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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public Works

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1822	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	30-6-195	6275

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th June 1875.*

No. 596. Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. M. SHAW-STEWART, R.E., Consulting Engineer for Railways, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Officiating Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madras, 17th June 1875, No. 341 :—

I HAVE the honor to forward the accompanying letter* from the Agent, Madras

Railway, reporting that seven loaded wagons
* No. 607, dated 8th June 1875, with two enclosures.
ran away from the Vellore station on the night of the 29th December 1874, and

were discovered by a night watchman at the 74th mile, a little to the west of Tiruvellum station, the distance run being somewhat over 6 miles. The Vellore station, at 80½ miles, is on a gradient, falling towards Madras, of 1 in 440, which extends from 82 to 75 miles. At 75 miles the rate of inclination changes to 1 in 660, and at 74 miles a rising gradient of 1 in 1,056 is met with, which continues as far as the Tiruvellum station yard.

2. From the depositions taken by the Assistant Traffic Manager, it appears that these seven loaded wagons formed a portion of twenty-one wagons which were standing on the second line siding, and that the accident was caused by the shunting of the 5-30 p.m. mixed train from Arcunum, due to arrive at Vellore at 8 p.m. This train runs no further than Vellore, and it was decided to place it for the night in the siding above referred to. It was accordingly passed through the west points, and on coming into contact with the twenty-one wagons already in the siding, the seven last of these being uncoupled from the others were set in motion, ran through the east points and down the incline. The station authorities did not observe them leave, and became aware of the fact only on the receipt of a telegram from Tiruvellum, asking for orders in regard to them. The 6 p.m. mail train having in the meantime been stopped at the Tiruvellum station, the Vellore Station-Master ordered it to proceed cautiously to the 74th mile, hook on the derelict wagons, and push them in front of the engine to Vellore, where the train arrived at 11 p.m., being 1 hour and 16 minutes late.

3. The cause of this occurrence, which might have produced a serious accident, appears to have been the neglect of the station authorities to carry out fully the rules laid down for their guidance with regard to vehicles standing in a siding, which are as follow :—

1st.—That the Scotch blocks are properly closed across the rail and *locked*.

2nd.—That the brakes of all the vehicles are *pinned down*.

3rd.—That the leading wheel of the vehicle nearest to the points at either end of the siding (if there are points at both ends) is secured to the spring of the vehicle by means of a chain and padlock.

4th.—That the whole of the vehicles are coupled together.

The first and third rules appear to have been acted up to, but there can be no doubt that the fourth was not observed. As regards the second, it does not appear from the evidence whether the brakes were pinned down or not. Both the Station Master and the Head Porter are old experienced servants, and are reported to have performed their duties generally with care and attention. They have both been fined one month's pay, which may, I think, be considered a sufficient punishment.

4. The watchman, on whose beat the wagons came to a stand, appears to have acted with promptitude in protecting the wagons with signals and reporting the

matter at once to Tiruvellum station, and in recognition of his services a bangle of the value of Rupees 15 has been presented to him.

5. The Assistant Traffic Manager recommends the provision of a catch siding at the east end of the station, into which all the lines of rails could be led, and the expediency of carrying this out is now under consideration.

In a station on a falling gradient, where a large amount of shunting takes place, this would appear to be a desirable safeguard.

6. The delay which has occurred in reporting this matter is to be regretted. It is partly due to the Agent having considered the subject as disposed of at the Meeting held on the 17th March last, when the correspondence was read, but the accident should have been reported immediately upon its occurrence.

From R. B. ELWIN, Esq., Agent and Manager, Madras Railway Company, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. M. SHAW-STEWART, R.E., Consulting Engineer for Railways, dated Madras, 8th June 1875, No. 697.

With reference to your letter of the 31st ultimo, No. 619, I have the honor to enclose you a copy of the Traffic Manager's letter, No. C 400, dated the 2nd of March last, which contains a report of the seven loaded wagons having got loose and "run away" from the Vellore station on the 29th of December last. I also enclose you the copy of Mr. Craik's report,* with the depositions referred to in Mr. Church's letter.

* In original, to be returned.

2. The sum of Rupees 15 was upon the recommendation of the Chief Engineer paid for the purchase of a bangle for Watchman Moneyan, No. 37, in recognition of his good services on the occasion in question.

3. All the documents forwarded with this letter were read to the Meeting of the Committee held in my office on the 17th of March last, when I reported that I had assented to the Traffic Manager's proposals with regard to the punishments to be inflicted on the Station Master and Head Porter at Vellore.

