

**NO.2. ACCIDENTS ON RAILWAYS.
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS OF THE MANCHESTER
AND LEEDS RAILWAY COMPANY FOR
DISTRIBUTION AMONGST THE COMPANY'S
SERVANTS, NOVEMBER, 1840**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649266661

No.2. Accidents on Railways. Published by order of the Board of Directors of the Manchester and Leeds railway company for distribution amongst the company's servants, November, 1840 by Various

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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VARIOUS

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1840

No. 2.

ACCIDENTS ON RAILWAYS

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PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

MANCHESTER AND LEEDS RAILWAY COMPANY

FOR

DISTRIBUTION AMONGST THE COMPANY'S SERVANTS.

NOVEMBER, 1840.

MANCHESTER:
BURGESS & CO., PRINTERS, MARKET-STREET.

TO ALL PERSONS
EMPLOYED IN THE SERVICE OF THE
MANCHESTER AND LEEDS RAILWAY COMPANY.

In consequence of the number of accidents which have taken place on railways recently opened—in many cases through the unavoidable inexperience of the persons employed—the Directors of the Manchester and Leeds Railway Company with the view of affording their servants the means of acquiring most rapidly a knowledge of their duties, as well as of apprising them of the *frightful consequences* to themselves and the public from inattention to the rules and regulations prescribed by the Board for their observance, have determined to print and distribute for their perusal and information reports of all judicial inquiries arising out of accidents on railways caused by the negligence or disobedience of the persons employed. As the information thus furnished must tend to prevent accidents, if properly regarded, so it will increase the responsibility of those through whose negligence or ignorance accidents occur, should they neglect to make use of it.

The Directors therefore most earnestly request the attention of every person in the Company's service to these reports, and most particularly to the circumstances under which accidents are reported to have arisen; to their immediate causes; to the means by which they might have been prevented; and to the consequences which befall the culpable parties.

By order of the Board,

JOHN JELlicORSE,

Manchester, Nov. 30th, 1840.

SECRETARY.

ACCIDENT ON THE YORK AND NORTH MIDLAND RAILWAY.

LOSS OF TWO LIVES—NEGLECT OF SIGNALS.

(From the London Standard, November 17th, 1840.)

Extracts from the Evidence given on the Coroner's Inquest.

Mr. John West, of Leek, Staffordshire, commercial traveller, deposed—I was travelling from Leeds to Selby, last night. We left Leeds at six. When about eight miles from Selby I was in the first-class carriage, which was the last in the train. The train was not then moving. After we had stayed a few minutes I saw a light following us. That was a luggage train. I saw it coming at a great rate, within a short distance of us. I should think about 50 or 60 yards from us. I saw they were coming so fast that I expected we should all be killed. I was sitting with my face towards the train that was coming. I put up my hands against the opposite side of the carriage. I felt a very severe shock. The muscles of my right arm are so injured that I can't get my arm up. Three other men were in the same carriage with me—viz., Mr. Knight, of Leeds; Mr. Greenwood, draper, of Hull; and a Mr. Holderness, of Hull. Mr. Greenwood was the most hurt, but none of us dangerously. The carriage we were in was broken to pieces. I think there is not a joint whole in the carriage. We were in the centre division of the carriage. According to my opinion the luggage-train was coming at the rate of 20 miles an hour. I did not observe a coloured light behind our carriages. I should say it was possible to have seen a light at the distance of one mile,

although the night was foggy. I observed a light coming before I heard the engine approaching. When I first saw the light it might be 400 or 500 yards distance from us. I did not hear the whistle of that engine coming up.

David Sanderson, of York, engine-driver, deposed, I was employed by the York and North Midland Railway Company till last Tuesday, when I left their employment. I was standing at the Junction, called Taylor's Junction, when the Leeds train came up last night before seven o'clock. They stood there about three minutes taking out the passengers' luggage that had to go to Selby. I heard an alarm given by the guard of the Leeds passenger train, or by a policeman, (I don't know which), that another train was approaching. Thomas Steel was the engine-driver of the engine bringing the train from Taylor's Junction to Selby. He moved his engine for fear any accident might happen to his train. This was before any accident happened, but the approaching engine was then in sight. So soon as Steel had got his engine and train moved I heard the crash. Steel stopped his engine, and he and I went up to the place where the crash was. The first I saw was the deceased. She was laid upon the bank side. There was a deal of blood about her. Her shawl was all covered with blood. We went to the other side of the carriages, and there was a man laid dead. Several of the passengers, some three or four, were lying on the bank side that were hurt. There was a luggage train coming from Leeds, following the passengers' train, that Reynolds was the guard of. Watkins is the name of the man who was the driver of the engine bringing the luggage train. It was the luggage train that ran against the passengers' train, which caused the accident. There are two first-class carriages broken; they are broken very much. The parts where the passengers sit in the carriages are much broken. The deceased was in a third-class carriage when the accident happened. The luggage train was about 100 yards distant when I heard the first alarm given that another train was coming. I could not hear the approaching engine beat by reason of the noise made

