

# WOKING STATION IN 1843 & THE EXCLUSION OF COACHES

On the 29th April, 1843, the Railway Times carried a 'leading column', and a series of letters relating to the 'Exclusion of Stage Coaches' from Woking Common Station. The column and the accompanying correspondence is reproduced here in full, so that you can get a better idea of the tensions caused with the opening of the station and the coachmen of the area.

AMONG the documents appended to the last Report of the Railway Officers of the Board of Trade is a copy of a lengthy correspondence, which has taken place between the Board of Trade and the Directors of the London and South-Western Railway, with reference to the exclusion of certain common road coaches from the Guildford station. We have given, in another part of our present publication, so much of the correspondence as will, we think, enable our readers to form a fair judgment of the question at issue. The matter, so far as the South-Western Company are concerned, being left undecided in the correspondence, we should not have referred at present to it, but that we understand similar questions have arisen with respect to other Companies; and, such being the case, it will no doubt be expected that we should say a few words on the subject.

And first of all, we are sorry to be obliged to say, that the Railway Company have not shown that proper spirit in this matter which we should have expected of them in reference to the party whose conveyances they have excluded from the station. It appears from one of the earlier letters in the correspondence, that even when the favoured coach was not running, the Directors would not admit the rival vehicle within their premises. This assuredly would seem to indicate a petty feeling of spite, which is totally beneath the Directors of the South-Western Railway, whether in their corporate or personal capacities. At the same time, we have no hesitation in expressing our firm belief that this outcry against the Railway Company has its origin in party prejudices, and that the (virtual) power of the Board of Trade has been called into action from very different motives than a concern for the public accommodation.

The particular case of Guildford in connection with the South-Western Railway, appears to present no very special feature of hardship. It seems that two coaches cannot "live" upon the road simultaneously; and however it may affect rival innkeepers, it can concern the public very immaterially whether the *Albert* or the *Victoria* has access to the railway station.

The general question is of far more importance. In most cases we would willingly subscribe to the doctrine of the Board of Trade, that Railway Companies ought not to be allowed to extend their monopoly beyond their own lines of road, and we may add, that we do not believe that the Directors of the Companies have any such wish. But if the proper service of the public on collateral branches of communication cannot be secured to the patrons of

the rail without restricting certain privileges to certain parties, we hold that Railway Boards are not merely justified in granting such privileges, but are bound with due regard as well to their own proprietors as to the public, to grant them. To fritter them away among two or more parties might tend to the encouragement of an unwholesome competition between rival coach proprietors, but could scarcely conduce to the convenience of the public. Every case must be decided upon its own merits, and to attempt to lay down any such general principle, as the Board of Trade seem inclined to enunciate, can lead to no practical good, but on the contrary, to much mischief in the development of railway communication.

We think, nevertheless, that the railway officers of the Board of Trade interfere very legitimately in a question of this kind. They are placed in the position of arbiters between the several Railway Managements and the public, and to them the public look for such protection as, had the railway system been better understood, would have been legally extended in the outset. We hope it will be the constant aim of *all* Railway Companies to avoid, as far as they can, the necessity of external interference.

## EXCLUSION OF STAGE-COACHES FROM RAILWAY STATIONS.—SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

The following is part of a correspondence which has passed between the Railway Department of the Board of Trade and the Authorities of the London and South-Western Railway Company. It is alluded to in our leading columns.

Copy of Lettersent to the London and South-Western Railway Company, recapitulating substance of Correspondence relative to the exclusion of the "Prince Albert" Coach from the Woking Station.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, 8th November, 1842.

SIR,—Referring to the correspondence which has taken place between the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and the London and South-Western Railway Company, relative to the exclusion of coaches from the yard at the Woking station, I am directed by their Lordships to recapitulate the substance of what has passed, in order that there may be no misunderstanding as to the facts in a case which involves a principle of such importance, and which may very probably become the subject of further proceedings.

