Damage to Rolling Stock.

No. 1,680 G.N. open carriage truck:
One Scotch bar, one axle box, two carriage straps, and one W.I. vacuum pipe junction broken.

No. 988 G.N. luggage van:
One buffer rod, one headstock, one axle box, spring scroll rods, buffer socket bolts, and axle box bolts broken, and break gear displaced, and body slightly displaced.

No. 216 G.N. slip carriage:
Four end panels, one end pillar, both end rails of body, one headstock, sheet-iron corner plate, one buffer rod, and two sand boxes broken, and body frame strained.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 26th April.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.
Board of Trade, (Railway Department,) 1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
12th March 1887.

Sir,

I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 28th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the causes of a collision which occurred on the 22nd ultimo at Quarry Gap, near Laister Dyke, on the Great Northern Railway.

In this case the 8.25 p.m. passenger train from Bradford to Shipley (consisting of tank-engine, running tank first, third-class break-carryage, one third-class and two composite carryages, and third-class break-carryage), which left Laister Dyke at 8.35 p.m., came into collision about a minute afterwards with a goods waggon, one of four vehicles which a goods train from Shipley to Laister Dyke had shunted across the line at Quarry Gap at about 8.15 p.m., and which, instead of running into a siding as intended, had stopped on the crossing of the main line, and outside the safety-points of the siding.

The passenger train was running at about 15 miles an hour, and the engine did not leave the rails, but was brought to a stand in a distance of 150 yards. The leading wheels of the two leading carryages were found to be off the rails.

Six passengers are returned as having been injured, and the engine and one of the carryages were slightly damaged.

In the permanent way 12 chairs were broken and a disc-signal damaged.

Description.

At Quarry Gap, about half a mile east of Laister Dyke, there is a junction between the line from Laister Dyke to Shipley, and a loop from Dudley Hill, on the main line from Ardsley to Bradford, and a short distance east of the signal-box there is a siding on the down side of the line, with a cross-over road leading out on to the up line to Laister Dyke, and slips on to the down line to Shipley.

The safety-points of this siding are 158 yards, the slip-points are 125 yards, and the trailing-points on the up line are 75 yards east of the signal-cabin. There are two disc-signals at the safety-points, only one of which can be seen from the signal-box when there are waggons on the crossing, the other one on the outside of the line being visible under all circumstances.

The line from Laister Dyke is on a slight curve on a junction of the signal-box, but is then straight, passing over a bridge across the line from Laister Dyke to Leeds, and then running out on to an embankment. It is slightly level at this point.

The rear waggon of the four vehicles dropped by the goods train seems to have been standing on the down line, and to have been struck fairly on the side.

The point of collision was 120 yards east of the signal-box.
Signalman Robt. Stanners states: I have been in the service over six years, and signalman five years. I have been signalman at Quarry Gap over three years. On the 22nd ultimo I came on duty at 2 p.m. for 12 hours. No. 307 goods train (7.10 p.m. Steam to Lasteir Dyke) arrived at my box at 8.15 p.m. The train pulled up and stopped clear of the station. There were four wagons in the train and we uncoupled and pushed back into the siding, and the train then away with a tall lamp on the last wagon, and a man riding in the last track but one. The train left at 8.17 p.m. I got “Be ready” for the 8.25 p.m. passenger train from Bradford to Skipton at 8.22 p.m. From Lasteir Dyke East and “On line 8.33. The collision occurred at about 8.36. Between 8.17 and 8.32 no train passed on the other line. I lowered my signals for the passenger train when I got “Be ready” at 8.32. I looked out on the line before doing this, but I could not see any obstruction. I could see one disc at the siding points alight, the other was out. I looked out when the wagons and breaks were put into the siding, and saw the disc alight. Both discs had been lighted, but one had gone out. It is my duty if a signal lamp is out to send for some one to light it, but in this case I did not think it necessary to do so, as I meant to ask the first man who came to the station to do this. I should think the speed of the passenger train at the time it passed my box would be 10 or 12 miles an hour.

