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BEFORE MORNING PAPERS
OF FRIDAY, 1ST JUNESIGNALLING WONDER AT YORK

A new signalling installation, an outstanding British engineering achievement, adding considerably to the extensive power-signalling already in use in the North Eastern Region of British Railways, has just been completed at York at a cost of over £500,000 and brought into full use.

Unknown until recently to the vast majority of passengers using York Station between 1939 and the present day, the largest route relay interlocking scheme in the world has been built into a new air-conditioned signal box which contains the largest control panel of its kind.

Eight mechanically-operated signal boxes which originally had 867 levers between them have been displaced by this new all-electric finger-and-thumb-operated marvel. The eight displaced signal boxes employed a total staff of 70 as against 27 needed for the operation of the new installation. This represents

a saving of £19,860 a year.

The new signal box controls $33\frac{1}{2}$ miles of track in and around York and 16 platforms at York Station.

The new control panel deals with 827 separate routes, and seventy-four 3 or 4-aspect colour-light signals and 157 sets of points operated by 277 point machines are controlled electro-mechanically from the new signal box.

The adjoining relay room has absorbed over 400 miles of single core cable in short lengths, few exceeding 50ft, and many as short, or shorter, than 5ft.

The signal box panel is a replica of the controlled tracks, and it contains 5,416 miniature light bulbs for route indication and track occupation, also 150 for telephone indication. Lights on the panel become illuminated immediately the track is occupied, giving the traffic regulator and the signalmen an overall picture of track occupation in the area, enabling them to size up the position quickly.

Practically the whole of the time occupied in passing signals between boxes and pulling levers has been eliminated by the fact that a signalman in the new box, on turning a switch, sets up the route of a train for anything up to 1,500 yards. This one simple operation, in addition to authorising the movements by colour-light signal, ensures that

perhaps 10 pairs of points are in the proper position and locked for the running of a train.

An instance of the operational simplicity of this system is that Chaloners Whin Junction, where the London lines join the lines from Leeds and Sheffield, is now electrically operated by 12 route switches, controlling 5 signals. Prior to the re-signalling an 80-lever manual signal box controlled this important junction.

The very considerable reduction in the total number of signals employed and the use of colour-light signals has resulted in a noticeable increase in the average speed of trains, particularly goods trains, running through the re-signalled area.