On the 26th of May, Mr. Blackmore, solicitor, of New Inn, Strand, lodged a complaint against the Directors for excluding the "Prince Albert" coach from the Station yard at Woking Common, in order to give a monopoly of the Guildford traffic to the "Victoria" coach, belonging to the proprietor of a rival inn, and patronised by a different political party.

Mr. Chaplin, the Chairman of the Company, furnished a statement, in answer to the inquiries made by this Department, justifying the conduct of the Directors on the following grounds:—

1. That the "Victoria" coach had been started in consequence of the parties connected with the "Prince Albert" having attempted to raise fares improperly, and having discontinued running at a moment's notice. That the "Victoria" had been run at a loss for a considerable time; and that now, when there was a prospect of a moderate remuneration, the Directors thought it only fair that the proprietors should reap it.

2. That the Guildford traffic being insufficient to support two coaches, and several of the trains having very few passengers, the result would be, if competition were allowed, that the public would in a short time be left with less accommodation than at present.

Mr. Chaplin finished by disclaiming all political or improper motives, and by offering to concur in any plan that might be devised between the proprietors of the two coaches which might promote public accommodation, provided good faith could be maintained, the present prices continued, and the service efficiently conducted.

My Lords wrote in reply, stating that the circumstances appeared to justify the Directors in giving a preference to the "Victoria" coach, but that they objected on principle to this preference being carried so far as absolutely to exclude any other coach from the yard, unless it could be clearly shown that such exclusion was necessary for the public accommodation, and for preserving order. In conclusion, their Lordships, founding upon the last paragraph in Mr. Chaplin's letter, recommended the Directors and parties interested to agree upon some arrangement by which the objectionable principle of absolute exclusion should be avoided. They wrote to Mr. Blackmore to a similar effect, recommending an amicable arrangement.

In consequence of this recommendation, an attempt at arrangement was made, which appears from Mr. Blackmore's representation to have been as follows:—

The up-trains for London leave Woking at 4.25, 7.45, 9.20, and 11.22, A.M.; and 1.0, 1.15, 3.22, 5.0, 5.15, 7.15, and 8.0, P.M.

Before the commencement of the recent dispute, the "Prince Albert" left Guildford at a quarter

before 7, 12, and 4, plying for the 7.45, 1.0, 1.15, 5.0, and 5.15 up-trains, and corresponding down-trains. The "Victoria" left Guildford at 8, 10, half-past 2, and 4, plying for the 9.20, 11.22, 3.22, 5.0, and 5.15 trains. The 4.25 A.M., and 7.15, and 8.0 P.M. trains having apparently no coach corresponding to them.

In the spring, the "Victoria" commenced running at a quarter before 7, and in August at 12; thus running for every train except the early morning and late evening ones; and upon this the gates of the Station yard were closed against the "Prince Albert" at those hours. Mr. Blackmore's offer was that the "Prince Albert" should take the quarter before 7 and 12 o'clock trips, leaving the others exclusively to the "Victoria." This, Mr. Blackmore states, was admitted by Mr. Chaplin to be very reasonable, but was rejected by the rival coach proprietor; whereupon the Directors decided on continuing the exclusion of the "Prince Albert" from the yard.

A copy of Mr. Blackmore's communication was sent to the Directors, and they were requested to state distinctly what steps had been taken with reference to their Lordships' recommendation. The reply was, that they could see no reason to change their opinion; and that the present arrangements are such as to secure the utmost accommodation to the public.

My Lords direct me to observe that they express no opinion as to the arrangement proposed by Mr. Blackmore, since they recognize to the fullest extent the right of the Directors to make what arrangements they please with coach proprietors, provided they do not create a positive monopoly, by absolutely excluding conveyances not belonging to the favoured parties from convenient access to the railway for the purpose of taking up and setting down passengers. The principle for which their Lordships contend, is that free access to the railway should be allowed to all parties alike, subject to such regulations as are necessary for the convenience of the public and for maintaining order, and this right of access should never be denied unless it can be clearly shown to be indispensable to do so for the attainment of the above objects.