Driver William Cooper states: I have been in the service 38 years, and driver for 25 years. On the 22nd ultimo I drove engine 517, a bogie tank passenger engine, with trailing bogie, and with leading and driving wheels coupled. I worked No. 81 passenger train Bradford to Skipton. We left Bradford at 8.25. My train consisted of five carriages and two breaks, one at each end. My train was worked with the continuous vacuum break, fitted with iron blocks on the coupled wheels of the engine and all the carriage wheels. We stopped at Lasteir Dyke, and left there about one minute late, the engines having to take water. It was rather a dark night, but I could see the signals were right for Beech Hill; they were before leaving the station. In passing Quarry Gap I struck some wagons which were out of the road. I had no warning whatever of this obstruction. I was running with steam on at about 15 miles an hour. My engine did not leave the rails. The leading wheels of the front carriage break and the carriage next to it left the road. Immediately after the collision I shut off steam, and applied my vacuum break, but the pipe was knocked off the engine, and the break would not act. I was running tank first. I was not hurt. My fireman’s lip was cut a little. Neither of us has been off duty. I shut off steam before applying the break, and the engine stopped in about 150 yards. After the collision I went back to the scene of the accident, but I did not notice whether the discs of the crossing were alight or not. I believe they were both broken by the collision.

Breaksman Walter Pearson states: I have been in the service 12 years, and passenger breaksman for five years. On the 22nd ultimo I worked the 8.25 p.m. train from Bradford to Skipton. It was formed as under:—Tank-engine, running tank first, carriage break, third-class carriage, composite carriage, composite carriage, carriage break. We left Bradford at nearly 9 p.m. and Lasteir Dyke three minutes late, the engine taking water. I had no warning whatever of the collision. I was knocked down, but not injured. There were 50 passengers in the train, four of whom complained of being injured. After the collision I went back, but did not notice the state of the discs.

Driver Alfred Bradford states: I have been in the service over 20 years, and goods driver over 11 years. On the 22nd February I came on duty at 2.50 p.m. My engine was 150, six wheels coupled goods engine. I worked 307 goods train from Shipley to Lasteir Dyke. On arrival at Quarry Gap, after bringing the train to a stand, I received a signal to knock some wagons back, I did not see the moment at the time. I knocked the wagons back until 2.45 p.m. The guard then gave me a signal to draw up clear of the signalman’s points. After that I heard him call out to the breaksman to give us a light when we were ready for away. He received a light and gave me a signal to go on to the station. As far as I know, from the time I got the signal to set back, I set about 9 or 10 wagons’ lengths. I considered this would be enough to put the wagons into the siding. I thought the wagons would run a short distance after we stopped. It is our usual custom to see back until we receive a signal from the rear of the train that all is right. I cannot tell how the discs at the siding end of the crossing were burning.

Goods guard John Frederick Mitchell states: I have been in the service 11 or 12 years, and guard five years. On the 22nd ultimo I came on duty at 2.50 p.m. I worked 307 goods train from Bradford to Lasteir Dyke. The train consisted of 13 wagons and two breaks on leaving Skipton. We did not detach or attach any wagons on the goods we arrived at Quarry Gap, where we put off two wagons and two breaks. On arrival at Quarry Gap the engine drove up till the train was clear to the crossing. I stopped the driver by signal after he was over the points. I was in my break at the rear of the train when I gave the signal. There were two breaks on the train at the rear, and I rode in the one nearest the engine. After the train had come to a stand I got out of my break, ran to the front of the train, and uncoupled between the two wagons for Quarry Gap siding and the Lasteir Dyke portion of the train. After doing this I gave the driver a signal to hit these two wagons and the two breaks back, to knock them into the siding. When I thought he had knocked them back far enough I gave him a light to stop. There were 11 wagons between the engine and the break. The driver did not stop until the engine reached me. At the same time I told my mate to go back and place a tall light on the last wagon of the train and give me a light when he was right. The fireman told me the signal was right for us to go ahead. I told him I had asked my mate to give me a light when he was right. I got all right signal from my mate and told the driver to go ahead. I have worked this train in turn with other men since it was put on and have always detached wagons at Quarry Gap siding in this manner. The hand-break in my van was off, but I cannot say whether the break in the rear van was off. I did not notice the discs at the other end of the crossing. I cannot tell whether they were burning. I did not myself go back to see whether the wagons were placed in the siding clear of the safety-points. I asked my mate to do this. I knew the rule 224 in which the guard’s duty in this respect is set forth. Practically in shooting operations of this description is for the guard to do the detaching part and to take the breaksman’s signal as to whether the wagons go in clear or not. My breaksman was not more than one or two wagons’ lengths from the crossing when he gave us the lights. He came away on the last wagon but one.

