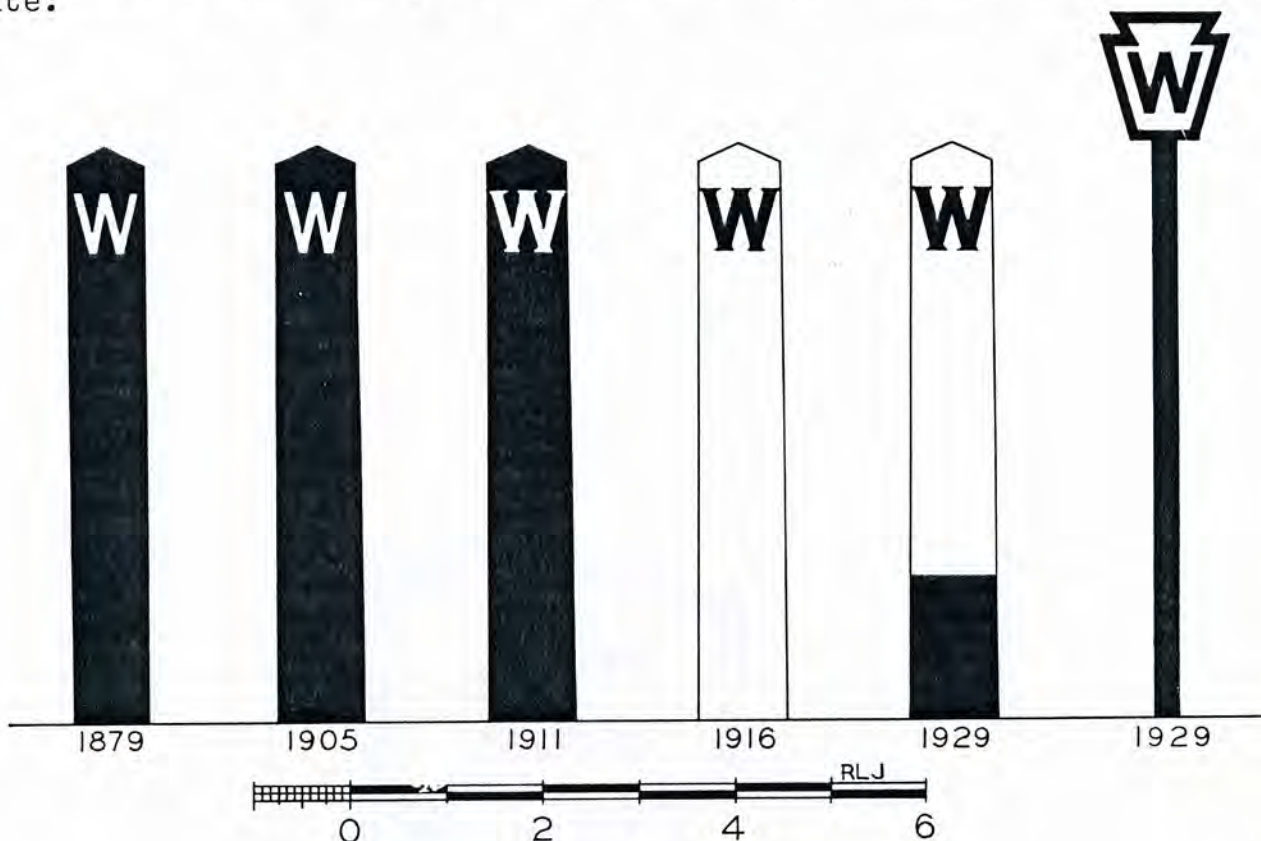


PRR WHISTLE SIGNS
by Robert L. Johnson

Whistle signs were located beside the track on both sides of a grade road crossing to notify engineers to sound the proper warning signal. The drawings below show all the styles known to the author. The dates shown are the dates of the PRR drawings from which the information was obtained. The 1879 design was made of $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. wood set in the ground so that a 6 ft. height was left exposed. The front was painted cobalt blue (a dark blue) with a white letter. The sides and back were white.



