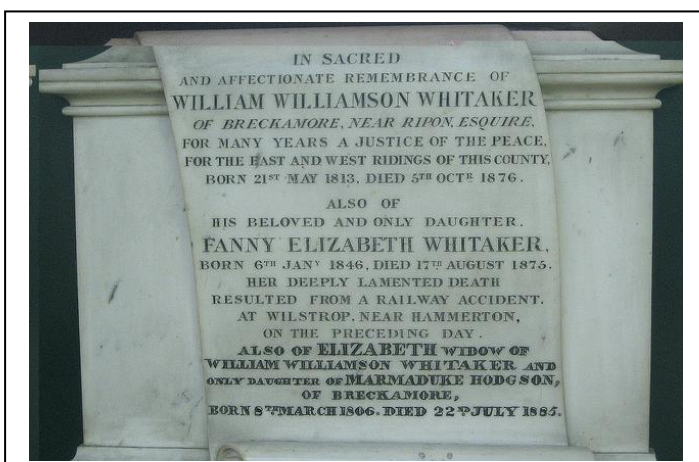


RIPON CATHEDRAL MEMORIALS



FANNY ELIZABETH WHITAKER (1846-1875)

lived at Breckamore, Ripon, and is buried at Kirkby Malzeard.



HER TRAGIC DEATH RESULTED FROM A MOST UNUSUAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT

AT WILSTROP SIDING (between Hammerton and Marston)

which is commemorated on a memorial in the North Aisle of the Nave

**THIS IS A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE ACCIDENT, HER INQUEST AND
THE TRIAL OF THE SIGNALMAN WHO WAS CHARGED WITH HER
MANSLAUGHTER**

Extracted from contemporary newspaper accounts etc by

Sue Ford and Michael Stewart
2004-2015

THE TRAGIC DEATH OF FANNY ELIZABETH WHITAKER

INTRODUCTION BY MICHAEL STEWART

I am a chartered accountant living near Canterbury. I have many connections with Yorkshire and with Ripon. My 5-greats grandfather, Henry Atkinson (1736-84), attorney, was Town Clerk of Ripon for many years. He married Dorothy, daughter of Rev. John Rakes (1700-1781), Vicar of Well, who is buried in the south transept of the Cathedral. Henry's daughter, Catherine, married Dr. William Harrison (1756-1802), surgeon, who founded, with Thomas Terry in 1785, Harrison, Terry & Co., 'Ripon Old Bank', which was actually Ripon's second oldest bank. William's sons John (1791-1866) of Bellwood, Ripon, and Thomas (1800-68) of Arlington House, Knaresborough; and John's son John James Harrison (1822-79) and Thomas' son, Thomas (c1828- 1907) were later partners in that Bank, which eventually became part of Barclays. My sister, Jacqueline Rae, is much involved with the Friends of Fountains Abbey and of Markenfield Hall, and her husband Martin is currently a guide at the Cathedral.

When visiting the Cathedral on 8 April 2013 and re-admiring its many beautiful items, my attention was drawn to the memorial to William Williamson Whitaker of Breckamore, [Clotherholme HG4 3JX] Ripon (1813-76), and his daughter Fanny Elizabeth (1846-75) whose death on 17 August 1875 resulted from a railway accident at Wilstrop near Hammerton on the previous day.

I was shown an article by Sue Ford in the Friends of Ripon Cathedral's Annual Report for 2004, which well summarised the accident, and ended by saying that there was a loose end - the sentencing of the Wilstrop signalman, Robert Collinson - to which she had not then discovered the answer. Having had a great interest in railways for almost all of my seventy-three years, I thought I would look further into the matter, and thanks to the ability today to read many digitised 19th century newspapers on the internet, I was able to find further articles other than those which Sue had read in the *Ripon Gazette*. Imagine my surprise, however, to find that of the two other ladies as mentioned as being with Fanny in the train compartment out of whose window she was thrown to her death, one, Mary Harrison (1843/4-1932), was my first cousin x 3 generations removed, and the daughter of my 3-greats grand uncle, the above Thomas Harrison of Arlington House (also known as Oak Villa), Scriven-with-Tentergate, Starbeck, Knaresborough.

I transcribed the full reports of the inquest held at Wilstrop Hall (home of another Mr. John Harrison, but not related to us) and found Sue's missing loose end - the report of the trial for manslaughter of Robert Collinson at York Spring Assizes in 1876. I make no apologies for setting out the full details! On 18 April 2013 I talked to Sue Ford who kindly lent me her transcriptions.

I have noted that William Williamson Whitaker who died just over a year after his only daughter's tragic death, had Mary Harrison's elder brother, Thomas, banker and lawyer, of Wyther, Kirkstall, Leeds, as his executor. so it would appear pretty certain that the Fanny's two companions in the train were both her friends.

As you will see, following much research, I tracked down first Fanny's great-grand-niece Jennifer Madden, whose sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Bethel, had attended the same school in Cheltenham 100 or so years after Fanny had been there. Jennifer then put me in touch with her cousin, David Watkins, the world-renowned harpist, who is Fanny's great-grand nephew and who holds the family papers, which included photos of Fanny and a letter written a fortnight after the accident by the other lady (E. Anne Wight) in the train compartment. [I have since writing this discovered that David and Jennifer are both 4th cousins of mine too and have also spoken to Anne Wight's descendants !!!]

I also managed to find Robert Collinson's great-grandson, Joseph Middlemiss, living in Newcastle, but he was not even aware of the accident and had no photos of his great-grandfather.



BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <i>Kirk Deighton</i> in the County of <i>York</i> in the Year <i>1846</i> <i>one thousand eight hundred and forty six</i>						
When Baptized	Child's Christian Name	Parent's Name		Abode	Quality, Trade, or Profession	By whom the Ceremony was performed
		Of the	Surname			
<i>1846</i>	<i>Fanny Elizabeth</i>	<i>William</i>	<i>Whitaker</i>	<i>Kirk Deighton</i>	<i>Cookham</i>	<i>J. Brown Curate</i>

Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker was born on 7 January 1846 in North Deighton and baptised at All Saints, Kirk Deighton, on 26 February.

In the Census taken on 30 March 1851, aged 5, she was at North Deighton Hall, Kirk Deighton, with her parents, William, 37, justice of the peace, and Elizabeth, 40, a butler, housekeeper, lady's maid, housemaid and two kitchen maids.

In the Census taken on 7 April 1861, aged 15, she was at a school in Lansdowne Terrace, Cheltenham, with 19 other pupils living there, including Mary Harrison, then 17, noted as born at Scriven. The head of the property was a Barbara Robinson, schoolmistress, 39 and single, and her three younger unmarried sisters were assistant teachers.

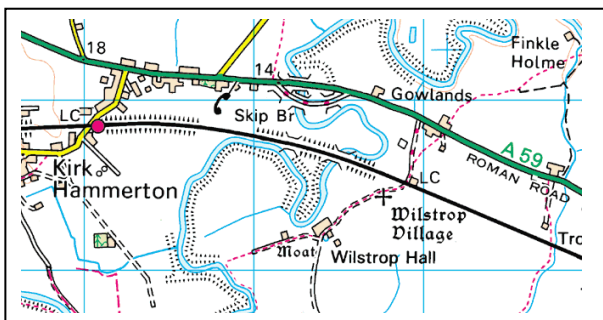
In the Census taken on 2 April 1871, aged 25, Fanny was at home at Breckamore with her mother. Her father was absent but her brother Marmaduke, 33, was there, described unusually fully as 'barrister at law in actual practice, living at 32 Gloucester St. London S4'. There were also 5 female servants - cook, maid, housemaid, under-housemaid and kitchenmaid - and 3 male servants - butler, coachman, and groom.

[On 2 April 1871 **Mary Harrison** was living at Arlington House with her two elder sisters (her father having died in 1868) and a housekeeper, housemaid, kitchenmaid and coachman. Her brother, Thomas Harrison, William Williamson Whitaker's executor, lived at Wyther, Kirkstall, Leeds. In 1860 he had married Louisa Manby, dau of Rev. A. Manby of Knaresborough. In Kelly's Handbook for 1899 in which surprisingly none of 'our' Whitakers appear, Thomas was a partner in Brown, Janson & Co., bankers in London and in W.W. Brown & Co., bankers in Leeds. Wither Grange appears on the 1846 tithe map of Armley as a large complex containing a grand house and outbuildings. Around 1870-1890 it was leased by Thomas Harrison. The house and grounds belonged to the Gott family until the First World War, during which they donated it to the war effort. (Thomas' daughter Louisa married Rev. Charles Gott of Armley House) The Wyther Home for Sick Babies opened in the building in 1914, and in the 1930s, the home became the City of Leeds Infants' Hospital. Houses were eventually built on the site of Wither Grange in 1990. The spelling of 'Wither' seems to have acquired a 'y' in place of the 'i' for unknown reasons at some stage. Perhaps it was thought to look more quaint and archaic!

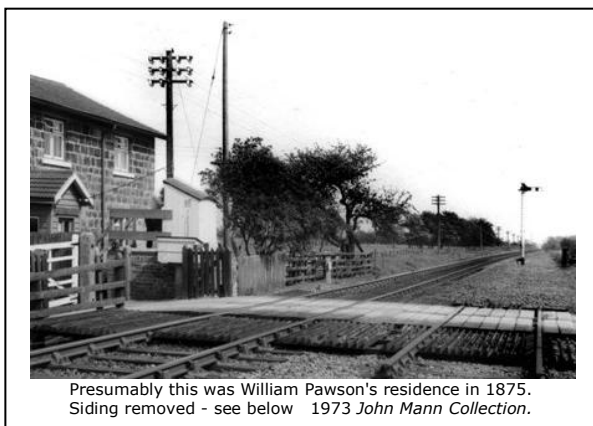
Thomas, 'gentleman' died on 11.1.1907 at Stourton Lea, Ilkley. Probate was granted at Wakefield on 1.3.1907 to his son Harry, 'gentleman'. Thomas' effects totalled £8,601.19.5. - c £924,000 in 2014 money.

Mary Harrison, then of 12 Westville Avenue, Ilkley, died a spinster on 24 November 1932. Probate was granted to her niece Louisa Manby Gott, wife of Rev. Charles Rhodes Gott, clerk, and Francis William Garrad M.D. Her effects totalled £29,632.1.7. = c £1,850,000 in 2014 money.]

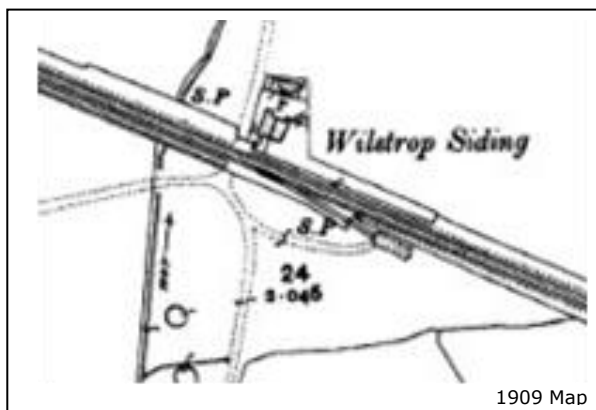
WILSTROP SIDING



1895 Map



Presumably this was William Pawson's residence in 1875. Siding removed - see below 1973 John Mann Collection.



