

BRISTOL & EXETER RAILWAY SIGNAL BOXES

Although the B&ER had many signal-boxes built by Saxby & Farmer to S&F designs, they also had several boxes built to their own all-brick design. With a few exceptions, most had been replaced by the early 1900s and their existence is known only from a few surviving photographs. In most cases it is not known what type(s) of lever-frames were fitted into the B&ER boxes originally, although it would seem reasonable to presume that *probably* they were S&F products.

By 1948 only three of the boxes still survived in some form. Weston-super-Mare box was still standing, but its use at the time is unknown. Watchet box was being used for railway staff facilities, but eventually was demolished. Only Williton remains largely unchanged and is still an operational signal-box.



A table is provided below which lists all known B&ER-style signal-boxes, but see also Note 1 below. The 'Size' column gives the number of levers provided when the box was opened (where known). In the 'Remarks' column a 'R=' entry indicates the size of any replacement frame.

Any additional information and/or corrections would be welcomed and should be sent please to WCRA@railwest.org.uk .

West Country Railway Archives

Name	Opened	Closed	Size	Remarks
Brent Knoll	by 1879	6-Aug-1891		See Note 2
Bridgwater (West)	c.1874	26-Jun-1932	23	R=32 in 1907
Cowley Bridge Jcn	c.1871	c.1894	16	
Durston Junction	1875	1895	25	
Highbridge (West)	c.1870	c.1914	22	35 levers by closure
Langport	c.1874	17-Apr-1906	15	See Note 3
Tiverton Junction	c.1874	25-Sep-1932	30	R= 65 in 1928
Watchet	c.1875	11-Aug-1926	12	R=8 in 1918, see Note 4
Weston-super-Mare	c.1866	c.1885		See Note 5
Williton	c.1875	4-Jan-1971		R= 16 in 1908 and R=25 in 1937, see Note 6
Yatton (West)	c.1875	31-Jan-1972	43	1897 box extended and R=135
Wells 'A'	c.1876	2-Dec-1955	30	R=28 in 1949, see Note 7

Notes:

1. A photograph exists of what appears to be a large B&ER box at Taunton, possibly Taunton 'C' box (*circa* 1876-94). It *may* be therefore that there were other unknown B&ER boxes in the Taunton area at that time.
2. The style of this box has yet to be confirmed.
3. Located at what became Langport West station on the Yeovil Branch.
4. This box was mounted on a tall brick base, making it effectively three storeys high, but it was reduced back to just the base *circa*-1961 and eventually removed entirely.
5. A non-standard design of stone construction, which *may* have been a precursor to the latter brick design. This box was located at the old Weston Branch terminus.
6. Re-opened by the private West Somerset Railway in 1976 and still in use.
7. Believed to have been built for the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway at the expense of the B&ER in connection with the opening of their connection from Tucker Street to East Somerset stations. Also known as 'Wells Somerset & Dorset' box.