

BYWAYS STEAM



EVELEIGH PRESS

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so please do us all a favour and share freely with others.

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BYWAYS OF STEAM 8

On the Railways of New South Wales



Please support the author where possible

Eveleigh Press



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Australia.

Front Cover: *The hey-day of Dungog locomotive depot and its crews came to an end with dieselisation of the North Coast in 1958. A few goods trains and the Martins Creek ballast trains continued to be worked by Dungog men for the next 25 years. On 16 September 1972, 5132, fitted with a Mort's Dock tender, leaves Martins Creek as it heads for Maitland with No.110 loaded ballast train, the blue metal conveyed in nineteen S trucks.*
Peter Attenborough

Back Cover, Above: *In late 1966, three 38 class engines were allocated to Lithgow and could be found working the main western line between Lithgow and Dubbo. The Coonamble Mail was one of their regular runs and in the late afternoon of New Year's Eve 1966, 3827 departs Geurie with No.46 up Coonamble Mail. The eight car load of FS, TAM, BS, FS, KP, MHO, EHO, and TP parcels trailer (detached off the up Far West Express) was typical for the period.*
R.D. Love

Back Cover, Below: *A number of blue metal quarries supply ballast for railway purposes in NSW, including Bombo, Ardglen and Martins Creek, near Paterson on the North Coast line. Martins Creek has been in constant use since 1914, although its future is uncertain in 1994. In happier days, 4720 and a 48 class have commenced loading from the bins and will then wait for a path to rejoin the main line.*
Ian Dunn



Many years ago, industrial branch lines, privately owned and operated, were quite common in NSW, being used for the transport of timber, coal, iron ore, limestone and cement. A small number of them survived into the 1970s, including the short line linking the cement works in the town of Portland, near Wallerawang, to the exchange sidings, situated in Portland railway yards. Small, company-owned steam locomotives were used on the line to convey cement to the sidings and, in this photo, the company's locomotive No.3 returns light, back to the works at the completion of the shift. An essay covering the last years of operation of the line is included in this issue.

R.D. Love

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Elegance exemplified: three-quarters of Alfred E. Smith's magnificent S class Pacifics present an unsurpassed vision of mechanical grace, posed for the Victorian Railways' official photographer shortly after completion in 1928. Australia's railways produced no finer specimens of the aesthetic complementing the pragmatic.

Public Transport Corporation



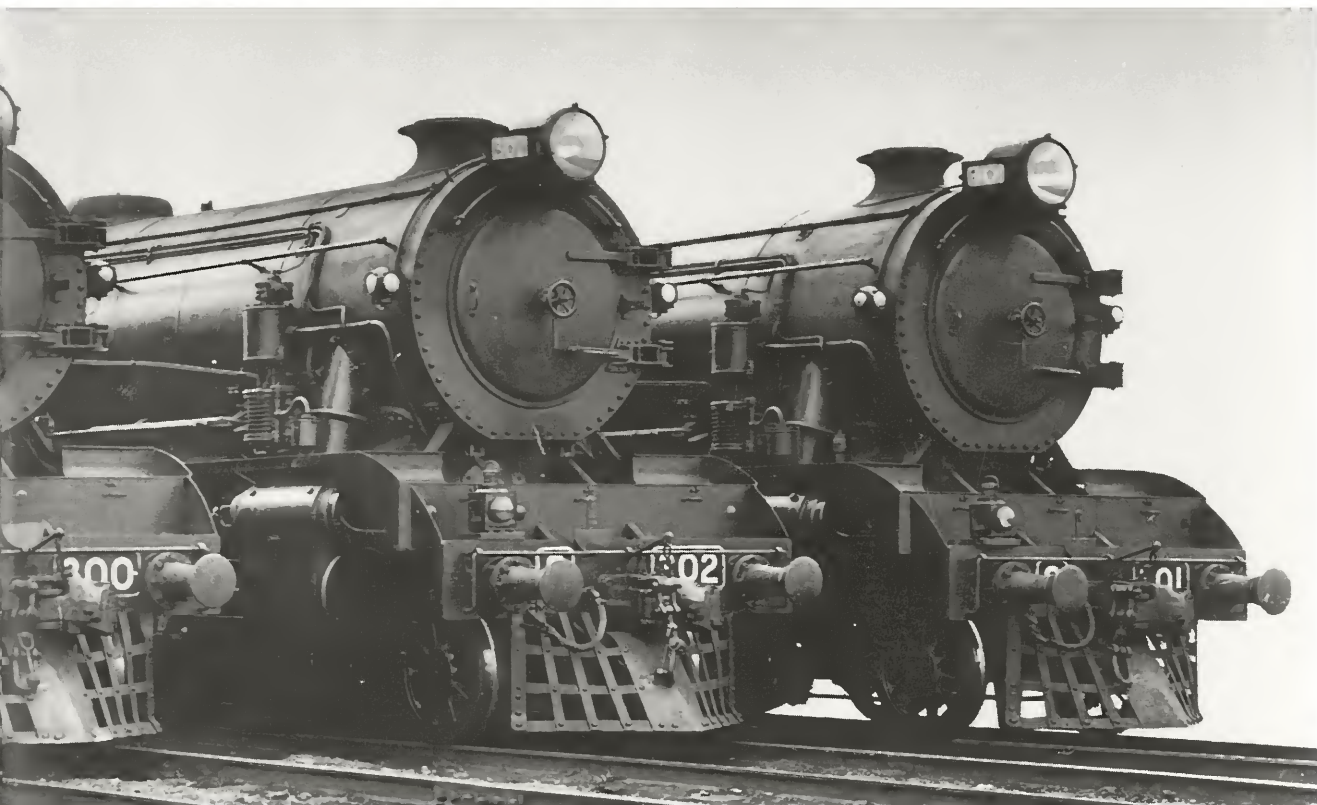
Introduction

In matters of aesthetics, we view what we grow up with as 'normal'. It sometimes comes as a shock when others do not agree with our perceptions. Our New South Wales view of what constitutes normality in railway design is unlikely to be shared by colleagues from Adelaide, Melbourne or Brisbane, who will, in all likelihood, see in a completely different light those peculiarities of the NSWGR which we overlook. Certainly, we are aware of them in our subconscious; indeed, the sum of these peculiarities is what constitutes the uniqueness of our railway world, that world with which we are completely at ease and which we defend as standard, often in the face of manifest contradictions.

The aesthetics of the steam locomotive are a particular case in point. In the world view, there are three broad 'schools of design': British (which includes colonial production), American and Continental, this latter subdivided into several very distinct varieties. Australian railways all began very firmly in the British colonial school. The locomotives were imported from Britain and were largely adaptations of home production to suit the more rugged conditions here. After two decades or so, some engineers began to question the engineering logic of this scenario, and looked to the American model as being more suited to colonial conditions. The argument was that physical conditions in the USA were more comparable to those in Australia than those in Britain, an argument which held considerable merit. However, background and prejudice do not always succumb to logic, and there was stout resistance to 'Yankee imports' from many quarters. So, at the dawn of the twentieth century, there were parallel schools of development, which included a marked difference in outward appearance.

British-styled locomotives emphasised smooth finish, continuity of line, subtlety of curve and a certain desire to hide the essential mechanical elements as far as possible. By contrast, the American vision was to follow the dictum that form follows function, with appurtenances placed in the most logical place for operation, not appearance. This was not to say that appearance was neglected, but a different aesthetic view prevailed.

Australian railways were nothing if not parochial. As each developed its own design and construction capabilities at the turn of the century, separate and distinct 'house styles' emerged. These quickly formed an identifiable image in the mind of the observer, and the sight of a porthole cab window immediately conjured up the thought 'NSWGR'. That the porthole cab window, found on more than nine hundred locos in NSW,



was an idiosyncrasy, shared by very few other types of locomotive in the world, in all probability did not occur to the NSW enthusiast. He likely as not viewed the common use of cowcatchers in other states as alien, too, for NSW was alone in eschewing these devices on mainline engines.

In Victoria there emerged the most consistent style. From the emergence of the DD in 1903, there was an unbroken development right through to the final steam products, the R and J classes. While no single element remained unchanged, there was a logical progression from an undoubtedly late Victorian, British influence to a totally unique style by the 1950s, incorporating more than a touch of German influence. Elements which stand out as distinctive to the non-Victorian eye include the early use of commodious, side window cabs, the lattice cowcatcher (irreverently known to one eminent photographer north of the border as 'a slats catcher!'), and long, slender boilers with finely wrought funnels and domes. The pinnacle of aesthetic excellence was reached in mid-development, for no subsequent locomotive anywhere in Australia achieved the elegance and assurance of the magnificent S and X classes in their original form. One is tempted to suggest that these two types exemplify the acme of the British design school, for they make little concession to the American paradigm, other than in the use of a large bogie tender, a detail which enhanced their already fine sense of balance.

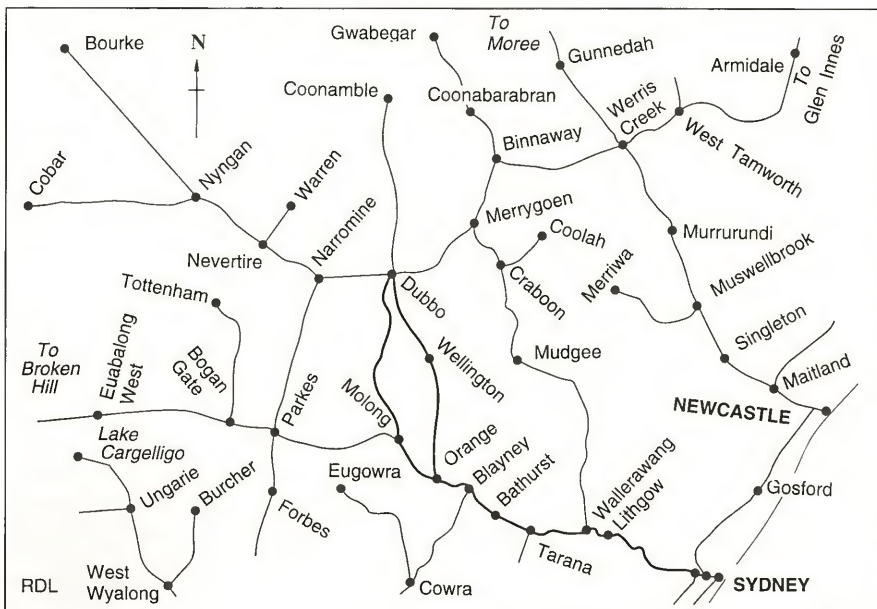
When New South Wales finally settled on a 'house style', after a couple of false starts with the NN and 36 classes, the vision was American. The 57 class, and later the 38 class, made few concessions to the British view. The fat, hump-backed boiler (artfully clothed and concealed in the case of the 38 class) and generally compact lines suggested power rather than elegance. They failed to assimilate the two aesthetic views as satisfactorily as Fred Shea had a few years earlier in his monumental locos for the SAR's legendary William Alfred Webb. Comparison of a 500B with a 57, or of a 600 with a 38, reveals that Shea (or his builder, Armstrong Whitworth in England) had a surer grasp of artistic niceties than Harold Young with no loss of mechanical elegance or practicality.

The overall result of this diversity in our Australian railways has been fortunate for the enthusiast. Those who can appreciate the charms of the interstate railway have no difficulty adjusting to the overseas mould, and Australian enthusiasts are notably quicker than their British and American counterparts to throw off the shackles of constraint when appreciating other systems.

Ian Dunn



The Travelling Post Office: Mail Officers Maurice Bolton (left), Leslie Rea and Colin Glover at work in a KP mail van in June 1959. Australia Post, from G. Bent collection.



Above Right: Locomotive 3630 stands at the head of No.45 Coonamble Mail at Sydney Terminal on 29 July 1947 awaiting its 7.25pm departure for the west. In this atmospheric scene, the KP mail van is visible as the second vehicle behind the locomotive, the first vehicle being a KKG horse box. Unusual for this period is the positioning of the KP at the head of the train.

SRA Archives

Left: Map showing the route of the TPO and mail trains on the west of the NSWGR system.



T.P.O. WEST - 1948

Stephen Halgren

In the freezing pre-dawn of a winter's morning in early August 1948, a group of people gathered around the welcome warmth of an open fire. They were in the waiting room at Orange station in the Central West of New South Wales seeking solace against the flurries of snow lashing the city, while awaiting the arrival of the Coonamble Mail from Sydney. Those locals amongst the group were no doubt proud, as the title 'city' had only been bestowed on the locality two years before, on 17 July 1946.

The origins of the city date back to the 1830s when the locality was known as Blackman's Swamp, after one John Blackman, a constable. The fledgling town was renamed Orange by Sir Thomas Mitchell after his friend from the Peninsular War, the Prince of Orange, later King of The Netherlands. The discovery of gold at a spot on Lewis Ponds Creek, 17 miles north east of Orange on 7 April 1851 by John Hardman Australia Lister and William Tom, protégés of Edward Hargraves, and the fact that Andrew Barton Paterson ('The Banjo') had been born nearby at Narrambla in 1864 have added

to the notability of the region. The district was richly endowed eons ago with the fertile, volcanic outpourings of the now-extinct Mt Canobolas, which ensured the rich bounty from orchards and fields on which Orange has prospered. The railway arrived in Orange in 1877 as a further step in its long trek to Bourke on the Darling River, and when the branch west to Molong opened in 1885, deviating from the Sydney/Bourke line one mile south of Orange East Fork, the town assumed fresh importance as a major junction. Orange had featured somewhat cramped, spartan locomotive facilities adjacent to the station from the early days but when a major locomotive depot was constructed within the Orange East Fork triangle in 1937, further importance was placed on the locality.