1909 Map



With both platforms in situ - probably c 1930. By kind permission of Stations U.K.

Wilstrop Siding was never much used as a passenger station. It first appeared in Bradshaw in June 1865 and was last used on 25 April 1931. My April 1869 Bradshaw shows in a footnote that the only train to stop there was the 8.35a.m. from Harrogate to York and that for York passengers only on Saturdays only! In January 1883 now elevated to being called 'Wilstrop', it is shown as $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile east of Hammerton and 2 miles west of Marston. The 8.25 from Harrogate and the 3.35 back from York appear to call on request but the table abbreviation 'c' does not say whether this is on Saturdays only. The July 1915 issue shows it again as 'Wilstrop Siding' but now as 1 whole mile from Hammerton and $1\frac{3}{4}$ from Marston Moor with the 10.55 from Harrogate and 3.17 for York, stopping as previously for York passengers only on Saturdays only. Similar in 1925. Not a lot of shopping time - only $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours in York! Read <http://tockwithpc.org.uk/wilstrop.htm> for the history of the lost village of Wilstrop.

If anyone can find me an edmondson card ticket issued from it by either the NER or LNER, I will gladly give them £100 for it and in addition a further £100 to the Cathedral!

Michael Stewart, 4 Meadow Close, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5AT. email: platformtickets@aol.com. 2013.

THE ACCIDENT AT WILSTROP SIDING AND THE INQUEST INTO FANNY'S DEATH

The accident took place at about 1p.m. on Monday 16th August 1875. Fanny died on the following day. The inquest was held at Wilstrop Hall, a mile or so SW of the station, home of John Harrison, on Thursday 19th and continued on the following Thursday the 26th. Wilstrop Hall was rebuilt, in 1870, of brick, being formerly of stone of very ancient date. The remains of the moat which surrounded the hall were still visible in 1890.

The inquest was reported fully in the *York Herald* of 21.8.1875 (which I quote below) and in other papers. Sue Ford transcribed the report from the *Ripon Gazette*, which has many identical words. Where they differ at all significantly, or the *Gazette* has extra sentences, I have added these in squared brackets and noted them as 'RG', but generally the *York Herald* report is more detailed.

SERIOUS RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT WILSTROP, NEAR YORK. A CARRIAGE OVERTURNED AND A YOUNG LADY KILLED.

On Monday afternoon a serious railway accident which has since proved fatal in the case of a young lady, befel the Harrogate, Knaresbro', and York train, which leaves Harrogate at 12.15, and arrives in this city at 1.15. The train, as is generally the case on this line, was a short one, consisting of some half-dozen carriages, and was being driven by S. Smith, an old and careful driver, who has been over twenty years in the service of the company. The train proceeded safely as far as Hammerton, at which station speed was slackened in order to allow the engine pilot to get off at Skip Bridge, which spans the river Nidd between Hammerton and Marston stations. A new bridge is being erected at this spot, and during the progress of the works the traffic is worked on the up line only, between Wilstrop siding and Hammerton station. On reaching this bridge the train was not going at a greater rate than six or eight miles an hour and the engine, van, and adjoining carriage safely passed over the single line and up to the points just beyond the siding. Not so the three remaining carriages, for by some means as yet unexplained these carriages were turned by the points on to the down line. The train going so slowly, and the couplers not breaking, the last [no - see on] carriage was violently overturned and fell on the edge of the platform. [See page 6 - the overturned vehicle was actually the 4th carriage of 6] The driver promptly stopped the engine before the carriage had dragged many yards. The overturned vehicle was a composite one, with first and second-class compartments, in one of which were three ladies—Miss Whittaker [sic, but should be Whitaker - correct in RG report], of Breckamore, Ripon [RG states that she was the daughter of Mr. Whitaker, J.P., and sister to Mr. Marmaduke Whitaker, barrister]; Miss Annie Whyte [should be Wight], who had been visiting Miss Whittaker; and Miss Mary Harrison, of Arlington House, Knaresbro'. Assistance was speedily rendered by the workmen at the bridge, which is but a few hundred yards distant, and on the carriage being removed, Miss Whittaker was found laid in a state of unconsciousness. She was rescued from under the overturned carriage in about seven minutes after the occurrence of the accident, and Mr. Hill, surgeon, of Hammerton, was speedily on the spot. Every assistance was rendered the lady, who was shortly afterwards removed to Wilstrop Hall, where Mr. Harrison afforded every facility which the occasion required. The three carriages forming the fore part of the train were detached and sent on to York, whence a "break-down gang" was promptly despatched by Mr. Welburn, the District Passenger Superintendent, who followed, together with Mr. Tempest Anderson, surgeon to the North Eastern Railway Company, in a special train at two o'clock. Mr. Bird, surgeon, was summoned, and soon attended. They found the young lady still unconscious, her skull being apparently fractured. [RG has 'From the [outset?] but slight hopes were entertained of her recovery, and from the peculiar position in which she was found - outside the carriage - the presumption is that on the shock first occurring she had either jumped or been thrown out.'] The other passengers remained inside the carriage, and escaped with a somewhat severe shaking The carriages were but little damaged, and the line was only blocked for a short time. Mr. Tuff, the locomotive superintendent, and other officials, were speedily on the scene of the accident.

We regret to announce that Miss Whittaker died at Wilstrop Hall, on Tuesday evening, about ten o'clock, having never recovered consciousness. She was the daughter of Mr Whitaker, of Brockamore [sic!], near Ripon, and sister of Mr. Whitaker, barrister, of the Midland Circuit. [RG has: 'Miss Whitaker, who had suffered fearful internal injuries in addition to fracture of the skull, never recovered consciousness, and died about 11.30 on Tuesday night. An inquest was formally opened upon the body yesterday afternoon at Wilstrop Hall, the residence of Mr Harrison. Miss Whitaker was in her 30th year. Mr C. Husband, of Ripon, the family surgeon, was in attendance on the deceased from Monday night up to the time of her death. The sad event has cast a gloom over the city of Ripon, where Miss Whitaker and the various members of her family are very greatly respected. She was a very amiable lady and of most prepossessing appearance.']

THE INQUEST.

On Thursday [19th August] an inquest was opened by Mr. J. P. Wood, coroner, at Wilstrop Hall, the residence of Mr. John Harrison, in the parish of Kirk Hammerton, as to the death of Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker, only daughter of William Williamson Whitaker, Esq., of Breckamore, near Ripon, and sister of Mr. M. W. Whitaker, barrister, of the Midland Circuit. Amongst the gentlemen present at the inquest were the brother of the deceased; Mr. Woodd (a relative), son of Mr. B.T. Woodd, M.P. for Knaresbro'; Mr. R Dale, solicitor, York, who represented the North Eastern Railway Company; Mr. Welburn, the District Passenger Superintendent; Mr. Stephenson, Assistant Locomotive Superintendent; and other officials.

The jury having viewed the body, Mr. Whitaker, addressing the Coroner, said that the ordinary course to have pursued would have been to have had the two ladies present as witnesses who were the travelling companions of Miss Whitaker at the time of this melancholy and much-to-be-deplored occurrence. As might be expected, the two ladies in question were at present in a condition of health which quite rendered them unfit to attend and give evidence on that occasion; and as it was probable the inquiry would not be concluded that day, he had taken upon himself to state that on a representation of the facts to the Coroner, their attendance would be excused that day. The Coroner said that considering the shock which the ladies in question would probably have received and the statement as to their health, he quite approved of the step Mr. Whitaker had taken, and said that the evidence of the two ladies need not be taken at that day's inquiry.

Mr. Whitaker said he would guarantee the attendance of these ladies at the adjourned inquest which would probably be necessary.

The Coroner said Mr. Whitaker's statement was perfectly satisfactory.

Mr. Whitaker added that he thought it right to state that he was present not so much as representing his family, but to assist in that inquiry in the interests of the public as far as he possibly could. He, therefore, requested permission to remain throughout the inquiry in which, on public grounds, he was interested apart from any personal or other interest.

The Coroner said he fully appreciated Mr. Whitaker's motives.

The following witnesses were then examined:—

Mr. Marmaduke William Whitaker, of Elleray, Putney, barrister-at-law, deposed - The deceased lady, -Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker, was my only sister [RG notes that he 'identified the body']. She was a single woman and resided with her father, William Williamson Whitaker, Esq., at Breckamore, near Ripon. The deceased was 29 years of age last January. I saw her alive in very good health and spirits at half-past six on Monday morning last at Breckamore, before I left my father's to attend the Leeds assizes. I next saw her at nine o'clock on Monday night, having come to Wilstrop in a special train for the purpose. She has shown no trace of consciousness since the accident happened. She died at twenty minutes to ten on Tuesday night.

Mr. Alfred Hill, surgeon, Green Hammerton, deposed: On the morning of the 16th, I was seeing my patients in the adjoining parish of Kirk Hammerton, when, at about one o'clock I was summoned by one of the passengers to see Miss Whitaker. I found her laid on the grass just by the Wilstrop railway crossing, the scene of the accident. I found her entirely insensible. There was an abrasion on her right cheek, which might have been caused by direct contact with the ground in falling from the carriage. Blood was issuing from both ears which, with other symptoms, led me to believe that she had fractured the base of her skull. There was discolourations [sic] about the loins, and more especially the neck. Her head and face were much swollen and her eyes congested. She was in a comatose state, from which she never rallied and died about a quarter to ten on Tuesday night. I was with her most of the time from the accident till her death. In my opinion deceased has died of fracture of the base of the skull and compression caused by effusion of blood and serum on the brain. I think the fracture was likely to be caused by the deceased being pitched out of the railway carriage and falling on the ground. There has been no *post-mortem* examination, the injury to the head being clearly the cause of death. She was attended by several other medical men.

Dr. Tempest Anderson, of York, surgeon to the North-Eastern Railway Company, deposed: I saw Miss Whitaker at twenty minutes past two o'clock on Monday afternoon. She had then been removed to Wilstrop Hall. She was in a state of insensibility. I agree with Mr. Hill's evidence as to the cause of the deceased's death.

