

97. The first train had arrived, and you were on the platform with the view of seeing that no signal was given too soon for the second excursion train to come in?—Yes; that is correct.

98. What, if any, steps did you take to protect that first train, seeing that it was exceptionally long in standing at your station?—I got a signal-lamp and saw that it was well trimmed and lighted and given in charge of a competent man, and I saw the light turned on before he left me. I instructed him to go well back and exhibit that signal, so that no train should pass him until he got a signal from me.

99. Is there any rule to that effect, or was that voluntary?—There is no printed rule; it was voluntary.

100. You told him to go well back?—Perhaps outside the station limits, where the semaphore signal would be fixed in case one was erected, so that the train would have a good view of that signal; and it would have the effect of stopping it, as I considered. By "well back" I thought 300 yards or 400 yards would be sufficient.

101. You started a competent man to go well back; do you know of your own knowledge that he went?—Yes; I saw him go.

102. To what point? You do not know of your own knowledge where he went?—No.

103. Did you see the head-light of the second train approaching?—Yes; I saw it immediately it came up the rise: that is about a mile from the platform.

104. Had the driver of that train at that time whistled or not?—Yes; he whistled immediately he came on the rise, just as I saw the head-light.

105. Did you give him a signal to come in?—Nobody gave him a signal; I am certain of that.

106. Did you form any idea at what speed the driver of the second train was approaching the station?—I could see just after she was coming out of the rise that she was travelling at a very rapid pace, because she came on us very quick.

107. Was the steam on?—I could not say; it was too dark to check that.

108. Did you form any opinion as to the speed?—She appeared to be coming at full speed.

109. Do you mean the steam was full on?—I cannot tell that. If she was running at full pace she would be running at full speed without steam.

110. As a matter of fact, did the second train approach your station without any signal from you, or any one on the platform?—Yes.

111. And did it exceed the station limits?—Yes.

112. And came into contact with the other train?—It dashed into the tail part of the train on the platform.

113. Had you left the first train standing?—Yes, where she stopped when she arrived. When I saw that the collision must occur, I went up and signalled the driver of the first train.

114. There were two engines on that first train?—Yes.

115. Were the drivers and firemen ready to go?—They started at once, and I believe the guard was signalling further on.

116. What signal did you give the driver?—A green light to start.

117. And how far had they gone before the contact?—I estimate about two carriage lengths.

118. Which would be some 60 ft. or 70 ft.?—Yes, I should say so.

119. Is your station one at which passenger-trains either frequently or regularly cross?—They regularly cross every day.

120. Is it a line on which there are many excursions trains running?—Yes; but I never found excursion trains to cross there before. This is the first occasion.

121. How long have you been at Rakaia?—About three years.

122. How long have you been Stationmaster?—Twenty-four years.

123. During the three years you have been at Rakaia, and with trains every day, as I understand you, crossing there, have you known anything approaching any irregularity on the part of a driver coming within the station limits without a signal?—Never before.

JAMES O'NEILL, Clerk at Rakaia Railway-station, sworn and examined.

124. *Mr. Pendleton.*] How long have you been at Rakaia?—About five years and eight months.

125. Occupying the same position as you do now?—Yes.

126. Were you on duty on the 11th March last?—I was.

127. Were you on duty when the first return train from Ashburton arrived?—I was.

128. Were you on duty subsequently?—Yes.

129. And were you sent out by your Stationmaster to in any way protect the first train against any other engine or train coming in?—Yes; I was sent out with a danger-signal. On the arrival of the first train I went to Mr. May, and asked him what signal I was to have. He said, "Take Porter Kerr's light." I turned it on to "Danger," and went straight down the line. It was an ordinary signal-lamp, with changing glasses. I turned it on to red, and walked down the line behind the van which was standing at the station. When I got down about 300 yards I saw the Methven engine standing on the branch line, which is about half a chain off the main line. There being no sign of the special, I went over to speak to them. I stayed there about a minute, and went out on the main line again and proceeded down to where I stood, and exhibited the danger-signal until the train passed me. I exhibited the signal on my right shoulder.

130. *Dr. Giles.*] How much further did you go after speaking to those on the Methven engine?—I should say, fully 50 yards.

131. *Mr. Pendleton.*] Did you go and take shelter from the rain on the Methven engine?—No, I did not.

132. You only remained there for a minute?—For a minute. I stood on the step of the engine and asked the time.