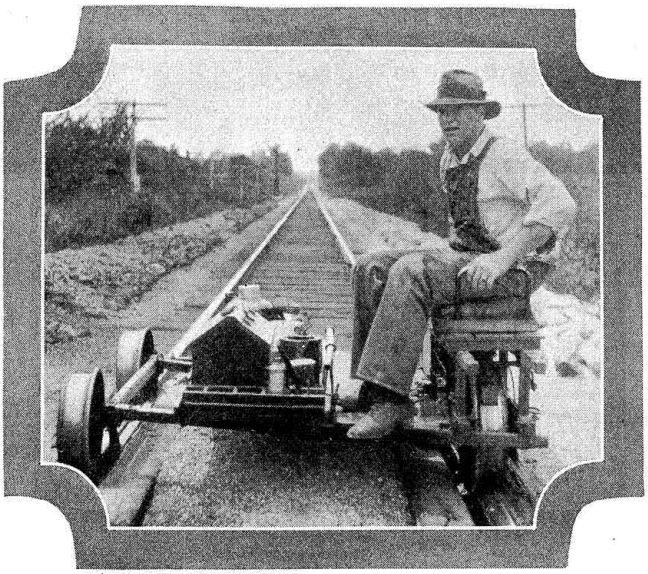

What's the Answer?

An open forum for the discussion of maintenance and construction problems encountered in the signaling field. *Railway Signaling* solicits the co-operation of its readers both in submitting and answering any questions of interest.

TO BE ANSWERED IN A SUBSEQUENT ISSUE

(1) *Should traveling signal maintainers on branch lines, and who look after interlocking and crossing signals only, use motor cars?*

(2) *Why does the neutral armature of a polarized relay always drop when the polarity of the relay is reversed?*

(3) *Do you provide an emergency release on approach or stick locking of signal levers? If so, what means do you use to introduce a time element?*

(4) *Where color-light home signals are used at interlockers, what scheme is employed when it is desired to hold a signal clear, during operation of an emergency release?*

Are Call-On Signals Safe?

"Do you believe that a call-on signal at an interlocker expedites traffic without sacrificing too much in safety?"

A Call-On Signal Expedites Traffic Without Sacrificing Safety

By D. W. RICHARDS
Signal Engineer, Norfolk & Western, Roanoke, Va.

WE USE calling-on signals on this road to direct train movements without flagging at interlocking plants where it is impossible to clear a home signal. There are certain conditions which make it absolutely necessary to use a signal of this character, particularly where cars have to be shifted off the rear end of trains in automatic block territory adjacent to interlocking plants.

It is my opinion that a calling-on signal no doubt creates a hazard. However, if the operating rules governing its use are strictly observed, it unquestionably expedites traffic without sacrificing safety. There is always a hazard present owing to the human element being present and there are cases on record where the calling-on signal has been used for purposes for which it is not intended, with accidents occurring as results. My experience however has been that without its use traffic is very seriously delayed under certain conditions, and therefore the use of the signal is warranted, but strict observance of the rules must be enforced.

Used Only for Controlling Slow-Speed Movements Through Crossovers

By A. H. MCKEEN
System Signal Engineer, Union Pacific System, Omaha, Nebr.

ON the Union Pacific System the call-on signal arm is used only for controlling slow-speed movements through crossovers or onto side tracks at interlocking plants. We do not use the call-on signal for advancing trains on main tracks for the reason that in our opinion nothing is gained by so doing because in most cases the automatic block ahead is occupied and by advancing a train through the interlocking limits with a call-on signal the train in most cases would be required to stop at the automatic signal and this would tie up the interlocking plant. We see no advantage in moving trains on the main line by means of call-on signals, except possibly to make switching movements.

Other Comments

IT IS the practice on the Chicago & North Western to use call-on signals and has been for a number of years. This practice was adopted because of the large number of derailments, occurring on account of misunderstandings of hand signals. J. A. Peabody, signal engineer, Chicago & North Western, states that they have believed it to be a safe practice and have have had no reason to change their opinion.

C. J. Kelloway, superintendent of signals, Atlantic Coast Line, replies that his road employs call-on