My Lords being satisfied that the Legislature would not allow this principle to be infringed, and the monopoly exercised by Railway Companies to be indirectly extended over the branch roads leading to their railways, I am directed to request that the Directors will inform their Lordships whether they admit the above statement of facts is correct; and if so, whether upon that statement they persist in the resolution of closing the gates of their Station against a public conveyance claiming admittance.

I am, &c.,

S. LAING.

The Secretary of the London and South-Western Railway Company.

In Reply to Letter from this Office of the 8th inst., relative to the admission of Coaches into the Yard at the Woking Station.

Nine Elms Station, 12th November, 1842.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the favour of your communication, dated the 8th inst., and I am instructed by the Court of Directors of the London and South-Western Railway to state in reply thereto, that they do not admit your present statement to be a full representation of all the facts appertaining to the affair in question.

The whole case is one in which the Directors believe that they have acted with care, and exercised their best discretion with a view to the proper management of the railway, in relation to the rights of its proprietors and the public convenience.

It is one of those cases in regard to which the Directors feel that they should fail in their duty to the concern and to the public if they did not claim the right of final adjudication; they also feel that if their management in such cases is to be subjected to control without adequate inquiry, then it will be impossible for them usefully and properly

to continue in the discharge of their present functions.

It is obviously difficult to go into a full detail of all the circumstances of such a case in written communications. The Directors will most cheerfully submit the whole affair to an adequate inquiry, if the Board of Trade continue to consider it worthy of its attention.

The Directors fearlessly look to inquiry before a Parliamentary Committee, in the fullest confidence that their conduct in this particular case will be approved; and that all such cases must, in deference to the public interests as well as the rights of property, be judged of and dealt with by those who have the responsibility of regulating the details of railway communication with a due regard to the property of their proprietors and the convenience and interests of the public at large.

I have, &c.

ALFRED MORGAN, Secretary.

S. Laing, Esq., &c. &c.

Letters relating to Coaching arrangements at the Woking Station.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
15th November, 1842.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 12th of November on the subject of the coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station, I am directed by the Lords, &c. to observe, that in asserting a principle which appears necessary in order to prevent a monopoly from being indirectly extended over the branch roads leading to railway stations, their Lordships have had no wish "to subject the Directors to control without adequate inquiry," but, on the contrary, have been anxious to arrive at an accurate knowledge of the facts. My letter of the 8th inst. was written with that object; and with the same view I am now directed to request that the Directors will state in writing in what respects they conceive the statement contained in that letter not to be "a full representation of all the facts appertaining to the affair in question."

I am, &c.

S. LAING.

The Secretary of the London and South-Western Railway Company.

In reply to letter from this office of the 15th inst. relative to Coaching arrangements at the Woking Station.

Nine-Elms Station, 26th November, 1842.

SIR,—In reply to your communication of the 15th inst., on the subject of coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common station, I am instructed by the Court of Directors of the London and South-Western Railway to express their regret that the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade having, as it appears, deemed the subject worthy of further consideration, should not have proceeded on the plan of appointing their own officer personally to investigate the subject, in order that it might undergo that "full and adequate inquiry" which it is difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish in the form of writing.

A view of the locality would show that there is not room for the two coaches to stand close to the door within the yard at which the "Victoria" coach now stands. It would also show that the "Albert" coach stands within 32 feet of the same door, and close to an open paling which forms the boundary line of the platform on which passengers from London descend from the railway carriages: so that on that account it is in a better place to attract customers than the station of the "Victoria" coach. It would also prove that those passengers who are anxious to go by the "Albert" coach have only to walk 32 feet from the place where the "Victoria" coach now takes up its passengers, which would be a distance quite as short as any distance at which it could properly or conveniently stand within the yard, unless it occupied the place actually occupied by the "Victoria" coach.

Personal investigation would also prove that there have already occurred conflicts between the coachmen and disturbances towards the passengers, which would undoubtedly be repeated and constant,

to the great annoyance of all parties, if both coaches were admitted within the yard to struggle for the position closest to the booking office.