In May, 1905 a cast iron design with a raised letter was made standard. This style was slightly tapered from 10 in. wide at the top to 11 in. wide at the ground line. The sign was 10 ft. long with 6 ft. exposed. The minimum thickness was $\frac{1}{2}$ in. with a rim extending back from the edges to a total of $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick. A tapered central vertical reinforcement (with a maximum depth of $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.) and cross braces on the back gave additional rigidity. The sign was painted black with a white letter. The letter was $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high with each line being 1 in. wide. In February, 1911 the letter was changed to the standard style with serifs - still $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, but with each line being $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide. By September, 1916 the standard called for the sign to be painted white with a black letter. All other details were unchanged. A detailed drawing of this version appears on page 55 of Pennsylvania Railroad Standard Maintenance of Way Plans, published by The Builder's Compendium. By August, 1929 the standard specified that the face and edges be painted white above 18 in. from the ground line, the letter and all other parts black. Some signs of this general design are still in service.

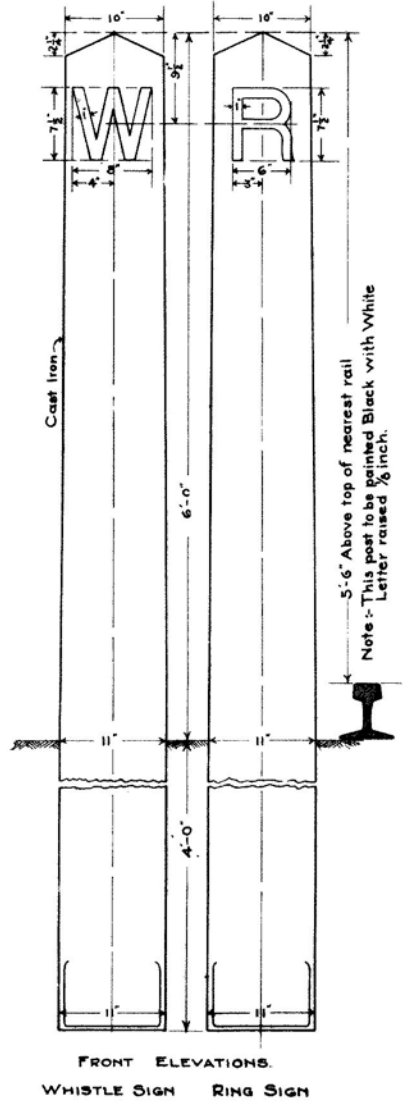
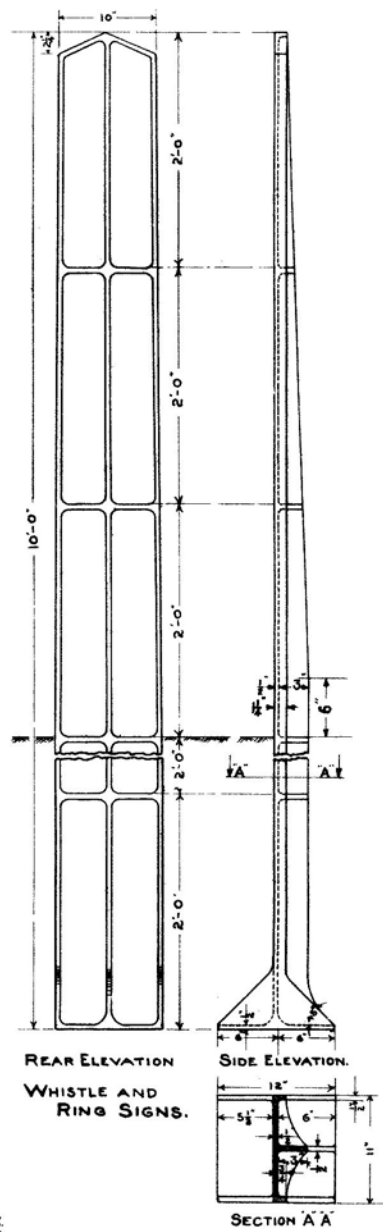
In June, 1927 the familiar keystone-shaped cast iron sign was made standard for new installations and replacements as needed. The post was 3 in. outside diameter pipe. The background of the sign was painted

(Continued on page 14)

