

## SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade (Railway Department),  
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
January 16th, 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 27th December, 1898, the result of my enquiry into the collision that occurred at 11.5 a.m. on the 26th idem at Appledore Station on the South Eastern Railway.

In this case, a horse-box, which was to be attached to the 10.45 a.m. train from Ashford to Hastings, was propelled against the train with such violence that eight passengers were badly hurt, two of them having their legs broken, and much damage done to the rolling stock.

The train consisted of engine, tender, and five coaches, viz., a third-class, a first-class, a second-class, a third-class (bogie), and a brake-van. It was fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, the blocks being on the wheels at the time of the collision.

The horse-box was being propelled by a four-wheels-coupled engine with a six-wheeled tender. The engine, tender, and horse-box were fitted with the automatic vacuum brake, and there was also the hand-brake on the tender.

The horse-box, which was not loaded, had just arrived at Appledore on the 10.27 a.m. train from New Romney, and was to be put on the down train to Hastings to go forward to Rye.

The effect of the collision was to derail the horse-box and the van, forcing the front buffers of the van into the end of the third-class carriage next to it, and smashing up two compartments therein. The horse-box, van and third-class carriage were badly damaged, and the second-class carriage had its headstock and buffer castings broken. The tender of the engine propelling the van had its buffers and buffing-plate broken, and the train engine had the brake-pipe, between engine and tender, separated.

Full details of the damage to rolling-stock are given in the Appendix.

#### *Description.*

There are two lines through Appledore Station, the approximate direction of which is north-east and south-west, and there are up and down platforms. The platforms are not opposite to each other, the southern end of the up-platform being opposite to the northern end of the down-platform, an arrangement which was not uncommon in former days. At the southern end of the station there is a double junction between the main lines and the single line branch to Lydd and New Romney, with facing points on the down line. About the centre of the station there is a trailing siding connection with each of the main lines, and north of the place there is a cross-over road between the up and down lines, between which and the station, there is a public road level-crossing.

The signal-box is at the southern end of the station, and the signalling is of the usual description; but, as the points of the cross-over road just referred to are too far from the signal-box to be operated therefrom, they are worked by ground levers which are bolted from the signal-box.

The main lines are quite straight, and within station limits are horizontal, but north of the level-crossing there is a gradient falling towards the north of 1 in 577.

#### *Evidence.*

*Frederick Whitewood*, driver: I have been in the Company's service 20 years, and I have been driver about seven years. On 26th December I came on duty at 4.25 a.m. at Ashford. I worked the 5.25 goods train from Ashford to Lydd. After that I was working the branch trains between Lydd and Appledore. My engine was No. 189, four-wheels-coupled, with six-wheeled tender. It was fitted with the automatic vacuum brake working blocks on the coupled wheels of the engine and on the tender wheels, and there was a

hand-brake on the tender. I arrived at Appledore with the 10.27 from New Romney. We reached Appledore at 11.3 a.m., being 11 minutes late. I had six coaches on my train and a horse-box, the horse-box being next the engine. When I reached Appledore, the down train to Hastings was standing at the down platform. I think the distant signal was against my train when I passed it, and the home signal was at danger when I first saw it. But, before I reached it, it was lowered for me to run into the station. After coming to a stand at

the platform, the shunter uncoupled the horse-box and engine from the train. After a minute or two at the platform, I got a signal from the shunter to draw forward over the points of the cross-over road. This is the regular operation to be performed by all engines of the branch trains, in order to allow them to get round their train. I knew I had the horse-box on my tender, but I did not know where it was to go. No one told me anything about it. After I passed the cross-over road points, my mate gave me the signal to get back, which I did. I thought the Hastings train had gone away, not having received any intimation that the horse-box was to be attached to it. I came back, as usual, thinking I had to run round my train, and that the horse-box was to be left in the up sidings. I have been in the habit of working this train for three months past. I have never had a horse-box to attach before. I knew that my train ran in connection with the Hastings train. I know that the passengers and luggage have to be taken across from one platform to the other before the Hastings train starts. When we arrive at Appledore, the usual time the engine stands at the up platform before starting to run round its train is one-and-a-half to two minutes, and the total time occupied by running round, after leaving the train, is about six minutes. As a rule the branch train reaches Appledore before the Hastings train, and we generally get round our branch train before the Hastings train arrives. While I was coming back along the down line, on reaching the end of the platform, I received a signal from the station-master to stop. He was holding up both hands. This was the first I knew of the Hastings train being at the platform. I had not steam on at the time. I had shut off steam after passing through the cross-over road. I was going about 7 miles an hour when I saw the station-master hold up his hands. I at once applied my automatic brake and reversed the engine. Immediately after this the collision occurred. I had not time to reduce the speed much. I was thrown down and hurt my back. My mate was thrown down also and hurt. The buffing spring between my engine and tender was broken. The automatic pipe on the tender, and both buffer-castings on the tender were broken. I leant over the side of my engine, while setting back through the cross-over road, but I did not see anything of the train. My mate received a signal to stop from a man on the up platform, and he transmitted it to me. This was about the same moment as I got the station-master's signal. My mate was looking ahead when we came through the cross-over road, but he said nothing to me about the train being there. The shunter said nothing to me about the horse-box having to be attached to the Hastings train. I thought I had merely to get round my train in the usual way. I never remember finding that the Hastings train had arrived at Appledore before the branch train. The latter always arrives first, so far as my experience goes, and I have never had to attach a horse-box or other vehicle to the tail of the Hastings train before. The station-master at Lydd said nothing to me about the horse-box, nor did the guard.