by the other engines standing at Taylor's Junction. *A light can always be seen from the ash-pan for a mile distant; by reason of the curve in the road at that place the approaching engine could not be seen more than 200 yards distant. I observed clearly that the approaching engine of the luggage train had slackened its speed; it might then be distant about 40 yards from the passengers' train. There is no regulation on this road that I know of as to the speed at which passengers' or luggage trains are to travel. The engine and part of the carriages were separated from the broken carriages when I first went to them, but whether they had broken loose or not I cannot say. I don't know that the luggage train had a light in front of it. I did not see one. If the passengers' train had had a red light behind, the driver of the engine of the luggage-train might have seen it for 200 yards. If the luggage-train was coming at its regular rate, and with the same number of carriages it had, the engine-driver could have stopped the luggage-train dead in 200 yards. I think if a red light had been shown the accident would not have happened. I saw the engine-driver of the luggage-train after the accident. He was quite sober. I never saw him drink a glass of ale in my life.*

The inquest was here adjourned to Tuesday next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

Mr. W. Sayner—I am clerk to the York and North Midland Railway Company. On Wednesday night I was at Taylor's Junction, when the six o'clock train arrived from Leeds. I cannot say how long the passengers' train remained at the junction before the luggage train arrived, but it was some minutes. They did not remain longer than usual, I think. They generally stay 10 or 15 minutes. I cannot say there were any signal lights up. I did not see any whilst the Leeds train stayed there. *John Baines and Charles Till are the persons who have to exhibit and rectify those lights.* These men were at their posts on that night. John Watkins, jun., was the engine-driver

of the passengers' train on that night. A man named William Reynolds was the guard of that train. *John Watkins, sen.*, was the engine-driver of the luggage train. I saw it coming at the distance of 700 yards by the light coming from the ash-pan. I observed the luggage train slacken its speed when about 150 or 200 yards from the passengers' train. I then saw they were making every possible effort to stop the engine, which they had reversed. I heard the crash made. I cannot say the speed at which the luggage train was coming. It forced the passengers' train some distance forward on the line, but whether 10 or 50 yards, I cannot say. It broke some of the carriages—perhaps two or three. The passengers' train consisted of the three different classes of carriages. I saw the corpse of the deceased, I saw him first lying on the way. He was then quite dead. I saw him removed from the line. The engine-driver of the luggage train got off the engine, but how I don't know. I saw an elderly female very much hurt, and other two or three persons seriously injured. I heard the whistle from the engine of the approaching train. There were three or four engines waiting at the junction, from which the steam was being let off. None of the standing engines were whistling. The noise of the standing engines might have prevented the engine-driver from hearing the whistle.

Mr. William Bownas.—I am employed by the York and North Midland Railway Company to book passengers at Burton Salmond. I am also a policeman on the line. On Wednesday night I was at Burton station when the Leeds train came past; it arrived at Burton station at 20 minutes before seven. It stayed there a minute or two. *I cannot swear there was a red lamp attached to the passengers' train, and I cannot swear there was not. It is the general practice to have a red lamp behind every night train, and it is my duty to see that all is safe and proper. But I do not know that there was a light.*

By Mr. Richardson.—If I apprehend there is any danger by one train following the other very closely, I have an order directing me to exhibit a green light, which denotes caution. I

did not show on Wednesday night a green light to Watkins, who was with the luggage train; I exhibited to him the red light. I did so because it was drawing near the time for the passengers' train from London. Upon exhibiting the red light, the luggage train driver stopped his train as near as possible. On this I said, "Go on, take time." Watkins I think made no reply. Some one on the train said, "There will be another luggage train in about half an hour."

By the Foreman—*Watkins went off at the usual speed.*

By the Coroner—*Burton Salmond station is about a mile and three-quarters from Taylor's Junction.*

The following witnesses were then called by the company's solicitors:—

Henry Woodroffe stated—I am employed at the station at Leeds. My duty is to attend to the lamps. I recollect the six o'clock train on Wednesday night. I affixed a red lamp to the end of that train, and exercised the ordinary care and caution in doing so. I saw the train start off, and the light was then burning. I never knew an instance of a lamp falling off, or of a light having gone out.

Mr. Timothy Glennan—I am station-master at the York and North Midland station. It is an essential part of my duty to see that the evening trains departing have lights affixed to the last carriage. I recollect the passenger train for York and Hull leaving Leeds on Wednesday evening, at six o'clock. There were two red lights attached—one for the York and the other for the Hull train. Those lights were affixed in the usual careful manner. One of the two was on the roof of the carriage, which the guard was to fix at the end of the York train when the trains separated at the junction, the Hull train being the last carriages that left the Leeds depôt. When the trains left the light was burning.

Mr. Francis Clark, station-master at Castleford, deposed to the lights being burning in the rear of the passengers' train when it passed his station. He also produced the instructions given upon that subject by the company.