

and did all that was possible to stop his engine, but as much rain had fallen, and the rails were very wet, he could succeed only in reducing the speed to ten or twelve miles an hour. To lessen the force of the now inevitable concussion, the other train was put in motion, but as it was, the engine of the express train ran into the rear of the other train, with terrific violence, lifting the hindmost carriages into the air, and smashing them to pieces.

To describe a scene like this is impossible. The reader may easily conceive the alarm and suffering that was endured by the unfortunate passengers of the devoted train; and how so many escaped with their lives is the theme of general wonder.

One poor woman, **Ann Airey** by name, who was sitting with her infant child in her arms, was somehow thrown down upon the rails, and ran over, the wheel of the express engine crushing both her legs, in such a horrible manner, that she died after half an hour's suffering. Her child was found lying safe in the adjoining fence, the woman having, it is supposed, with maternal affection, cast away her child into a place of safety. Others received various injuries, but none of a fatal nature. The escapes were miraculous, particularly that, we understand, of **Mr Beckett**, the tea dealer, of this town, who, having fallen through the bottom of the shattered carriage, must have been run over, and yet escaped without a scratch.

Instantly, an engine was dispatched on to Lancaster, and without a moment's loss of time, **Dr De Vitre**, the Mayor, and other medical gentlemen, were on the spot, giving their professional aid to the sufferers. The chief one, as we have said, died on the spot. Others were taken away, some to Lancaster and others back to Preston.

No one sustained any injury in the express train. The passengers made a subscription in aid of the sufferers, amounting to ten or twelve pounds.

We find, in a contemporary, the following list of persons injured, and we dare say it is pretty correct:-
Moore, of Lime-street, Preston, butcher, said to have been taken to Lancaster.

William Leigh, butcher, Church-street, Preston, bruised, and complains of Internal pain.

William Tronton, butcher, North Road, Preston, much hurt.

William Cross, butcher, shambles, Preston, cut in the head, and foot bruised.

Robert Sykes, butcher, shambles, Preston, knee injured, &c.

John Gardner, butcher, Market-place, Preston, complains of pain in the side.

Hethersall, butcher, Preston, not seriously injured.

George Tronton, butcher, North road, Preston, not much injured.

Tronton, brother of the above, not much injured.

A female (**Miss Bland**, of Church-street, Lancaster,) had her face and hands much bruised and cut.

A female threw up blood, and appeared to have sustained internal injury.

Child of the woman who was killed, slightly injured.

The person "name unknown," is an aged man named **Parkinson**, a blacksmith, of Burton.

THE INQUEST

The inquest on the body of **Ann Airey**, was held at the Town Hall, on Wednesday, before **J. Gardner**, Esq., the coroner. The case having excited deep interest in the town, a considerable crowd of persons assembled in the hall to hear the proceedings.

On the bench we observed **T. Howitt**, Esq., (the Mayor) **E.G. Horsby**, Esq., **Dr. De Vitre**, **J. Greg**, Esq., **J. Bond**, Esq., **J.C. Satterthwaite**, Esq., **W.B. Bolden**, Esq., all magistrates. **Capt. Laffan**, R.E. Inspector of Railways, was also present. For the different companies there were in attendance, **Mr Wagstaff** for the Lancaster and Carlisle Company; **Mr R. Jackson**, for the Lancaster and Preston Company; and **Mr Maxted**, for the Canal Company. Several other gentlemen connected with the various railway interests, were likewise present.

The coroner took his seat very soon after one o'clock, and a most respectable jury, of which **Mr Preston Kelsall** was chosen foreman, was sworn. At the request of the parties interested, all persons having any interest in the different companies were excluded from the jury.

The coroner briefly pointed out the course to be pursued, and directed the jury in the first place to view the body, which they did, and on their return into court, the following evidence was recorded:-

Harriet Edmondson, sworn – I am a married woman, wife of **Daniel Edmondson**, of Poulton-by-the-Sands. He is a husbandman; the deceased was my daughter; her husband's name is **James Airey**; he lives at Poulton; he is a labourer; she was 43 years of age; I last saw my daughter alive on Friday morning, at 10 o'clock, when I left her at Preston, at her own home; I have not seen her since.

James Airey, sworn – I am husband of the deceased; I saw her dead yesterday, at the hospital (the Infirmary); she was dreadfully mangled, but how it happened I cannot say; I saw my wife alive a fortnight since; no doubt she is the person lying dead.

Here a private consultation took place between the coroner and the mayor, and at the close of it the mayor asked the representatives of the different railway interests if they were ready to go on with the enquiry and they replied in the affirmative.