Samuel Smith, of 14, Oxford-street, Holgate-road, York, engine-driver, deposed: On Monday I was driving the engine of the passenger train leaving Harrogate for York at 12.15. On getting to Hammerton I took the pilot, William Pawson, up, and he went with me on the engine till I got near to the points at Wilstrop siding. I came nearly to a stop, and set him down. As soon as he got down he said, "All right; go on." I saw the road was all right for me, and I put on my steam to go on my journey as usual. Feeling a bit of a chuck, I looked round, and I saw one of the carriages belonging to the train coming on the wrong line. I immediately reversed the engine; the fireman attended to his brake, and I set steam against the engine to help me to stop as soon as possible. As soon as I had stopped the train I immediately jumped off the engine and ran back, and saw the carriage on its side with the deceased lady lying underneath on the ground. She was, as far as I could observe, laid on her right side. I cannot say exactly what part of her body was being pressed by the carriage. I immediately ran back to the stoker to fetch the "jacks" with which the men about raised the carriage, when the deceased was lifted out. It was the third carriage from the engine that was upset. I had passed over the points with my engine and van and couple of carriages before I felt the chuck. On seeing what had occurred I sent the pilot to Cattal to telegraph to York. I cannot tell what was the cause of the carriage leaving the rails. It must have jumped at the points somehow to have done so. The signalman had charge of the points, and worked them upon levers at the cabin close to the crossing. The signalman was at the cabin before we came on to the points. I cannot swear that the signalman on this occasion waved his hand or flag for us to go on, as he generally does. The signals were all right for going forward. The fireman has told me that the signalman waved his hand as usual. I should be going about three miles an hour when I set the pilot down, and not more than about eight miles an hour on crossing the points. The train consisted of engine, van, five carriages, and a carriage truck. The points had been down at Wilstrop siding for a week before the accident. When I first looked round on feeling the chuck I saw the corner of the carriage going in the direction of the cross-line. [RG has: 'The points must have been closed for the first part of the train to pass, and if they had not been opened then the accident would not have occurred.']

By a juror [these words 'by a juror' seem to mean 'in reply to a question from a juror the deponent said']: It was a facing point, and if it had not been there we could not have got off the line, no matter what the speed. When facing points are properly closed they are as safe as a solid rail. The accident could not have happened if the points had remained closed till the whole of the train had got over. I cannot tell how they came to be open.

Samuel Ballance [RG and BofT have 'Balance'], York, stoker, deposed: I was on the engine of the train in question. We left Hammerton station all right. The pilot got on the engine there, and rode down to Wilstrop siding. We reduced speed there, and the pilot dropped off the engine and said, "All is right." The signalman at the time waved for us to go on. On this the engine-driver put the steam on, and I took off my break. I looked over the fence-plate, as I always do, to see that all the train was following. As soon as we had got nicely started, I saw the signalman push a lever over. I at once shouted out to my mate, and said, "Look out; there's going to be something up," and he shut off the steam and reversed his engine and I applied the brake. By this time I saw the carriages jumping about a good bit. As soon as we got stopped I saw a carriage upset on its broadside. I never left the engine. I was standing on the right-hand side of the engine, nearest to the signal cabin, and I distinctly saw the signalman push a lever over. I cannot say why he did so, or which lever it was. As near as I can tell the engine, van, and one carriage had got over the points when I saw the lever pushed by the signalman. [I don't understand this - if he was on the right hand side of the engine, facing York, then the signal box must have been on the south side of the track, whereas it is currently on the north side beside the cottage.]

By a Juror-: I don't know why the signalman should touch the levers at all, his boards being right.

Thomas Downey, Oxford-street, Holgate-lane, York, deposed: I was guard of the train in question. In order for the pilot to alight at Wilstrop Siding, the speed of the train was reduced to between four and five miles a hour. He gave us the signal to move on, and that all was right. The driver put on the steam, and we started again. We had not gone above fifty or sixty yards before I felt a sudden jerking of the carriages at my brake. On looking round I saw the

carriages in the centre of the train taking the wrong or contrary line. The engine-driver noticed it at the same time, and driver, fireman, and I did all we could to stop the train as soon as possible. We had not gone more than about twenty or thirty yards from the time of the jerking before the composite carriage in the centre of the train fell over. The deceased lady was in the first-class compartment in the centre of the carriage which fell. I could not see whether she was thrown out or not, owing to the curve with the carriages going on to the other line. As soon as we got the train stopped, I ran up to the overturned carriage, and found those who were in it were trying to get out of the windows of the upper side of the carriage. I saw part of the deceased's dress under the side of the overturned carriage, and then saw her laid underneath. We got long poles and lifted the carriage up and got her out with all speed. I saw the points within five minutes of the accident. They were turned open for the through-shunt on the down line. We were on the up line. If the points were in the same position as I saw them at the time the latter carriages of the train got up to them, they would be turned on to the down line, where the composite carriage was upset. I was in the van in front next to the engine. When I felt the jerk I saw the signalman at his cabin. I cannot say what he was doing. The signals were all right. When I got out I found all the carriages had cleared the points. The tail-board of the last carriage would be nearly two carriage-lengths from the points and within the through-shunt. The carriage next to the composite had just got over the crossing and was on the down line. The other two carriages behind it were standing on the crossing, and had followed the course of the composite which was overturned. The composite carriage in front of the overturned one was with its two last wheels off the lines.

William Pawson, living at Wilstrop gatehouse, platelayer, deposed to being employed on Monday last as pilot between Hammerton station and Wilstrop crossing. This was in consequence of the company only working one line there whilst Skip Bridge was being repaired, and was for the safe working of the trains. Witness continued: Between Hammerton and Wilstrop we ran from eight down to four miles an hour. When we got near to the facing points I got off and then gave the driver the "all right" signal. I kept my eye on the engine and saw it enter the points all right. I immediately saw a carriage turning from the right line and going over the crossing. It had no sooner gone off the road than the carriage began jumping and dragged another carriage off the up line. I kept my eye on the carriage and saw it fall over on to the platform. The carriage was dragged along the platform side until the train was stopped. I assisted in taking the people out of the carriages. I don't know how the accident could have happened, except through the points being open. I thoroughly tried the points twice that morning, as it is my duty to do after a train has passed. I found the points in capital good working order, and made a remark to the permanent way inspector that I never saw points work better. They fit so tight that I could not have got a pin in between the rail and the end of the facing-point. The second time I tried these points was at 12 o'clock on Monday. Between twelve o'clock and the time of this accident a goods train had passed over the points all right. I cannot tell how the points got open. The signalman was at his post, standing on the platform against the levers when I got off the engine. I did not notice the signals. On getting out I was in the six-foot.

Mr. James Vester, 22, West Parade, York, inspector of bridges for the southern division of the North-Eastern Railway, deposed: I have charge of the rebuilding of Skip Bridge, and was on the bridge on Monday last when the train passed. I saw it come to a stand, and I noticed the passengers getting out on each side. I took the workmen employed on the bridge to the place, with their tools, feeling sure that an accident had happened. I saw a carriage overturned, and a lady laid underneath. A man was applying a "screw-jacks" to lift up the carriage. I and my men got poles from the adjoining timber yards, which, used as levers, raised the carriage. I assisted in getting the lady out. She was laid with her face downwards to the ground, with her right arm underneath her body. We placed her on the bank. She was unconscious. I never saw anyone attempting to get out of the carriage which was overturned. The lady was placed underneath the door of the last compartment of the first-class carriage, laid lengthways, parallel with the line. The handles of the doors of the carriage were all turned and fast. None of the doors of the carriage opened when the carriage was uplifted except the one which I had turned previously in order the better to extricate the lady.

At this stage of the inquiry the Coroner and jury adjourned to the railway siding, and had the points and levers worked and fully explained to them by Mr. Inspector Jackson. On returning to the Hall, the evidence of witnesses resumed.

Wm. Kerr, Clementhorpe-terrace, York, engineer's assistant deposed that the plan (produced) was a correct plan of that portion of the Knaresbro' branch of the North-Eastern Railway between Marston and Hammerton stations, and showing the Wilstrop crossing. A copy of this plan was submitted to the Board of Trade and approved. An order had been received from the Board authorising the temporary use of one line only, and also the points in question during the repair of Skip Bridge.

John Jackson, Chapter House-street, York, district signal inspector, explained the working of the signals and points at Wilstrop crossing. The levers were in a normal position for a train coming from Harrogate, and the distance and home signals alone had to be worked. So far as I know there is nothing faulty or wrong in the working of the Wilstrop crossing levers. From the down-line to the up line the points-lever would have to be pulled over and not pushed. To put the signal to "danger" would require a push. It is the duty of the signalman to see that the whole of the train has passed the points before he touches the lever, and then it was his duty to put on the "home" signal. It was inconsistent with his duty to touch any lever except the distance signal whilst the train was on the points, which in no way could affect the points in question. The signalman is forbidden by rule to touch a lever connected with the home signals whilst a train is passing the points. I produce the rule in question, and I furnished a copy of it to Robert Collinson, the signalman, at Wilstrop crossing on Monday, the 9th inst., who was still the signalman. The rule is as follows;—"General Manager's Office, York, 5th October, 1869. —To signalmen.—An accident having recently occurred to a passenger train, in consequence of the signalman at a junction having altered the points before the whole of the train had passed over them, thereby throwing carriage off the line, I am directed to call the particular attention of signalmen to this matter, and to point out that it is the duty of all signalmen *to see that the last vehicle* of every train going over points under their charge *has passed perfectly clear of the points* before any alteration be made either in the points or signals.—W. O'Brien, general manager."

Samuel Ballance [RG & BofT reports have 'Balance'], recalled, deposed that Robert Collinson, now present, was the signalman on duty on the day of the accident, and that he was the man who pushed the lever at the time when the train was going over the points at Wilstrop siding.

This being the whole of the evidence which could be produced that day, The Coroner said that the inquiry was most important, and the cause of the accident should have the fullest investigation. The great question was to ascertain, if possible, how it was that these points were changed during the passing of the train over them which had resulted in the carriage being thrown off the rails, and in the death of this young lady. The better to arrive at a decision he

proposed to adjourn the inquiry for a week, in order to obtain additional evidence, and in the meantime he would communicate with the Board of Trade, so that the Board could, if it thought fit, send down a Government inspector to investigate the accident on the spot, and to aid in the present inquiry.

Mr. Whitaker (who spoke under great emotion), said that the day suggested for the adjournment would suit his convenience. He hoped it would not be deemed presumptuous on his part to suggest that the further hearing of the inquiry should be held at some other house than that in which they were then assembled. Through this dispensation of Providence he felt that his family had trespassed more than could ever be expected of anyone on the goodness of Mr. Harrison, the head of that household. He had shown the utmost kindness and attention in every way, which he (Mr. Whitaker) felt he could never sufficiently acknowledge and he should be sorry to cause Mr. Harrison any further inconvenience or trespass further on his kindness. Through this unforeseen calamity, sorrow and discomfort had been brought into a hitherto happy home, and under the circumstances he (Mr. Whitaker) took that opportunity of publicly expressing his deepest gratitude and that of the members of his family at the extreme kindness, solicitude, hospitality, and care, which had been shown to his deceased sister, by Mr. Harrison, his sister Mrs. Hagyard, and her daughter, Miss Hagyard. At no other house could his sister's declining hours have been passed amid greater manifestations of solicitude, tenderness, and love.