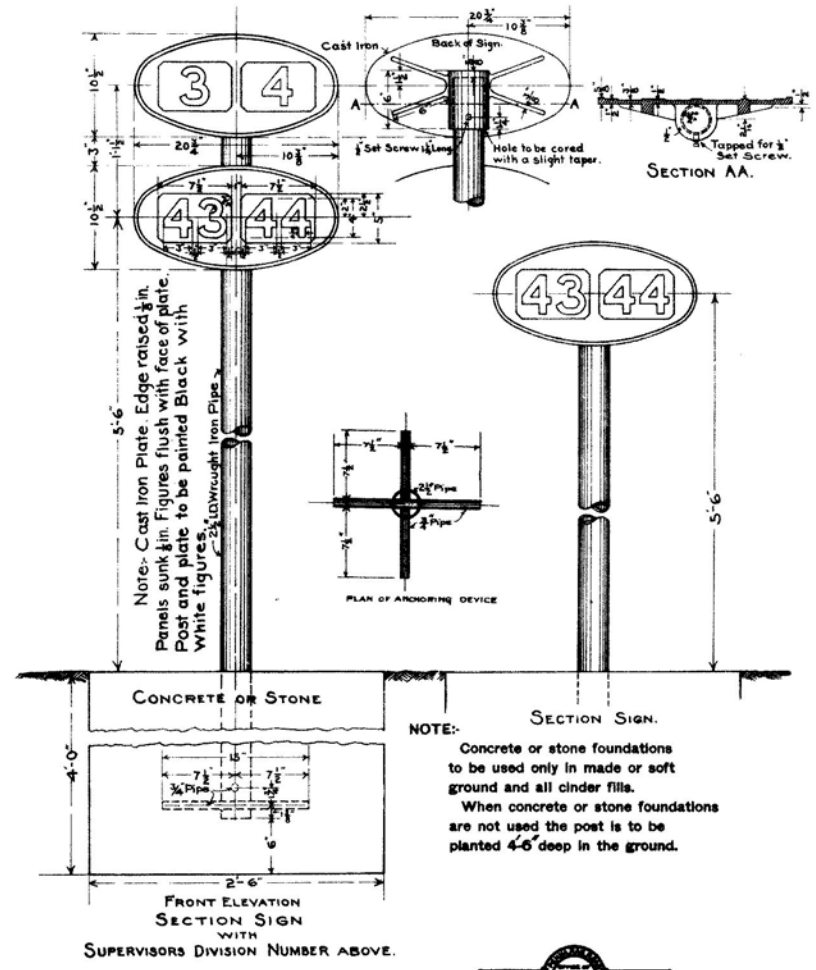
PRR Whistle Signs (Continued from page 8)

white, with all other parts black. A detailed drawing of this style appears on page 9.

Also shown on page 9 is a ring sign. A design of ring sign was made for each known design of whistle sign. In each case the only change was the substitution of an R for the W. The author has been unable to locate anyone who has ever seen a ring sign, indicating that their use must not have been widespread. One possibility is that ring signs were used to mark grade crossings in municipalities where use of the whistle was prohibited. Any further information on whistle or ring signs will be greatly appreciated.



1905



Correct *L. Spring*
ENGINEER M. W.

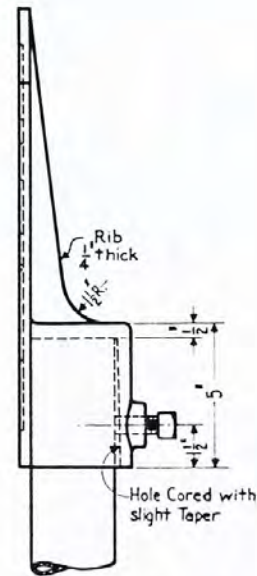
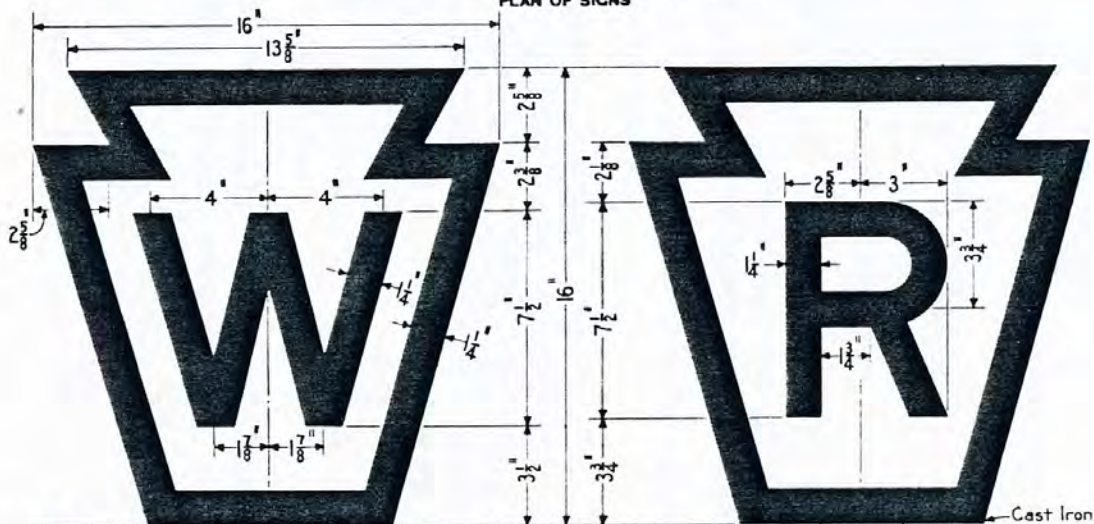
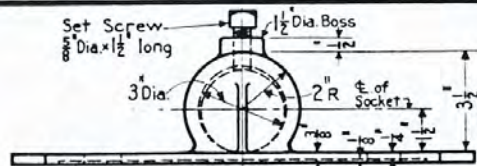
Approved *James J. Richards*
CHIEF ENGINEER M. W.