A *vis à voce* and full investigation would also prove incontestably that struggles and conflicts between the drivers of carriages, leading to riot and the loss of property, would be the constant result of the managers of railways being dispossessed of full authority over their own stations; or if that authority were weakened, by the successful issue of such interference as that of Mr. Blackmore in the present case.

It never has been the wish of the London and South-Western Railway Company to extend monopoly to the means of communication from towns and villages to their railway stations.

They are fully confident of the many great disadvantages under which they labour in consequence of the communication upon the rail being necessarily a monopoly; and from the first they have uniformly desired to avoid, as much as possible, any interference with other communications, unless strictly called for by the convenience of their passengers and the public.

In the early stage of their opening the railway to Woking Common the parties in connexion with the present "Albert" coach were preferred by the Directors, and received all the support which they could give them.

The former proprietor of that coach suddenly withdrew his coach, and thereby occasioned much inconvenience to the passengers by the railway.

This led to the proprietor of the "Victoria" coach making arrangements with the railway to furnish all the required accommodation for transmitting passengers and parcels which the train might require, at stipulated charges. This proprietor now avows his readiness to increase the quantity of accommodation in the fullest proportion required by the passengers of the railway.

The Directors have no evidence of any inconvenience or difficulty which results from any other cause than the contest set up by the party in connexion with the opposition coach.

It, therefore, appears to them that, consistently with the rule of good faith which should govern them as men of business, they ought to adhere to their engagements with the present proprietors, so long as he manages to supply accommodation to the fullest extent that is required by the railway passengers; and that to divide the advantage which it is now in their power to give him equally to another coach, or to encourage that other coach in a constant struggle for its position in the yard, would be an infringement of the engagements which they have made, detrimental to the convenience of the passengers, and in every way as an example injurious to the interests of the public.

I am to conclude by strongly repeating that the railway Directors in no manner interfere to prevent the "Albert" coach from conveying passengers to and from Guildford; and that they are determined to adhere strictly to the course which has always governed them, of being uninfluenced by political parties or partizan interests.

In the course which they have taken they have been guided alone by a sense of their duty to the railway, the permanent interests of which they consider to be inseparable from the convenience of the public.

I have, &c.

ALFRED MORGAN, Secretary.

S. Laing, Esq., &c. &c.

Major-General Pasley's Report on the Coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station of the South-Western Railway.

Railway Department, Board of Trade, Whitehall, 7th January, 1843.

MY LORD,—In compliance with your Lordship's instructions that I should inspect the Woking-Common Station of the London and South-Western Railway Company, and make a report on the circumstances connected with the exclusion of the "Prince Albert" coach from Guildford, which have been the subject of correspondence between the

Railway Company and this department, I proceeded this morning to the Woking Station accompanied by Mr. Laing, whom I had requested to join me, as the subject appeared to involve several questions rather of a legal than of an engineering nature. On our arrival at the station we were met, by appointment, by Mr. Blackmore, who was accompanied by the following gentlemen connected with Guildford; namely, Mr. Weale, the mayor of Guildford; Mr. Rand, the town clerk; Mr. Elkins, the late mayor; and Mr. Stedman, a magistrate. Mr. Martin, the resident engineer, and Mr. Stovin, the superintendent of traffic, were present on the part of the Company, and stated that they had been instructed by the Directors to afford any explanation in their power, but were not authorized to make any alteration in the present arrangements. The proprietors of the two rival coaches, Messrs. Goodrham and Biden, were also present.