The Coroner said he had, during the time they were inspecting the line, taken the opportunity of mentioning to Mr. Harrison the circumstances named by Mr. Whitaker, and asked whether it would materially interfere with his comfort and convenience if the adjourned inquiry should also be held in that house. Mr. Harrison, with the same kindness and good feeling which he had from the first manifested towards this young lady, whose death they all so deeply mourned, had placed his house at the disposal of that Court until the inquiry should be finished, and acting on his kind offer, the inquest would be adjourned until the following Thursday morning [26th].

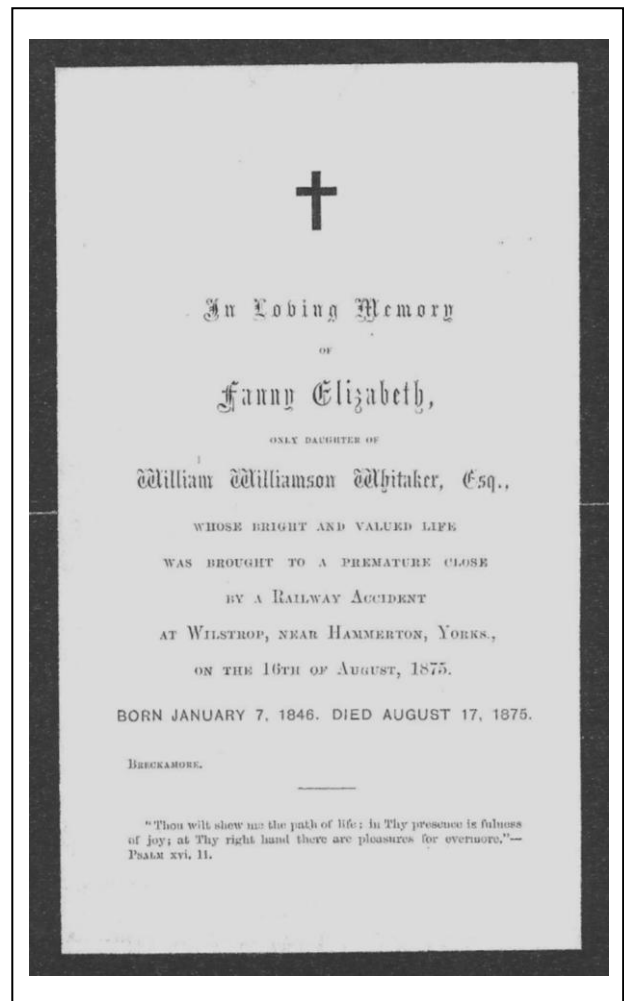
Ripon Gazette:

FUNERAL OF THE DECEASED

On Saturday morning [21st] the remains of Miss Whitaker were removed from Wilstrop Hall to Kirkby Malzeard for interment in the family vault. As the funeral cortege passed through Ripon the minute bell of the cathedral was tolled and several tradesmen closed their shops from respect to the deceased and her family. On Sunday morning the Rev. Canon Residentiary Worsley, in the course of his sermon at the Cathedral, alluded most feelingly to the sad event. The funeral anthem "I am the resurrection" (Croft) instead of the ordinary one selected was sung on the occasion. Mr Whitaker, barrister, was present at the service.



Photo of Fanny taken by Edward H. Cox at Torquay found by William Husband on ebay for £25 in March 2015! Edward Harry Cox had established a photographic studio in Park Crescent, Torquay around 1873, so photo must be 1873-5.



COL. HUTCHINSON'S REPORT FOR THE BOARD OF TRADE OF 23RD AUGUST

[made available to the Coroner for the adjourned inquest] (printed copies of which it says were sent to the [NER] Company on 11th September) appears at pages 165 and 166 of *Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which have occurred on railways ... 1875*, printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, for Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1875, reads -

Board of Trade (Railway Department,), Whitehall, 23rd August 1875.

Sir, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the order of the 17th instant, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances connected with the accident to a passenger train, which occurred on the 16th inst., at Wilstrop siding, near Hammerton station, on the York, Knaresboro', and Harrogate section of the North-Eastern Railway.

In this case as the 12.15 p.m. passenger train from Harrogate to York was slowly passing over a set of temporary facing-points at Wilstrop siding a portion of it left the rails, one carriage was turned over on its side, and a lady riding in one of the compartments of this carriage was thrown out of the window and so crushed by the falling carriage that she died on the evening of the following day. No other passengers or servants of the company were injured.

The line on which the accident occurred is double; but owing to the renewal of a viaduct between Hammerton station and Wilstrop siding the traffic between these two points (a distance of about three-quarters of a mile) had since the 9th instant been worked over the up line; the points at each end of the single line are properly interlocked with the signals and are worked from small locking-frames slightly raised above the level of the ground; that at Wilstrop siding is situated on the down side of the line, 70 yards on the York side of the facing-points on the up line, the up home-signal being 20 yards on the Harrogate side of the facing-points, or 90 yards from the locking-frame.

The traffic over the single line is carried on under the direction of a pilotman, who accompanies the last train or engine passing in the same direction over the single line, and without whose presence at one end of it no train or engine is allowed to leave that end.

The 12.15 p.m. train from Harrogate on the day in question consisted of a four-coupled engine and tender, running engine first, a guard's van, a second-class carriage, two composite carriages, and two third-class carriages, six vehicles in all, coupled in the order given. It started at 12.17 p.m., two minutes late, had a carriage truck attached to its rear at Cattal station (in which operation three minutes were lost), and left Hammerton station at 12.55, five minutes late, with the pilotman on the engine.

According to the evidence of the driver, Samuel Smith, of 30 years service, the speed on approaching Wilstrop siding was reduced to three or four miles an hour, to let the pilotman off, who jumped down into the six-foot space just before they reached the facing-points. He did not observe when the up home-signal, which was off when he approached it, was put to danger. He had put on steam, and had increased his speed to about eight miles an hour, when about opposite the signal-frame he felt what he described as a "chuck," and on looking back saw some of the carriages on the wrong line; he at once used all means to stop, and brought his engine to rest about 30 yards on the York side of the signal-frame, or about 100 yards from the facing-points. When looking back he saw the signalman pulling a black handled lever (*i.e.* a point lever) towards him. He saw that the engine, tender, break-van, and second-class carriage remained on the proper line, and that the next carriage but one was turned over on its right side with a lady under it, but he had not time to observe the condition of the rest of the train, as he was sent on to York at once with the break-van and second-class carriage which had not left the rails.

Samuel Balance, Smith's fireman, who had been previously a signalman for more than a year, states that the home-signal was off as they approached Wilstrop siding at a speed of six or eight miles an hour, to let off the pilotman who jumped into the six-foot space near the facing-points; that he did not notice when the signal was put back to danger, but that on approaching the signalman he saw him push a lever from him (he could not say which), and that it at once struck him something was wrong, and that the train would be split, and that he shouted to this effect to Smith, the carriages at the same time beginning to jump about; that every effort was at once made to stop, which was done within a very few yards.

I pressed Balance as to why seeing the signalman *push* a lever (the probable action of restoring the home-signal to danger) should have made him think there would be an accident, but he would acknowledge to nothing more than seeing one lever, and one lever only, moved, and that one *pushed*.

The guard of the train riding in the van next the engine thinks the speed at Wilstrop siding was about five miles an hour when the pilotman jumped off the engine 20 or 30 yards from the facing-points. The speed had increased to seven or eight miles an hour when he felt the carriages tugging at the break-van, and looking round saw the carriages in the centre of the train taking the wrong road, upon which he applied his break and stopped very quickly. He then got out and found the state of the train as follows:-

Engine, tender, break-van, and second-class carriage on the proper line; third vehicle (composite) with its leading wheels on the proper rails, and its trailing wheels in the six-foot space; fourth vehicle (composite) turned over on its right side, its right leading wheel against the inside rail of the up line, and its right trailing wheel near the inside rail of the down line; the right trailing corner of this carriage resting in the York end of a low platform (used on market days) and the rest of the right side of the carriage on the stones of a road level-crossing; the deceased lady lying on the level-crossing with her head underneath the handle (which was shut) of the door of the third compartment (the one in which she had been travelling) and her feet towards the trailing end of the carriage in the four-foot space; fifth vehicle (third-class) leading wheels, one in the six-foot space and the other in the four-foot space of the down line; trailing wheels on the rails of the crossing leading from the up to the down line; sixth and seventh vehicles, (third-class and carriage truck) all the wheels on the rails of the crossing.

He saw the signalman at his post, and asked him what had made him move the lever and he replied he did not know what he had been doing. He heard the fireman say that he had seen the signalman move a lever. The guard saw that the points were set right *for* the crossing after the accident.

William Pawson, seven years a platelayer and acting as pilotman over the single line, joined the train at Hammerton and left it about 100 yards from the facing-points at Wilstrop siding, jumping into the six-foot space, the driver having slackened his speed to about four miles an hour to allow him to do so. He could not speak as to when the home-signal was put to danger, but was watching the train pass through the points, when he saw the fourth vehicle from the engine (the one that was upset) first slide in the direction of the crossing, then commence jumping about, pull another coach off the rails, and then turn over on its right side. He did not hear the points moved, nor did he notice their

position after the accident. A coal train was standing on the down line at Wilstrop siding waiting for him to pilot it to Hammerton.

The driver and fireman of this coal train stated that they had been standing at Wilstrop siding for about 15 minutes when the accident happened. They had been whistling for the pilotman, but had not observed what the signalman was doing as the passenger train came up.

Signalman Robert Collinson had been employed as such since the 3rd May; he had been at Malton for six weeks learning the duties, then two or three days in the telegraph office at York, after which he passed a satisfactory examination and was employed at Helmsley (where there is a locking-frame) from June 22 to July 31, next at Carnaby for a week, and then came to Wilstrop. He had come on duty at 7 a.m. on the day in question. I cautioned him only to answer such questions as he thought [f]it. He stated that the down coal train had arrived a few minutes before the up passenger train; that he had his distant and home signals off for this latter train, and restored his distant-signal to danger when the train had passed it; that he is not certain when he put his up home-signal to danger, but expected that the train had passed it when he did so; that on putting the home-signal lever back to the position of danger the facing-point lever flew forward towards him brushing past his leg and the catch slitting his trousers; that he did not attempt to do anything, not knowing what to do; that he had never previously observed any of the levers act thus.

The damage to rolling stock was but trifling and was principally confined to the steps and side of the carriage which was upset.

The facing-points were not injured and showed no signs of having been struck. Two or three rails were bent and a check-rail was broken.