Approved *W. D. Atter*
GENERAL MANAGER

57688
P. R. R. STANDARD
IRON WHISTLE, RING
& SECTION POSTS.

May 1905
REVISED SEPT., 1908.
MAY, 1909. A.D.B.

Drawn by L.L.K.
Checked by L.L.K.



NOTE:

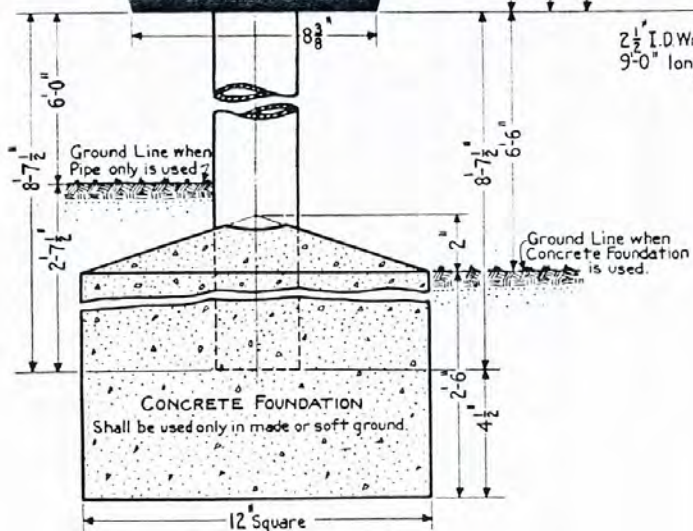
Letters and borders shall be raised $\frac{1}{8}$ inch with slight draft. All parts of the sign shall be painted black except the background which shall be white.

Except where regulated by local ordinances or other laws the prescribed sign shall be located at a distance of not less than 1200 feet nor more than 1650 feet in advance of the grade road crossing or point for which the warning is to be sounded.

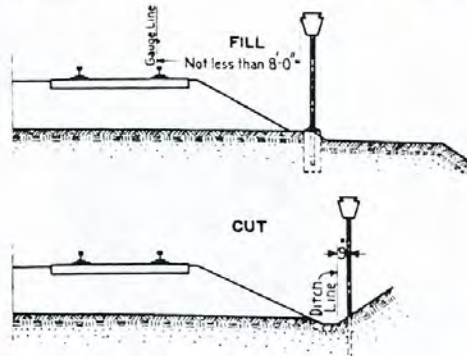
Whistle and Ring Signs of earlier design shall have the face and edges painted white from a distance of 18 inches above the ground line upward, the letter and all other parts black.



DETAIL OF RING SIGN



DETAIL OF WHISTLE SIGN AND GENERAL DIMENSION VIEW



LOCATION SKETCHES

78408-B



THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD
STANDARD

WHISTLE AND RING SIGNS

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER, PHILA., PA., JUNE, 1927

Estimated Weight
Sign 23 3/8 Lbs.
Pipe 52 1/4 Lbs.
Total 75 3/4 Lbs.

Correct
H. S. Leach
Engineer of Standards

Approved

E. J. Killman
Chief Engineer