Doubtless the topic of conversation amongst those in the waiting room centred around the forthcoming fifth and final test at The Oval on 14-18 August and on that twentieth-century cricketing legend, Donald Bradman. There was strong support for rumours of his justly deserved knighthood, not only in recognition of his outstanding prowess with

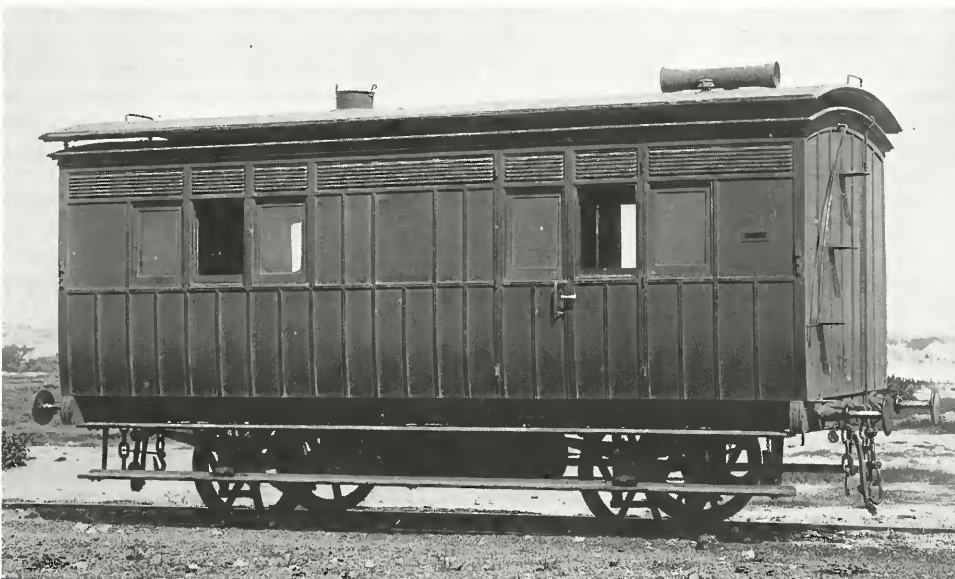


Often described as the best of an outstanding class, 3827 heads No.45 Coonamble Mail near Geurie, 15 miles east of Dubbo. The KP is the fifth vehicle in this consist, the roller coaster nature of the Main West visible behind the train.

R.D. Love

the willow but for the tremendous pride and morale his achievements had brought to his fellow Australians during the 1928-1948 period, arguably the most trying twenty years endured by people this century. The perils faced by the Chifley Government with banking and the coal industry, together with the rise of Communism in Australia were always good and often heated sources of conversation amongst any group. Perhaps any hint of contention was broken by the distant, mellow blast of a locomotive whistle. One of those present, Ernest Henry Albert Victor (Vic) Goodfellow, on checking his fob watch, noted that the Dubbo-bound Coonamble Mail, train number 45, would make an on-time

arrival at Orange at 4.00am. Girding his strength to face the elements, he ventured onto the snowy platform and observed the baleful headlight of a locomotive materialising through the gloom approaching from Orange East Fork Junction. A big 36 class 4-6-0 approached, darkened sleeping and sitting cars glided by, air brakes hissed and a KP mail van stopped adjacent to him. The door of the van slid open, bathing the platform in yellow light and releasing a cloud of blue cigarette smoke which escaped to float heavily in the cold air. Five men wearily alighted and passed brief pleasantries with Vic, who then joined the sole remaining occupant of the van, which would be his workplace for the next



A four-wheel 'Royal Mail' van of 1870 vintage, the inaugural mail sorting vehicle in New South Wales.

SRA Archives

Not for resale



NN1028, later 3502, was very new when photographed at the head of a posed 'express' train in 1914. A KP mail sorting van, itself new, is the second last vehicle, behind five attractive 72'6" twelve-wheel cars, these being two TFX second class and one TBC first class sitting cars, a TAM sleeper and a CAM composite sleeper, with an EHO van as the last vehicle.
SRA Archives

three hours. He was doubtless envious of those alighting, who were only minutes away from comfortable, warm beds. For Vic Goodfellow was a Senior Mail Officer employed by the Postmaster-General's Department (PMG) and amongst that elite, well-travelled group of PMG employees who manned the Travelling Post Offices (TPOs) and provided an invaluable and vital public service in the supervision and sorting of mails and parcels. Vic Goodfellow was one of two mail officers based at Orange, the provision of such men at this location dating from 1882.

Mail officers such as Victor Goodfellow were carrying out a function, most valued by the people of rural New South Wales, which had commenced in 1870 when special Travelling Post Office mail vans were first attached to Southern line trains out of Sydney. The use of such facilities was well established on railways in Great Britain and their value was soon realised in the then colony. With the opening of the Great Western Railway to Wallerawang in 1870, a similar service was provided in 1871 on the Western Mail and was known as TPO West.

The progressive westward push of the railway between Wallerawang and Orange by 1877 saw the TPO service similarly extended. The crews operating from Sydney to Wallerawang and return became known as TPO1 West, while their fellow officers serving Orange became TPO2 West. To cater for the requirements of Dubbo and, later, beyond to Nyngan, TPO3 West came into being in 1881. Initially, mail sorting services on the Western Mail were provided by early four-wheel vehicles, followed by the KF, KL and KM type bogie mail vans until the arrival, between 1912 and 1914, of the much larger and more familiar KP type vehicles. The KL type were converted to HKL types during 1941-1942 and continued in service until 1965.

Upon its inaugural run in June 1911, No.61 down Coonamble Mail took over the conveyance of the KP van from Sydney to Dubbo, providing a much needed adjunct to the long established, and by now overtaxed, No.59 Through Mail. On the up ex Dubbo, No.58 Through Mail retained responsibility for the carriage of the KP except on Fridays, as notified thus in Weekly Notice 30 of 1911: "Since 16 June, No.60 Mail, Coonamble to Sydney, on Fridays

From CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER and SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LINES

A new design of Mail-sorting Van (Code K.P.) has been placed in traffic. The average tare of these vehicles is 26 tons 1 cwt. 0 qr. and the count will be as follows:-

		tons
Loaded -	Up to 150 mail-bags	30
	Over 150 mail-bags	35
Empty -	Actual tare.	

Their description is as follows:-

Type.	Class.	No. in Stock.	Code.	Average Tare.	Wheels.	Length over Body.	Length over Buffers.	Maximum width over Cornice.	Remarks
Exp. Bogie Sorting	Postal	8	K.P.	tns. cwt. qr. 26 1 0	8	63 ft 3 7/8 in.	66 ft 6 1/4 in.	9 ft. 7 7/8 in.	To accommodate 8 Sorters and 13 tons of Mail.

Extract from Weekly Notice No.12 1912.



In 1890-91, Hudson Bros of Sydney built eight Mansard-roofed KL type mail sorting vans and these remained the mainstay of the TPO service until the advent of the larger KP vans in 1912. The KLs were then relegated to secondary and standby duties. In 1941-42, three KLs were converted to HKL type vehicles. On 18 October 1937, a KL van is seen stabled in the dock at Glen Innes in the New England region of northern NSW. At this time, the Brisbane Express via Wallan-garra conveyed a KL from Werris Creek to Glen Innes.

SRA Archives

A KB bulk mail van being used as a 'Special Display Van' (No.11) in the 1970s. The accompanying vehicles in the siding at Petersham were SHO vans which, at the time, were used for storing the department's model railway equipment.

Bob Gallagher



reduces speed at Kelso, Raglan, Brewongle, Wambool, Locksley and Rydal to pick up mail bags instead of No.58 up Through Mail. On other week nights, No.58 up Through Mail will slacken speed at the stations named for similar purpose."

In 1917, the TPO service was reduced to two sections with TPO1 West being rescheduled between Sydney and Orange and TPO2 Orange to Dubbo. Doubtless, the abandonment in 1910 of the world-famous, though very restrictive, Great Zig Zag at Lithgow and duplication and realignment of the line west of Lithgow enabled streamlining of the TPO service through much faster running. The eleven large KP vans of 63'4" length, workplace of the TPO mail officers, had been built by Ritchie Brothers of Auburn (10) and the Department of Railways' Eveleigh Carriage Works (1) between

1912 and 1914. Weekly Notice No.12 of 1912 advised all and sundry of the introduction of these 'Express Bogie Sorting' vans and advised that, within their 26 ton 1 cwt average tare, up to 150 mail bags could be carried for a maximum loaded weight of 35 tons. The TPO staff, originally known as 'mail guards' but renamed mail officers in 1925, worked at a long bench affixed to the side wall of the vehicle and sorted the mail into racks and pigeon holes above the bench, prior to placing the sorted items into mail bags for offloading at the appropriate locality. The 'Late Letter' chute in the van gave customers the opportunity to post late mail right up to the time of departure, such correspondence being endowed with the 'TPO West' cancellation on the envelope.

Thus, four of these mail officers now alighting



Interior view of a Mansard-roofed KL type mail sorting van of 1890-91 vintage. A crowd of sorters and supervisors is busy at work in this 1910 scene. Australia Post, from G. Bent collection

from the KP at Orange and being relieved by Vic Goodfellow, were Sydney-based TPO1 men. They had signed on duty at 6.00pm the previous evening, so by 4.00am were very grateful to be farewelling their shift. The fifth officer to alight was Vic's Orange-based colleague who was completing his shift, having signed on duty at 4.00am the previous morning. The remaining occupant of the van was one of two TPO mail officers based at Bathurst who, along with Victor Goodfellow, would sort mails as far as Dubbo, arrival time being 7.36am. After spending the day in Dubbo, these two men would join the Sydney-bound Through West Mail at 5pm that afternoon. Upon arrival at Orange at 8.57pm, these two would be joined by the refreshed Sydney crew relieved by Vic that morning, and work with these men through to Bathurst, arriving at 12.22am. Farewelling his Bathurst colleague, Vic would, like his Orange counterpart the previous morning, then join the next Sydney crew on the down Coonamble Mail back to Orange and complete his shift at 4.00am. However, should the down Coonamble Mail be running late, the Orange man, (reflecting his

place of domicile, not a possible Irish ancestry) would continue on the up Mail to Brewongle on the Macquarie Plains, 10 miles east of the Carillon City, to effect the change over.

Many hours of concentration were in order for these mail officers as they sorted and bagged mail for towns and hamlets, not only between Orange and Dubbo, but also for distant towns such as Cobar, Warren, Bourke and Brewarrina, the bags for these locations being carried on by other services from Dubbo. On the Sydney-bound mail, the extent of their labours knew no geographical boundary, as bagged mail from western locations would contain articles destined for not only Sydney and other New South Wales locations, but also interstate and overseas, as well as registered and certified articles. Individual bags would be made up to cater for all these categories and would include bags specifically compiled during the journey for mail addressed to Sydney GPO boxes and large suburban post offices, which ensured a next day delivery.

In 1948, Vic Goodfellow was one of 73 TPO officers statewide. TPO1 West (Sydney to Orange) com-



Interior view of a KP showing pigeon holes labelled for various destinations, the Sydney suburbs of Bondi and Coogee being prominent in this photo.

SRA Archives

Officer-in-Charge of TPO2 West from 1928 to 1950, Victor Goodfellow, with his wife Una and mother-in-law, soon after taking up appointment at Orange in 1928. The photo was taken at their home in William Street, Orange.

S. Halgren Collection



prised three crews of one senior and three mail officers operating on a six week roster. Such a roster saw the crews undertake twelve return trips to Orange in order to accumulate a total of 240 hours for the period. A similar composition manned the South- and North-West services. However, the busy TPO1 South featured four crews of five men (the fourth crew having been formed in 1935), while TPO1 North-West had three crews of two men to undertake sorting. In addition to the permanent TPO crews, a pool of relief men was available to cover permanent officers on leave and also to provide assistance ex Sydney in the form of a 'changeover' man. When the earlier mentioned Coonamble Mail left Sydney, such a 'changeover' man accompanied the Sydney TPO men as far as Tarana, 27 miles west of Lithgow, where he alighted at 12.35am in time to return to Sydney on the up Through West Mail at 1.23am, thus assisting the Sydney crews during the busiest period of the journey. Such a changeover also allowed mail for non-western destinations collected by the down mail between Emu Plains and Sodwalls, to be sorted, bagged and placed on the up Through West Mail for return to Sydney in time for a next day delivery. A 'changeover' man also accompanied the North and South TPO crews ex Sydney, to Scone and Goulburn respectively. The TPO1 West men ex Sydney were

3806 leads No.7 Albury Mail past the Dalgety Wool Stores on the approach to Albury on 11 December 1954. The KP van, marshalled behind the locomotive, was attached at Cootamundra after being taken off No.23 South-West Mail earlier that morning.

John Stormont



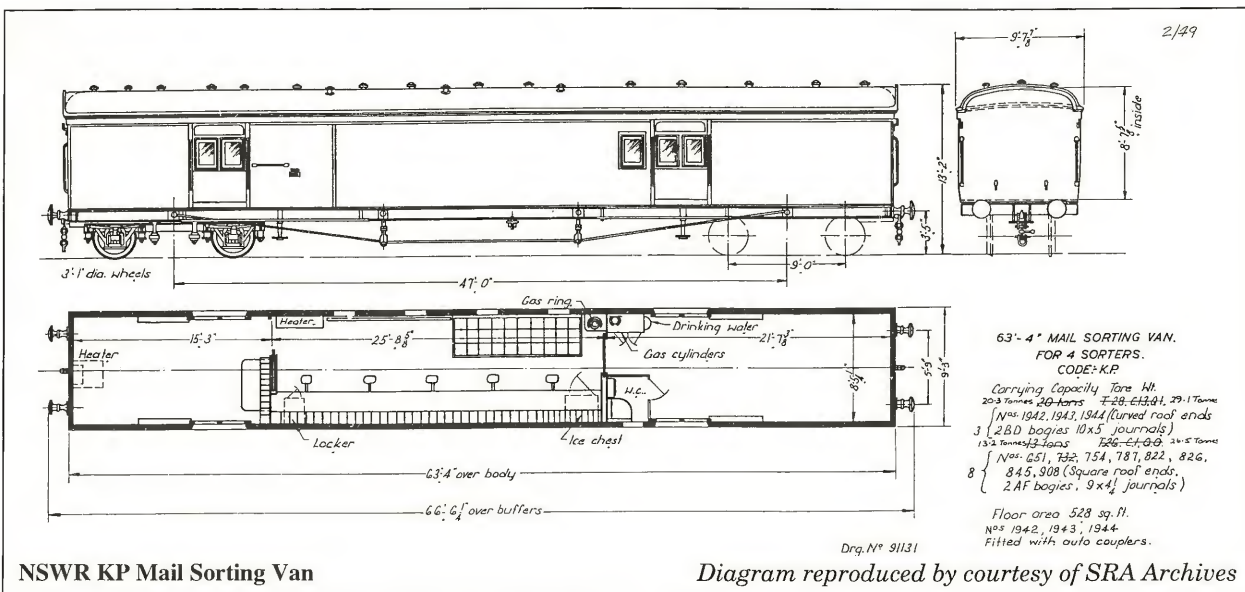
somewhat disadvantaged when compared to their brethren on other lines, as they had to work twelve return trips on the short Sydney - Orange leg of 200 miles whereas the other routes, Sydney - Junee (299 miles) or Sydney - Narrabri West (351 miles), being longer, required their crews to put in only nine return trips in the six week period. TPO2 West featured the earlier mentioned two crews of two men each, comprising one senior plus one mail officer, with one crew each based at Bathurst and Orange operating a two week roster. Vic Goodfellow's shift would entail a 276 mile journey, comprised of the initial 174 miles Orange - Dubbo return and 102 miles Orange - Bathurst return. Should an Orange or Bathurst TPO man be unavailable due to illness or annual leave, a Sydney relief man ventured west to take his place. The TPO crews on the South- and North-West services featured four men attached to TPO2 South (Junee) and two men attached to TPO2 North-West (Narrabri).

