short of the junction signals, part of the rear of the train standing on the falling gradient of 1 in 30.
The guard uncoupled the train at the 10th wagon, signalled to his driver to go ahead, and then back these wagons into a siding, where eight had to be left. The driver did so, and the guard uncoupled these eight in the siding; the driver then went out of the siding with the two front wagons, and, on going back to rejoin the remainder of his train, he found it gone. After receiving the necessary instructions he followed the runaway wagons, and found that they had stopped by coming in contact with the engine of a goods train which had been standing at the stop-signal. The driver declares that the guard was perfectly sober; he assured him that he had put his break on hard before he left his van to uncouple the train; and that, moreover, he had stood by the wagons a minute or two after he had uncoupled them, and before he signalled to him to go ahead.

The guard had been dismissed from the Committee’s service for a further offence before I made my enquiry, and was not forthcoming at it.

The goods train which was run into had followed the other from Liverpool, and had been standing at the stop-signal at Woodley about five minutes when the wagons ran back. The driver perceived them coming in time to get his train into backward motion, but they ran in with a heavy blow, which knocked the guard from one end of his van to the other. The train was stopped before it reached the runaway points, and no damage of any importance was sustained by the engine or by the runaway wagons and van.

The guard of the second goods train went up to the van of the first one as soon as they had stopped, and found the break-blocks not in contact with the wheels. He then got into the van, and found it in three drovers complaining of injury. They denied having tampered with the break, which the guard tried, and found that, though it worked stiffly, he could apply it.

A district inspector, who arrived on the spot soon after the collision, also inspected the break, and found it in good working order; he thought that the drovers were rather the worse for liquor, and had but little doubt that the guard had not put his break on properly before uncoupling the train.

No one appears to have asked the drovers whether the guard did or did not apply his break.

This collision was most probably caused by the negligence of the guard of the first train in not having properly put on his break before uncoupling his train. It is, however, possible that the break may have been tampered with (as alleged by the guard) by one of the drovers, who ought not to have been travelling in the guard’s van.

Although this collision was happily unattended with the serious consequences that so often accompany the running away of trains down steep inclines, it shows very clearly the importance of drovers not being permitted to travel in the guard’s van, as is now the case. The driver, as it was to do so, the act of some thoughtless or half tipsy man in tampering with a break may endanger both their own safety and that of the travelling public.

The Secretary,
(Colne Valley Railway),
Lt.-Col. R.E.
Board of Trade.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 8th December.

COLNE VALLEY RAILWAY.

Sax, Chappell, 14th August 1873.

In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 24th July, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 22nd July near the Chappell junction of the Colne Valley Railway.

In this case the Colne Valley passenger train, 7.40 a.m., from Haverhill for Chappell, whilst approaching the Chappell junction, came into collision with the engine of a goods train which had been standing at the stop-signal. In running between the distant-signal and the junction there is a sharp curve to the right. The distant-signal is not visible from the cabin, nor from the point of collision, 145 yards on the north of it. The driver of the Colne Valley train could not see the goods train in his way, as he states, until he was within 70 yards of it, in consequence of the sharpness of the curve, and of the hedges which were on each side of the line, the line being also in a cutting at this point. The engine-driver states that he passed the distant-signal at a speed of seven or eight miles an hour, and that his tender-break was applied at that time; but the guard states that his break was off because the distant-signal was at all right. As soon as the engine-driver saw the goods train in front of him he opened his whistle for the guard’s break and reversed his engine; and he thus reduced his speed to one mile an hour before the collision occurred. Neither of the engines left the rails, nor did any of the carriages, but the buffer-beam of the passenger-engine was broken, and the cylinders of the buffers were also broken.

The goods train which was thus run into by the Colne Valley train, was a special train which left Marks Tey at 8.15 a.m. It consisted of an engine and tender, 32 wagons, and a break-van. Of these wagons, 11, the last of which was 15th from the engine and tender, had to be placed in the Colne Valley siding; and in order that this might be done, 15 wagons were uncoupled by the yardman from the remainder of the train, and were set forward through the crossing road towards the Colne Valley line, whilst the remaining wagons and the break-van were left on the Great Eastern line.

This train arrived at Chappell at 8.31 a.m. and the uncoupling took place at 8.33, 10 minutes before the Colne Valley train was due. Three minutes were then occupied in spraying the wagons in the hinder...
part of the train, on a gradient of 1 in a 100, in order that the fore part of the train might be eased back whilst the coupling was loosened. That having been done, the engine, the tender, and the 15 waggons were run across to the Colne Valley line and forward along that line sufficiently far to clear the points of the Colne Valley siding. The driver of the goods train states that he had brought his engine to a stand, in compliance with a hand-signal made to him by the yard-shunter, in the first instance foul of the points,—that he again moved forward to clear the points,—and that having done so he was in the act of setting back towards the siding when the collision occurred. None of the men with the train could see the distant-signal on account of the curve in the line above referred to. Neither the goods engine nor any of the trucks were damaged.

