

## The crash at ASHFORD

I can only recall one serious train crash at Ashford, around 1967, involving a Freight Train in the early hours of the morning.

About 02.00 on a weekday morning a short Freight Train with about 50 wagons would leave usually the Marshalling Yard to reverse into one of the two <sup>h</sup> trough roads between the Station platforms.

However, late running meant that these were unavailable, so the Signaller followed the usual practice and routed them into the partly empty Carriage sidings to the east of the Station.

Unfortunately, shortly before leaving, the train was doubled in length in order to clear some of the empty wagons out of the Marshalling Yard.

It was only as the Brakevan crossed the points into the Carriage Sidings that the <sup>u</sup> Guard realised that the Siding was far too short for the unusually long Freight Train, and that a serious crash was inevitable.

Fortunately the train was only doing just over 10mph, so the Guard threw his bag and himself clear of the wagons and continued to crawl away. The sound of the train hitting the buffers could be heard maybe ten miles away. The top half of the Brakevan broke away and landed in the almost empty Car Park. The top half of the next three wagons were severely deformed, but all the wheels stayed on the track.

Soon a mass of the Emergency Services and Heavy Rescue ENGINEERING Services arrived. Fortunately the Train Guard escaped with bruising though he was very shocked. The immediate job was to remove <sup>movable</sup> the <sub>parts</sub> of the stricken train, then fix the points so that the early morning Coaching stock could be released to form the <sup>III</sup> Comuter Trains.

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