

THE SIGNAL BOX

The signal box stood here. As you will see from the photographs, it had originally a much more decorative style than in later years.

It was manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by a team of signalmen most of whom lived in the Railway Cottages built for the purpose. In addition to operating the signals the signalmen opened and shut the level crossing gates, using a large wheel, and locked the pedestrian wicket gates as the train drew near. When a herd of



STAFF OF SIGNALBOX C 1918-20



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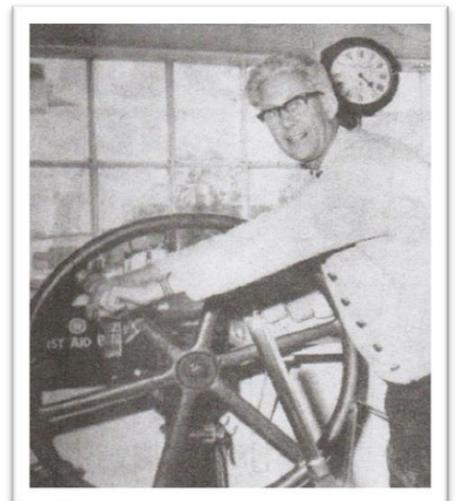
dairy cows approached the crossing on its way to and from milking the signalsman would weigh up the time until the next train was due and, if he felt it necessary, close the level crossing gates early and keep the cows milling about outside them until the train had gone. The fact that there was always a signalsman awake and alert was very reassuring to villagers walking through the village at night, especially in the days before electricity when the village was very dark.

The signal box was the place where the first, and for a time the only, telephone to reach the village was installed.

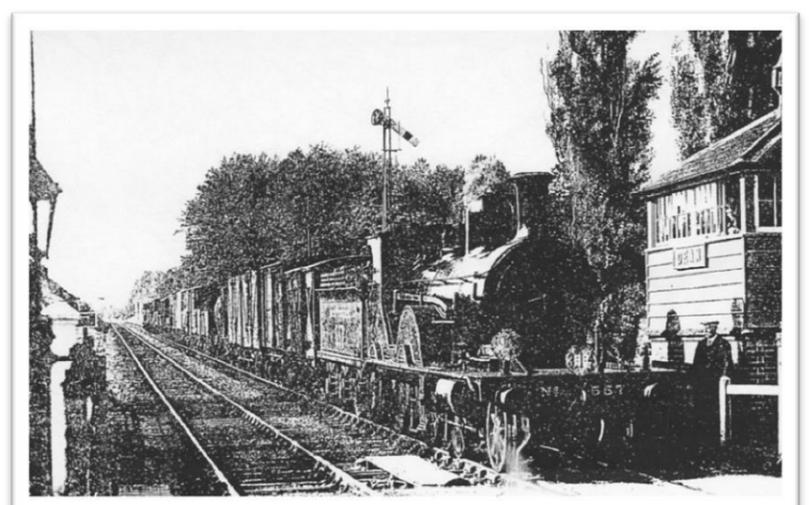
The level crossing gates were replaced by an automatic half-barrier crossing on 9 September 1980. There were by then no milking herds using the road but the proposal to install the half-barriers caused consternation and protest among the villagers who feared the risk they would create for children and animals. In practice there were no such accidents during the period of these half-barriers, now recently replaced by the present full barriers.

It was in 1980 also that the signal box was removed. It is said to have been sold to a collector so it is to be hoped that it is still looking good somewhere.

DICK HANN OPERATING WHEEL
OF LEVEL CROSSING GATES



SIGNAL BOX AND LEVEL CROSSING 1962



THE SIGNAL BOX AND TRAIN 1930S