From H. E. CHURCH, Esq., Traffic Manager, to R. B. ELWIN, Esq., Agent and Manager of the Madras Railway Company, dated Madras, 2nd March 1875, No. C 400.

With reference to your letter, No. 462, dated 1st ultimo, I beg to enclose copy of a final report made to me by the Assistant Traffic Manager of the division, dated 26th ultimo, together with copies of the depositions taken from the Station Master, Head Porter, and Pointsman Moonosawmy.

There can be no doubt that the running away of the wagons was entirely due to a neglect of the rules laid down for securing vehicles standing in a siding, for the proper observance of which the Station Master is personally responsible, and, notwithstanding Mr. Craik's remarks, I don't see how the Station Master can be held blameless in this case.

Both the Station Master and Head Porter are old and efficient servants of the Company, and have generally performed their duty satisfactorily, and in this particular instance the Vellore yard was unusually full of wagons, and it was perhaps necessary to resort to expedients in order to accommodate so many vehicles. At the same time this unusual pressure should have suggested extra precaution, which does not appear to have been taken.

Looking at all the circumstances of the case, and having due regard to the serious nature of the offence, I hope that a fine of one month's pay in the case of the Station Master and Head Porter will be considered a sufficient example to the rest of the staff.

I will confer with the Acting Chief Engineer on the suggestion made by Mr. Craik with reference to the sidings.

From J. CRAIK, Esq., Assistant Traffic Manager, to H. E. CHURCH, Esq., Traffic Manager of the Madras Railway Company, dated Madras, 26th February 1875, No. T. M. 15 ⁷⁹¹/₁₁₄₃.

On the night of the 29th December a line watchman arrived at Tiruvellum and reported to the Station Master that seven loaded wagons, which had apparently become derelict from Vellore, were standing at the 74th mile, a little west of Tiruvellum station. The Station Master at once advised Vellore of the occurrence, and received directions to allow the 6 p.m. mail, which, in the interval, had arrived at Tiruvellum, to proceed to 74th mile, attach the seven wagons, and propel them to Vellore. These directions being acted upon, the 6 p.m. proceeded with its own train, consisting of eleven carriages, and the seven loaded wagons to Vellore, and arrived there at 11 p.m., 1 hour and 26 minutes after time.

I have made a thorough inquiry into the cause of this occurrence, and have taken depositions from the Station Master, the Head Porter, and a Pointsman of Vellore, I send herewith a copy of their statements.

The stringency of our rules with regard to securing of wagons would appear to be sufficient, if acted upon, to absolutely prevent wagons becoming derelict, and the result of my inquiry at Vellore goes to show that the rules are carefully adhered to at that station.

All the witnesses agree in stating that at 7 p.m., on the night stated, the extreme last wagon of those standing in the Vellore yard was duly locked, and all the Scotch blocks carefully closed. To admit of the shunting of the 5-30 p.m. mixed train, it became necessary to remove the chain and lock from the wagon, and to open the blocks. Twenty-three wagons and carriages were received by the 5-30 p.m., and it was decided to place them for the night in the second line, so called, where twenty-one wagons were already standing. During the course of the shunting of these twenty-three vehicles, they came sharply in contact with the twenty-one already in the siding, the consequence being that the seven wagons at the east end, being uncoupled from the other fourteen, received a propulsion of sufficient power to carry them outside the points. Immediately to the east of the station there is a decline, and as soon as the wagons reached this part of the line, they gathered speed and ran on for a distance of 6 miles till they stopped upon an incline at the 74th mile, and being observed by the line watchman their brakes were put down and secured. Danger signals were at once exhibited, and information conveyed to Tiruvellum station as previously stated.

The immediate causes of the occurrence were a somewhat rough shunt, and the whole twenty-one wagons not being coupled together. I cannot well attach blame to any one on account of the shunt, but the Head Porter is to blame for failing to have all the wagons coupled together, it being quite clear, notwithstanding his statement, that there was a disconnection between the 7th and the 8th wagons east side.

This occurrence seems, however, to indicate that some special safeguard is required in the Vellore yard; and it appears to me that no better means of providing such could be adopted than the putting down of a dead siding at the east end of the yard. Into this siding the whole of the lines on the north side of the main line should converge, and the points of the dead siding being always open, except when otherwise held by a pointsman for a train to pass from one or other of the sidings to the main line, it would be impossible for wagons to run out of the yard.