The circumstances of the case have been already fully detailed in the correspondence; and the only dispute as to questions of fact related to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the yard, to admit two coaches without occasioning inconvenience. Upon this point I have no hesitation in reporting my opinion, that there is abundant space to admit two coaches, and that there is no ground for limiting the privilege of entering the yard to one coach, on the score of insufficient accommodation. There is only room for one coach to stand at a time at the side of the covered shed, into which the passengers pass from the train; but there is plenty of space for a second coach to draw up in the yard outside or behind the first one, in a position accessible for passengers, without inconvenience in fine weather, while in bad weather the second coach might draw up to the covered shed, as soon as the first coach had taken up its passengers. It was said that the position now occupied by the "Prince Albert" coach outside the gate was equally convenient; but this was denied by the gentlemen from Guildford, who ought to be the best judges of what suits their own convenience, for the obvious reason, that in wet weather it is now impossible to obtain access to the excluded coach, without being exposed to the rain and passing through the mud. It was also asserted by them, that the position which the excluded coach is now obliged to take up is dangerous, from the small space in which it has to turn, and the proximity of the coach to the railway; and that very recently the horses took fright, and the coach was nearly upset. Nor do I conceive that there could be any difficulty, as has been suggested, in preventing the rival coachmen from scrambling for passengers, luggage, &c., to the annoyance of the public, seeing that the Company have power to make and to enforce proper regulations for preserving order. The question, therefore, is reduced simply to one, of the right of railway Companies to make a contract with a particular coach proprietor, by which all other coaches are excluded from their station-yard, and of the consequences which have resulted to the public, from the exercise of this right, in the instance in question.

On the one hand, it was stated by the gentlemen from Guildford, that they, in common with a number of the inhabitants of that town, were dissatisfied with the creation of a monopoly, which caused considerable inconvenience to those who preferred travelling by the excluded coach, and that on general grounds they thought it unfair, that the gate of a railway station should be shut against any public conveyance plying for the convenience of passengers to and from the railway. Mr. Biden, the proprietor of the excluded coach, urged strongly the hardship of giving a rival innkeeper an advantage which prevented competition on equal terms, and said that it was essential for his interests, as the proprietor of one of the leading inns at Guildford, to run a coach to the railway station, even at a loss.

On the other hand, it was stated that the contract between the Company and Mr. Goodrham had been entered into as the sole means of providing the public with a regular mode of conveyance between Guildford and the Station, at a time when the pre-

decessor of Mr. Biden, with whom the railway Company had at first entered into a similar contract, had suddenly taken his coaches off the road; and that since that time Mr. Goodrham had fulfilled his part of the contract, and provided ample accommodation for the public at a reduced scale of fares, although he had thereby incurred a considerable loss, and invested a considerable capital in horses, &c., which would be lost to him if competition were allowed. Under these circumstances, Mr. Goodrham said that he should hold the Company to their contract, and insist on their co-operation in putting down competition, by giving him the sole entry into the yard, unless he received compensation for the money which he had already sunk; while Mr. Martin stated that the view of the Directors was, that the traffic to Guildford was barely capable of supporting one coach, and competition could not be long sustained; and, therefore, the only chance of securing a regular conveyance for the public by each train, was to contract with one or other of the two leading innkeepers in Guildford; which being the case, they considered that Goodrham had clearly a preferable claim. This was met by Mr. Biden's offering, in the event of Mr. Goodrham's throwing up his contract, in consequence of the gates being opened to the "Prince Albert" coach, to take it off his hands, and provide the same accommodation at the same rate, *without insisting on the exclusion of other coaches from the yard.*

The above is, I believe, a full statement of what took place at the interview, and of the facts of the case, as admitted by both parties. Without entering upon the general question of the policy of allowing railway Companies, under any circumstances, to extend their monopoly over branch roads leading to the railway, without being subjected to some proper control, it will be sufficient for me to say, that Mr. Biden's offer to guarantee the performance of the same amount of public service without stipulating for the exclusion of competition, appears conclusive in the present instance. The only valid reasons for limiting the admission to a single coach would be, first, that the yard would not admit a second coach without inconvenience; secondly, that it was impossible to secure a regular conveyance for the public by each train, without giving a monopoly. Upon the first point, I have already stated my opinion that there is nothing to prevent the admission of two or more coaches; and upon the second, Mr. Biden's offer removes the objection that the public may be left without accommodation. Mr. Laing and I, therefore, agree in opinion, that if Mr. Biden will tender a formal offer to the Directors, giving sufficient security for performing the present amount of duty for a definite period, *without excluding competition*, they will have no reasonable ground for refusing, either to throw open the gate of the yard and allow Mr. Biden's coach to draw up outside or behind Mr. Goodrham's, or if Mr. Goodrham throws up his contract in consequence of their doing so, to accept Mr. Biden's offer.

