

USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION REGARDING TRACKWORK AND SIGNALLING.

60 years ago, when I was a boy, prototype information was as near as your local railway line. We were mostly train spotters as well and so were able to see prototype material as we needed it. Today, things are different. We do have preserved lines and although these do a fine job, they do tend to offer a sanitised view.

Here at C+L we often get requests for help with prototype matters and it is fortunate that I have built up a library of useful books. Many are out of print but still turn up on second-hand booksellers' stalls.

So here is a list of material that I have found useful.

Surprisingly, my first recommendation is not a book, but 3 DVD sets, each containing 2 discs. I have only recently received these, but I refer to them so frequently now that I now wonder how I modelled without them.

Andrew Dow of Fastline films has issued the British Railways staff training films made in the 50's. Forget the DVDs often purchased - blurred, poorly remastered films with a 'lunatic commentator' talking drivel, these are professionally digitally remastered, produced under licence from the British Film Institute and have been made possible by support from Network Rail and The Institution of Railway Signal Engineers.

The 3 sets are as follows:

Set FF01 - MECHANICAL SIGNALLING AND LEVEL CROSSINGS

Disc 1

Layout of Signal Connections. (1955) 33 mins.

Maintenance of Signals and Connections. (1955) 33 mins.

Right Down the Line. (1962) 18 mins.

Disc 2

Level Crossing Gates. (1956) 42 mins

In 3 parts: General. Mechanisms. Maintenance.

Walton Street Crossing. (1962) 5 mins.

Safety on the Track. (1951) 13 mins.

Set FF02 - PLAIN LINE

Disc 1

Plain Line Maintenance. (1951) 29 mins.
Track Buckling and its Prevention. (1951) 16 mins.
A Mechanical Rail Creep Adjuster. (1951) 16 mins.

Disc 2

Straight Track. (1953) 48 mins.
Curved Track. (1953) 18 mins.
Gantries. (????) 15 mins.

Set FF03 SWITCHES AND CROSSINGS

Disc 1

Layout of Rodding and Connections. (1954) 15 mins.
Switches & Crossings. (1951) 22 mins.
Adjustment of Double-ended Points. (1954) 7 mins.
MFD Re-railing Equipment. (1956) BTF 30 mins.

Disc 2

Maintenance of Rodding and Connections. (1954) 18 mins.
Maintenance of Points and Fittings. (1954) 27 mins.
Mechanised Renewal of Plain Line. (1956) 32 mins.

Each set costs £30.00 inc. p+p. This may seem a bit steep, when most DVDs you see at exhibitions sell for about £16-19. But you do get two discs in each set and almost 2 1/2 hours of playing time.

However, if when ordering, you quote 'C+L Special Offer', you can have them at the following prices.

1 set - £30.00: Any 2 sets - £50.00: All 3 sets £65.00: Prices include p+p.

Order by post to Fastline Films, PO Box 4472, Wedmore. BS28 4WY.
Payment by cheques only, please.

Seven and a quarter hours of riveting viewing for £65.00 is amazing value. Highly recommended.

Book List

Books about prototype track are few. The best we have found is

GWR Switch and Crossing Practice by David J. Smith.

Although mainly for GWR devotees, it provides valuable information for modellers of other railways. 152 pages packed with essential data - no modeller should be without it.

Available from the Great Western Study Group, or from us as Product ID C1665 - £14.95. It is a heavy book and copies will be despatched by City Link.

Aids to Best Practice in Modelling.

Two books we both recommend and stock are:

Wiring the Layout.
Track Construction.

Both priced at £14.99 +p+p and available from us as Product IDs C1663 and C1664 respectively.

We also recommend the Activity Media Series of DVDs. Currently there are eight:

Right Track DVDS

The Right Track series of DVDs is designed to cover the main aspects of railway modelling in great depth.

Each programme covers a specific subject and runs for at least 2 hours (most are 3 hours or more) . Each introduces a professional model maker who is well respected in their own particular field.

Titles in the series are:

Right Track 1	Locomotive Kit Building - Part 1	Tony Wright
Right Track 2	Locomotive Kit Building - Part 2	Tony Wright
Right Track 3	Painting, Lining and Finishing Locomotives and Coaches	Tony Wright and Ian Rathbone
Right Track 4	Modifying and Improving Ready-to Run Locos and Coaches	Tony Wright
Right Track 5	Modelling Landscapes - Part 1	Barry Norman
Right Track 6	Modelling Landscapes - Part 2	Barry Norman
Right Track 7	Building Buildings	Geoff Taylor
Right Track 8	An Introduction to DCC	Nigel Burkin
Right Track 9	Practical Aspects of DCC	Nigel Burkin <i>Due for release October 2008</i>
Right Track 10	Laying and improving Trackwork	Norman Solomon <i>Due for release November 2008</i>

For more details, please visit the Activity Media Web site - www.model-railway-dvd.co.uk