The signalman on duty in the cabin was a servant of the Great Eastern Company, who has been employed in the cabin for 12 months. He asserts positively that his distant-signal had not been lowered since it had been turned to danger on the previous evening, and that it must have been at danger when the Colne Valley engine-driver passed it. He denies having given permission to the goods train to run forward on the Colne Valley line, though the goods driver of the Great Eastern train asserts that he did so by a motion of his hand. The signalman adds that he had his hand out to stop the goods driver, but that the goods engine had by that time passed through a bridge on the north of the cabin, and the driver was unable to see him. The signalman admits that he is in the habit of lowering his Colne Valley distant-signal when the Colne Valley train is due to arrive or when he hears the engine whistle in the distance, provided the line is clear for the train to run past the junction cabin; and he has every right to do so; and the servants of the Colne Valley Company allege that they usually find that signal lowered for them as they approach it.

The station master at Chappell states that he was engaged with a customer at the time of the arrival of the goods train, that he saw the goods going forward towards the Colne Valley line, and that as there were 13 minutes between the arrival of the goods train and the due time of the passenger train, he considered there was time for the shunting operation into the Colne Valley siding to be performed before the arrival of the passenger train. He was anxious, if possible, to get these trucks into the Colne Valley siding before the arrival of the passenger train, because he feared that otherwise the traffic following upon this train might be delayed.

The yard-shunter states that he was also anxious to get through the shunting before the arrival of the passenger train to avoid delay to the traffic.

This collision has been caused in the course of shunting at a most awkward spot, and as the passenger train is usually punctual it might have been expected to arrive at the moment of the collision.

The evidence as to the distant-signal is conflicting. There is only the signalman on one side, who states positively that the signal was at danger as far as his wheel was concerned, whilst the three men of the Colne Valley Company state as positively on the other side that the signal was at all right. There has been no complaint of the working of the signal before or since the accident, and I am unable to decide positively whether the Great Eastern signalman or the servants of the Colne Valley Company with the passenger train are telling the truth. In any case, the station-master, signalman, and yard-shunter all did wrong in allowing the goods train to be shunted at such a place in the train that the goods engine could not be provided with points on the passenger line to be provided at the Chappell junction station for this purpose.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary,
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 12th September.

CORK AND BANDON RAILWAY.

Sir,

Dublin, 23rd December 1873.

I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, that I have inspected the Cork and Bandon Railway, in compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 26th ultimo and its enclosures. The enclosures consist of letters from the Earl of Bandon, Viscount Midleton, and its enclosures. The enclosures consist of letters from the Earl of Bandon, Viscount Midleton, Mr. Bullen, Chairman of the Bandon Town Commissioners, Mr. Connor, Chairman of the Dunmanway Board of Guardians, and extracts from a newspaper forwarded by Lord Bandon, that refer to three accidents which are reported to have occurred on the railway on the 31st October, and 13th and 18th of November. The whole of this correspondence refers to the bad and dangerous condition of the permanent way and rolling stock of the Cork and Bandon Railway, and to the great uncertainty and irregularity of the trains on the line, and the interference of the Board of Trade is urgently requested.

The complaints appear to be well founded. The permanent way of this railway was reported by Capt. Tyler, in March 1862, to be in an unsatisfactory state. He recommended better maintenance, and that the rails should be fished.

About ten miles of the railway have been fished, but the general state of the rest of the line and of the rolling stock appears to have been allowed to go from bad to worse since that time; and both the permanent way and the rolling stock are now in a very bad and dangerous state.

The railway is about 20 miles long. It is a single line with sidings, and junctions with the West Cork Railway near Bandon, with the Cork and Kinsale Railway about 7 miles from Bandon, and with the Cork and Macroom Railway about 14 miles from Cork. The ruling gradient is 1 in 80, and it is worked on the train staff system. The signals and points at these junctions are arranged on the locking principle, but they all require to be repaired.

The stations on the line should be provided with distant-signals, which as well as the home-signals should be interlocked with the points, and the sidings should be provided with watch points. Two sets of facing points at Bandon and one set of facing points at Cork station should be taken out, and each set of points on the passenger line should be provided with a covering rod. The permanent way for about 10 miles consists of a single-headed rail, that has been worn down from 70 lbs. (which it originally weighed) to about 60 lbs. per linear yard, which it is...