The 1948 down Coonamble Mail, upon its 4.16am Monday to Saturday departure from Orange, was allowed 3 hours 20 minutes for the 87 mile trip to Dubbo, arrival time being 7.36am. Upon arrival on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, the appropriate carriages departed for Coonamble at 8.06am. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the service was provided by a CPH rail motor. The same pattern applied to the up journey ex Coonamble. For the Sunday to Friday return ex Dubbo at 4.59pm, the up Through West Mail was allowed 3 hours 58 minutes for the trip to Orange, the additional 38 minutes for the up journey no doubt in deference to the many long 1 in 40 grades faced by up trains in climbing the central tablelands on leaving Wellington. The 51 mile journey from Orange to Bathurst was timed for 2 hours 2 minutes. To complete the shift, the Orange TPO man then undertook an additional 2 hours 16 minutes journey from Bathurst to return him home, the 14 minutes difference be-

tween the two directions due to the climb from the Macquarie River Valley at Bathurst to the top of the range west of the famed Tumulla Bank.

Victor Goodfellow had commenced his chosen career with the PMG on 6 December 1900, at the age of 15, as a telegram delivery boy at the GPO Sydney, employed initially in the delivery of that form of communication by horse to the harbourside district of Mosman. This necessitated the crossing of Sydney Harbour by punt from Dawes Point to McMahon's Point, complete with his trusty steed. Progression through the ranks of that enormous instrumentality, the PMG, saw him as a mail officer at the GPO Sydney and later at Ashfield until his appointment as a mail officer Grade 3 in the Shipping Section, GPO Sydney on 1 July 1924. His first wife Elenor had died in early 1924 and in 1926 he remarried, his new bride being Una Christina Halgren, sixth and youngest offspring of Lars Oscar Halgren and his Scottish-born Australian wife Annie (nee Hoskins). Lars Halgren was a native of the Swedish island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea, who had arrived in Sydney as a seaman on the ship 'Roopariel' in 1876 and from 1886 until retirement in 1913, was employed on Sydney's tramway system, initially as a conductor on steam trams and later as a signalman. Lars and Annie's third child, Arthur Roy Halgren, a Lance Corporal in the 54th Battalion, had fallen at the Battle of the Hindenburg Line in France on 30 September 1918, only six weeks before the end of the war to end all wars.

Orange greeted Mr and Mrs Goodfellow upon Victor's appointment as Officer-in-Charge of TPO2 West on 5 April 1928. To farewell their esteemed colleague in a suitable manner, his compatriots in the GPO Shipping Section presented Victor with a valuable gold fob watch, still in the possession of his family. Upon commencement in 1928, Victor was one of two such men based at Orange and, on alternate days, he would relieve the Sydney TPO1 West



crew upon arrival of No.61 down Coonamble Mail at 4.16am. Mr Fred Stuart, who commenced duty as a TPO in 1930, including a period until 1935 on TPO1 West before transferring to a newly created fourth crew on TPO1 South that year, recalls to a man the entire TPO staff on all lines in 1930. Amongst one of the three crews on TPO1 West, relieved by Vic Goodfellow and his counterpart from Orange, Guy Medley, were two men bearing the same name and known as 'Big Bill Warwick' and 'Little Bill Warwick'.

Victor would join his Bathurst-based TPO West partner in the KP and this van would then be detached from the Coonamble Mail to await the arrival of the following No.59 Through West Mail for forwarding to Dubbo via Wellington. In the meantime, No.61 Coonamble Mail would depart at 4.27am and travel to Dubbo via Molong, thus traversing the now-closed route through Cummoock, Yeoval and Arthurville, known to latter day discerning travellers as 'The Scenic Route'. The Coonamble Mail had commenced using the route via Molong upon the opening of that line in May 1925. Such a route had a dual role, as the service not only provided a means of communication for the traveller and delivery of mail, it also assisted the Department of Railways in balancing the staffs for the Molong - Dubbo line. Such staffs were heavily biased in the up direction because of the number of trains using this route ex Dubbo in preference to the heavily graded mainline route through Wellington. The Working Timetable of 1928 ad-

vised “when the load exceeds 200 tons for a 32 class engine, three minutes extra is allowed at Little River Tank, mileage 275 75 chains, for water”. The Working Timetable also made provision for the wives of railway employees to boost the economy of local towns by disposing of their husband’s fortnightly earnings, as follows: “No.56 calls at Apex Loop on pay Thursday to set down fettlers’ wives returning from Cumnock or Yeoval and at River Loop on the first Monday in each month to set down wives ex Dubbo”. After a day in Dubbo, the two men rejoined No.58 up Through West Mail for Orange, again via Wellington. At Orange, the KP was detached to await the arrival of No.56 Coonamble Mail after its journey from Dubbo via Molong.

Upon the train's arrival at Orange, the Sydney men would rejoin their Orange and Bathurst brethren for a 10.05pm departure to Bathurst, arriving at 12.11am. Once again, Vic would have to cool his heels (or perhaps stamp them to keep warm in winter) until the arrival of his conveyance home to Orange, the down Coonamble Mail at 1.34am.

Hauled by a 36 class engine, the Coonamble Mail at this time comprised: LFX, EHO, BX (Coonamble), ACX (composite sleeper), LFX and KP for Dubbo.

For his efforts upon commencement, Victor received an allowance of £12 per annum as Officer-in-Charge of TPO2 West in addition to his annual remuneration of £301. This salary included a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % loading to compensate officers for night work, which afforded a very at-

No. 61 Mail.

7:27 p.m. from Sydney (Sats. excepted),
arrive COONAMBLE 12:20 p.m.

From Sydney.	From Orange.	From Dubbo.
L F X	L F X	L F X
E H O	A C X	E H O
B X	B X	B X
A C X	E H O	L F X
*L F X	L F X	
†K P		

Load :—

From Sydney ... 140 tons.
From Mt. Victoria... 165 tons.

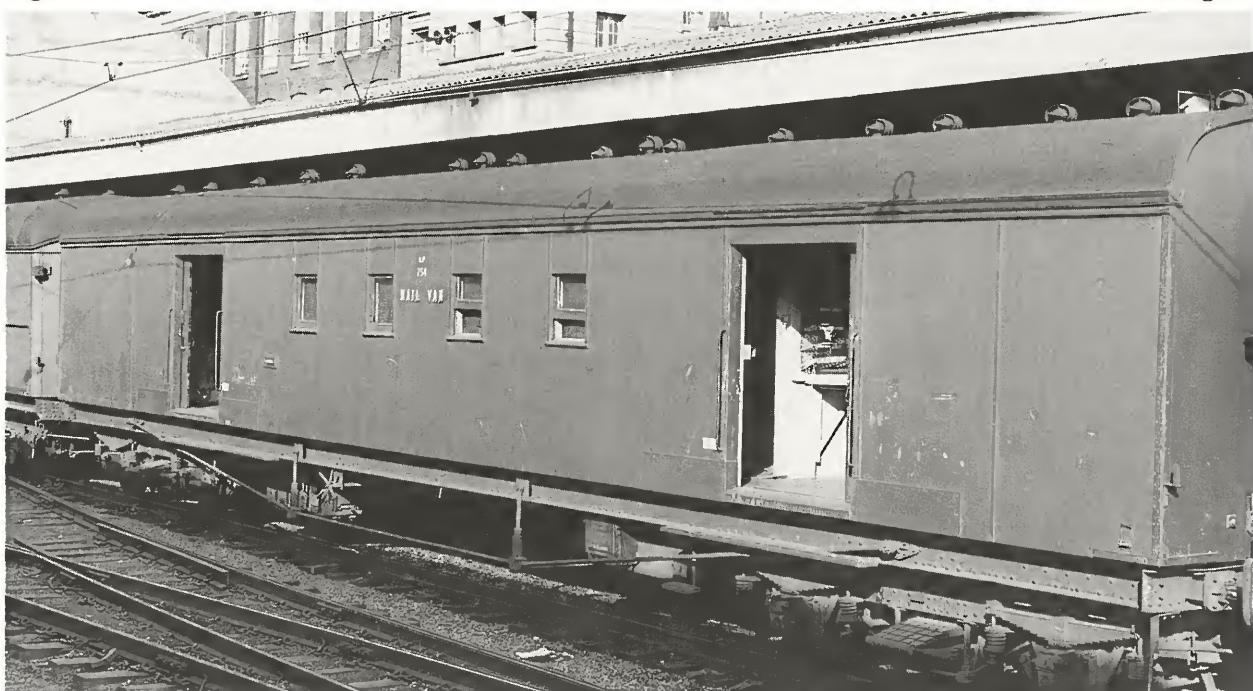
* Attached Mt. Victoria.
† K P detached Orange and attached to No. 59.

Composition of No.61 Coonamble Mail in 1928.



KP845 in the consist of the South Mail at Junee in 1981. While most KP vans had been refurbished, KP845 still retains the deep letter board sides and standard windows and is fitted with 2AN style bogies. KP754 (below) basks in the morning sun at Sydney Terminal in the early 1970s, displaying some of its mail sorting interior. The deep letter board sides have been replaced by thick Masonite panelling. The side windows have been shortened in height and the van is fitted with 2AH bogies, which were reworked from the unique Dean bogies.

Bob Gallagher



tractive financial package, often far above that received by senior PMG staff such as Postmasters. In addition, TPO men were paid four pence per hour travelling expenses, which was intended to cover

the costs of lodging and sustenance for the weary sorter at journey's end.

In Vic Goodfellow's case, this allowance amounted to eight shillings (8/-) per shift. Upon

arrival at Dubbo, the KP was stabled for the day in the carriage shed, along with those vehicles which did not venture on to Bourke and Coonamble. A bargain could often be struck with the friendly sleeping car conductor, whereby berths would be made available for the TPO men to rest in, provided assistance was given in subsequently making up all beds in the car prior to its return to Sydney. When Vic commenced in 1928, an ACX composite sitting/sleeping car was rostered, subsequently, during the 1930s, giving way to a TAM and, by the time of his retirement in 1950, an EAM sleeper. Consequently, comfortable, bargain-price accommodation was enjoyed for a small consideration. The Sydney men relieved at Orange, on the other hand, did not share such fortune, as they had to put their allowance to its intended purpose, paying for accommodation at the Great Western Hotel opposite the station. Once the desire to sleep had passed, the problem of occupying oneself for the rest of the day, in Dubbo or Orange as the case may be, had to be overcome prior to rejoining the up Mail.

Like other Australians, Vic saw his salary and allowance compulsorily reduced by the Public Service (Salaries Reduction) Act 1930, a result of the Great Depression's legacy of sorrow. It was not until July 1941 that his history card shows his annual salary once again attaining its pre-Depression high of £307. Doubtless, the threatening days of 1942/43 would have seen an increased burden placed on TPO men due to staff shortages and volume of mail carried. By 1945, his salary was £312 and upon retirement from his important role in 1950, it had reached £400.

Conveyance of the KP varied according to the requirements of the Department of Railways and the Postmaster-General. It appears that, in addition to Victor and many of his fellow Australians, the Coonamble Mail was also a victim of the Depression, as the weekday services disappeared from the timetable of November 1930, the sole survivor bearing the

name being the Sunday 7.45pm departure. To compensate, the van was conveyed ex Sydney on weekdays by train No.61, the Cowra/Orange Mail. Discerning readers will note that this train inherited the number of its predecessor, the Coonamble Mail.

Upon arrival at Orange at 3.56am, the KP would be removed from the terminating train and placed in the dock, to await the arrival of the following, fleet-footed No.59 Through West Mail. To assist in this manoeuvre at Orange, the van was conveyed at the head of the train behind the locomotive ex Sydney

and likewise attached to No.59 at Orange. Upon arrival at Dubbo, cars not destined for Bourke were removed and placed in the carriage shed, the balance of vehicles continuing their relentless progress toward the Darling. The KP returned ex Dubbo attached to No.58 Through West Mail to Orange, where the van was detached and placed on No.60 Forbes Mail for forwarding to Sydney, again at the head of the train.

October 1939 saw a variation on the theme with the KP van being conveyed ex Sydney on No.49 Forbes Mail to Orange on Mondays to Fridays, then attached to the following No.59 Through West Mail. Sundays had the van on No.61 Cowra/Orange Mail. The return to Sydney still featured the Through West Mail to Orange and then the Forbes Mail to Sydney.

No doubt to cater for the wartime passenger traffic, the Coonamble Mail was re-introduced briefly between 12 October 1941 and 28 May 1944, conveying the KP all the way to Dubbo via Wellington, thus abandoning its 1925-1930 sojourn via Molong. The return saw No.58 Through Mail convey the van all the way to Sydney ex Dubbo. When the Coonamble Mail was once more discontinued, the KP again worked on the Forbes Mail to Orange and the Through West on to Dubbo, with a similar return pattern.