There is no doubt as to this melancholy accident having been caused by the movement of the facing-points on the up line as the train was passing over them, and I have but little hesitation in saying that this movement was the act of the signalman himself. I could trace no tendency of the point-lever to spring in the way he described, nor is there any likelihood of the wheels of any of the carriages having so acted upon the heels of the points as to have caused the toes to have moved, as the points seemed in perfect order. Even granting the possibility of the point-lever having sprung over when the home-signal lever was put back to the position of the [sic] danger, the signalman was acting contrary to orders in having put this signal to danger until the whole of the train had passed it, and his act was thus still the cause of the accident.

If the fireman's evidence is to be relied on, the act in which he saw the signalman engaged must have been the restoration of the facing-points right for the up line (their normal position) after their having been moved and having caused the accident, though they must after this have been again moved to have been in the position in which the guard deposes to have seen them after the accident.

The accident could not have occurred had the facing-points been provided with a locking-bar, which would have prevented them having been moved until the whole of the train had passed over them; and its occurrence only shows how desirable it is even for more temporary purposes to provide facing-points worked from locking-frames with means for preventing their being moved through the blunder of a signalman while a train is passing over them.

I have, &c., C.S. HUTCHINSON, Lieut.-Col. R.E. and Colonel.

The Secretary (Railway Department,) Board of Trade.

YORK HERALD FRIDAY 27 AUGUST 1875.

RE THE ADJOURNED INQUEST ON THURSDAY 26TH.

An edition of Saturday 28th carries the same report but starts 'On Thursday' instead of 'Yesterday'. The *Ripon Gazette* carried the report in its edition of 6 September which Sue transcribed, and again I have put additional points in squared brackets. A shorter version appeared in the *Northern Echo* for Friday 27th and I have added in a couple of points from it 'NEo'

THE FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT NEAR YORK. THE ADJOURNED INQUEST. VERDICT OF MANSLAUGHTER AGAINST THE SIGNALMAN.

Yesterday the adjourned inquest on the body of Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker, the only daughter of W.W. Whitaker, Esq., J.P., of Breckamore, Ripon, was held before Mr. J.P. Wood, at Wilstrop Hall, the residence of Mr. John Harrison.

Mr. [RG has 'Robert'] Dale, solicitor, York, again appeared on behalf of the North-Eastern Railway Company, and in addition to the witnesses and friends of the deceased, there were also present Mr. Harold Copperthwaite, engineer of the Southern Division of the North-Eastern Railway; Mr. Welburn, District Passenger Superintendent, Southern Division; Mr. Inspector Kane, of Tadcaster, Superintendent of Police for the district, and other officials.

The following was the additional evidence adduced:

Annie Wight [RG has 'Wright'], of Monk's House, [NEo has 'Wright and 'Markhouse'] near Kidderminster, deposed: I was a passenger by the train leaving Harrogate for York at 12.15 (noon) on Monday, the 16th inst. Miss Whitaker (the deceased lady), Miss Harrison, and myself were the only persons in the carriage. I was sitting in the carriage on the left hand side, next the window and facing the engine. Miss Whitaker was in the middle seat facing the engine. Miss Harrison, was opposite me, with her back to the engine. I did not know the particular spot at which we had arrived, being a stranger in the locality, when I felt the carriage shake violently, at a time the train was going very slowly. After it had been shaking a short time the carriage gave a sudden and violent lurch, which jerked Miss Whitaker right through the window. It was so sudden she had not time to raise her arms. [NEo then has 'Miss Harrison was then thrown out of the carriage head foremost.' - but this does not appear correct and would still seem to refer to Fanny]: we were protected by being in the corners of the carriage. The deceased was sitting, leaning forward in conversation with myself and Miss Harrison at the time. She was pitched head foremost out of the window. After she was thrown out the carriage righted itself again, and seemed as if it were going to fall over on the opposite side. Then it shook violently for a few seconds before it fell over on the side at which Miss Whitaker had been thrown out. My arm was in the sling of the carriage, which somewhat protected me. We had no idea of any accident until we felt the shakings. I crept out of the carriage window after it was upset, and found Miss Whitaker laid underneath the carriage.

Miss Mary Harrison, of Arlington House, near Knaresbro', deposed: I was in the railway carriage with the deceased and Miss Wight on the 16th inst. I have heard the account of the accident given by Miss Wight, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it is quite correct.

Mr. Dale at this period of the inquiry produced from the office of the General Manager of the North-Eastern Railway Company, a letter from Mr. Calcroft, the assistant secretary of the Board of Trade, dated 23rd June, 1875, approving of the arrangements proposed to be made on the railway in connection with the rebuilding of the viaduct over the river Nidd on the Knaresbro' branch of the North-Eastern Railway, subject to an inspection to be made by Colonel Hutchinson, the Government Inspector, as soon as he conveniently could, and also subject to any alterations which might be required by the inspecting officer on his visit.

William Johnson, of Starbeck, district inspector of permanent way for the North-Eastern Railway, deposed: The line between Hammerton and Marston is under my charge. That part of it which is at Wilstrop siding and the points there were in excellent order on the 16th inst., the day of the accident to Miss Whitaker. I carefully examined the line, and the working of the points on the 9th inst., the day when the single line was first brought into use. The points were new, and of steel rails of 82 lbs. weight per yard, and nothing could surpass them. I never saw any better in my life. The rails had been put in about three weeks before the day of the accident, and had been used regularly from the 9th till the 16th inst. I saw the line and points again and examined them again on the 12th or 13th inst. They were then in as good a state as they could possibly be. On the morning following the accident I examined the rails, and found that a check-rail had been taken away from near the crossing of the "through shunt" by the accident. I believe the trailing of the carriage had removed the rail. The wheel of the carriage appears to have caught the end of the rail, and torn it off, breaking the chairs at the same time. The carriage would not be going in a straight direction, but crossways, and two wheels must have been on one set of rails, and two on the other. I cannot conceive any other way in which the accident could have happened, except by some person opening the points by pulling the lever. The facing-points at this place are not provided with a locking bar. If [this would be more likely as 'Even if..'] there had been a locking bar the points could, judging from those I have seen on the North-Eastern Railway, have been opened by any person pulling the levers. I have seen a carriage turned off the line when there has been a locking bar. I think a locking bar might be invented which would prevent this.

Mr. Whitaker: -Do you mean to say that the North-Eastern Railway Company keep up the use of locking bars which have hitherto failed?

Witness: Yes; those in use are defective.

The Coroner: How long have you been in the employ of the North-Eastern Railway Company?

Witness: Thirty years.

The Coroner: Have you seen these locking-bars regularly used during that time?

Witness: I have.

The Coroner: Do you consider them be an advantage?

Witness: I do; but they are not perfect. I believe that it is possible for any one using the lever in the ordinary way to open the points with any locking-bar which the North-Eastern Railway Company have at present in use.

Mr. Whitaker: Do you know how many of these locking-bars there are in your district?

Witness: I believe there are six. The last was put down within six months, and the first from eighteen months to two years ago.

Mr. Whitaker: Can you suggest any reason why the North-Eastern Railway Company put down locking-bars which have been found, in your experience, to be absolutely useless?

Witness: They are not absolutely useless, but they are not what they might be.

The Coroner: During the whole of your experience have you known more than one failure of these locking-bars?

Witness: They are not tried every day. I am of opinion that if they were tried they would fail.

The Coroner: Where was that failure?

Witness: It was at Arlington, about a year ago.

Mr. Whitaker: Was there an inquiry as to that accident?

Witness: It did not lead to any damage. There was a private inquiry.

Mr. Whitaker: Was it clearly proved that the cause of the accident was the defect in the locking-bar?

Witness: Yes; the man admitted turning the wheels of a carriage on to a wrong line.

By Mr. Dale: My district extends over one hundred miles, and all the locking-bars are those in permanent use and not at temporary crossings. I never knew a locking-bar put down at a temporary crossing by the company, nor did I ever hear of the Board of Trade requiring it.

The Coroner: Do you consider that the locking-bar is an advantage?

Witness: I believe that a locking-bar can be put on to points which shall absolutely prevent a train in passing being turned wrong.

The Coroner: Then you believe such locking-bars are in existence.

Witness: No, I don't.

Mr. Dale: You mean that they are not invented yet?

Witness: No, they are not. I don't consider the locking-bars at present in use on the North-Eastern to be any protection.

Henry John Winspear, of Queen-street, York, signal inspector for the South Division of the North-Eastern Railway, deposed: I have had experience of many temporary crossings being made from one line of rails to another. I have been present when those temporary crossings have been inspected by officers of the Board of Trade. None of them have had locking-bars, nor have I heard that they have ever been required of the Board of Trade. The facing points at the crossing at the bridge over the river Ouse on the Scarbro' branch are precisely the same in all respects as those at Wilstrop siding. The points at neither place have any locking-bar. The traffic over the bridge near York to Scarbro', Hull, and Whitby is very great. I was present last year when Col. Hutchinson, of the Board of Trade, inspected the points at the crossing at Scarbro' bridge, and also the signals. I was with him officially at the time, and he never required any locking-bar to be put down. He asked me if I was going to put a locking-bar on, and I said "No;" and he said. "Very well." I was also present in the spring of this year when Col. Hutchinson inspected the facing points on the other line of the railway at Scarbro' bridge. They have no locking-bar, and were passed and approved of, as were many others.

The Coroner: What is the advantage of a locking-bar?

Witness: It prevents the signalman moving the points by touching the lever whilst a train is on the points.

By Mr. Dale: Without a locking-bar the points could not be moved, unless the signalman put the home signal at danger. To do that he would have to push the lever. After the home signal had been put at "danger," it is impossible for the points to have been operated without the signalman or some other person pulling the lever to open them. The locking-bar and points are identical in working. There is a locking "apparatus" at the Wilstrop crossing, which is in good working order. For the safety of the public for the time being, it is just as important to have locking-bars at temporary crossings as on the permanent line. I saw the levers and points two hours after the accident, and found them in perfect working order. I think it impossible for the facing-points lever to have moved of itself, or from the action of the train at the points. I had some conversation with Robert Collinson, the signalman, after the accident. I asked him how it had occurred that the carriages got off the rails. He said he could not account for it; it was a bad job; he didn't know how it had happened. I asked Collinson if he had kept the home signal off that locks the points. He said, "I think I put it on as soon as the engine passed." He ought to have kept the signal off till the whole train had passed.