*William Whibley*, fireman: I have been in the Company's service four years, and I have been acting as spare fireman during the last two summers, and during holidays. My hours of duty on the 26th instant were the same as driver Whitewood's. I had been firing for Whitewood for the past week. After arriving at Appledore

with the 10.27 p.m. from New Romney, the porter at once uncoupled the engine and horse-box from the train, and he got up on to the steps of the horse-box and told us to go ahead over the points. He then pulled over the points, and I said to my driver, "Right back, Fred." We came back at once, and I then got hold of my shovel to put some coal on the fire. I had just finished doing this when I saw the warehouseman on the ballast in the six-foot waving to me. He was holding up both his hands. I had no time to say anything to my mate before the collision occurred. I was knocked up against the brake and hurt slightly. I had no time to apply my hand-brake. I heard shouts on both sides of me before the collision occurred, and I heard the automatic brake go on. No one said anything to me about the horse-box. The porter said nothing to us about it at Appledore. I knew the Ashford train was in the station when we ran in. I did not hear it whistle, as though it was starting away. The horse-box and engine were uncoupled from my train as quickly as possible. We always get away as quickly as on this occasion. I did not look to see if the Ashford train had gone. I was not looking out because I had let my fire get a little low. I usually look out as we set back through the cross-over road, because of the level crossing. But, on this occasion, I was attending to my fire, because it was low, and I wanted to clean it for the relief man. I heard no one at all call out that the horse-box was for Rye, nor that it was to be put on the Hastings train.

*Alfred William Law*, porter: I have been in the Company's service nine months, all the time as porter at Appledore. On the 26th instant, I came on duty at 9 a.m., to work till 9.45 p.m. I was on the up platform when the branch train arrived at Appledore at 11.3, being 11 minutes late. As it arrived I stood ready to uncouple, and I saw there was a horse-box next the engine. The guard called out to me that the horse-box was for Rye, so I uncoupled the horse-box and engine from the train. I got on to the steps of the box and gave the fireman a signal to go up over the points. While the engine was coming back through the cross-over road, I saw the fireman about to get hold of his shovel, and I called out to him that the horse-box was to go on to the down train, and pointed towards the train. He did not seem to take any notice. I thought the engine was coming back over the points about the same speed as usual. I quite thought that the enginemen knew the horse-box was to go on to the Hastings train. I think the engine passed me at about five miles an hour, but it went faster after that. I do not know when the driver shut off steam. I heard someone calling out to the driver, and I heard the crash of the collision. I did not hear the driver whistle as he went over the level crossing.

*Samuel Alfred Jennison*, warehouseman: On the 26th December I was standing on the down platform, at Appledore, when the branch train arrived. I went across to the up platform to help with the luggage. I heard the station-master call out to the shunter "one off." The station-master was then standing about the middle of the up platform. I returned to the down platform with two boxes of fish, and I heard the engine coming back through the cross-over road very fast. What attracted me was the noise of the steam. I jumped off the platform and ran towards the engine, about 25 yards, holding up my arms, and I got the attention of the fireman, but the collision occurred directly afterwards.

*Conclusion.*

The circumstances attending this bad collision were as follows :—

The branch train from New Romney, due at Appledore at 10.52 a.m., arrived there on the up line at 11.3 a.m., being 11 minutes late. The front vehicle on it was a horse-box, which was to be forwarded to Rye with the down train for Hastings, due to leave Appledore at 11 a.m. When the branch train ran into the station the stationmaster and shunter were on the up platform awaiting its arrival, and the down train was standing alongside the down platform. As soon as the branch train stopped the guard called out to the stationmaster and shunter that there was a horse-box for Rye. The shunter at once uncoupled the horse-box, engine, and tender from the train and gave a hand-signal to driver Whitewood to go forward over the points of the cross-over road, but no one informed him what was to be done with the horse-box.

It is usual for the engines of the branch trains to be uncoupled immediately after their arrival at this place, and to get across on to the down line for the purpose of running round their trains, which are then drawn out on to the branch and backed to the down platform ready for the return journey to New Romney. The branch train to which reference is made in this report is, as stated, due at 10.52, and the Hastings train is due at 11, and it generally happens that the engine of the branch train is allowed to run round before the arrival of the other train.

Driver Whitewood went forward over the points as directed, and immediately afterwards he received a hand-signal from the shunter to come back through the cross-over road on to the down line.