I have, &c.,

C. W. PASLEY, Major-General,  
and Inspector-General of Railways.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Ripon, &c. &c. &c.

Letter to E. Blackmore, Esq., relative to Coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station on the South-Western Railway.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
19th January, 1843.

SIR,—With reference to our correspondence on the subject of the coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station, and to General Pasley's recent inspection, I am directed by the Lords, &c. to inform you that the General's Report expresses a decided opinion that there is no ground for limiting the admission to the yard to a single coach, on account of the insufficiency of the space, or the impossibility of making arrangements to preserve order. He states, therefore, that the only ground on which the monopoly could be defended would be the impossibility of securing the present amount of accommodation for the public provided by the contract with Mr. Goodrham, in case the admission of com-

petition led to the abandonment of that contract. This objection, the General states, appeared to him to be conclusively answered by the offer of Mr. Biden to undertake the contract, in case Mr. Goodrham should throw it up, without insisting on the exclusion of other coaches from the yard. This appears to their Lordships a point of such importance with reference to the general merits of the question, and to the allegation of the parties who complain of the present arrangements, that their Lordships would suggest whether it would not be desirable that a regular written proposal should be made to the Directors on the part of those interested in the "Prince Albert" coach; first, to admit that coach to the station-yard, to draw up outside or in rear of the "Victoria" coach, or in such manner as they would consider satisfactory; secondly, if the proprietor of the "Victoria" coach should throw up his contract in consequence, to undertake, for a specific period and giving proper security for the fulfilment of their offer, to provide the same amount of accommodation for the public at the same rate as at present, without insisting on the exclusion of other coaches from the yard.

In the event of such an offer being made, their Lordships would not hesitate to express a decided opinion that it would be unreasonable to continue the exclusion of the "Prince Albert" coach, although, as I have already had occasion to state, the question not being one which comes within their immediate control, they cannot pledge themselves to any further steps.

I am, &c. S. LAING.

E. Blackmore, Esq., &c. &c.

Relative to Coaching arrangements at the Woking Common Station on the South-Western Railway.

2, New Inn, 27th January, 1843.

SIR,—I have duly communicated the contents of your letter, of the 19th instant, to the gentlemen of Guildford, who met General Pasley at the Woking Station, and also to Mr. Biden.

That gentleman, in consequence of the suggestion of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, has addressed a letter to the Directors of the South-Western Railway, in the terms copied on the other side.

Another accident has occurred to the "Prince Albert" coach, which is wholly attributed to the location assigned it by the Directors outside the station-yard. In drawing the coach from the corner, the strain is so great in the turn, that on Saturday, the 14th instant, the splinter-bar broke, and the coach upset. Fortunately no person was injured, but it is lamentable the public should be exposed to such dangers, because the Directors choose to exercise a control beyond the limits of their rail, and this too for the purpose of creating an unjust monopoly.

I have, &c., EDWARD BLACKMORE.

S. Laing, Esq., &c. &c.

To the Directors of the South-Western Railway,

Guildford, 23rd January, 1843.

GENTLEMEN,—I take leave to repeat to you in writing the proposal I made General Pasley, at the interview at Woking Station on the 7th instant, namely,—

That if my coach were admitted to the Station-yard, I was willing it should draw up in the rear of the "Victoria" coach, or in such manner as the Directors should consider satisfactory.

And that in case the proprietor of the "Victoria" coach should throw up his contract in consequence, I was prepared to undertake to provide the same amount of accommodation for the public at the same rate as at present, without insisting on the exclusion of other coaches from the yard.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

(Signed) F. A. BIDEN.