John Jackson, of York, signalling inspector for the district, deposed: Since the 3rd of May last Robert Collinson, the signalman, has been in the employ of the North-Eastern Railway Company. He was first sent to learn the duties of a signalman at the west junction, Malton, on the 3rd May. He was there learning his duties up to June 11th. He passed a satisfactory examination before Mr. Stephenson, chief signal inspector, at York, on that date. He was then sent to Helmsley to be employed as a signalman. The points and signals at the crossings at Helmsley are of the same character as at Wilstrop siding; but there are more levers, and the duties are much heavier. Collinson was passed by the inspector there on the 22nd June as "competent," and performed his duties until the end of July, when he was removed to Carnaby, to assist the station-master in connection with the Yorkshire Show at Driffield. On the 7th August he came to Wilstrop siding. On the 9th I examined him, and considered him perfectly competent. A relief signalman, as a matter of additional safety, was left with Collinson for the first three days at Wilstrop. Before I withdrew the relief man on the 11th, I further examined Collinson, and received a certificate signed by Collinson in the following words — "I hereby certify that I have received all necessary instructions relative to the working of the machinery in this cabin, and I understand the working of the same." Attached to this certificate was one by Inspector Jackson as to Collinson's competency, both of which were forwarded to York.

James Vester, bridge inspector in the employ of the company, deposed: I saw a coal train standing on the down line at Wilstrop siding, a short time before the passenger train came up. It was waiting for the passenger train to pass, and would then have gone over the points, and been in charge of the pilot on the single line. I heard no whistling of the engine of the coal train, and there seemed no indication of a wish to press forward on the part of the driver of the coal train. I was present after the accident, and I noticed a piece of the check rail imbedded in the bottom of the overturned carriage.

Mr. Dale here stated that the directors of the company most deeply deplored the lamentable occurrence which had caused the death of Miss Whitaker, and they desired, through him, to express their great sympathy with the parents of the young lady; with Mr. Whitaker, her brother; and with her relatives and friends, in the severe bereavement they had sustained. Mr. Leeman, their chairman, had intended to have been present, but at the last moment he was called away on business of most urgent importance, and he much regretted that he could not be present at that inquiry. The directors, however, had required him (Mr. Dale) to attend there to render all assistance in his power to the Coroner and the jury in elucidating the facts of the accident at the present inquiry, and they had requested that all their officials and servants should assist in every possible way, in order to make a most searching investigation with reference to the cause of the deplorable accident in question.

The Coroner, having expressed his gratification at hearing Mr. Dale's statement, then requested Robert Collinson, the signalman, to stand forward.

After being duly cautioned [RG : 'Robert Collinson, the signalman, was then told by the Coroner that he might make any statement he desired, but cautioned him as to what he did say, as it might be used in evidence against him.'] Collinson said: —I was signalman at Wilstrop siding at the time of the accident. I lowered the signals to "All right" on the approach of the train in question from Harrogate. As she passed my distance signal I put it to danger. Whether the whole of the train got clearly by the home signal I cannot say. I also placed the signal to danger by shoving over the lever. Immediately, as I put the signal to danger, the point lever flew over and caught my trousers and tore them about an inch with the brass plate which has the number and the word 'points' on it. As the engine passed me I gave a wave of the hand as an 'all right' signal. That was when the pilot had got off the engine. I then pushed over the home signal, and the point lever flew over, as I have already stated. When the point lever flew over I immediately looked at the train and saw it going in all directions nearly, except the right one, as far as I could see. I don't know that I have anything more to say except that I will answer any questions. I assisted all I could to get the carriage up after it overturned.

The Coroner, after a brief adjournment, then addressed the jury. He said he was quite sure that he was not only expressing his own feelings, but those of everyone present, when he stated how deeply they regretted the sad accident which had resulted in the death of this young lady, and, in expressing their sincere and deep sympathy with her family on their sad bereavement. Mr. Dale, on behalf of the railway company, had stated that it was the wish of the chairman and directors that every facility should be given for the full investigation of the case, and he (the Coroner) could certainly say that such facility had certainly been given, and that every assistance for obtaining information had been rendered by the officials and servants of the railway company. They were also much indebted to Mr. Whitaker, the brother of the deceased, for the great interest he had taken in the case, not from any personal motives, but in the interests of the public. The Coroner then addressed the jury on the special features of the evidence, stating from the facts proved in evidence, there could be no doubt that the deceased had died from fracture of the base of the skull, causing compression and effusion on the brain, and that this injury had been caused by the young lady being thrown out of the railway carriage there could be no doubt. The question for the special consideration of the jury was how it was that this carriage was upset. They had had a great deal of evidence on that point; in fact, all that could be gleaned on the subject. In accordance with the promise he made at the former inquiry he (Mr. Wood) had communicated with the Board of Trade in order that they might, if they saw fit, send down an inspector to Wilstrop to investigate all the circumstances of the case. He might state that accordingly he had received that morning a copy of the report of Colonel Hutchinson on the accident. Owing to an engagement in Ireland Colonel Hutchinson was unable to be present at that adjourned inquest but he had fully stated his views in the report. Although he (the Coroner) could not read it to the jury, or make it evidence on that occasion, he would state that the information therein afforded had tended in some measure further to elucidate that inquiry. The Coroner next treated of the

probability or possibility of the points having become opened owing to some defect in the machinery or permanent way, showing that the evidence was very clear against such having been the case, and that the points, levers, and all connected therewith were in a thoroughly good condition and excellent working order. The man Collinson had said that the points flew open of themselves; but the jury had had practical evidence that day that such a thing could not have happened, and that the lever must have been touched by some one. The Coroner next showed that no one had access to the levers at the time except the signalman, and that he was aware of a direct prohibition of touching the points whilst a train was passing over. Treating next of the locking-bar, the Coroner said that notwithstanding the evidence of the witness Johnson, it appeared that locking-bars were most valuable, and that if these points had been provided with one the accident would not have happened. Whatever might have been the opinion of Col. Hutchinson at the time he made the inspections which had been referred to by Mr. Winspear, he (Col. Hutchinson) certainly now was of the opinion that there should be locking-bars at such points, as they prevented the signalman having the power to open points whilst a train was passing over them. He (the Coroner) had no doubt that this question would be brought before the notice of the company, for there was the same risk at temporary crossings as at those which were permanently in use. At the same time Mr. Dale was perfectly right in showing that the company had never been required to put down these locking-bars, and that there had been no neglect on their part. After stating to the jury the legal bearing of the case as against the signalman—that if the death of the deceased had resulted from his gross carelessness in the discharge of his duties, it was their duty to return a verdict of manslaughter, and, if otherwise, an open verdict. The Coroner left it to the jury to decide on their verdict.

After a consultation for a quarter of an hour, Mr. Harrison, the foreman of the jury, announced that the jury were of opinion that there had been great neglect of duty on the part of Robert Collinson, the signalman, and therefore they returned a verdict of manslaughter against him. They also strongly recommended that there should be locking-bars placed in connection with the points at Wilstrop siding, which might be the means of preventing any further accident.

The Coroner said that he should forward the recommendation of the jury to the North-Eastern Railway Company.

On bearing the verdict of the jury, Collinson, who is a young man about twenty-one years of age, was greatly affected. He was then duly charged with the manslaughter of Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker, and taken into custody by Mr. Supt. Kane. Bail, however, was offered, Collinson himself in £80 and two sureties of £40 each.

The inquiry occupied above four hours.

August 31st. Letter from Miss Wight addressed from Breckamore to Fanny's aunt Mrs. [Anne] Turner nee Whitaker (wife of Charles Turner M.P.) in Liverpool.

Dear Mrs. Turner

Dear Mrs. Whitaker begs me write to you and give you an account of the terrible accident which has brought such grievous trouble here. At the time it happened the train was going so slowly that I had no thought of any real danger as the carriage gave no warning of upsetting until the sudden lurch came which sent darling Fanny through the window. This sudden upheaving of the carriage seems to have been caused by the check rail being torn up and becoming embedded in the bottom of the carriage - it acted like a spring. At the time, she was turning towards Miss Harrison and me the opposite way to the one she was thrown, but as she was in the middle seat she had nothing to hold by and she had not even time to put out her hands to save herself. She went as straight through the window as if she had been shot out in a way I could not have believed possible if I had not seen it but I distinctly remember seeing her feet last. She fell on her face - but some part of the carriage must have struck her as she fell - for the chief injury was to the back of the head and the doctors all agreed that she must have been unconscious from the first which is a great mercy as she was spared pain. It is the most bitter sorrow for all those who loved her so dearly, but for her we know it is a most blessed change. Her whole life was so true and so beautiful, none could be better prepared to die suddenly. Dear Mrs. Whitaker bears it very bravely, but she has lost the most devoted daughter that ever lived and it has left a blank which nothing earthly can ever fill.

She wishes me to say that she hopes to hear a better account of Mr. Turner's health soon.

Believe me

y[our]s sincerely

E A Wight

October 2. Yorkshire Post article.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DRIVERS, GUARDS, AND PASSENGERS ON RAILWAYS.

It is evident that much remains to be done, not only in the way of preventing accidents on railways - for a very large proportion of such accidents are entirely preventable - but also in dealing with such accidents when they arise. Of late several accidents have occurred in which carriages or waggons of passenger or goods trains have become detached, and in one instance of very recent occurrence, on the North British Railway, the parting or some waggons from a goods train was utterly unobserved until the train had occasion to stop. It need hardly be said that the subject is far from being a new one. During years past various suggestions on the subject have been made, and inventions submitted for inspection. It is a melancholy coincidence that Mr W.W. Whitaker, of Breckamore, near Ripon, who recently lost his only daughter through a disaster on the North-Eastern Railway Company's line, called attention a quarter of a century ago to an invention of his own, and suggested the use of glasses, which might not always be attended to at the critical moment, but the consideration of which he believed, as he stated in a letter published ten years ago, to have been shelved for mere selfish reasons. In the face of what Mr Henry Pease said at Darlington the other day, one would be slow to accuse railway directors of disregard of human life, but in the letter to which we have referred, Mr Whitaker declares that he had it "in writing from a very celebrated director with reference to the 196 inventions submitted to the committee of directors at the Clearing-house, in London, that 'none were accepted for general use, not because the inventions are incomplete, but because the managers, like me, consider such communication is not expedient.'" Mr W.W. Whitaker also, years ago, recommended the adoption of alarm-guns attached to each carriage, such as are used in preserves, in fact he had models of that portion of his invention during the Exhibition in London in 1851. It was pointed out that when charged and properly protected they needed no attention for months, and no change of cord was requisite. We have referred to Mr Whitaker's suggestions because of the said circumstance that, after devoting much attention to the subject of communication with the drivers and guards of trains, he should have so painfully realised in his own domestic circle the necessity for improved means of providing against railway accidents. Would it not have been possible, with improved mechanical means, in such a case as the

accident at Wilstrop, for the attention of the driver to have been earlier directly to the accident? It must be admitted that there is a wide field here for inventive genius, and a great need for practical consideration.

The case against Collinson did not come to the York Assizes until March following.
York Herald Wednesday 15.3.1876 re Tuesday.

COUNTY ASSIZES. CROWN COURT [YORK].

Punctually at twelve o'clock, Mr. Baron Bramwell made his appearance at the Castle from the Guildhall. He was accompanied by the High Sheriff (Major Stapylton), the Under Sheriff (Mr. Wm. Gray), the High Sheriff's chaplain (the Rev. Mr. Munby) and others. The following gentlemen were sworn on THE GRAND JURY.