It was not until March 1946 that a sense of normality returned, with the van being conveyed all the way from Sydney to Dubbo on the rein-

No. 45 Mail.

7.20 p.m. from Sydney (Mons., Weds.,
Fris.), arrive DUBBO 6.49 a.m.,
(6.39 a.m. Sats.)

Mondays.

T P (32 tons) Coonamble.
M H O
K P
F S (1)
M A L (2)
B S (3)
F S (4)
E H O Cowra.
M L V Parkes.

Wednesdays.

T P (32 tons) Cobar.
E T P Coonamble:
M H O
K P
F S (1)
M A L (2)
B S (3)
F S (4)

(Brakesman required Sydney-Katoomba
Wednesday).

Fridays.

T P (32 tons) Coonamble.
M H O
M L V (Parcels).
K P
F S (1)
T A M (2)
B S (3)
F S (4)

From Sydney, Mondays ..	336 tons.
From Orange, Tuesdays ..	276 tons.
From Sydney, Wednesdays ..	306 tons.
From Sydney, Fridays ..	305 tons.

(Booked Seats.)

Composition of
No.45 Coonamble Mail in 1964.



3642 passes North Strathfield at the head of No.7 North-West Mail on 15 January 1954. The KP mail van for Moree is the first car behind the tender.
John Stormont

roduced Coonamble Mail, now renumbered as train No.45. As with its brief wartime interlude, the journey via Molong was not re-introduced. The up journey also benefited by a through Dubbo-Sydney journey on No.58 Through West Mail. From June 1957, 46 class electric locomotives took over the running, between Sydney and Lithgow, of western line passenger, mail and goods trains to faster journey times than were possible with steam. In January 1960, the conveyance of the TPO van was split between the Coonamble and Through West Mails, with the former taking the van ex Sydney on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and the latter on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. The same trains returned the KP to Sydney on the following days. This pattern continued until the Coonamble Mail was finally discontinued with the timetable introduced on 5 May 1968, the Through West Mail then assuming full responsibility for the TPO service. In addition to the KP on these two mail trains, they also conveyed the aluminium-bodied TP coded van which matched the cars on the four-car, self-propelled Far West Express from Dubbo to, on alternate days, Bourke, Cobar and Coonamble. In the case of the Through West Mail, it also conveyed the DEH coded van to Orange for forwarding via the Forbes Mail to Parkes for attaching to the Silver City Comet to Broken Hill.

The 'modern' era of the TPOs could be said to have commenced in March 1929 following the signing of an "Article of Agreement Regarding the Carriage of Mails and the Provision and Running of Mail Sorting Vans" between the Postmaster-General and the NSW Department of Railways. This document laid down the contractual arrangements for the service, and specified that TPO staff be issued with special certificates signed by the Deputy Postmaster-General to allow such employees access to railway premises or to travel in the postal vans. The Railway General Appendix advised staff of this requirement and enjoined employees, particularly station masters, not to be backward in coming forward to request PMG staff to prove their *bona fides* by the production of their certificates. The PMG paid the Railways Commissioner £149,454/9/3 for the carriage of mails between 1/1/1927 and 31/12/1928; thereafter, the amount payable was based on the actual weight of mail carried. To determine this weight, a sample weighing was undertaken annually whereby all mail bags on all routes were check-weighed using a skillion scale and supervised by an appropriate railway official. To advise all concerned of this exercise, an item appeared in the Weekly Notice and by Circular giving details.

An example is this 1965 extract:

"Weighing of mails, 1965 - A weighing of mails

will be conducted from 15th September to 14th October, 1965 inclusive, to adjust the annual charges for the carriage of mail by Railway. The issues involved are very important to both the Railway and Postal Departments, and it is essential that each Railway employee entrusted with any duty in respect of the weighing of mails strictly complies with the instructions in Chief Traffic Manager's Circular No.215.

"Station Masters and Officers in Charge will be responsible for the proper carrying out of the instructions and particular care must be taken to see that any relief staff is thoroughly acquainted with the duties they must be required to perform.

"Prior to the commencement of the weighing period a statement must be prepared at every station showing the mails despatched each day of the week. This statement must be available to the weighing staff at all times.

"During the weighing period, the prompt despatch of completed P.O.1 and P.O.2 forms to the Chief Traffic Manager, Supervisor of Mails, Sydney, at the close of each period is essential so that preparation of the accounts may be expedited and all concerned must give this phase of the business special attention."

(C. 1-65-1,101.) (W.N. 36-1965.)

The relevant Circular covering this audit (i.e. Circular 215 of 1965) provided all concerned with two pages of details to be observed.

In addition to an amount determined by the annual audit, the Postmaster-General paid the Department of Railways 10 pence per mile for the transport of the KP van. The 1928 agreement also required the Railway Department to provide safe and comfortable accommodation for the mail officers with the provision of "lavatory and other sanitary conveniences" as well as work benches and sorting racks. The Postmaster-General had, from the early days of the service, provided his good officers with uniforms of coat, trousers and cap and later, with shirts. However, heaters for the crews were not added until after World War II when gas heating was provided in the KP vans, the supply being contained in two six-foot cylinders which provided gas to a radiator at each end. According to Mr Fred Stuart, the post-war addition of the heaters caused some altercation as not all tastes could be appeased regarding the degree of heat required, although it did provide comfort to the KP which was previously "cold as a morgue!" in winter, to quote him. Having experienced a couple of minor derailments in which the "KP bounced along the sleepers but never overturned", the consequences upon the stored gas of a possible major accident were always in the back of the minds of the TPO staff. Prior to this installation, the only sign of modernity was a Primus stove to heat water for tea and to warm food. In this regard, Mr Eric Bent, who spent many years from 1933 as one of two TPO2 West men based at Bathurst, recalls the crew improvising a toaster to fit over the primus to toast bread. (Coincidentally, Mr Eric Bent's son Geoff followed his father's footsteps and similarly became a TPO, commencing in

1957 on TPO1 West and finishing on the North Coast Mail in 1985.) Evidently, the PMG hierarchy considered the constant physical effort required to accomplish the mail sorting task was an adequate source of warmth for the officers! In reality, warmth was also provided by the everpresent foot warmers, familiar to sitting and sleeping berth customers of the railways. Should slack times eventuate, officers would take it in turns to place a foot-warmer in an empty mail bag and curl up in a convenient place for the proverbial forty winks.

Amongst the crew of the KP was a junior officer, whose lot was often far from happy. In addition to the task of sweeping the floor of the van to remove the constant accumulation of paper, rubber bands, twine and tags, this person was also required to clear the late fee boxes familiar at all large localities and usually adjacent to the main station entrance. Such conveniences allowed customers of the PMG, for the addition of a 1 penny consideration, to post letters long after closing time at the local post office. In midwinter, with snow and ice blanketing stations from Katoomba to Orange, 'junior' was required to vacate the comparatively warm and safe haven of his KP van temporarily and make a considerable dash along the treacherous platform to clear the box, fumbling with frozen, numb hands to release the appropriate device affording security. On the down Mail ex Sydney during the period 1928 to 1946, with the KP marshalled next to the locomotive, the van would sometimes overshoot a platform requiring the officer to climb down to ground level to undertake his tasks. Should the Officer-in-Charge be vociferous, the driver could be persuaded to reverse his often lengthy and heavy train into the platform to assist the mail officer in the safe discharge of his duties, otherwise they would have to comply with the driver's directive to "climb down!".

Mr Fred Stuart, while working TPO1 West during the early 1930s, recalls an alarming night at Katoomba attempting, as the junior officer, to clear the late fee box. After the headlong dash from the KP on the head of the train to the late fee box near the rear, he encountered a howling gale blowing up from the Jamieson Valley which caught the plethora of letters in the box upon opening and several were blown along the platform before he could bag them. To compound the situation, the whistle blew and the train began to move. Abandoning the errant letters, he rushed to the guard's van, and managed to climb aboard, much to the surprise of the guard who had forgotten his presence on the platform. As the train gathered speed out of Katoomba, a hiss of escaping air and dramatic reduction in speed denoted the concern of Mr Stuart's colleagues in the KP at his non-appearance at the head of the train by their activating the emergency brake. As the train finally stopped with all vehicles beyond Katoomba Station, he was then required to endanger life and limb and walk along beside the train in darkness to his van. Upon arrival at Mt Victoria for the train's thirteen minute refreshment stop, Mr Stuart notified the postmaster at Katoomba of the dilemma and re-



Mail bags being loaded into KP845 at Sydney Terminal on 9 June 1959. Former PMG Mail Officer, Mr Leslie Rea, is receiving bags from Department of Railways staff. Australia Post, from G. Bent collection

quested that officer to undertake the safe retrieval of the wayward correspondence. We can only assume that the postmaster was not amused, especially considering the time of night and frightful weather. To add insult to injury, Mr Stuart subsequently received a 'bung' for the three minutes delay to the train but his explanation in defence was sufficient to exonerate him, with the result that the guard 'took the rap'. Even a minor delay to such a train in those days evoked a swift request for explanation.

During the trek from Wellington to Dubbo and return, the mails passed through the village of Wongarbron. I vividly recall Vic Goodfellow, a man with a brilliant memory, fount of stories and a bit of a wag, telling me a "Ripleys believe it or not". Evidently a gentleman of notoriety by the name of Brag lived, in the locality of present day Wongarbron, before that name had been bestowed on the place. Upon his death, the locals reputedly rejoiced "No Brag Now", which, when reversed, is Wongarbron! The name is actually an Aboriginal tribal name.

Mr Eric Bent recalls an amusing episode on the

up Through West Mail one evening. The Post Office at Eulomogo, the first hamlet east of Dubbo on the main line toward Wellington, had a postmistress in charge. Although the up Mail was tabled to stop at Eulomogo to pick up passengers only if required, the driver had to reduce speed to allow the mail bag to be collected in passing. On the night in question, the postmistress arranged herself on the station platform in order to pass the mail bag to the crew in the KP marshalled behind the locomotive. Unfortunately for her, the fireman was driving and evidently became confused as he approached Eulomogo and neglected to reduce speed to effect the pick up of the mail bag. As the train approached, she held the bag in a position to allow the mail officer to collect it as he passed. However, the force of the wind created by the onward rushing locomotive blew her dress upward and over her head with the result that she let go of the bag to rearrange her attire - obviously, modesty came before duty! The poor fireman, realising his mistake, had to stop and reverse his train into the platform until the brake van on the rear was in position to retrieve the mail

Not for resale



Dusk on the Western Plains: shortly after departure from Dubbo, 3665 and 3827 head No.46 Coonamble Mail near Eulomogo on 29 January 1966. Peak holiday loading has resulted in a clerestory-roofed car of antiquity being pressed into service. At this time, the KP van was conveyed ex Dubbo by No.46 Mail on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, while on the other weekdays, No.58 Through West Mail did the honours. R.D. Love

Above Right: *The down Glen Innes Mail (No.13) normally divided at Tamworth, three or four cars forming the connection to Barraba, whilst the remaining four or five cars continued north toward Armidale and Glen Innes. In the up direction, the train amalgamated and returned to Sydney. On a frosty morning in August 1965, No.12 Glen Innes Mail, comprising MHO, ACS, CR (Barraba cars), FS, BS, TAM, MHO (Glen Innes cars) roars through Ourimbah led by 3825 and 3508, the latter fitted with a turret tender. The 35 class was 'light-attached' to Gosford, in order to work a return military special to Broadmeadow.* R.D. Love

Right: *The North Coast Mail was an institution on the mid and far north coast regions of NSW, providing a reliable and essential passenger and mail service to country people in that area. On a fine sunny morning, 27 October 1981, the last-built in a famous class, 44100, departs Nana Glen with No.11, the North Coast Mail, with FS, BS, FS, TBC, TAM, KP, MHO and EHO van providing a good load for the 1 in 80 grades ahead.*

Peter Attenborough

bag for later passing on to the TPO men during the stop at Wellington.