Letter relative to Coaching arrangements at the Woking Common Station.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
1st February, 1843.

SIR,—Referring to the correspondence which has

taken place between the Lords, &c. and the London and South-Western Railway Company, on the subject of the coaching arrangements at the Woking Common Station, I am directed by their Lordships to inform you that the Inspector-General having, in compliance with the wish of the Directors that the matter should be the subject of a personal investigation, visited the spot, has reported that there are no obstacles from the size or construction of the yard to the admission of the second coach; and that the present position in which the "Prince Albert" coach is obliged to draw up is inconvenient and dangerous,—an opinion which has been fully confirmed by an accident which, as their Lordships have been informed, occurred on the 14th instant. The Inspector-General further reported that the only remaining ground on which the exclusion could be maintained, viz., that it was absolutely necessary in order to secure the present amount of accommodation for the public, appeared to him to be obviated by the offer of the proprietor of the "Prince Albert" coach to contract for the performance of the same work at the same rate, without stipulating for the exclusion of other coaches from the yard, in case the admission of his coach should lead to the abandonment of the present contract by the proprietor of the "Victoria" coach.

Having ascertained that a formal written offer to this effect has been made to the Directors, my Lords conceive that they would not be discharging the trust, which, although not created by express legislative enactment, is imposed upon them by the general understanding of Parliament and of the public, of watching the proceedings of railway Companies, and endeavouring by amicable representations to prevent any exercise of the extraordinary powers which circumstances have vested in the Directors of these bodies, adverse to the spirit by which the legislature was influenced in conferring their privileges, if they were to refrain from expressing their decided concurrence with the opinion of the Inspector-General, that the continued exclusion of the "Prince Albert" coach from the station-yard at Woking Common would not under the circumstances of the case be justifiable.

In expressing this decided opinion, my Lords need not repeat that they impute no political or other improper motives to the Directors in the course hitherto taken, and they direct me to express their hope that the representation now made will be sufficient to avert the necessity for any further proceedings, by inducing the Directors to accede to such arrangements as will obviate the complaints to which the exclusion of the coach in question from the station-yard has given rise.

I am, &c., S. LAING.

The Secretary of the London and South-Western Railway Company.

In reply to Letter from this Office, of the 1st inst., relative to Coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station.

Nine Elms Station, 11th February, 1843.

SIR,—I am instructed to acknowledge your favour of the 1st inst., and to express the Directors' regret that General Pasley's inspection of the Woking Station should incline their Lordships to interfere in those arrangements which the Railway Company have adopted; and they still trust that their Lordships will not further insist on pressing for any alterations in those regulations which have, on experience, been found best calculated for public convenience.

I am likewise desired to remark, that the accident to the "Prince Albert" coach on the 14th ult., arose from the breaking of its fore axle, and consequently could have no reference to the position of the coach at the station.

I am, &c., ALFRED MORGAN, Secretary.  
S. Laing, Esq., &c. &c.

Letter relating to Coaching arrangements at the Woking-Common Station.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
15th February, 1843.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lords, &c., to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th

February, expressing the regret of the Directors of the London and South-Western Railway Company that General Pasley's Report on the arrangements at the Woking Station should incline their Lordships to interfere with these arrangements, and their trust that their Lordships will not further insist in pressing for any alteration in the regulations, which have, as the Directors consider, been found on experience best calculated for public convenience. In reply, I am directed to inform you that their Lordships decidedly concur in opinion with the Inspector-General that, under the circumstances of the case, the absolute exclusion of the "Prince Albert" coach from the yard should not be continued; and they repeat their former recommendation to that effect. If the Directors do not think proper to attend to this recommendation, it will only remain for their Lordships to take the first fitting opportunity of applying to Parliament for the necessary powers to enforce what they believe to have been the spirit of the Acts relating to railways, and the intention of the Legislature.

I am, &c.

S. LAING.

The Secretary of the London and South-Western Railway.