The Hon. A. Duncombe, of Kilnwick Percy, (Foreman); The Hon. P. Dawnay, of Beninbrough; Sir G. O. Wombwell, of Newburgh, Bart.; Sir J. Meek, of Middlethorpe Lodge. Knight.; W. C. Worsley, of Hovingham, Esq.; J. Austin, of Skelton Hall, Esq.; E. S. Cayley, of Wydale, Esq.; C. A. Darley, of Burton Field, Esq.; W. Driffield, of West Huntington, Esq.; Chas. Elsley, of Patrick Brompton, Esq.; F. J. Hadden, of Wykeham Abbey, Esq.; T.C. Hincks, of Breckenbrough, Esq.; W. R. Innes Hopkins, of Grey Towers, Esq.; J. J. D. Jefferson, of Thickett Priory, Esq.; J. Kendall, of Scarbro', Esq.; J. W. Pease, of Hessewood, Esq.; G. Roper, of Richmond, Esq.; S. T. Scrope, of Danby Hall, Esq.; E. S. Strangways, of Alne, Esq.; F. Wailes, of Husthwaite, Esq.; C. Walker, of Red House, Esq.; J. W. Woodall, of Scarbro', Esq.

The proclamation against vice and immorality having been read, His Lordship charged the Grand Jury. . . . He said he was sorry to say that there were several cases of manslaughter in the calendar, the first being against a man of the name of Collinson for manslaughter of Miss Whittaker [sic]. It appeared that the deceased person was a passenger in a train, that she either fell out or was in some way thrown out of the carriage, and the latter fell upon her, causing her death. The question was as to whether the prisoner was responsible for this. Evidence would be given to show them that the manner in which the accident occurred was this—that before the train had passed over certain points, of which the prisoner had the management, he shifted them, the consequence being that the carriages did not pursue the same line of rails, but went onto others, where it was overthrown. If they were satisfied of this, then the prisoner was the cause of the death of the deceased, and the only remaining question would be whether he was not only the cause, but the culpable cause. He was sorry to tell them that what constituted culpability in such case he could not define. Something short of perfection would not of itself make a man liable to a charge of manslaughter, but if they asked him how much he could not tell them. All he could say was that the Grand Jury must of themselves consider whether the carelessness or misconduct of the prisoner was such for which he should be punished. If they thought the prisoner caused the deceased's death, and that his negligence was of a culpable and criminal character, and deserved punishment, then they would have to find a true bill for manslaughter against him. . .

On Friday 17th the case came before the Grand Jury and was reported on as follows:

The *Leeds Mercury* Saturday 18.3.1876.

YORKSHIRE SPRING ASSIZES. NORTH AND EAST RIDING DIVISIONS. YORK CASTLE, FRIDAY [17 MARCH 1876] CROWN COURT. (BEFORE MR BARON BRAMWELL). ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER BY A SIGNALMAN.

ROBERT COLLINSON was indicted for the manslaughter of Fanny Elizabeth Whitaker, at the Township of Wilstrop in the West Riding, on 26th August last. Mr. MAULE, Q.C., and Mr. HAIGH were for the prosecution; and Mr. V. BLACKBURN and Mr. LOCKWOOD for the defence.

Mr. MAULE, in opening the case, said the charge of manslaughter against the prisoner arose out of his duties as signalman and pointsman on the North Eastern Railway, and it was for his culpable and criminal misconduct in the exercise of his duty that he stood upon his trial. On the 26th [no 16th] August a train left Harrogate for York at 12.15. At a point near Hammerton Station a bridge over the river Nidd was being repaired, and the traffic was being conducted on one line. At Wilstrop signal station the prisoner had charge of the points, and when one-half of the train had passed the latter half was diverted from the line. The first-class carriage in which deceased was travelling was consequently overturned: at the same time she was thrown out of the window, and died 2 days [no - one day] afterwards from fracture of the skull. Mr. Maule explained at some length the manner in which the signals were worked. They were six handles, three belonging to the up line and three to the down line. Nos. 1 and 2 were signal levers, and number 3 was the lever for the points. Of the two signal levers one was what is called the distance danger signal, and the other the home danger signal. The line was worked on the block system, and the signals stood at danger as the normal or permanent position, danger being indicated by the arm standing out at right angles to the signal post, so that no train could advance as long as that signal was at danger; it being the signalman's duty to withdraw the danger signals at the proper and convenient moment when trains were advancing, and to replace the signals at their normal state, showing danger when a train had clearly and completely passed. He called attention to the following rule issued to signalmen on the North Eastern Railway, dated October, 1869, and signed by the general manager: -

'An accident having recently occurred to a passenger train in consequence of the signalman at a junction having altered the points before the whole of the train had passed over them thereby throwing a carriage off the line, I am directed to call the particular attention of signalmen to this matter, and to point out that it is the duty of all signalmen to see that the last vehicle of every train going over the points under their charge has passed perfectly clear of the points before any alteration is made either in the points or signals.'

That being the rule for the guidance of a signal and pointsman with regard to the passage of trains, he was forbidden not only to touch the levers which regulated the points, for the transferring or removing a train from one line to another, but he was not to touch the levers which regulated the signals, and therefore, if he touched nothing at all he could not do any mischief. Either when the train was going straightforward, or from one line to another - when he once put the line in condition for the purpose of the train that was coming, he should leave everything alone until it had gone past. Unluckily, in this case there were no locking-bars, so that the points could be opened or shut without this protection. The train in which deceased was travelling arrived at Wilstrop about one o'clock. It was travelling on its natural line - the up line - but while three or four carriages passed the point as the whole train ought to have done, the last carriages were diverted on to the other line, and the carriage in which deceased was travelling was upset. This could only have been caused in one way. As the engine and first carriages kept running straight on, the points must

have been closed to divert the last carriages. That could not have happened except by great power being exercised on the lever to draw it over and close the points, and it took great strength to do that. The man who was on the signal platform was the man who governed these levers and points, and he must have done that, because there being no locking-bar, it was possible for him to alter the points and divert the carriages. It so happened that on this day one of the witnesses saw the prisoner push over from him the lever of the home-distance signal. The points had been recently laid down. The prisoner had been four months in the service of the company; he had been trained how to manage points, had passed the requisite examination, and was entirely qualified as far as examination could qualify a man for the execution of his duties. The prisoner said that as he was pushing back again the lever of the home-distance signal to danger, the lever No. 3, which was connected with the points, sprang towards him, and caught his trousers, which were torn. If that was so, the prisoner was to blame for replacing the home-signal at "danger" prematurely.

Marmaduke Whitaker, barrister, said the deceased lady was his only sister. She was unmarried, and resided with her father at Breckamore, near Ripon.

Mary Harrison said she was travelling with deceased on the day in question. At Wilstrop the carriage began to oscillate, and fell over on its side. Miss Whitaker was thrown through the window.

William Johnson, district inspector of the permanent way on the North Eastern Railway, said he had examined the points at Wilstrop on the 9th August. They then worked perfectly. – In cross-examination, witness said that there was no locking-bar attached. If there had been a locking-bar, the train could not have been put wrong by the prisoner. He believed there was a locking-bar now.

Henry Winspear, signal inspector for the southern division of the North Eastern Railway, explained that when the signals were at safety, the points were locked. In restoring the signals to danger, the lever had to be pushed back, and that unlocked the points. It was as much as a man could ordinarily do to pull the lever towards him. There was no possibility of a lever springing back towards the pointsman if it was not touched. – By HIS LORDSHIP: It was possible for the points, if anything got between them and the line – if, say half an inch in thickness – to move the lever, and make a train go on the wrong line. It was impossible for the points to go wrong whilst the lever was right, and *vice versa*. The points were known as facing points, and were almost as thin as the blade of a knife at the end where they joined the line.

John Jackson, district signal inspector, said the prisoner had been served with a copy of the rules for signalmen. In cross-examination, he said that if he had not known the prisoner to be a careful and intelligent man, he would not have put him in charge of the signals.

Thomas Dawney, guard of the train, said that at Wilstrop points there was a sudden jerking at the brake, and his attention was drawn to the carriages taking the wrong line. The traffic was being run on one line at the time. He did not see the prisoner do anything.

Samuel Ballance, stoker, who was on the engine, said he saw the prisoner push a lever when they got over the points. He could not say which lever he pushed.

Alfred Hill, surgeon, said he attended the deceased, whose death was caused by fracture of the skull.

Mr. MAULE then addressed the jury. He quoted from a statement made by the prisoner before the coroner, in which he said – "As the train passed my distance signal, I put it to 'danger.' Whether the whole of the train got clearly by the home signal I cannot say. I also replaced it to 'danger' by shoving over the lever. Immediately as I put the lever to 'danger' the points lever flew over and caught my trousers and tore them with the brass plate." He contended that this version of the accounts was neither possible nor plausible, looked at and weighed side-by-side with the evidence of the witnesses who understood the construction and working of the points, signals and levers.

Mr. BLACKBURN maintained that there was nothing positive in the evidence to lead the jury to believe that the prisoner's explanation was unworthy of credit. Everything they had heard of his conduct before the time in question would lead them to think that he not only did his duty at the time, but gave a correct account of what occurred.

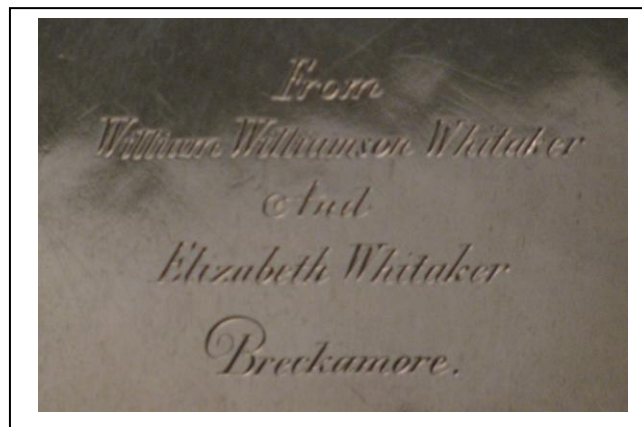
His LORDSHIP, in summing up, referred particularly to the rule which forbade the prisoner to touch the levers until a train had passed, and to the importance of the statement made by the stoker, who saw the prisoner move a lever.

The Jury, after an absence of an hour, returned a verdict of *Not Guilty*, and the prisoner was discharged.

* * * * *

Now, doesn't that surprise you? I wonder what went on in the Jury Room, but we shall of course never know – maybe they accepted that it was an accident in that Robert Collinson's trousers got caught and maybe the Jury thought that the North Eastern should have had locking bars that actually worked.