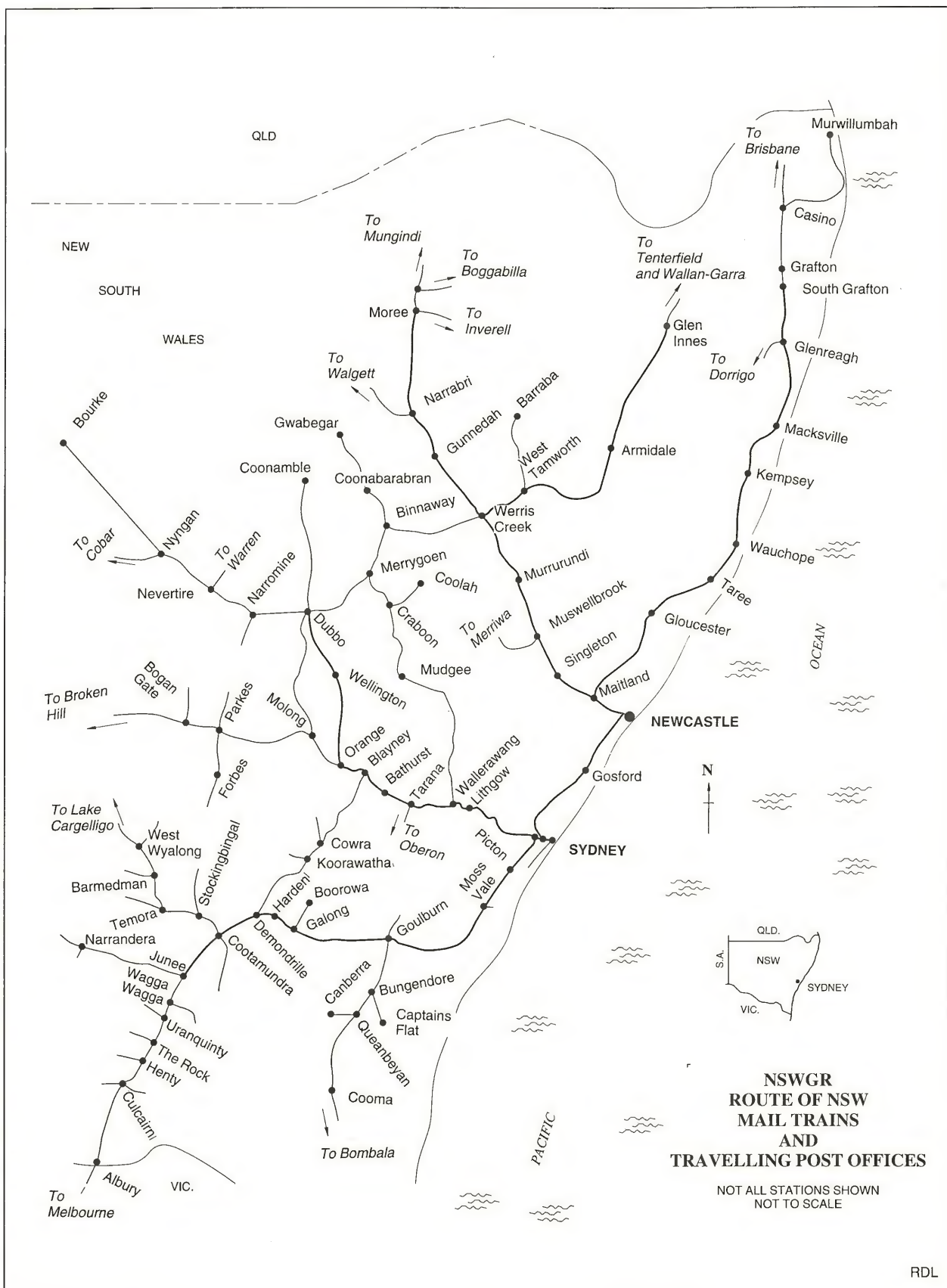
On their nightly journeys, the various mail trains traversed many protected and unprotected level crossings. Those which were protected featured manually operated gates and some of these were in isolated locations not easily accessible to nearby towns. Protected crossings were usually in charge of a husband and wife team, more usually the wife operating this vital appliance as hubby often found a second job on nearby farms or as a local ganger. The TPO men forever endeared themselves to these couples by throwing out newspapers, magazines and other items for them as they sped by. Mr Fred Stuart recalled one particular task which was very much appreciated by the recipients - the TPO men on the up Albury Mail would collect bundles of local newspapers from locations such as Wagga, Cootamundra and Goulburn and throw them out, as

well as much sought after cigarettes, as the train departed Liverpool past the historic Old Men's Home. Even though the mail passed Liverpool at 5.45am, the elderly inhabitants of the home would be lined up to receive news of perhaps their former home town by the print media.

The other mails serving the west in 1948 in addition to the Coonamble, Through West and Forbes Mails were the Mudgee Mail to that historic town and onwards to Coonabarabran, and the Cowra Mail to that town on the Lachlan. The story did not end here as this scenario was being acted out also on the Main North and South lines out of and into Sydney on a nightly basis, with the weekday and Sunday procession ex Sydney as follows:

- *Brisbane Express* to Wallan-garra, ex Sydney at 1.35pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays would, on arrival at Werris Creek, attach an earlier mentioned HKL mail van for the sorting





Not for resale



The first of the procession of mail trains ex Sydney was No.7 North-West Mail, seen here behind Belpaire-boilered 3645 as it steams past Eveleigh on 1 August 1955 with the KP mail van prominent behind the locomotive.

SRA Archives

of mail as far as Glen Innes.

- *North-West Mail* to Moree, at 3.30pm (featuring TPO1 North to Narrabri; TPO2 to Moree and 'changeover' man to Scone); followed some hours later by a similar North/North Coast-bound procession in the form of the:
- *South Grafton Mail* to the Jacaranda City on the Clarence;
- *Glen Innes Mail* to the New England region;
- *North Coast Mail* to Murwillumbah; and
- *Kempsey Mail* to that town on the Macleay.

Not to be outdone, the South hosted the following:

- *Temora Mail* to that town in the rich wheat belt (featuring TPO1 South as far as Cootamundra with the 'changeover' man to Goulburn);
- *South-West Mail* to Griffith (conveying the van and TPO1 South men off the preceding Temora Mail from Cootamundra to Junee); and
- *Albury Mail* to the border.

The reason for the relaying of the KP on the South was the heavy loading ex Sydney conveyed by the South-West Mail; the addition of the KP would have overloaded the 36 or 38 used on this train, so the preceding Temora Mail of lesser loading conveyed this vehicle to Cootamundra for attaching to the South-West Mail as the grades to be faced from

there were not nearly as severe as those between Goulburn and Cootamundra.

Doubtless at this time, the twice-weekly Kosciusko Express doubled as the Cooma Mail for that high Monaro town. Cooma, at this time, was receiving a fresh injection of human and material importance as Prime Minister Chifley's dream of harnessing the vast, eastward flow of water into the Snowy Mountains Scheme materialised. The Scheme brought a flood of hard-working migrants to "the land of promise which beacons in the south", reminiscent of an event nearly one hundred years before which also brought a flood of hopefuls forever to our shores. Although the popular North Coast line was well served by mail trains, it was not until 1949 that a TPO service commenced as far as Grafton on the North Coast Mail, with TPO1 North Coast to Macksville; TPO2 to Grafton and 'changeover' man to Paterson.

Into an awakening Sydney from 4.58am rolled the returning counterparts of the previous evening's departures, bringing human and written cargo to the metropolis until the arrival at 9.15am of the last of the nocturnal venturers, the up Glen Innes Mail. Like the return of the KP from the west on the up Through West Mail, the south also varied with the van returning from Junee on the up Albury Mail.



Early mail van HKL 386 in use as Way and Works vehicle WV1024, at Bathurst on 30 March 1979.

S. Halgren

Above Right: *The sorting van in use on the south-bound mail train was conveyed by the lightly-loaded Temora Mail to Cootamundra where it was detached and shunted into the dock to await the arrival of the following, heavier South-West Mail. On New Year's Day 1964, class leader 3801 retrieves the KP prior to shunting it onto the South-West Mail.*

R.D. Love

Below Right: *Mail trains, such as the Coonamble Mail, were a regular feature of passenger train operation in NSW for more than half a century. On the main line to Dubbo, the Coonamble Mail was hauled by heavy passenger locomotives but on the light branch line to Coonamble, smaller motive power took over. On 8 April 1966, No.45 Coonamble Mail pauses at Gilgandra, with 3004 leading three cars and an MHO van.*

R.D. Love

Below: *The first KP to be withdrawn was No.732 in 1975. It is seen here undergoing workshop attention at Carriage Works, Redfern, mounted on works bogies in 1972.*

Graeme Kirkby





The early arrival of the majority of the mail trains was meant to ensure a same day delivery of mail to the city and suburbs, bearing in mind that most suburbs in those halcyon, post-World War II days benefited from two weekday and one Saturday delivery.

Upon arrival in Sydney, the TPO men mingled with the passengers and wended their weary way home. The KP was shunted into either Sydney Yard East or West carriage sheds for cleaning and preparation for its next duty. One former Eveleigh fireman, now a senior Sydney suburban electric train driver, recalls shunting the cars off the mails during the 1960s with a 30 class 4-6-4 tank and, during a lull in proceedings, inspecting the KP to find it strewn with rubber bands and pieces of string, testimony to the toils of the TPO men.

However, as a service to sleeping car passengers, the railway administration made provision for such travellers to remain in their berths, should they so desire, until a respectable hour following their

early, pre-dawn arrival into Sydney. The November 1949 public timetable advised the following:

"Passengers occupying sleeping berths at Sydney by certain trains in the early hours of the morning may remain in the cars for varying periods up to 7.00am. Particulars are obtainable from the conductor."

The April 1960 public timetable was more enlightening, specifying the times until which passengers could remain in their berths. In the case of the western mails, the following applied:

"No.46 Coonamble Mail - arrives 4.58am - passengers may remain until 6.00am."

"No.60 Forbes Mail - arrives 6.23am - passengers may remain until 6.45am."

"No.58 Through West Mail - arrives 6.41am - passengers may remain until 7.00am."

Perhaps those on No.12 North Coast Mail were the most favoured as, after a 5.21am arrival, they could remain until 7.00am.

Nearly all overnight trains, which included a

Commonwealth of Australia.

No. 57 (T.P.O.)

Postmaster-General's Department.

WAY BILL

T.P.O. 2 WEST to COONAMBLE (DOWN)

Despatched by the 8.15 a.m. Train from Dubbo on the 19.....



MAILS FOR.	MAILS FROM																Total No. of Bags	Signature of Person to whom Mails are delivered.
	T.P.O. 2 West	Mudgee	Wellington	Orange														
Mogriguy																		
Eumungerie																		
Balladoran																		
Gilgandra																		
Curban																		
Armatree																		
Gular Railway																		
Gulargambone																		
Brightling																		
Brocklehurst																		
Combara																		
Coonamble																		
TOTALS																		

Signature of T.P.O. 2 West Sorter.

Signature of Railway Guard.

This Way Bill, when completed, to be retained by the Railway Department at Coonamble.

The Coonamble Mail shed its TPO van and crew at Dubbo. However, the mail had to get through and, to assist the Postmaster-General in this task, the guard of the train recorded details of the number of bags picked up at each station on the Coonamble line and recorded details on the TPO2 West Way Bill.

S. Halgren Collection



Engine 2304, formerly No.449 of the disgraced O class 4-6-0s, photographed at Craboon on the Gwabegar branch in the twilight of the engines' career, circa 1946. Engine O452 (2307) of these locos derailed at Tarana on 28 April 1892 while hauling the Western Mail. The subsequent Royal Commission into that fatal accident had the effect of removing the class from passenger work until the subject of our photo, 2304, was rebuilt in 1919, the first of the twelve members so treated and returned to respectability. Engine 2304 was also the last of its class in service, being withdrawn from service in September 1946 from Binnaway Depot, where the 23s spent many of their useful latter years.

R. Bowman

brake van such as an EHO or MHO type in their consist, had provision for the receipt of late fee mail to be deposited in that van in the absence of a KP type. In such instances, a sealed box, for which only the PMG staff held a key, was provided. Such a box was opened by the local postmaster, for example, at Coonamble and locked and removed on arrival at Dubbo by another PMG official. The contents of the box would then be transferred to the KP for sorting. In such instances, the guard was responsible for mail collection and deposits, in addition to his train duties. To assist the Postmaster-General, he completed a 'Way Bill - TPO2 West to Coonamble' form (example illustrated) which gave details of his exertions at each station on the line.

The newly arrived 38 class Pacifics, which were making their magical presence felt, along with the older 35 and 36 class 4-6-0s, were kept gainfully employed day in, day out providing motive power for the demanding nightly procession of mails along with other important trains requiring reliability.

While the TPO men carried out their public duty, paying passengers of the Department of Railways slept soundly in their sleeping car or fought for that luxury sitting up in a compartment of 6, 8 or 10 people, depending on the class and type of car. A train such

as No.45 Coonamble Mail in August 1948 departing Sydney Terminal at 7.25pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays would feature a composition from the Sydney end of:

MHO, KP, LFX, FR, EAM, BS, FS = 256 tons.

As usual, excess patronage could be appeased by the inevitable addition of another LFX or BX express lavatory compartment car of considerable antiquity. Despite the rollingstock variations, the service provided by the procession of mails through the night was outstanding.

The Coonamble Mail ex Sydney, complying with the 1947 Working Timetable directive "hauled by a 36 Class Engine", would pick up passengers at Strathfield, Parramatta, Penrith, Valley Heights (attach assistant loco), Lawson, Katoomba (detach assistant), Mt Victoria (13 min. refreshment stop), Lithgow, all stations to Orange (except Wombiana), arriving at 4.00am. Departing at 4.16, No.45 would then service all stations to Wellington (except Warnecliffe), thence all to Dubbo (except Oddfield), arriving at 7.36am. The train would here detach all except the MHO, BS and FS cars, and set out bravely at 8.02am behind an 1880s vintage 12 class 4-4-0 for Coonamble on the Castlereagh River.

Prior to 1941, when the KP had been detached at Orange

No. 45 Mail.
7.25 p.m. from Sydney (Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Fridays), arrive:
COONAMBLE 11.40 a.m.

M H O	} Dubbo.
K P	
L F X	
FR	
E A M (1)	
B S (2)	
FS (3)	

(Load 256 tons.)

(Booked seats.)

**Composition of
No.45 Coonamble Mail in 1948.**





The last route to receive the TPO service was the North Coast to Grafton in 1949 - this route was also the last bastion of the KP and saw the finale of the TPO tradition on 31 August 1985. In happier days, veteran Alco 4012 heads No.11 North Coast Mail at South Grafton on 22 October 1962. The KP is visible as the fifth vehicle, while the leading car is a second class SFX, for many years a regular feature, along with its first class counterpart, the SBX, on both the Coonamble and North Coast Mails. SRA Archives

Above Left: *Typical members of a mail train's composition from 1925 to the mid 1960s were the inevitable LFX express lavatory 'dog box' car and the 36 class 4-6-0, seen at Tarana in July 1970.* S. Halgren

Below Left: *The KP mail sorting vans continued in service until 1985. However, their use on long-distance mail trains had declined some years earlier. By 1982, one was still used regularly on the North Parcels Express between Sydney and Moree and, on 21 October 1982, branchliner 4862 gets away from Narrabri with N107, the down service trailing LLV, KB, KP mail sorting van and MHO van.* R.D. Love

from the Coonamble Mail and forwarded to Dubbo by the following Through West Mail, a similar abandonment of the majority of cars would see a residue of MHO, CR (Cobar), BS, FS (Bourke) and CR (Brewarrina) again leave Dubbo in the hands of a 12 class 4-4-0 which would gird up its strength for the initial assault of the 1 in 60 grade of 'Bourke Hill' between Dubbo and Minore, then skip onwards across the Western Plains to Nyngan. One former Dubbo-based driver recounts how the 12 class on the mail always lost time on 'Bourke Hill' but once past this inconvenience, recorded an on-time arrival at Nyngan. One can picture the little 12 charging at speed across the plains to keep its appointed arrival time at Nyngan. From Nyngan, the mail continued on to Byrock on Wednesdays and Fridays, then onwards to Bourke, 512 miles and 42 chains from Sydney, as a mixed, with a scheduled arrival time of 5.22pm. Like tentacles, connections off this important train ran from Dubbo to Merrygoen; Nevertire to Warren; Nyngan to Cobar and Byrock to Brewarrina.

