

Left Hand Running

The July 2009 Newsletter of The British Train Society
www.britishtrainsociety.org

A View From The Footplate

Just a short note this month as summer recreation and other things seems to be dominating. We did enjoy the annual picnic on the last Saturday in June at Ralph's place and I would like to personally thank Kathy and Ralph for being such good hosts. They even arranged great weather for us. We had a slightly smaller group (25) than last year but it was a very convivial outing that the wives enjoy and it has become a signature event. I complement Harry Raynis for his good work in organizing a very popular raffle and thanks to all those who donated gifts for this. Bernie Bossov as usual was especially generous and it is a great highlight. Thanks also to Harry and Ralph for their work in organizing the food which was very well received as the catering, which was new for us this year, was quite well received.

Our regular meeting program resumes in August with a meeting at Harry's on August 15th. Other meeting dates are included in the newsletter. One topic for which we need to prepare is the display we will be exhibiting at the Southland Model Railroad Show in Oaklawn on September 26th and 27th. Help in setting up, manning and transport is always welcome. Also, do not forget about Train Festival 2009 in Owosso, Michigan July 23rd through 26th. Some of us will be there and the reports are that it will be well attended. Peter Carr reports that "Daylight", one of the locomotives on display, will also be at Union Station on August 1st with a trip to Milwaukee to follow. This is the engine that pulled the freedom train at the time of the Bicentennial celebrations. For more information on this event go to www.trainfestival2009.com

That is all for this time. Hope to see you at the next meeting. Happy Modeling
Don Buchanan

Calendar of Coming Events

July 19th, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Timber Creek Train Show
Sandwich [Best Western, 2300 Drew Ave.]

August 9th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton [DuPage County Fairgrounds]

August 15th, 1:30 pm
BTS Regular Meeting
Naperville [Harry Raynis, 1537 Warbler Dr]

September 13th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton [DuPage County Fairgrounds]

September 19th-20th,
Southland Model RR Show
Oak Lawn

October 11th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton [DuPage County Fairgrounds]

October 17th, 1:30 pm
BTS Regular Meeting
Lincolnshire (Mike Perry, 24 Wimbledon Ct.)

Rule 55

Rule 55 was an operating rule adopted by railway companies in the British Isles in the late 19th century. It was introduced following a spate of accidents caused by signalmen forgetting that trains were standing on the line, sometimes within sight of their signal boxes.

Overview

The rule required that, if a train was brought to a stand at a signal, within three minutes in clear weather or immediately in rain, snow or fog, the driver of the train must dispatch his fireman, guard or any shunter riding on

the train to the signal box to ensure that the signalman was aware of the presence of the train, and that all safeguards to protect the train, such as slides or collars on the signal levers, were in place, the crewman then signing the train register to confirm this.

In practice, this usually meant a fruitless trudge, often in foul weather, for the unfortunate crewman (although there was usually a mug of tea to be had in the signal box). Quite often the rule was obeyed only perfunctorily, the crewman merely exchanging a greeting with the signalman before signing the register and departing. In many cases, such as at major junctions or marshalling yards where crewmen walking along the rails were in grave danger from moving trains, the rule could not be applied properly. Further the need for the fireman to return to the train would delay it if the signal was cleared in the meantime.

Accidents

Failure to apply the rule properly was a factor in several railway accidents in the period from 1890 onwards. At Thirsk and Hawes Junction, the crews of the standing trains failed to carry out the rule. At Quintinshill the fireman of the standing train signed the register although the necessary safeguards were not in place.

It is impossible to know how many accidents were prevented by the proper observation of the rule, and it could not always prevent a crash. At Winwick a train was brought to a stand some distance from the signal box. The fireman left promptly to carry out the rule but he had not reached the signal box before his train was struck. To prevent such occurrences 'call plungers' (which operate an indicator in the signal box when pressed) or telephones were installed at some signal posts, or track circuits installed.

Except on some remote rural lines the rule has fallen into disuse.

Exemption

A white diamond sign on a signal post indicates to the driver that Rule 55 does not



apply at that signal (at which no telephone is provided) due to the train being protected by track circuits or similar means.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Picnic Raffle

This years' raffle was a great success and everyone at the picnic got a prize thanks to the generous donations of many of our members. The few items which we have left over will be sold on behalf of BTS at the October meeting or may be purchased in advance at the prices indicated [see list below]. Call Harry if you want to buy something. A special BTS thanks to Bernard Bossov, John Derler, Chuck La Buda, Mike Perry, Harry Raynis, Richard Smythe, John Struthers, Ralph Transue, and Martin Venn for the gifts they donated to the raffle.

Large format book, *Yonder Comes the Train*, 393 pages, \$8.00

Large format book, *World Encyclopedia of Locos*, 256 pgs, \$8.00

Large Format book, *The Lore of the Train*, 240 pages, \$8.00

Book, *The Life and Times of York Carriage Works*, 209 pgs, \$6.00

Book, *Steam Trains*, 65 pages, \$2.00

Hornby, R6172, modern container wagon with three containers, \$6.00

Kitmaster plastic diesel shunter kit, \$3.00