

- H 304. Westinghouse angle cocks and train-pipe damaged, body good, wheels good, door damaged.
 F 165. End of body broken, underframe damaged at one end, guard's compartment smashed, bogies all right, brake-gear all right, running-gear good, one axle-bar damaged.
 H 346. Body completely broken, drawgear and running-gear good, wheels good.
 F 190 (rebuilt). Body completely broken, brake-gear broken, underframe strained, bogies damaged, draw and brake gear smashed.
 L 3497. Brakes on slightly. Westinghouse combined set broken, two axle-boxes broken, hand-brake gear broken and twisted, one end of wagon completely broken, drawgear badly bent, train-pipe good, cross-bars pull-rod bent, wheels good, one angle cock good.
 L 3533. Westinghouse brake-cylinder broken, hand-brake broken, W.H. pull-rods bent, cross-bars good, end and side of wagon broken, hand-brake broken, train-pipe broken, drawbars bent, wheels good, one angle cock good.
 L 3495. Combined set good, train-pipe broken, angle cocks good, hand-brake good, cross-bars good, pull-rods bent, body and floor broken, wheels good.
 H 257 (rebuilt). Body broken, combined set good, cross-bars good, pull-rod bent, hornplate broken, axle-box broken, side chain broken, drawbar bent, body completely broken, hand-brake good, wheels good, body damaged, wheels and brake-gear apparently right.
 L 7778. Combined set good, cross-bars and gear twisted, side chain broken, drawbar broken, axle-guards bent, train-pipe broken.
 LA 7004. Body twisted, headstock broken, axle-box broken, combined set good, drawgear twisted, hand-brake push-rod bent, train-pipe broken, one angle cock broken, wheels good, brakes on lightly.
 LA 7134. Combined set good, axle bent, train-pipe good, drawgear twisted, body twisted, wheels good, cross-bars good.
 L 7764. Combined set good, train-pipe good, drawgear twisted, body twisted, angle cock good, headstock broken.
 LA 7134. Underframe apparently good, two axle-boxes broken, drawgear broken, end of body damaged.
 LA 7350. Horn plates one end missing, and axle-boxes; brake-gear damaged, underframe damaged, body strained.
 L 7764. Underframe good, axle-boxes broken, W.H. brake fairly good, body twisted.
 R 66. Drawgear damaged; can run on its own wheels.
 L 7235. Bulged on one side, headstock damaged; can run on own wheels

EXHIBIT No. 24.

Newmarket, 17th August, 1907.

Chief Mechanical Engineer, Railways, Wellington.

Accident on Arahiki Grade, 3/8/1907.

As wired to you on Wednesday evening, 14th, from Rotorua, the jury returned a verdict as follows, in full: "That Guard John Lowe came by his death as the result of injuries received through the accident to the Rotorua goods-train on the 3rd August, 1907, owing to the vehicles receding from the vicinity of the 48th-mile peg, where the engines detached through the partial failure of the second engine. The evidence is too conflicting to justify the jury arriving at a decision as to why the vehicles receded."

I attach the engine-driver's and foreman's reports, and typed copies of the evidence, which covered in ordinary writing 149 pages of foolscap.

The engines were J 84, high pressure, leading, driver J. L. Taylor, fireman H. Pee; T 102, trailing, driver T. M. Cooper, fireman C. V. Kerr. In evidence it is given that brakes were tested at Putaruru, and seem to be released by the Stationmaster.

A service stop was made at Ngatira, and water taken; nothing put off; and, again brakes being released, air must have been in the main pipe to full capacity. A service stop on the bank is acknowledged, due to T 102 getting off her beat. This deceived the men, and they stopped to ascertain the cause and state, as given at length in the evidence. It is certain to my mind that the air-brakes were not on when the train began to recede, and that the train-pipe must have been charged and valves released as stated; but I consider the Westinghouse cock on the van was shut before the emergency application was made, and therefore it only got on to the engines, and the train went back, only holding on by the hand-brakes, four, stated to have been put down.

These vehicles show no signs of skidding. The trailing van and car show that hand-brakes had been on. All the vehicles, twenty-two in number, being a 30 ft. van leading, a 47½ ft. van trailing, and a 44 ft. 4 in. compartment car, also show wheels in good order. All but the one vehicle had had triples examined within the prescribed time, and one only fifteen months.

The wagons were 4 H, 1 K, 10 L, 3 LA, 1 R—total, 19; 2 vans, 1 car—total, 22. The weight of train, 226 tons 4 cwt. 2 qr.

I left the vehicles alone until the jury arrived on the Monday, forty-three hours after. They (the jury) examined the vehicles, finding several with blocks still on, apart from damaged ones. These men, the Coroner, one or two jurors, and the proprietor of the *Times* paper are prepared to give evidence on this if called upon.

The jury desiring to see brakes applied, &c., at Rotorua, I introduced Mr. Robertson, the Westinghouse Brake Company's Inspector, to the Coroner and the foreman of the jury, stating that I placed the express train at Rotorua at his disposal for a demonstration. This was carried out, commencing some three-quarters of an hour before the departure of the train.