NSW can be justly proud of its excellent rail safety record. As with any instrumentality run by humans, misfortune often appears and the various mails on all lines were not immune from mishap. In connection with our study of the TPO West service, the following incidents are noteworthy.

On the night of 28 April 1892, O class 4-6-0

locomotive No.452 derailed while hauling the Western Mail near Tarana, causing the deaths of nine passengers. The initial verdict attributed the cause to the springing on the leading truck but later evidence highlighted track deformation. However, media reports damning O452 had the effect of damaging public confidence in the class, resulting in their ostracism and withdrawal from passenger working. An acute engine shortage after the First World War saw each of the twelve members overhauled and modified to again become respected members of the locomotive fold, a situation which existed until the withdrawal of the last member of the class in September 1946. On 16 July 1933, the Sydney media reported the derailment of the tender of locomotive 3622 and three cars of the up Cobar Mail east of Lithgow in the vicinity of the immortal monuments of the Great Zig Zag. The report noted that no injuries were occasioned, only inconvenience, with passengers transferred to the following Forbes Mail, which evidently ran wrong road from Lithgow to Zig Zag Box.

In the wee hours of 12 May 1959, No.46 Coonamble Mail was delayed for 108 minutes between Lithgow and Zig Zag due to a broken drawhook on car FS2132.

On the evening of 23 August 1963, No.58 Mail left Dubbo behind 38 class engine 3817. Into the wheat siding at Geurie, between Dubbo and Wel-



The South-West Mail departs Cootamundra on 2 October 1954 after the train locomotive, 3801, had picked up the KP mail van from the dock and attached it to the train.

John Stormont

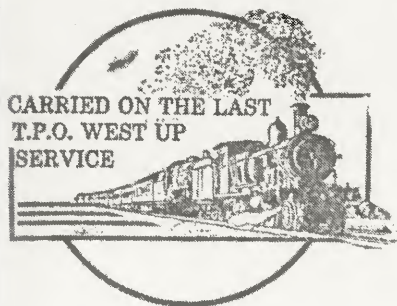
lington, was placed No.669 down goods behind Beyer-Garratt locomotive 6003 to cross the up mail on the single track section. Unbeknown to the crew of 6003, the front tank of their mammoth machine had derailed through the catch points and was foul of the main line. Upon the scene came 3817, the unfortunate victim of two previous mishaps, and collided with the Garratt, with the resultant extent of damage to both engines severe enough to warrant condemnation. Several of the mail's cars were derailed and some passengers hospitalised. The first of 3817's three serious accidents also featured a mail train. On 9 June 1948, while hauling No.23 South-West Mail south of the hamlet of Rocky Ponds (between Harden and Cootamundra) 3817 came upon a broken rail and rolled down a twelve foot embankment, the following two LFX type 'dog box' cars being demolished with resultant fatalities to several passengers. The bitter cold was blamed although some cited the pounding of the track by 57 class engines as a contributory factor. On the night of the Rocky Ponds accident, Mr Fred Stuart was in the KP van attached to the Temora Mail which was preceding the ill-fated South-West Mail. At Galong, the junction station for the line to Boorowa, he had put out a mail bag for the property adjacent to Rocky Ponds Siding, owned by Mr Knight Gregson, and which would be conveyed by a following goods or perhaps train No.31, the 1.10am ex Sydney 'Paper Train', to Rocky Ponds. Mr Knight Gregson's home was adjacent to the scene of the accident, so doubtless he had a very active though tragic night to come. Of course, the KP off the Temora Mail stood at Cootamundra and was not able to be forwarded to Junee by the South-West Mail.

One well-known Sydney radio commentator

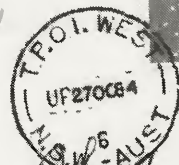
some years ago spoke disparagingly of people "being conceived in a *third* class compartment on the North Coast Mail" in an attempt not only to deride mail trains but passenger train travel in general. Despite the denigration delivered by this person, the mail trains provided a vital means of transport and communication to rural NSW until the advent of near universal ownership of a motor car in the early 1960s. In spite of their shortcomings in terms of speed and comfort for the majority of passengers, they have made an indelible mark in the transport history of our State for 116 years.

The slow demise of the familiar TPO West services commenced on 5 May 1968 when the Coonamble Mail was discontinued, the KP then being conveyed solely by the Through West Mail to and from Dubbo. Further rationalisation occurred on 29 November 1970 when TPO2 West was discontinued, the entire Sydney to Dubbo section then being undertaken by the TPO West crew from Sydney. This service was to continue until 1 January 1974 when the TPO service for the west was undertaken by No.249 West Parcels Express from Sydney Terminal, a train comprised entirely of non-passenger rollingstock. From 1981, the TPO service was undertaken by a joint parcels/freight express from Flemington New Markets, with the KP attached as far as Orange, then removed and, reminiscent of the 1931 - 1946 period, attached to the following Western Mail. On the up ex Dubbo, a similar arrangement applied. The traditional exception applied on Sundays, when the Western Mail conveyed the KP all the way ex Sydney. The saga ended on 27 October 1984 when the KP, so long a feature and treasure of the west, was withdrawn, the entire conveyance of mail falling to road transport. In keeping with

Not for resale



T.P. Daly
 SUPERVISOR
 T.P.O. SERVICES
 AND
 RAILWAY MAIL TRANSIT DEPOT
 STATE MAIL CENTRE



Tom Daly
Robert Suggett

Australia Post issued Last Day Covers to mark the end of the TPO era on the west. This example was signed by the crew of the last up TPO West service ex Dubbo. *Tom Daly, Supervisor of last TPO West crew*

their historical tradition, Australia Post, as the successor to the former Postmaster-General's Department, arranged for special covers, bearing the emblazoned message "Carried by the last T.P.O. West up Service" to be conveyed on the last No.58 Western Mail ex Dubbo on 27 October 1984 and such an example, signed by the last four-man crew of TPO1 West accompanies this essay. For some time after this melancholy event, the 'Letters to the

Editor' columns of Sydney and country daily newspapers vented the displeasure felt by so many country folk at the demise of their once reliable means of communication. Although the saga has ended, the presence of the TPOs and mail trains is perpetuated in such poems as *The Travelling Post Office* by Banjo Paterson and *On the Night Train* by Henry Lawson, these bards immortalising the benefits of the coming of rail as a means of carriage for people and mail.



In November 1955, No.3 Melbourne Limited Express approaches North Albury after its overnight run from Sydney behind 3824. A clerestory-roofed KB bulk mail van is the first vehicle. *John Stormont*



The down North-West Mail approaches Woy Woy in 1957 behind 36 class 4-6-0 3619. The KP mail van is visible as the third vehicle behind the ACX composite branch line sleeper, destined for Barraba.

Late R. Hocking, Zig Zag Railway Collection

Elsewhere, the mails lingered a little longer, the end coming on 31 August 1985 when the last up TPO1 North-West and North Coast Mails undertook their journeys into Sydney.

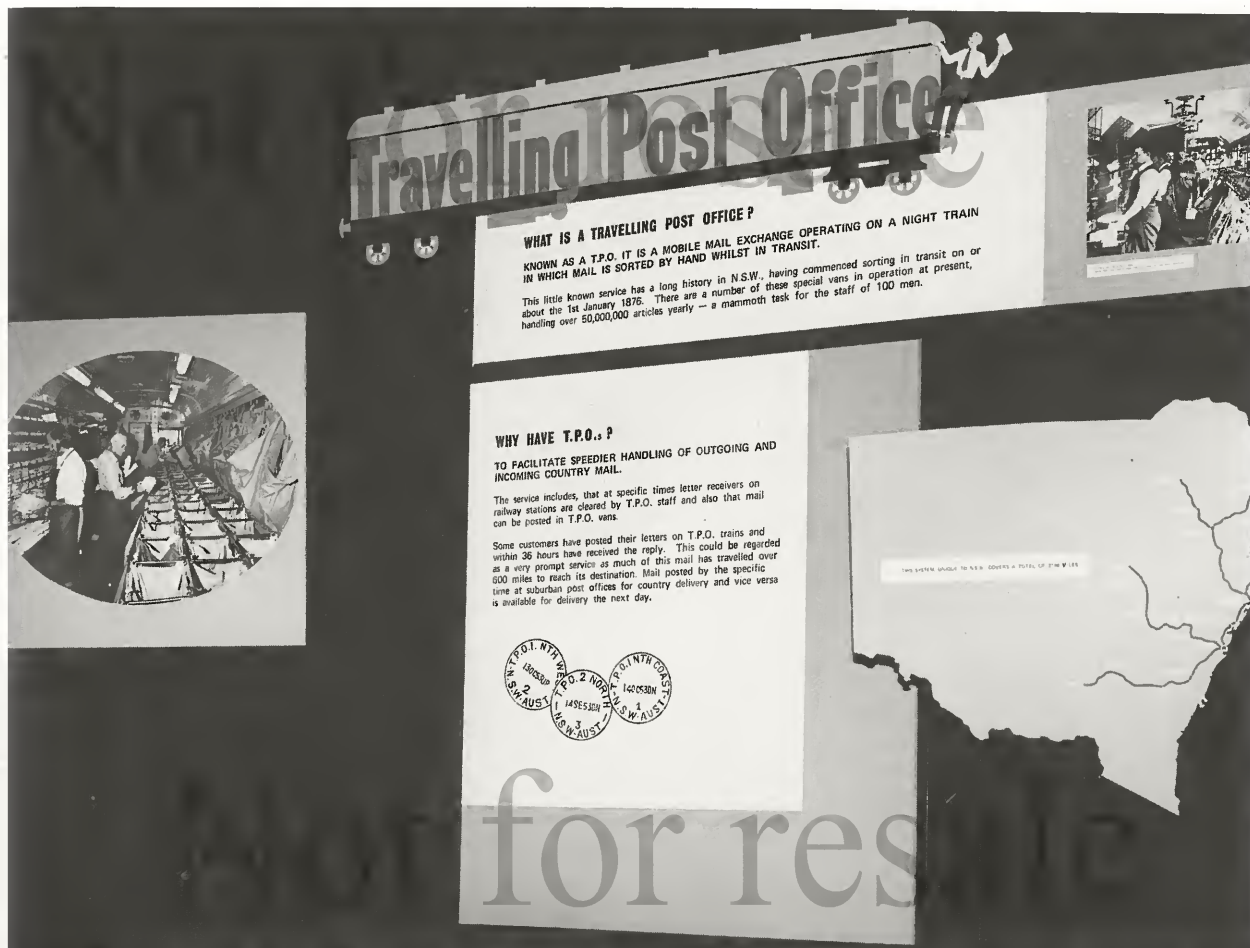
When introduced between 1912 and 1914, the eleven KPs carried the following road numbers: 651, 732, 754, 787, 822, 826, 845, 908, 1942, 1943 and 1944. Special care had to be taken when the KP was marshalled on the head of the train and the trailing load was in excess of 390 tons. As at 1948, the publication *Engine Loads, General Instructions* nominated only seven of the eleven KP vans as being fitted with transition drawgear capable of handling a trailing load in excess of 390 tons up to a maximum of 550 tons. Those four vehicles not so fitted were Nos. 732, 1942, 1943 and 1944, and these could not have a trailing load in excess of 390 tons. Upon cessation of the TPO service in August 1985, the vans were withdrawn, condemnation taking place between August 1984 and October 1985, although one van, No. 732, had been condemned in August 1975. Fortunately, some KP vans have been preserved to provide an insight into those halcyon days and examples are held by the Australian Railway Historical Society (ACT) in Canberra (KPs 651, 787 and 1944) and, at the Dorrigo Railway Museum in the State's north, 732. KPs 822 and 1943 were sold to private individuals.

The people of NSW owe much to the tradition of the Travelling Post Office Service and the dedication of men such as Victor Goodfellow, Fred Stuart and Eric Bent for a job well done.

Personal Reminiscences

In my youth, I spent many a school holiday with a copious number of relatives in Orange and on surrounding properties, including the gentleman mentioned in this article, my great uncle Vic

Goodfellow. Beside a predominance of motor car trips to this destination, many journeys on the up and down were made by the air-conditioned Central West Express, both steam and diesel hauled beyond Lithgow. Unfortunately, only one such trip was made by the evening Mail, that being a trip ex Strathfield on the Through West Mail in May 1961, my very first long distance rail journey. Due to my youthful ignorance, specific details regarding the identity of the 46 class electric locomotive on the train from Sydney to Lithgow and subsequent sightings are lost to history. However, I clearly recall the always fascinating pre-journey lesson in geography pronounced by the station master at Strathfield as he recited the stopping pattern of the train on its long trek to the Darling River at Bourke, this facet instilling a great sense of imminent adventure. My other recollection is of a crowded compartment in an FS sitting car, into which dame fortune had allocated me a window seat to assist the adventure, although this window became foggy and coated in condensation as the heated bodies of the octet of travellers demonstrated the marvels of atmospheric science on the glass pane in contact with the chilly air outside. Sleep overtook me somewhere on the Blue Mountains and consciousness returned near Blayney, no doubt prompted by the drop in temperature associated with that town in the Belubula River valley, notorious as one of the coldest places in New South Wales. From Blayney on, I distinctly recall the unending, clipped beat of the locomotive exhaust and the occasional blast from the chime whistle which seemed literally to hang in that frosty air of the Central Tablelands. My stay on the freezing platform of a pre-dawn Orange was brief as I was whisked away to a warm home once luggage had been retrieved from the van, but a brief glimpse of the first of many 38s behind which I was to ride



To publicise the work of the TPO service, this display was prepared in August 1973. Alas, the days of glory were approaching an end, with ever increasing reliance on road transport of mail overshadowing the prominence of the TPO service.