There is no doubt that Whitewood did not know what the intention was as regards the horse-box, and thought that he had to run round his train as usual, and that the horse-box was to be left in the up sidings. He therefore reversed his engine and opened the regulator, and came back at a fast speed so as to get round his train, which was then due to start on its return journey, as quickly as possible. As he was approaching the down platform he saw the stationmaster making signals to him to stop. He says that he had already shut off steam, and he at once applied his brake and reversed his engine; but before the speed was materially reduced the horse-box collided with the rear van of the down train, which was still standing at the down platform. Both driver Whitewood and his fireman were thrown down and hurt; several passengers in the train received very serious injuries, and the damage to the rolling stock was considerable. Whitewood estimates the speed at which his engine was moving at seven miles an hour, but judging from the effects of the collision, it was probably considerably higher.

According to their own admissions both driver Whitewood and fireman Whibley are convicted of exceeding carelessness. When they entered the station with their train they passed the down train which was standing at the down platform, and they both saw it. But when setting back through the cross-over road and along the down line, these men assumed that the down train had left, and neither of them made any attempt to see where they were going, or whether the down line was clear. It is true that the horse-box which, while they were moving backwards was in front of them, somewhat obscured their view from the foot-plate. But both men could, by slightly leaning over the side of the engine, have obtained an almost uninterrupted view of the down train. Moreover, apart from the general obligation on enginemmen to see that the line is clear, they were quite in the wrong in travelling over the public road level crossing without looking out to see that there was no one on it, and the driver was further to blame for moving round his train within station limits at such a speed. Although, therefore, these men, who had been on duty about 6 hours 40 minutes, were not told, as they should have been, what was going to be done with the horse-box, I am unable to find any excuse for their negligence, and they must bear the principal blame for what occurred. Of the two, driver Whitewood must, of course, be held to be the more culpable.

But while thus condemning the conduct of these men, it must be admitted that they are not the only ones in fault. Both the stationmaster and the shunter seem to have assumed that the driver knew what he had to do, and neither of them took the trouble to inform him as to the destination of the horse-box. Had either of them done so, the collision would not have occurred. The shunter on this occasion was working under the direct superintendence of the stationmaster, and may be absolved. But the stationmaster evidently failed in his duty in this respect, and must therefore share in the responsibility for the accident.

The Assistant Secretary,  
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,

H. A. YORKE,

*Lt.-Col., R.E.*

## APPENDIX.

*Damage to Engines.*

No. 189, working train from Lydd.—Tender-buffers broken and buffing-plate damaged.

No. 243, working the 10.45 a.m. Ashford to Hastings train.—Automatic train-pipe between engine and tender broken.

*Damage to Carriage Stock.*

Bogie third-class carriage No. 2288.—One headstock and buffer-castings broken, buffers bent, and one end compartment telescoped into next compartment.

Luggage-van No. 238.—One sole, two headstocks, buffer-castings, and step-boards broken, buffer-rods and draw-bars bent. Body shaken and sprung, one end driven in, arch-rail, corner-pillars, battens, and dog-box broken, two bottom sides split, two end-bars and look-out broken, roofing canvas damaged.

Second-class carriage No. 2000.—One headstock and buffer-castings broken.

Horse-box No. 69.—Two headstocks, buffer-castings, and step-boards broken, buffer and step-irons bent, body badly shaken and knocked out of upright, three corner-pillars, three standing-pillars, and several rails broken, one door, and one side-flap broken up, and all ironwork bent.

Printed copies of the above Report were sent to the Company on the 27th January, 1899.

## TRALEE AND DINGLE LIGHT RAILWAY AND TRAMWAY.

Board of Trade (Railway Department),  
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.,  
February 18th, 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 2nd ult., the result of my enquiry into the circumstances attending an accident that occurred on November 24th, 1898, on the Tralee and Dingle Railway.

In this case, as the 7.35 a.m. train from Dingle to Tralee, consisting of engine, one open cattle waggon and three passenger carriages, was running between Lispole and Annascaul Stations, about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Dingle, the three rear vehicles left the rails and were overturned on their right sides. The coupling between the waggon and the leading carriage was broken.

There were only four passengers in the train, three of whom received injuries, which in one instance, I regret to say, ended fatally. The guard of the train was badly shaken.

Details of the damage to rolling stock are given in the appendix. The permanent way is reported to have been very little disturbed.

*Description.*

The Tralee and Dingle light railway is a single line, on the 3-foot gauge, which partakes largely of the character of a tramway, being laid along the sides of the roads to a very considerable extent. The distance from the Great Southern and Western Station at Tralee, the commencement of the line, to Dingle Pier is nearly  $31\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and the scene of the accident was just opposite to the 24 miles post, where the line is a railway through fields. Following the direction in which the train was travelling, viz.: from Dingle to Tralee, the line at the 24 miles post is on a right-handed curve of about 10 chains radius, and on a gradient falling towards Tralee at 1 in 80, being approached, however, for a short distance on gradients of 1 in 30 and 1 in 49. The high, *i.e.* the left-hand, rail of the curve had, at the time of my enquiry, a superelevation of one-and-a-half inches.

The permanent way, which was laid about eight years ago, consists of flat-bottomed steel rails, weighing 45 lbs. to the yard, secured to the sleepers by fang bolts and dog