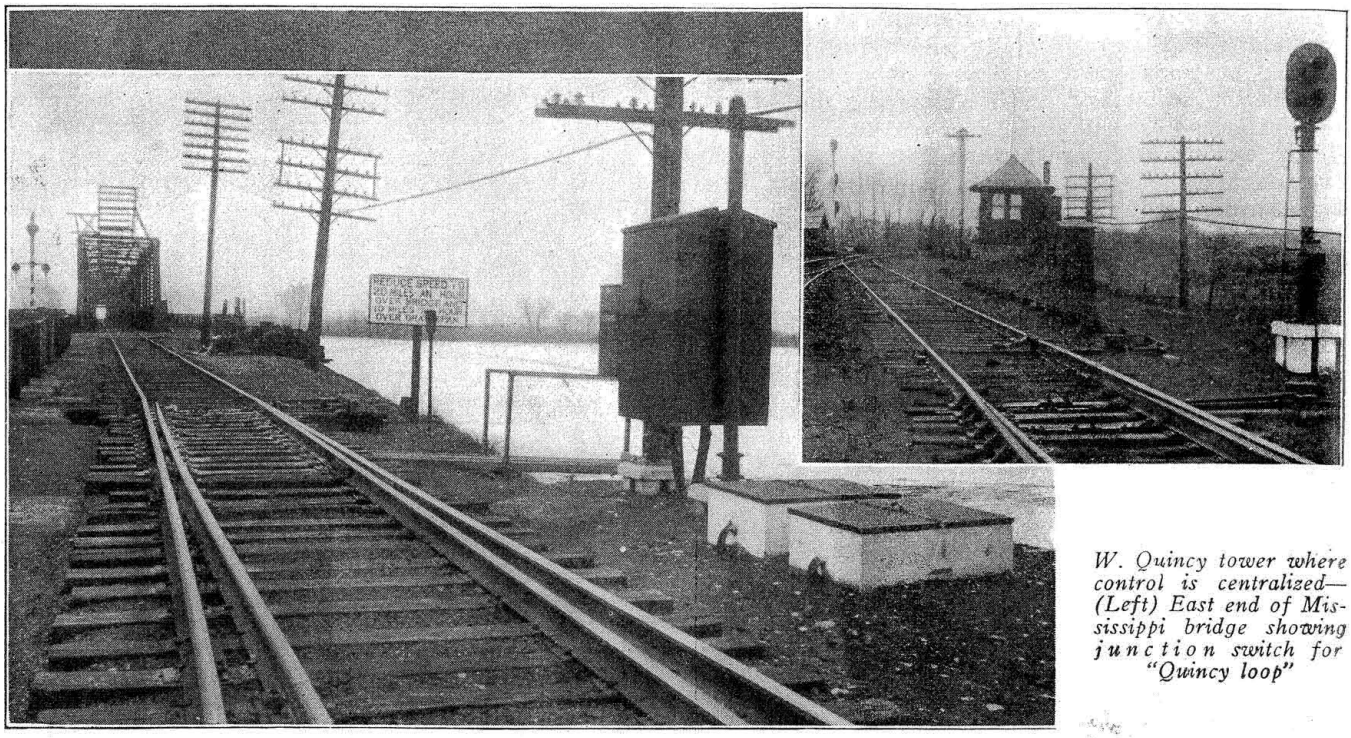
Centralized Control on Burlington Saves $16,200 a Year



W. Quincy tower where control is centralized—(Left) East end of Mississippi bridge showing junction switch for "Quincy loop"

Low-voltage installation at West Quincy, Mo., relieved nine operators and replaced four mechanical plants

A TOTAL saving in operators' wages and maintenance supplies amounting to $16,200 annually has been effected by the consolidation of four mechanical interlockers into one low-voltage remote control plant on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy at West Quincy, Mo. The present facilities cost $54,300 and are operated by the dispatcher who is located in the interlocking tower, thus dispensing with the services of nine telegraph operators who were used formerly as levermen in the four mechanical interlockers. An annual operating saving of 30 per cent of the total cost of the new facilities is thus being realized. While there has been some additional saving, because of the speedier handling of train movements possible under centralized control and operation of interlocking facilities stretched out over a territory approximately seven miles in length, no definite figures are available.

No train orders are issued to govern train movements within this remote control territory, and this, together with the operation of the plant by the train dispatcher, lends particular interest to the installation, for it has several features in common with the recent development of dispatcher-controlled signaling systems. Operation of the interlocker has in no way interfered with the manifold duties of the dispatcher whose territory embraces the single-track main line from Burlington, Iowa, to Hannibal, Mo., 101 miles, and a branch line running from Keokuk, Iowa, to Mt. Pleasant. The dispatcher was formerly located at Hannibal, 18 miles south of West Quincy.

Owing to the track arrangement at West Quincy, Mo., and Quincy, Ill., on the other side of the Mississippi river, it is necessary for all passenger trains running via Quincy to pass through the West Quincy interlocking plant twice. It will be seen from the track plan that all trains running between Burlington, Iowa, and St. Louis, Mo., via Hannibal, are operated over the single-track drawbridge into Quincy station, and returned over the other side of the Quincy loop to West Quincy interlocker; similarly all trains from the Kansas City line enter the interlocking plant at Mark, and loop into Quincy over the single-track draw. This plant also handles all traffic from Galesburg destined for St. Louis, Kansas City, or points west and south of Quincy. West Quincy, Mo., is also the eastern terminus of the Quincy, Omaha & Kansas City, a subsidiary of the Burlington, but operated independently. Traffic on the latter line is light.

Four Mechanical Plants Replaced

An old cabin door mechanical interlocker had been used formerly to protect the Q.O. & K.C. crossing, another mechanical plant had been in service at Mark to control the junction of the Kansas City and St. Louis lines, another had been in service at Bridge Junction on the east side of the river to control the signaling in connection with the operation of the Mississippi river drawbridge and a third mechanical plant had been in service at West Quincy to control the Q.O. & K.C. junction, and the junction of the Burlington line and the line to Kansas City and St. Louis.

The frame building, which housed the cabin door interlocker at the Q.O. & K.C. crossing, was moved