SRA Archives

has proven to be unforgettable, the engine being, I think, 3821, absolutely majestic with steam oozing from various pores, obviously impatient to be on its way.

Subsequent trips on long distance trains are much more vivid in my memory by virtue of a more observant approach to ensuring that such nostalgic experiences are committed for ever to memory.

I had one further trip on the Through West Mail, this time in May 1973 from Dubbo to Sydney after catching the four-car DEB set forming the Far West Express from Narromine. That trip was of course diesel hauled to Lithgow, the unit being a 'sick' 4480 which seemed determined to try and pull the coupler out of the leading car after every stop with a very jerky start and acceleration. The inevitable 46 class (4614) put us out of our misery at Lithgow. By this time, an MCS composite sitting car was included in the consist on No.58 and afforded a most comfortable journey.

Oh! to have had a camera in those halcyon days of yore between 1961 and 1965 to record such sights as a May 1962 departure of No.28 Central West

Express from Orange, the 38 class blasting up the 1 in 50 grade from the station to lather my cousin and me with steam and smoke as we watched it from atop the Franklin Street bridge. Or the sight of Beyer-Garratt 6015 in June 1966, heading for Dubbo, storming past my father, the earlier mentioned Victor Goodfellow and me as the three of us waited at the Dalton Street level crossing in Orange. I remember Vic gazing in awe and commenting on the enormity of the 260 ton Garratt, he being more familiar from his 1928 to 1950 exploits as a TPO with the size of 32, 36 and Standard Goods engines. The number of times that the melodious whistles and shouting exhausts from all manner of steam locomotives cleft the chill night air of a sleepy Orange to land on my always tuned ears are still treasured in the nostalgic depths of my memory. Especially discernible were the high-pitched screech of a 60 class and the distinctive wail of a 38 - what memories are evoked by the thoughts of the magic which always heralded the presence of the 38s!

Oh, to be able to experience it all again!



Our Rail Heritage

Newcastle Terminus

R.K. Booth

Photograph from the N.J. Thorpe Collection

Newcastle's harbourside rail terminus is still graced by two architecturally elegant buildings - the customs house with its clocktower and time ball, and the two-storey station building. Both structures date from the 1870s, having been designed by James

Barnet and John Whitton respectively. By the early 1890s, when this photograph was taken, Newcastle had had, for some ten years, three platforms to cater for long distance and suburban trains. By this time the main platform had been extended and provided



with a cantilevered awning in place of the original supported by posts.

Newcastle boasted a middle engine road for re-leasing engines off incoming trains 25 years ahead of Sydney's terminal. The engine road here ends with a genuine three-way set of points. The class of engine on Platform 2 is difficult to identify. It is a tank engine, perhaps an F or Q class, but its chimney is a cast-iron replacement, a feature which appeared no earlier than 1890.

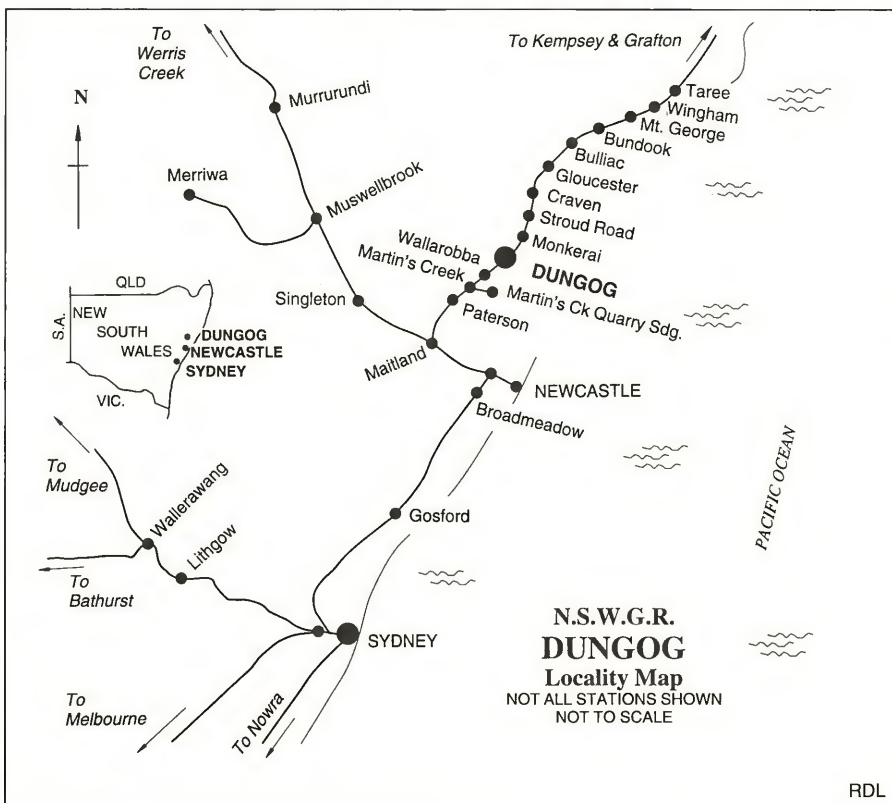
The carriage shed was very conveniently located at this time but was removed when increased suburban traffic required a fourth platform. Tucked in beside the carriage shed is the gas works which supplied carriage lighting and fixed lamps around the station and yards. The tracks to the left led to Newcastle's goods and wharf sidings.

The tall semaphore signal is pure McKenzie & Holland and dates from 1891, when alterations were made to the yards following the first interlocking of 1883. The three dolls have arms controlling departure from No.3 Platform, No.2 Platform and the engine siding. The ringed arms signalled shunting or call-on movements. By 1893 the open rings had been replaced by solid circular targets as the standard indicator for shunting signals. The latest possible date of the photograph is thereby established. The signal lamp cases have two styles of ventilator attached to their lids, a mixed practice found elsewhere at the time. Several revolving-lamp ground discs can be discerned on the left.

All in all, a wealth of detail recorded for posterity a century ago.



The southern end of Dungog yard. The locomotive shed is in the centre of the photograph, with Standard Goods engine 5350 having a well earned rest. The turntable road is out of view to the left. The track beside the shed is the stock siding, serving the stock race in the middle distance. The triple doll signal (Down Second Home) stands beside the main line, with the tracks in the foreground leading to the goods sidings. I.K. Winney



Above Right: The NN class 4-6-0s were the premier express passenger engines for about ten years, being displaced by their larger cousins, the 36 class, in 1925. However, they remained at work on the 'North Coast Railway' for more than forty years, where they seemed to be at home. The scene is Stroud Road, 14 miles north of Dungog, and an NN class in original condition crosses the Karuah River bridge and heads toward Maitland with the day train around 1920.



THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE DEPOTS IN NSW

Ray Love

Locomotive Out-Depot: Dungog

Preamble

As has been stated in previous essays, there were about 85 steam depots in operation in NSW during the 1950s. Some of these were very large, employing more than 200 men and with 200 engines on allotment, while others were extremely small, with only three or four men and not a solitary engine to look after. All were links in a chain, where one was just as essential for train operations as any other and sheer size had nothing to do with importance.

Dungog was actually a small sub- or out-depot, employing only a few men and without any steam locomotives on allocation. However, it played a vitally important part in the running of express passenger trains on the main interstate coastal route between Sydney and Brisbane.

It is perhaps timely to explain again the accepted definition of the word 'depot' or 'out-depot'.

From a train operation viewpoint, a depot (or sub/out-depot) is regarded both by 'Head Office' and unions as a location where men are employed. The provision of locomotive servicing facilities (sheds, pits, etc.) does not necessarily constitute a 'depot' as

such. In most places, the facilities and amenities for the enginemen were provided adjacent to the sheds, pits and other engine servicing installations, (eg. Broadmeadow, Werris Creek, Bathurst). In other towns, no servicing facilities were provided for engines, only those required for enginemen, Capertee and Yeoval for example. There was another possibility, the provision of locomotive servicing facilities in a location separate from those provided for the men. Dungog was an example of this. In this essay, the use of the phrase 'Dungog depot' refers to the installation as a whole. It has been necessary, however, to refer to the area occupied by the shed, turntable, pits, etc. as the 'loco depot area' to distinguish this from the 'crew side' of things.

Quite a few depots were in the charge of senior staff, either mechanical or running, such as Fitter-In-Charge, District Locomotive Engineer or Steam Shed Inspector, but not in all cases. It is, however, important to note that, where steam locomotives were actually on allocation, the depot was under the care and responsibility of senior mechanical staff.

Dungog is a small, quiet country town, located on



Above: The northern (or Taree) end of Dungog yard and a D class 4-4-0 express passenger engine, at the head of a down goods train, is serviced by the crew, whilst standing on the main line. The brake van of an up train is shown at left, standing in the loop, with Dungog engine shed beyond. The elevated 20,000 gallon water tank is located at the northern end of the platform.

Dungog Historical Society

Below: A view of Dungog station and environs, taken from the 20,000 gallon elevated water tank. On 4 February 1913, P class engine 854, complete with star on the smokebox, worked the first passenger train into Taree from the south. This photo shows the arrival (on the main line) of that special train into Dungog, en route to Taree, and the interest displayed by the local population in the event. Also of note: a down goods train, hauled by a T class 2-8-0, standing in the loop with Dungog engine shed (and locomotives) beyond; various vehicles, both bogie and four wheelers, stand in the sidings to the right; part of the town to the far right.

G. Kelly courtesy Dungog Historical Society



the Williams River. It is 152 miles north of Sydney by rail and 52 miles north from Newcastle. The name 'Dungog' is a corruption of an Aboriginal word meaning 'clear hills'. It is in Durham County, Parish of Dungog.

The small sub-depot of Dungog was located just

50 miles north from Newcastle's main locomotive centre of Broadmeadow but its geographic position allowed efficient crew and locomotive operations for the heavy express passenger trains working over the North Coast railway. Previous essays in this series have covered the North Coast depots of Taree, Wauchope and Kempsey, all to the near north of Dungog. These depots, perhaps with the exception of Wauchope, worked hand in hand with Dungog in steam days.

With the increasing usage of diesel-electric locomotives on the main line in the mid to late 1950s, Dungog depot lost its importance in relaying men for the interstate express trains. This history attempts to re-create the life and times of the small, country-town depot during its seventy-six year existence.

Brief Area History

In 1858, the railway from Newcastle was opened through to Maitland, then known as West Maitland. From there, railway construction reached out towards the north of the state, via an inland route. In 1886, the government railway was opened to Tenterfield and (in 1888), to Wallan-garra on the border with Queensland. This provided a single track route, 390 miles long, linking the

rich New England areas of northern NSW to the sea port of Newcastle.

In 1908, construction of a coastal route towards the north commenced, branching off the existing main northern line at Maitland.

On 14 August 1911, the line was opened between

Maitland and Dungog. The principal construction contractors for the 32¾ mile section of line were Messrs. Carson, Cary and Simpson.

By February 1913, the North Coast Railway, as it was then officially known, was opened into Taree, through the towns of Gloucester and Wingham. The contractors for the 83 mile section between Dungog and Taree were J. Willcox (part), J.C. Jones (part) and Public Works Dept. using day labour (part).

The 115 mile single line section between Maitland and Taree featured maximum gradients of 1 in 80, as well as three tunnels, Monkerai, Wallarobba and Bulliac. Substantial steel bridges were constructed over the Hunter, Paterson, Williams, Karuah, Avon and Manning rivers as well as bridges across many large creeks and other waterways.

A small locomotive sub- or out-depot opened in the town of Dungog in 1911.

History of the Depot

On 30 November 1910, the Chief Engineer for Railway and Tramway Construction, Public Works Department, signed a drawing entitled ...

*North Coast Railway
West Maitland-Dungog
Engine Shed at Dungog*

This drawing illustrated the construction plan and details of the locomotive engine shed in Dungog and heralded the commencement of railway operations in the small town. Associated with this drawing was the issue of a standard drawing for a steel 60 foot diameter turntable to be installed in Dungog, near the engine shed. This drawing was actually signed for issue in March 1908 and was used in many other locations as the need arose.

Records indicate that the Specification for Construction of the engine shed in Dungog was issued to R. Quiggan in 1911.

In Weekly Notice No.33 of 1911, it was announced that "On Monday 14th August 1911, the branch line from West Maitland to Dungog will be opened for traffic. The line is fenced and classed as main line." The Weekly Notice carried information and instructions pertaining to the new line and



A number of contractors were used on the construction of the North Coast Railway. The well-known contractor Smith & Timms obtained a locomotive from the Railways in 1909 and used it on such duty in the area for about 12 years. The locomotive was A class, 0-6-0 tender engine No.193 (Henry Vale, 1882, B/N 18). Whilst used on railway construction, the name 'Gloucester' was painted on the sides of the six-wheel tender. It reverted to railway ownership at the completion of work and was renumbered 1010, finally being scrapped in 1937. In this photo (c.1912), 'Gloucester' is shown on a construction train near Dungog.

Dungog Historical Society

listed the facilities provided in Dungog, including the turntable and an engine shed. A coal stage was not provided at the time of opening. To quote Weekly Notice No.33, "The first train to travel over the new line will be No.1 Mixed, due to leave West Maitland at 8.45am on Monday 14th August 1911."

'The Staff', the journal of the Railway and Tramway employees of the day, carried a photo showing a saturated P class locomotive at the head of the Official Train entering the (then) new Dungog station. On that day, the Mayoress cut the ribbon stretched across the track at the Newcastle end of the station, thus opening the North Coast Railway into Dungog. It was recorded that the driver of the train was J. Ewers and the fireman was T.H. Dark.

A drawing of 'Signal and Interlocking Arrangements - Dungog' dated July 1911, illustrates the locomotive shed on the 'engine siding' and the turntable erected on the adjacent 'turntable siding'.

Weekly Notice No.33, 1911 states (for Dungog) "A platform and goods siding are provided on the down side and a crossing loop, stock and loco sidings on the up side of the line ..."