Breaksman Walter Cogley states: I have been in the service seven years, and breaksman a little more than two years. On the 22nd February I came on duty at 2.40 p.m. I was riding in the rear break of 307 goods train from Shipley to Lasteir Dyke. When we
arrived at Quarry Gap my mate and I got out of our break, and I took the tail lamp off my break to put it on the last wagon of the portion we were going to take on to Laister Dyke. The guard gave the driver a signal to push the wagons back into the siding until he (the guard) thought they had gone far enough. When I got out of my van I stood opposite where it had stopped. I did not go back at all on the crossing. The wagons were pushed back past me over the crossing. I did not go back myself to see whether they were clear. The guard signalled to the driver to go ahead after the wagons had been pushed back. I did not see him do so. "The guard rode on the engine as it drew up. He said to me, "Tell me when you are right." When the last wagon was opposite to me I put the tail lamp on. I was still standing in the same place. When the engine pushed the wagons back it stopped near where the guard and I stood. There were, I think, about 11 wagons on the train, exclusive of the two last wagons and breaks which were detached. I did not go back to the safety-points to see whether the wagons and breaks had been placed clear of the siding. I trusted to the guard, having concluded that the engine had pushed them back far enough. I am aware of Rule 224 in which the practice in shunting wagons into sidings adjoining the main line is set forth. I cannot say whether the lights in the boxes at the other end of the crossing were burning. The break in my van was slightly on.

Driver Alfred Bedford (recalled) states: When my engine stopped after setting back it came nearly to where the guard was standing. I did not see the break signal with him. When the breakman gave the guard a light, the guard was on the engine, and the breakman was at the rear of the train. This was before I moved the engine ahead at all. After we hit the wagons up we drew up clear of the points to allow the signalman to set them. I cannot tell whether the breakman went back on the crossing. I did not see him until he gave the guard a light to go right away.

Conclusion.

This collision, the consequences of which were less serious than might have been expected, was due to the neglect of the goods guard and breakman of the goods train from Shipley to Laister Dyke, who disregarded a very well known and very important rule of the Company, which imposes upon such men the duty, when vehicles are being shunted off their trains into a siding, of seeing that all are put clear off the main line and inside the safety-points or switch-blocks on the siding.

It appears that on this occasion the guard, upon the goods train being stopped with the rear of it clear of the points on the up line, uncoupled the four rear vehicles and signalled to the driver as usual to push them back across the down line into the siding. After giving this signal he did not himself go back to the rear of his train, but trusted to his breakman to give him a signal from the rear when the wagons were clear into the siding, and upon receiving this signal he gave a signal to his driver to proceed to Laister Dyke. There is some discrepancy between the statements of the guard and the breakman, each trying to make out the best possible case for himself. The guard says that the breakman went back on to the crossing to a position where he ought to have been able to see clearly whether or not the wagons went into the siding, whereas the breakman says that he remained with the guard at the place where they got out of their breaks after the train had stopped in the first instance clear of the points on the up line, and that he did not go back on the crossing at all, waiting at the same place until the train had been drawn forward after pushing the wagons back, and only signalling to his guard that it was right to go away when he had attached the tail lamp to the vehicle then the last in the train, the guard at that time being on the engine.

