

512. What opinion did you give as to the reason why the train ran beyond its proper point without stopping? Did you form any opinion?—Only that the brakes did not seem to take sufficient hold to stop the train.

513. What knowledge have you that they did not hold: have you any knowledge?—I have not any knowledge that the engine-brake did not hold.

514. Do you think that the train approached Rakaia at a higher speed than usual?—I should say we were travelling about express speed when the driver shut off steam.

515. Which, I believe, is a maximum of thirty-six miles an hour, is it not?—Yes.

516. Did you not give evidence at the trial in the Supreme Court?—Yes.

517. Were you correctly reported there in saying that you formed no opinion as to how the accident occurred?—Yes.

ALFRED LUTHER BEATTIE, recalled.

518. *Mr. Pendleton.*] I should like some information with regard to the Westinghouse brake?—I have here the *Railway Times* of the 26th November, 1898, with a leading article on continuous train-brakes, giving the official returns.

519. On what is it based? Are they official figures?—These are based on the Board of Trade returns for the United Kingdom, in November, 1898, for the preceding half-year. The article says, "We are glad to note the extremely small number of cases, only four in all, in which the brakes failed when called upon in ordinary circumstances. Although these instances are all reported as due to negligence of staff, they are absolutely insignificant when considered in relation to the enormous mileage of ninety millions in the course of which they occurred." That is to say, in ninety millions of train-miles, only four brake-failures occurred.

520. I should like to ask you this as an expert: Is it a probable thing in the working of the Westinghouse brake that it should be all right at 6 o'clock or 6.31 at Ashburton, should go wrong about 7 o'clock, and be right again in an hour or so afterwards without anything being done to it—that it should run to Christchurch all right and continue right ever since?—Knowing what I do of this particular brake, I should say it is highly improbable. The possibility is a very remote one. Nor do I know from subsequent examination of any reason at all why this brake should have failed.

521. Is there anything in the opinion which Carter seems to have formed, that there is a difference somewhat against him between the English and American brake?—None whatever. You simply put the brake on by moving a handle in exactly the same way. The one brake has an equalising arrangement, while the other has a graduated arrangement. The newer brake-valve is improved in this respect: The English or newer brake-valve is so designed as to render it less easy for a man to roughly handle a train.

522. But there is no difference whatever in using it?—No more difference than in winding up two ordinary watches.

523. *Dr. Giles.*] The newer invention would be to prevent too abrupt stopping?—Yes, that is the main improvement. In principle they are identical.

JOHN DICKENSON, Running-shed Foreman at Christchurch, sworn and examined.

524. *Mr. Pendleton.*] How long have you been in the service?—In the regular service since the 1st May, 1863.

525. And you know a great deal about the Westinghouse brakes?—Since we have had it here we have been practising the brake.

526. Did you examine the brake on Engine U 284 when it arrived at Christchurch at midnight on the 11th March?—Yes. The same driver brought the same engine into Christchurch Station and stopped perfect.

527. Did your examination show that the brake was in good order?—Yes, it was in first-class order.

528. Did Driver Carter, either then or subsequently, complain to you that the brake failing was really the cause of the accident?—No.

529. Did he say to you that it was in any way defective?—No, he did not.

530. Did he give you any idea of the cause of the accident?—Our Engineer being away South that night, and the Traffic Manager in the North Island, Mr. Stringleman, the Chief Clerk, asked me to bring him, so that we could send a report to Wellington.

531. What did he say?—I really forget the words exactly, but they were similar to these: that he had misjudged his distance, to the best of my knowledge.

532. There was a telegram sent by Mr. Stringleman to the General Manager in the name of Mr. Gaw, in which he says, "On seeing the lights of the standing train he thought the train was further down the station-yard than it actually was, and when he found out his mistake he could not stop in time." Do you believe those were the words, or something like them?—Yes, they are something like what he said. Mr. Stringleman took the words down as he said them.

533. *Dr. Giles.*] Did he give you any reason for misjudging his distance at the first interview?—No; he gave me no reason, to my knowledge. He is a man who ought not to misjudge, because he ought to know every inch and movement of the road.

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