As far as I can judge it is only at the east end of the yard that such a siding is required. The danger of wagons running westward without being noticed is small, for not only does the line gradually rise to the west of the yard, but there are always gatemen on duty at the level crossing at that end.

VELLORE STATION, 8th January 1875.

Ramachendra Row, Station Master, Vellore, examined states:—At 7-15 p.m. on the night of 29th December I ordered Head Porter Narrainsawmy to close all the Scotch blocks and lock wagons as usual every day at this station. I never fail to order the Head Porter to do this. After doing so on that day, the Head Porter came to me and informed me that he had done so. On the night

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th June 1875.*

in question it was necessary to open the blocks and take the chain off the wagon in 2nd line, so that the vehicles received by 5-30 p.m. train might be placed in same line. The shunting was performed under the direction of the Head Porter, and there was no necessity for me to be in the yard, so I went home to my meals and returned again at 8-15 p.m. At 10-15 p.m. I received a telegram from Station Master Tiruvellam to the effect that seven wagons of goods had run to 7th mile from my station, and asking for instructions.

I thereupon directed him to instruct Guard and Driver, 6 p.m. mail, to proceed cautiously to the point where the wagons were standing, and bring them back to Vellore. Train arrived here with the derailed wagons at 11-10 p.m., shunted them off, and proceeded.

(Signed) C. RAMACHENDRA ROW,

Station Master.

Vellore Station, 8th January 1875.

Naraynasawmy, Head Porter, Vellore, examined states:—I have been thirteen years in the service of the Madras Railway Company, and have been Head Porter at Vellore for eighteen months. I am well acquainted with the rules for securing wagons, and am an experienced Shunter. On the afternoon of the 29th December last I was on duty at this station, and had occasion to place seven loaded goods wagons at the east end of the siding, called here the second line; after I had done so, I closed the blocks at the extreme east end of the second line, and locked the 1st wagon, counting from east side with chain and padlock as laid down in rule. I can prove that I did so by Pointsman Memonasawmy and Peon Anthony. At 7-45 p.m., shortly before the arrival of the 6-30 p.m. train from Arcot, I opened the blocks and removed the chain and padlock as mentioned, because the station being very full of loaded and empty wagons the second line was the only one in which I could place the wagons received by the 6-30 p.m. train, and it was necessary to remove the chain, or the wagons would have been immovable, and to open the locks, for had the wagons been moved back while they were shut some of the vehicles might have been derailed. The seven wagons were safe in the yard at 8 p.m. when I proceeded to the west end of the station yard for the purpose of having the whole of the twenty-three vehicles received by the 5-30 p.m. train drawn forward and backed into the second line. After I had done this, which occupied about half an hour, I proceeded to the east end of the station, closed the blocks, and locked the extreme east wagon, but the night being dark and rainy I did not notice that seven wagons were missing. There were in all twenty-one loaded wagons in second line before arrival of the 5-30 p.m., and as they were all very much alike, I did not notice that the wagon which I locked about 8-40 p.m. was not the same which I had locked earlier in the evening. The whole twenty-one wagons were coupled together, and I am unable to explain, how the seven which ran away became detached from the other fourteen. When the vehicles composing the 5-30 p.m. were shunted back, they came in contact with these already in the siding, and I believe it was at that time the seven wagons were started, but I had no idea that they had gone, or I should have endeavoured to stop them and bring them back into the yard.

(Signed) C. NARRANASAWMY,

Head Porter.

Witness,
C. RAMASAWMY.

Vellore Station, 8th January 1875.

Pointsman Naraynasawmy examined states:—On the night of the 29th December last I was on duty at the east points of main line siding, and after all shunting had been performed by the pilot engine, Head Porter Narrainasawmy ordered me to bring a chain and lock and place it upon the extreme east wagon of those standing in second line. This I did under the supervision of the Head Porter. I then went home as my turn of duty was done.

(Signed) × His mark,

Pointsman.

Witness,
C. RAMASAWMY.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
30th June 1875.*

No. 597.

ORDER THEREON, 30th June 1875, No. 1,822.

RAILWAY, No. 77.

ORDERED to be recorded. The notice taken by the Railway authorities of the neglect of the station officials seems, under the circumstances, sufficient. The necessity of some such additional precaution as that suggested by the Assistant Traffic Manager has apparently been established, and the Honorable the Governor in Council will be glad to learn that the required action has been taken.