* * * * *



In 2015 William Husband of Somerset wrote to Sue Ford saying that he 'was the great-grandson of Charles Husband (1822-1898), surgeon, of St Agnesgate and Mayor of Ripon in 1860-1. He was the youngest son of the Reverend John Husband, Vicar of Whixley, and he was born at Green Hammerton. I have in my possession the salver which I illustrate. The inscription reads, **'To Charles Husband Esqr. and Mrs Husband, in affectionate recognition of much sincere kindness and sympathy at a time of intense affliction, Aug.17th 1875.'** On the base is a further inscription, 'From William Williamson Whitaker and Elizabeth Whitaker, Breckamore'.'

You will note from a report above that 'Mr C. Husband, of Ripon, the family surgeon, was in attendance on the deceased from Monday night up to the time of her death.' William also said that his great-grandfather was a Coroner, but for the Liberty of Ripon, so he would not have presided over the inquest. He added that 'the story handed down by them was that Fanny had either been eloping with, or on the way to meet, a man whom she intended to marry clandestinely. This may be an unworthy slight upon the lady. Supposedly, it was borne out by her age (29) at which she was believed to fear being left on the shelf. Against this is the part of your account which speaks of Fanny being accompanied by two companions. Her photograph, which arrived only today, does not seem to me to be of a lady who needed to fear being passed by and indeed appears to be of a 'very amiable lady and of most prepossessing appearance.' So I don't go along with the elopement story.

ROBERT COLLINSON (1854/5-1927)

1851 Mar 30. In the Census for a cottage in Wilton (c. 5 miles east of Pickering), were Ann Thorsby, head, widow, 65, widow of an ag. lab., born Lyth; Robert Collinson [father of 'our' Robert], her son, unm, 35, ag lab, born Wilton; Thomas Collinson, grandson, 14, scholar, born Pickering; Ann Collinson, granddau, 11, scholar, born Pickering. [Ref HO 107/2373]

1855 Jun Qr. Marriage of Robert Collinson and Mary Nawton [MC Pickering 9d 583]

1854/5 Birth of Robert Collinson at Wilton - per 1861 & later censuses - but no birth registered. [BC Sep Qr Whitby 9d 367 is not him - it is for a Robert Collinson of Aislaby whose father Robert was a skinner/ fellmonger and hose mother was a Jane Jowsey [MC Mar Qr 1848 Regd Whitby 24 559]

1861 Apr 7. In the Census for a cottage in Wilton were - all born in Wilton except Mary - Robert Collinson, 44, cottager and huckster; Mary, his wife, 31, born in Sinnington; **Robert, son, 6, scholar**; Sarah Ann, dau 3; John, son, 2; Mary Jane, dau, 3 mths [RG 9/3644 ED 8]. Next door was a 72-year old woman described as an 'outdoor pauper'!

1871 Apr 2. In the Census for a property on the south side of the High St. in Wilton, - all born in Wilton except Mary - were 'our' Robert's parents and family - Robert Collinson, head, 54, market gardener, born Wilton; Mary, wife, 51, born Sinnington; John William Collinson, son, 12, scholar; Thomas Collinson, son, 7, scholar; Grace Collinson, dau, 5, scholar; Martha Collinson, dau, 3, scholar; Nawton Collinson, son, 1, scholar; Phoebe Thoersby, boarder, unm, 78.[RG10/4843].

1871 Apr 2. In the Census for a property on the 'East side of Low Street', Wilton, was Joseph Sedman, 50, 'farmer of 204 acres, employing 2 labourers', born Wilton; his wife, born Pickering, and 5 children aged 2-19, all born Wilton; 3 male 'farm servants' including **Robert Collinson, 16**; one 17-year old girl domestic servant; and a shepherd.;

1875 At the adjourned inquest into Fanny Whitaker's death, held on 26 August at Wilstrop Hall - repeating words quoted above - 'John Jackson, of York, signalling inspector for the district, deposed: Since the 3rd of May last **Robert Collinson**, the signalman, has been in the employ of the North-Eastern Railway Company. He was first sent to learn the duties of a. signalman at the west junction, Malton, on the 3rd May. He was there learning his duties up to June 11th. He passed a satisfactory examination before Mr. Stephenson, chief signal inspector, at York, on that date. He was then sent to Helmsley to be employed as a signalman. The points and signals at the crossings at Helmsley are of the same character as at Wilstrop siding; but there are more levers, and the duties are much heavier. Collinson was passed by the inspector there on the 22nd June as "competent," and performed his duties until the end of July, when he was removed to Carnaby, to assist the station-master in connection with the Yorkshire Show at Driffild. On the 7th August he came to Wilstrop siding. On the 9th I examined him, and considered him perfectly competent.'

Following the inquest, Robert was charged with manslaughter, but was found 'not guilty' when the case came up at York Assizes on 17.3.1876.

1880 Nov 20. Marriage after banns according to the Established Church, at Christ Church, Bishopwearmouth, by Wm. Scott Moncrieff, Vicar, **of Robert Collinson**, 25, bachelor, engineer, Hylton St., Millfield, son of Robert Collinson, farmer, **and Elizabeth Blackett**, 21, spinster, 2 The Grove, Bishopwearmouth, father not named. Witnesses: Mary E. Blackett, William Burn. [MC Dec Qr Sunderland 10a 744]

1881 Apr 3. In the Census for a property in Wilton, Pickering, were 'our' Robert's parents and family - Robert Collinson, head, 64, huckster, born Wilton; Mary, wife, 51, born Sinnington; Mary Jane Hall, dau, mar, 20, ag lab's wife, born Wilton; Thomas Collinson, son, 17, farm servant, born Wilton; Martha Collinson, dau, 14, born Wilton; Nawton Collinson, son, 11, scholar; Francis Lang Collinson, son, 7, scholar; Ann Goodwill, sister-in-law, 56 nurse (monthly), born Sinnington; Thomas Taylor, 57, boarder, annuitant.[RG11/4830].

1881 Apr 3. In the Census for one of two parts of 1 Albert Road, Bishopwearmouth [This appears to be close by the still surviving Mountain Daisy Inn on Hylton Road] - were **Robert Collinson, 26, 'Engine Man at Glass Works'**, born Wilton; and his wife Lizzie, 22, born Dalton, Durham [RG11/4990 ED 15]

1881 Nov 1. Birth of Robert Blackett Collinson [BC Dec Qr Sunderland 10a 539]. He died 14.4. 1971 [DC Dec Qr Northumberland South 1b 912]

1885 Mar Qr. Birth of Alfred William Collinson [BC Mar Qr Sunderland 10a 538]

1891 Apr 5. In the Census for 4 Salisbury Street, Ford, Sunderland, were Robert Collinson, 36, engine driver, born Wilton; Lizzie Collinson, wife, 32, born Dalton; Robert B. Collinson, son, 9, scholar, born Sunderland; Alfred W. Collinson, son, 6, scholar, born Hylton; and Elizabeth Blackett, visitor, 66, single ['s' inserted later by checker - no marriage status in original entry], living on own means, born Sedgefield. [RG12/4132]

1891 Jul 21. [Day per DC] **Birth** in Sunderland **of John Thomas Collinson** [BC Sep Qr Sunderland 10a 619] He died 17.12.1972 [DC Sep Qr Sunderland 1a 2754]

1901 Mar 31. In the Census for 4 Salisbury Street, Ford, Sunderland, were **Robert Collinson, 46, locomotive engine driver**, born Wilton; Lizzie Collinson, wife, 32, born Dalton-le-dale; Robert [B.] Collinson, son, 19, apprentice fitter in engine making works, born Sunderland; Alfred [W.] Collinson, son, 16, apprentice ship's joiner, born Hylton; John Collinson, son, 9, born Hylton. [RG13/4708 Ed 31]

1907 Dec Qr. Marriage of Robert Blackett Collinson and Alice Grant Whitfield. [MC Sunderland 10a 1123]
[where were they in 1911 Census?]

1911 Apr 2. In the Census for 4 Salisbury Street, Hylton, Sunderland, were **Robert Collinson, 56, locomotive engine driver**, born Wilton; Lizzie Collinson, wife, 52, born Dalton, Darlington [married for 30 years with 3 children still alive]; Alfred William Collinson, son, 26, joiner in ship yard, born Hylton; John Thomas Collinson, son, 19, apprentice joiner in ship yard, born Hylton. [RG14/2352] Property is a 3-room cottage. Form completed by Robert in own handwriting.

<small>(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)</small>	
<small>Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.</small>	<small>I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.</small>
3 Room Cott	Signature <u>Robert Collinson</u>
	Postal Address <u>4 Salisbury Street Hylton Sunderland</u>

1913 Sep 7. Birth of Hilda Mary Collinson, dau of Robert Blackett Collinson and Alice Grant Whitfield [BC Dec Qr 1913 Sunderland 10a 1289]

1927 Jun 13. Death at 30 John St, Ford R.D. of **Robert Collinson**, 72, railway locomotive driver (Paper mill) (retired). Cause: Cerebral softening (duration ? years). Informant: R.B. Collinson, son, present at the death, 22 Howarth St., Sunderland. [DC Jun Qr Sunderland 10a 712]

1934 Mar Qr. Marriage of Hilda Mary Collinson and Joseph W. Middlemiss. [MC Sunderland 10a 1103]

1934 Sep Qr. Birth of Joseph W. Middlemiss, mother's maiden name Collinson, presume daughter of Joseph W. Middlemiss and Hilda Mary Collinson. [BC Sep Qr. Sunderland 10a 862]

1938 Mar Qr. Birth of Gordon Middlemiss, mother's maiden name Collinson, presume daughter of Joseph W. Middlemiss and Hilda Mary Collinson. [BC Sep Qr. Sunderland 10a 871]

1961 Sep Qr. Marriage of Joseph W. Middlemiss and Ann L. King. [MC Newcastle 1b 366]

1971 Apr 14. Death at St. Nicholas Hospital, Gosforth, of **Robert Blackett Collinson**, 89 (born 1.11.1881), retired ship's engineer, of 193 Coast Er., Newcastle 7. Cause: Ischaemic heart disease, chest infection, hernia. Informant: Hilda Mary Middlemiss, daughter, of 193 Coast Rd. [DC Jun Qr Northumberland South 1b 912]

1972 Dec 17. Death at Sunset View, Albion St., Sunderland, of **John Thomas Collinson**, 81 (born 21.7.1891), of Sunset View. Cause: pulmonary metastases, sarcoma of leg (removed). Informant: Douglass Collinson, son, of Sunset View. [DC Dec Qr Sunderland 1a 2754]

1995 Nov. Death of Hilda Mary Middlemiss, 82 (born 7.9.1913) [DC Newcastle Regr A57C Dist+subd 0531A Entry No.29]

2013 J Middlemiss Tel: (0191) 266 1895 10 Cleveland Gdns, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE7 7QH
Spoke to Mrs. Middlemiss 12/8/2013 but no-one knew anything about it.