

16. On the morning in question if No. 5 train had drawn in at the first points, would it be possible for the collision to have taken place?—If a man would overrun a signal he would overrun the station.

17. That is not an answer?—It is impossible for me to say.

18. If the train on this morning had drawn in at the first points it would have been in the loop and not on the main line?—It would.

19. Would it have been possible for the train that did run into the station to have been collided with if it had been in the loop?—If it had been fully in the loop it is obvious it could not; but at the same time if a man comes down with his train at an excessive speed he might run into the station.

20. *Mr. McVilly.*] Rule 250 states, "unless otherwise directed to the contrary." That refers to the action to be taken by the officer in charge of the station at the moment?—I think so.

21. He is the man who is in a position to judge what steps it is necessary to take to secure the safety of any movements he is taking?—That is my experience.

22. If the officer in charge concurred in the pulling of train No. 5 back on this particular morning under cover of the north home signal, would you conclude that he was perfectly satisfied that that movement could be made with absolute safety?—Yes, I should assume that would be the position.

23. And that before doing it he had considered all the circumstances and the surroundings of the moment?—Just so.

24. Now, the rules of the service are framed on the assumption that there will be co-ordination among all the men who are engaged for the moment in handling the trains?—That is the position.

25. And special rules are provided dealing with almost any emergency or any ordinary operation that may occur in connection with railway working?—I take it so.

26. Now, in this connection Rule 82 provides that the home signal must never be passed when at "Danger"?—Yes.

27. That is an indication to the driver as to what he is to do when the signal is against him?—Yes.

28. Rule 157 lays down that a train must not be moved from the main line into a siding or from a siding on to the main line, or allowed to stand on the main line, unless protected by the proper signals?—Yes, the rule provides that.

29. If the north home signal standing at "Danger" was against No. 6, would you not expect the driver of that train to comply with Rule 82 and stop before fouling that signal?—Most decidedly.

30. And under those circumstances the movement that was made on that particular morning with No. 5 would be safe and justified under Rule 157?—Yes, in my opinion.

31. If the fog on this particular morning was so dense that the driver of this No. 6 train could only see 30 yards ahead, would you expect him to come down relying on detonators, or to exercise the care that is provided for under Rule 208 in regard to reducing speed in a fog?—I should certainly expect him to exercise care, and from my long experience of engine-drivers and trains it is usual for them to slow down if they are not sure of their position.

32. You were asked yesterday if the north home signal were shifted further out whether it would be an extra safeguard, and if the driver of No. 6 would have had a better chance of stopping before colliding with the other train. If the home signal was shifted further north it would have reduced the distance from the foot of the grade to the signal, and therefore shorten the space in which the driver had to control his train?—Yes, coming down the grade.

33. Would it have prevented him overrunning the signal?—Not in my opinion.

34. Assuming that signal was further north, would not that have given the officer in charge of No. 5 the right to pull out further north under cover of the signal?—Yes.

35. The fact of the signal being shifted to its present position does not affect the position at all?—No, I do not think it does.

36. Any difference would be in favour of No. 6—it would give him a better opportunity of stopping his train by reason of the extra distance he has along the flat?—Coming off a grade of 1 in 200 would make a great difference, and would enable a man to pull up much easier than on a grade of 1 in 45.

37. Supposing a man running past a home signal at a speed that causes him to drive another standing train 110 ft. when he strikes it, if a man was pulling in, have you any guarantee that he would not collide with the train?—No; there is just the same possibility of his striking the train side on.

38. The position seems to be, then, that the driver of No. 6 came down the hill and along that flat at too great a speed and overran the signal?—That is my firm opinion.

39. In your opinion that was the cause of the collision?—Yes, that was the real cause.

40. *Mr. Hine.*] With regard to removing the home signal further north, I understood you to say in answer to Mr. McVilly that the driver would be just as likely to overrun the signal if it had not been removed—that the driver of the other train would have to go further up the line, and therefore the risk of colliding would be in no way obviated?—That would be the position.

41. For what reason would he need to go up the line?—It would depend on the length of his train. If he were to pull out at Henderson end to back in, the length of his train might cause him to go beyond the present site of the home signal. If a train was 300 ft. long and the signal was 250 ft. away, the driver would be 50 ft. beyond the signal. The rule provides that shunting may be done inside and under protection of the signal, and so long as the man keeps within the signals he is acting in accordance with the rules.

42. What I understood from the evidence was that had that home signal been further away the danger would have been minimized to a large extent?—It is problematical.