(True Extract.)

Major, R.E.,

Offg. Joint Secretary to Government.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies

Railway Department.

CONSULTING ENGINEER'S OFFICE.

No. 34th Madras, 17th June 1875

From

LIEUT. COLONEL J. H. M. SHAW STEWART, R.E.,

Consulting Engineer for Railways,

To

Lieut. Col. J. Mullins, R.E.,
~~Colonel C. W. WALKER, R.E.,~~

Secretary to Government,

Public Works Department,

Fort Saint George.

SIR,

* No. 607, dated
8th June 1875
with two en-
closures.

I have the honour to forward the accompanying letter* from the Agent, Madras Railway, reporting that 7 loaded wagons ran away from the Vellare station on the night of the 29th December, 1874, and were discovered by a night watchman at the 74th mile, a little to the west of Tiruvellum station, the distance run being somewhat over 6 miles. The Vellare station, at 80¹/₂ miles, is on a gradient, falling towards Madras, of 1 in 440, which extends

from

from 62 to 75 miles. At 75 miles the rate of inclination changes to 1 in 660, and at 74 miles a rising gradient of 1 in 1056 is met with, which continues as far as the Tiruvellum station yard.

2. From the depositions taken by the Assistant Traffic Manager, it appears that these 7 loaded wagons formed a portion of 21 wagons which were standing on the second line siding, and that the accident was caused by the shunting of the 5-30 p.m. mixed train from Arcanum, due to arrive at Vellere at 8 p.m. This train runs no further than Vellere, and it was decided to place it for the night in the siding above referred to. It was accordingly passed through

through the west points, and on coming into contact with the 21 wagons already in the siding, the 7 last of these being uncoupled from the others were set in motion, ran through the east points and down the incline. The station authorities did not observe them leave, and became aware of the fact only on the receipt of a telegram from Tiruvellum asking for orders in regard to them. The 6 p.m. mail train having in the meantime been stopped at the Tiruvellum station, the Vellere station-master ordered it to proceed cautiously to the 74th mile, hook on the derelict wagons, and push them in front of the engine to Vellere, where the train arrived at 11 p.m., being 1 hour and

and 16 minutes late.

3. The cause of this occurrence, which might have produced a serious accident, appears to have been the neglect of the station authorities to carry out fully the rules laid down for their guidance with regard to vehicles standing in a siding, which are as follow:—

1st. That the scotch blocks are properly closed across the rail and locked.

2nd. That the brakes of all the vehicles are pinned down.

3rd. That the leading wheel of the vehicle nearest to the points at either end of the siding / if there are points at both ends / is secured to the spring of the vehicle

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by means of a chain and padlock.

4th. That the wheels of the vehicles are coupled together.

The first and third rules appear to have been acted up to, but there can be no doubt that the fourth was not observed. As regards the second, it does not appear from the evidence whether the brakes were pinned down or not.

Both the station-master and the head-porter are old experienced servants and are reported to have performed their duties generally with care and attention. They have both been fined one month's pay, which may I think be considered a sufficient punishment.

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As soon as the wagons came to a stand,
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have been reported immediately
upon its occurrence.

I have the honour to be
Sir

Your most obedient servant

Mantlewood, Esq.,

Cons. Engineer for Railways.

Report

Public Works Dept.

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Under date the 1875

Read the following

From The Comr. Engrs. for Railways } (G.O. No. 341 of 17th June/75)

G.O. No. 1822 of 30th June/75

Ordered to be recorded. The notice taken by the Railway authorities of the neglect of the Station Officials seems, under the circumstances, sufficient. The necessity of some such additional precaution as that suggested by the Asst. Traffic Manager has apparently been

established.

W. 1875-2021
RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.
No. 4013

From The Consulting Engineer,
for Railways,
To The Secretary to Government,
P. W. Department,
Fort Saint George.
Dated 17th Decr 1875
Recd 17th Decr 1875

L. 51 No. 341

Subscribed by letter from the Engineer, with regard to the road wagon which had been from away from the station on 29th Decr 1875. C. 356/1875

4013

Cable of 1875
PUBLIC WORKS

The Inspector General

W. Daniel

1872

Nos. 576-577

Loaded Wagons which got
loose and ran away from
the Yellow Station, Northern
Railway, on the 29th
December 1874 — Letter
of the Consulting Engineer
submitting letters from
the Agent, regarding
the recorded