hour on collision. The engine went forward about 10 or 15 yards and mounted the wreck of the van and waggons, the tender wheels and those of the van and next carriage being also off the rails. I was not hurt. The break gauge showed from 20 to 22 inches of vacuum. The rails were slippery from a shower which had recently fallen.

5. *John Whittaker*, fireman; 11 years in the service, fireman five years.—I had been working with Whalen three days before the 8th. I have been used to the vacuum break about 18 months. After leaving Rochdale I saw the Walsden signals were off, and after that I was shovelling coals in the tender, and was still there when the collision occurred. I saw no

signals after Walsden. I did not hear the signalman say anything as we passed Dobroyd cabin. I did not see that the driver was busy with the injector when nearing Todmorden. I felt the break gently applied before reaching Dobroyd, and after that it was put on just before the collision, when, I think, the speed was about 10 miles an hour. I was thrown over the side of the tender on to the ground into the 4-ft. of the up road. I was not hurt to speak of. The driver whistled for the break just as he applied it, and just as I turned round the collision occurred. The rails were, I think, slippery from rain.

6. *Joseph Nettleton*, guard; 34 years in the service, 28 years guard.—I was under guard of the 4.40 p.m. train from Blackpool to Leeds and Bradford on the 8th instant. I had come on duty at 11 a.m. to go off at 7.7 p.m. I was riding in the front van next the tender. The train was fitted with the automatic vacuum break; this could be applied from my van, which had an elevated portion. All went right up to Rochdale, which we left five minutes late, time having been lost in checking tickets at Heywood. The break had acted properly at Rochdale and elsewhere. The vacuum had remained at about 19 or 20 inches all the way along. After leaving Rochdale the first signal I saw at danger was the Dobroyd distant-signal (which is slotted from Todmorden west), and then the Dobroyd home-signal at danger some yards before reaching it. We passed this latter signal at a speed of 10 or 12 miles an hour without stopping at it, as we ought to have done. I saw the signalman give no permission to pass it at danger. The driver appeared to be attending to his work, and the fireman was on the tender shovelling coals. I did not take any means to stop the train at Dobroyd home-signal, thinking the driver knew what he was about. I continued looking ahead, but I did not see the goods break-van at all before the collision, which took place immediately after the driver had given the break-whistle, the speed being still about 10 or 12 miles an hour. I felt the breaks applied immediately on the whistle being given. I was knocked on to the floor of the van, and hurt my back, but have not had to go on the sick list. The driver acknowledged to me that the Dobroyd signals were on, but that he was going on to the west cabin. I did not ask him about not seeing the goods van sooner. The driver was perfectly sober. He is a teetotaler.

7. *George Bullock*, guard; six years in the service, 18 months guard.—I was in charge of the 4.40 p.m. train from Blackpool to Leeds and Bradford on the 8th. The train consisted of 11 vehicles, all fitted with the automatic vacuum break, except one carriage about the middle of the train. I was in the last vehicle but one—a guard's van. I could apply the vacuum break from the van. All went right as far as Rochdale, which we left five minutes late. After passing Walsden I was engaged with luggage and poultry. I saw no signals for some time. As the van was passing Dobroyd cabin I looked out of the near side window, and I felt the break go on sharp, the speed just before having been 12 miles an hour, and immediately after this the collision occurred, the speed having been sensibly reduced. I hurt my face, but not seriously. The collision occurred about 6.25 p.m. When the train stopped the tail of it was a short distance past Dobroyd cabin. The driver appeared sober. I had no conversation with him.

#### Conclusion.

This collision was chiefly caused by complete disregard of signals on the part of the driver of the passenger train, William Whalen. He has been 26 years in the service, 13 years a driver, accustomed to run through Todmorden for seven or eight years, and acquainted with the working of the automatic vacuum break (with which the train was fitted) for about three years. He had come on duty at 9.25 a.m. for a day's work of about 10 hours. On approaching Dobroyd cabin he acknowledges to have seen the down distant-signal at danger, but only when 100 yards from it, instead of a quarter of a mile off when it is first visible; steam had been shut off some distance back (the gradient

being a falling one), and on finding the distant-signal at danger he reduced his speed by a slight application of the break from 40 to 35 miles an hour. After passing the distant-signal about 100 yards he saw the arm of the Dobroyd down home-signal looking, as he thought, "off," but being occupied with the injector, which was working badly, he never looked at it again. On passing the Dobroyd cabin, while he was looking out on the 6-ft. side of the engine, he heard the signalman shout, but not hearing what he said, looked back and saw him waving to him to stop. His engine was at this time only about 70 yards from the van of the goods train (which he had before seen but had not realised that it was on the main line), and his speed not more, he thinks, than about 12 miles an hour. He then applied the continuous break with full force, reversed his engine and gave it steam, but he thinks the speed was still 10 miles an hour when his engine struck the goods van, drove it forward from 10 to 15 yards, and then mounted on the wreck of it and the waggon in front of it. Thus, although Whalen was warned by a distant-signal at danger visible more than three-quarters of a mile from the point of collision, and by a home-signal at danger visible more than 1,000 yards from the same point, and, though he had at his command a powerful break by which he could easily have stopped his train had he applied it even when he was passing the Dobroyd home-signal, at which he ought to have stopped, the speed of the passenger train was still so great when its engine struck the goods van, that the van and the five waggons in front of it were destroyed, the engine mounting on the débris.

The fireman was engaged in shovelling coal, and saw no signals after passing Walsden; he felt the break being applied (gently) when nearing Dobroyd cabin, and then again just before the collision.

The front guard (of 28 years' service in that capacity), although he saw the Dobroyd distant and home-signals both at danger, and that the driver was evidently running past the home-signal, took no means to stop the train, thinking, he said, "the driver knew what he was about." If he had done his duty and had applied the automatic vacuum break from his van, as he knew he could do, when he saw the driver was passing the home-signal, the collision would have been prevented. This guard is therefore much to be blamed. I understand that both driver and guard have been discharged from the Company's service.

The guard in the rear van was engaged with luggage after passing Walsden, and did not see the Dobroyd signals. As his van was passing Dobroyd cabin he felt the break go on sharp and immediately afterwards the collision. In approaching an important station like Todmorden, he is, in my opinion, to blame for not having kept a proper look-out for signals.

Had the Dobroyd signalman fully carried out the block telegraph regulations, and not accepted the "Be ready" signal for the passenger train from Walsden east until he had made sure that the goods train would not stop to shunt at Todmorden west cabin, the collision would have been prevented. He was, no doubt, at first under the impression that the goods train was, according to its usual practice, not going to shunt at Todmorden west; but on finding that the signalman there did not clear the section, and would not accept the "Be ready" signal for the passenger train, he must have known that the goods train had stopped, and he ought therefore to have cancelled the "Be ready" signal by blocking back to Walsden east. There was plenty of time to do this, as three minutes elapsed between the receipt of the "Be ready" and "Train on line" signals. This signalman, therefore, is not free from blame; and still less is the signalman at Todmorden west for permitting the goods train to commence shunting at 6.20 p.m., when he had heard through the telephone circuit that the passenger train was running only five minutes late, and was therefore due in about four minutes, an up express train being also due. The signalman at Todmorden west ought to have sent the goods train forward into the refuge siding at the east of the station, to remain there till the down passenger train had proceeded on its journey.

From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that this collision resulted from the misconduct, more or less grave, of five of the Company's servants (who had at their command all necessary appliances for safe working), and that it would in all probability have been prevented had any one of these five servants strictly obeyed the rules under which they are ordered to work.

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 14th October.