It is impossible to say which of these men is speaking the truth, but both of them have been dismissed from the service. The guard is the proper person to hold responsible that these shunting operations are properly carried out, and the breakman must either have been grossly careless if the guard's statement be true, or have connived at the guard's neglect of duty if his own statement be true.

If both the disc-signal at the safety-points of the siding had been alight the signalman should have seen that something was wrong, for the view of one of them would have been obscured by the wagons being across the down line, but at my inquiry he stated that he knew one of them was not alight, and that on looking out and seeing one burning properly, he had no suspicion but that the line was clear. Nor can this case he is not free from blame for leaving one of these signals in a useless state to the officers of the Company he said nothing about the signal light being out, and only mentioned it after some experiments had been made to see if the wagons would have shut out one disc-signal. Under these circumstances I am inclined to doubt whether he looked out along the line at all, as he should have done before lowering his signals for the passenger train.

The driver of this train is in no way responsible for the collision, as he had no warning of the obstruction before him, and the driver of the goods train seemed to have pushed the wagons back a sufficient distance to have sent them clear of the
main line if the break had not been on the rear van, and he received the usual all-right signal from his guard before starting.

It should be remarked that when the collision occurred, the continuous break on the passenger train being non-automatic, was, as is too often the case with such breaks, rendered useless by the fracture of the pipe at the end of the engine. It is to be hoped that this warning will not be neglected by the directors of the Company in considering the advisability of adopting a break possessing the qualities believed by the Board of Trade to be necessary, and which have so often been proved to be so.

I have, &c.,

F. A. MARINDIN, Major.

The Assistant Secretary,
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 4th April.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,) 1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
14th March 1887.

SIR,

I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in the order of the 7th instant, the result of my inquiry into the causes of a collision which occurred on the 5th instant, at Laister Dyke station, on the Great Northern Railway.

In this case, the 8.32 A.M. train from Bradford to Leeds (consisting of engine and tender, running tender first, third-class break, one third-class, one first-class, and two third-class carriages, and third-class break), when running into Laister Dyke station on the up line during a thick fog, came into collision with the tail of the 8.28 A.M. train from Bradford to Shipley (consisting of tank-engine, third-class break, two composite, and one third-class carriages, and third-class break), which was standing at the up platform.

The latter train was driven ahead for about four yards, but no vehicles were thrown off the rails.

Seven passengers are reported as having complained of slight injuries.

In the 8.32 train to Leeds only one buffer casting was broken, but in the 8.28 train to Shipley the following were the damages:

Third-class break No. 840.—Headstock, axle-box, corner plate, and break block broken, break-screw bent, and body shifted.

Composite No. 223.—Axle-box and two quarter-lights broken.

Third-class carriage No. 1,596.—Quarter-light and buffer casting broken.

Third-class break No. 1,956.—Body shifted.

There were no damages to the permanent way.

Description.

Laister Dyke station, the next station but one to Bradford, which is a terminal station, is situated a little to the east of the junction of the line from Bradford and the line from Halifax, and is a double-sided station, the platforms not being opposite to each other.

The signals are worked from two signal-boxes, the junction or West signal-box at one end, and the East signal-box at the other; the two being about 400 yards apart.

The former is on the north side of the line close to the junction, 125 yards west of the up platform, and 175 yards west of the point of collision. The only signals to which it is necessary to refer are, the up-home signal from Bradford, which is 207 yards west of the junction or West box, and a signal which is called the up advance signal, which is hung upon the underside of the foot-bridge leading from the east end of the down platform to near the west end of the up platform. This signal is 146 yards east of the junction signal-box. There is no up distant signal from the East box, but there is an indicator in the junction box.

The next block signal-box towards Bradford is Hamerton Street box, which is about three-quarters of a mile from the junction.

The line rises very rapidly from Bradford, the gradient being one of 1 in 50 as far as