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Brandon	July 16-20	W. I. Smale
Regina	July 23-27	D. T. Elderkin
Saskatoon	July 30-Aug. 3	C. D. Fisher
North Battleford	Aug. 6-8	F. Wright
Yorkton	Aug. 6-7	J. A. Duncan
Prince Albert	Aug. 9-11	W. O. McDougall
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WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE GUIDE

English Railways under War Conditions

How They Met a Great Emergency

W. M. Acworth in The Outlook, New York

England is an island. But only twenty miles of sea separate it from the Continent of Europe. In the year 1870 war broke out at a few days' notice between France

and Prussia, and within six weeks the Germans were in front of Paris. England took alarm. It was not possible that a great army could invade England. Our fleet could take care of that. But it was possible that a few score thousand men might evade the fleet and make a landing in England. And one provision against this possibility was at once made. An Act of Parliament passed in 1871 gave the government power to take over by royal proclamation all or any of the railways of the United Kingdom in time of war.

Some forty years later, when the constant shaking of the Prussian mailed fist and the constant rattling of the Prussian sabre were alarming all Europe, matters were carried further. A committee of some twelve managers of the principal railways was formed (the English general manager corresponds to the American president), and detailed schemes of railway mobilization were drawn up.

The general manager of a railway of which I am a director, which, though small, is not unimportant, as it runs through one of the great training-grounds of the British army, told me that he received the original scheme some four years before the war. It was a sealed packet, and he was instructed to place it unopened in his safe. In the course of the next year or two he received several supplements, to be placed beside the original. Finally in 1912 he received a complete new scheme, and was told to destroy all the former papers unopened.

On August 4, 1914, England declared war on Germany. The same day the railways were taken over by the government, and the mobilization scheme came into operation. The general manager opened his packet and read his instructions. Within a week he despatched ninety military trains. Each train ran to its fixed schedule. Each train was made up of the precise equipment assigned to it. And each carried precisely the troops which the scheme had laid down for it.

Within some ten days of the declaration of war the whole of the first line British army, about one hundred and twenty thousand men, was landed in France. The main point of embarkation was the port of Southampton, which was closed to all except military traffic. Eighty trains each day, coming from all parts of the British Isles, and bringing many thousands of men who had already crossed the sea from Ireland, converged upon Southampton. They were scheduled to arrive at intervals of twelve minutes during the sixteen hours from dawn to dark. A special instruction provided that if any train was as much as twelve minutes late it was to be regarded as having missed its turn. It was to be side-tracked at any convenient spot, and the transport was to leave without waiting for it. The instruction was not necessary. No single train during the whole embarkation period failed to fall into and keep its appointed place in the procession.

The railways have been taken over by the government, but the management has been left undisturbed in the hands of the old men. There is nothing by which a shipper or a passenger can recognize that any change has taken place. Each general manager with his own old staff manages his railway as before. But there is for the first time an authority behind him. The informal committee of general managers that existed before the war was at the outset given full powers as the Railway Executive Committee. And it exercises supreme control. Its nominal chairman is a cabinet minister. But the deputy chairman, the real head of the organization, is one of the general managers. The executive committee is in almost constant session, and its task is to insure that all the railways of the country work together as one harmonious whole.

The task is not light. Not only have the troops to be moved to the ports by the million, gone by tens of thousands,

and military stores in millions of tons, but when every factory in the country is impressed into military work the amount of traffic back and forth within the country itself is enormous. Steel is cast in one place, and made into shell in another; the fuses come from a third district, and the explosives from a fourth; the boxes and baskets to hold the shells have to be brought from a fifth; the filling is done in a sixth place, before finally the finished shell can be delivered at the port of shipment. And similarly with all the other necessities of the armies and the fleets.

And this is not all. Railways, like any other business concern, as they grow up develop an organization to meet the requirements of their normal business. And the requirements of England nowadays are wholly abnormal. Imagine a camp of twenty or thirty thousand men, with all their multifarious needs in food and supplies, plumped down alongside of a petty way station, whose accommodation was meant to suffice for a score of passengers a day and three or four freight cars. Imagine half a dozen important ports taken up wholly by naval needs and the whole of their normal traffic diverted to an adjoining port, or, it may be, to a port on the opposite coast of the island. Again traffic has been thrown upon the roads that they have never handled before. The collieries before the war imported pit-props by the millions of feet from the Baltic through ports close at hand. That traffic has been stopped, and pit-props have to be carried long distances by rail from remote parts of Great Britain.

Nor are these the only difficulties against which the railways have to contend. With more traffic than ever to handle, there are fewer men to handle it. One man out of every five—and they not the least active and efficient—has gone to fight. Shops that should be building new engines and overhauling old ones are given up to making shells or building airplanes or motor lorries. Steel that should be rolled into new rails has been commandeered for ship plates and guns and shells. But somehow the railways have pulled through. The employees who are left, feeling that their services are essential to the state, have worked their best and hardest with conspicuous loyalty. Women, as porters, carriage cleaners, ticket collectors, and in various other capacities, are lending a willing hand. Military traffic of course comes first. And if freight is delayed and passenger trains overcrowded and behind time, nobody grumbles. And indeed there is not much excuse for grumbling. So far freight rates have been left unaltered, but passenger fares have practically been doubled. Before the war the normal fare was two cents a mile. But there were so many concessions from the normal fare in the shape of commuter's tickets, workmen's tickets, week-end tickets, excursion tickets, etc., that it was estimated that the average passenger did not pay more than twelve mills per mile. Early in the war all cheap fares except commuter's and workmen's tickets were cut off, and a few months ago the ordinary fares were increased fifty per cent. So the ordinary passenger now pays three cents. The increase was put on quite as much to reduce travel as to obtain revenue. Gradually the passenger service has been very greatly reduced; the express trains stop at more stations and take longer on their journey. Dining cars and sleepers have been almost entirely cut off.

Under the Act of Parliament of 1871, the compensation to be paid by the government to the proprietors of a railway taken over was to be fixed by arbitration in default of agreement. But when all the railways were taken over for an indefinite time it was felt that this would not be fair to the hundreds of thousands of stock and bond holders. Accordingly an agreement was at once made that all government traffic should be carried free and no account rendered; that the government should take all the receipts from ordinary traffic, pay all operating

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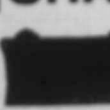
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