On 4 February 1913, engine P854 (later 3344) departed Dungog and headed north over the recently completed North Coast Railway hauling the first train into Taree. This marked the opening of the line, a distance of 115 miles from Maitland. A passenger service commenced immediately. On 5 February 1913, the first rostered mail train to enter Dungog from the north arrived from Taree hauled

by engine P83 (later 3300). The engine would have used the new servicing facilities in the small town. Apart from P854 the previous day, it is obvious that P83 had also worked north to Taree, in order to return on the 'Mail'.

Again, records indicate that a rest house (barracks) was provided in Dungog on 28 June 1913 and a pillar tank (parachute water tank) was provided near the station on 15 May 1914.

Early in 1921, a new design of point indicator signal was developed. Dungog loco siding was mentioned in a Weekly Notice. "On Tuesday 30 August, 1921" ... "a new pattern point indicator" ... "will be fixed at the catch-points in the Loco. Siding operated by lever C". Improvements to the rest house were carried out in 1929, approval by the Chief Mechanical Engineer being granted at the Senior Locomotive Officers' Conference for July of the previous year.

A small coal stage had been provided in the Dungog loco area soon after construction. The Local Appendix (North) for 1930 shows Dungog with 'Coal Stage, 60 foot diameter turntable and an Engine Shed'.

Dungog remained unaltered for the next few years, with no major changes requiring approval of expenditure or alterations to layout. However, a number of changes to the loco area took place during the 1940s.

In 1942, a water column was provided between the main line and the loop at the southern end of the station, with an elevated tank and stand being built nearby.

The coal stage, installed not so many years before, was removed about 1944. The reason is unclear; perhaps the expenditure needed for maintenance was not justified, since locomotives would not have needed coaling during the relatively short, 100 mile return run to and from Broadmeadow on the local passenger trains. In September 1943, authority for improvements to the watering facilities

in Dungog was given by the Locomotive Officers' Conference (LOC). Improvements had also been carried out in 1930.

In the early 1940s, the length of the locomotive shed was substantially reduced, to almost half of the original length. Originally, the shed was 143'7" long but, by 1945, it had been reduced in length to 79 feet. The locomotive inspection pit, originally located wholly within the shed, was then partly external to the front of the building. Also, in 1945, further improvements in loco water supply were authorised and carried out.

Not exactly associated with the locomotive depot (but nevertheless very important to railway operations and the town), major upgrading of Dungog railway station and environs was carried out in 1945. This included new station buildings, platforms, road approaches, fences and culverts.

Electric lighting was provided at the two water columns located at the southern (or Newcastle) end of the platforms in 1955. One column served the main and loop, the other served the back platform road.

In 1957, further improvements to the watering facilities were carried out.

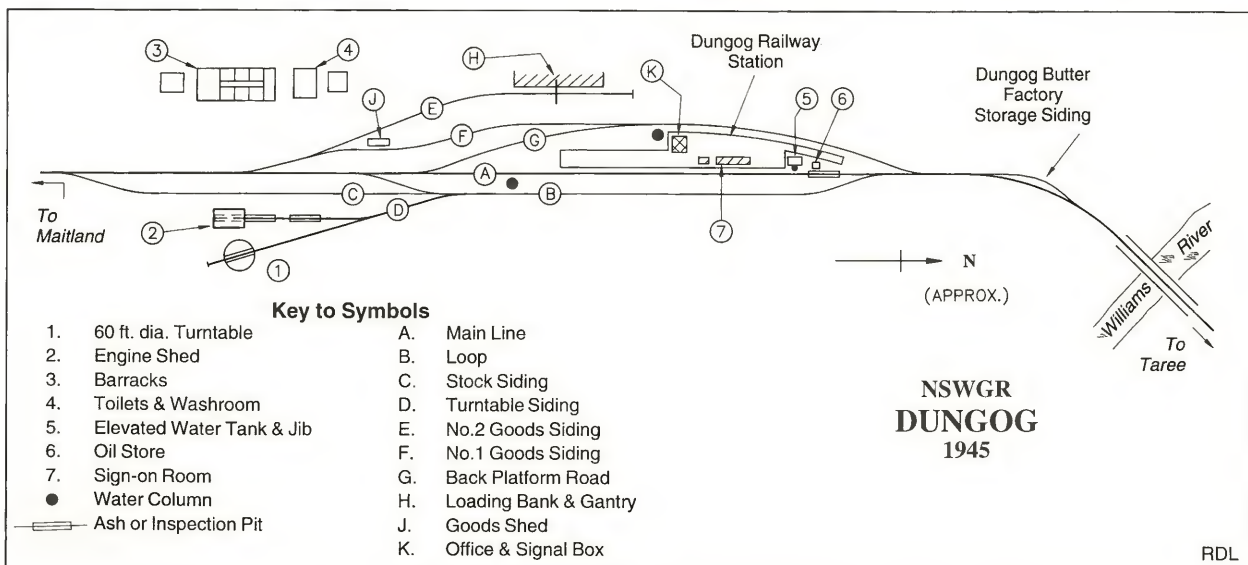
With the increase in dieselisation during the mid 1950s, Dungog did not fit into the plans. Few, if any, changes and improvements were carried out there and the old shed fell into disrepair during the 1960s.

On 2 October 1980, the loco sidings in Dungog were completely abolished.

Description

Dungog locomotive depot area consisted, essentially, of two sidings: an engine siding, about 400 feet long, and a turntable siding, approximately 440 feet long. The points leading to these sidings were located at the Newcastle end of the loop, facing up trains and on the up side of the line.

A single road engine shed and an ash pit (60 feet long) were located on the engine siding. A 60 foot



September 1948, and 3610 departs Dungog with No.5, the down Kempsey passenger, two express lavatory cars leading the consist. A Dungog crew has just taken over from the Broadmeadow men. They will work to Berrico or Gloucester, where a changeover with the Taree men on No.142 pick-up, will see the local men return to Dungog in early evening. To the right of the train is a 20,000 gallon elevated water tank with jib. Beneath the tank is the small wooden cabin which provided shelter during crew changes.

I.K. Winney



diameter steel turntable was located on the turntable siding.

As built, Dungog engine shed was a single road type, built to a Public Works Department standard design. The shed was 143'7" long, 27'4" wide, fitted with a pair of swing doors at the entrance or northern end of the shed. Timber buffer stops were constructed just inside the rear or southern wall of the structure. A ventilating ridge, approximately 120 feet long, was located along the peak of the shed roof. A smoke trough running the full length of the shed and five equally spaced smoke chutes assisted in smoke dispersion from within the shed.

The shed construction was of timber frame, with main vertical posts bolted to angle-iron brackets

which, in turn, were set in concrete foundations. The wall and roof cladding was corrugated iron sheeting. Five windows were fitted along each side wall, each window being fitted with pivoting fanlights at the top.

Inside the shed, two timber work benches (each 21'6" long x 3'0" wide) were placed, one against each side wall.

A locomotive inspection pit, almost the full length of the shed, and two water hydrants (recessed into the floor), assisted with locomotive preparation. The flooring of the shed was circular-shaped hardwood billets.

A crew barracks building (or rest house), with associated separate toilet and bathroom buildings,

Dungog engine shed during construction, c.1911. The locomotive is standing on the (later) stock siding with the main line being nearest the camera. The engine is probably former E class, 0-6-0 tender engine No.22, named 'Dungog', which, at the time, was working on construction duties with the Public Works Department.

SRA Archives



was constructed on a hill just to the west of the main line opposite the engine shed. The barracks contained six bedrooms, a meal room and a kitchen. The barracks, shower room and toilet block were all of brick construction.

The main engine shed was substantially altered in the early 1940s and in its final form, Dungog engine shed was reduced in length from 143'7" to 79'0". The inspection pit, formerly 124'6" long and entirely within the shed was thus divided, with a pit 56'0" long then being in front of the building, the remainder being located within the shed. The ash pit, 60'0" long, remained unaltered, in the original location, in front of the shed.

The standard 60 foot diameter steel turntable, installed at the time of construction, remained for the lifetime of the loco depot area.

An unusual aspect of the Dungog locomotive depot was the lack of engine servicing and preparation facilities in the shed area. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that the prime purpose of the depot was the provision of men for relay working on the mainline expresses and mails.

The sign-on room was an office within the station building, at the southern or Newcastle end of the platform, but most other facilities were located at the northern end. A locker room was provided but, to quote a Dungog driver of the time, was 'only a small wooden cabin under the water tank and column at the northern end of the platform'. Similarly,

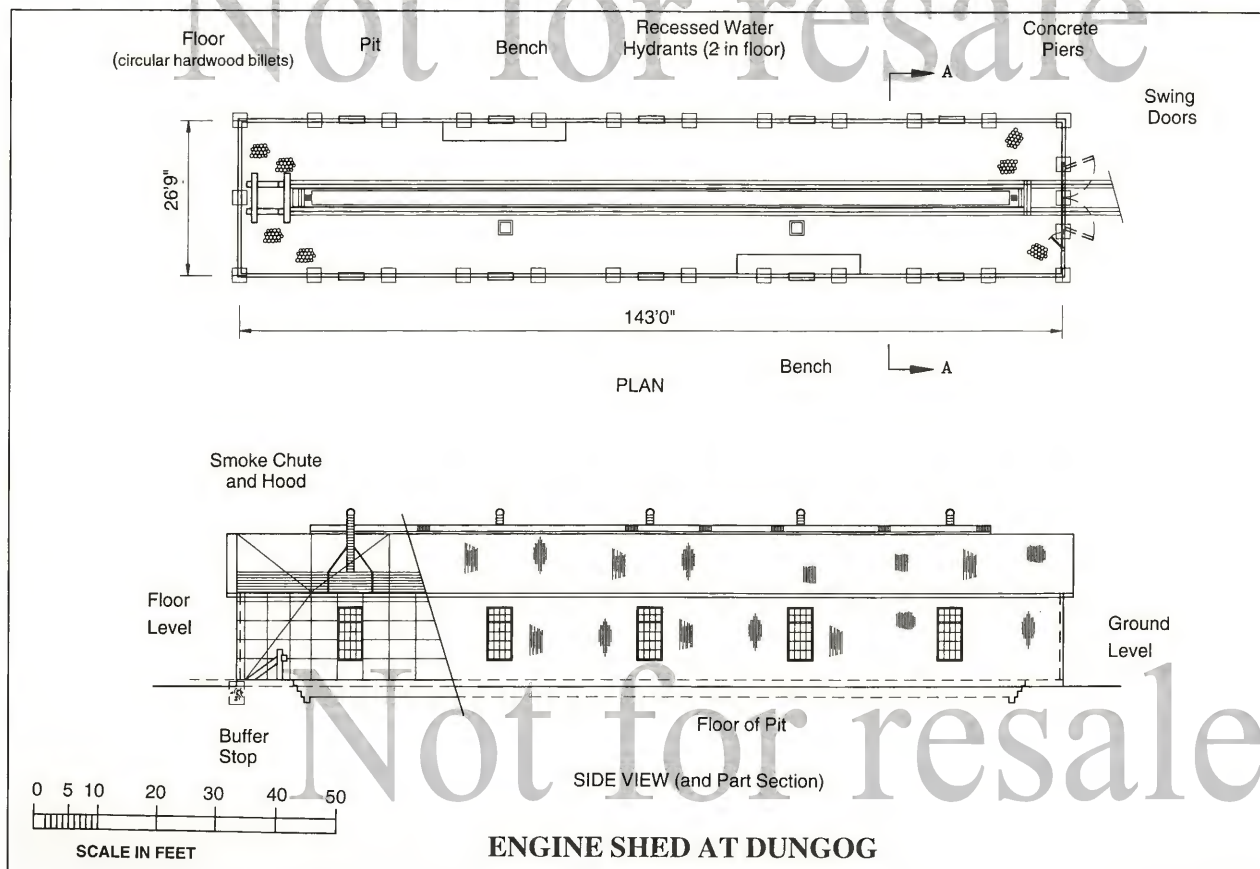
the oil-store was in 'a small iron box', under the tank and the washing amenities for enginemens doing the relays were 'a tin trough', also under the same water tank. (It seems to have been a very useful water tank!)

Crews, Working and Locomotives

Arthur William Hawkins was born in December 1892 and joined the Railways in June 1913 as a cleaner at Hamilton (Newcastle) locomotive depot. His rate of pay, at the time, was five shillings per day. In August 1916, he transferred to Taree depot as a fireman, and in October of the following year, was sent on loan to Dungog depot. He received expenses as a result of this temporary transfer, records indicating that he still resided permanently in Taree at the time. His rate of pay had then risen to nine shillings and nine pence per day and he remained in Dungog until May 1918, returning to Taree as a fireman.

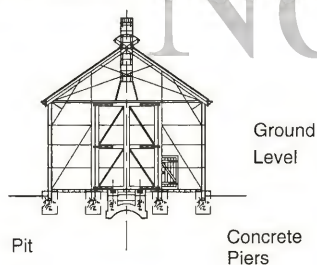
In early 1926, Charles Abrahams and George Cooper were both appointed to Dungog depot as cleaners, in the (then) Locomotive Branch.

In 1921/1922, there was a small sub- or out-depot at Mount George, some 60 miles north of Dungog but only 22 miles south from Taree. Its purpose is unclear at the time of writing and further investigation will be required. It is conjectured that the crews were used on the local pick-up goods work. This is probably associated with the number of





An enlarged view of the front of the Dungog engine shed, with workmen and scaffolding in the doorway of the new building. The heavy swing doors are in position, with roofing and gutters completed, although the smoke chutes are partly finished.
SRA Archives



SECTION A - A



FRONT VIEW

NOTES

1. This drawing is based on Dept. of Public Works Dwg. 'Engine Shed at Dungog', dated 1910.
2. Only basic internal construction of the shed is shown on this dwg.

RDL

active saw mills (and hence, heavy timber traffic) in the area. Working of pick-up trains by a 'local' crew often reduced the need for inconvenient relief having to be arranged for men working excessive hours on these trains. This was similar to the arrangements applying in other locations such as Capertee, Wauchope and Yeoval in years past.

Crew ar-

rangements at the time are recorded as follows:

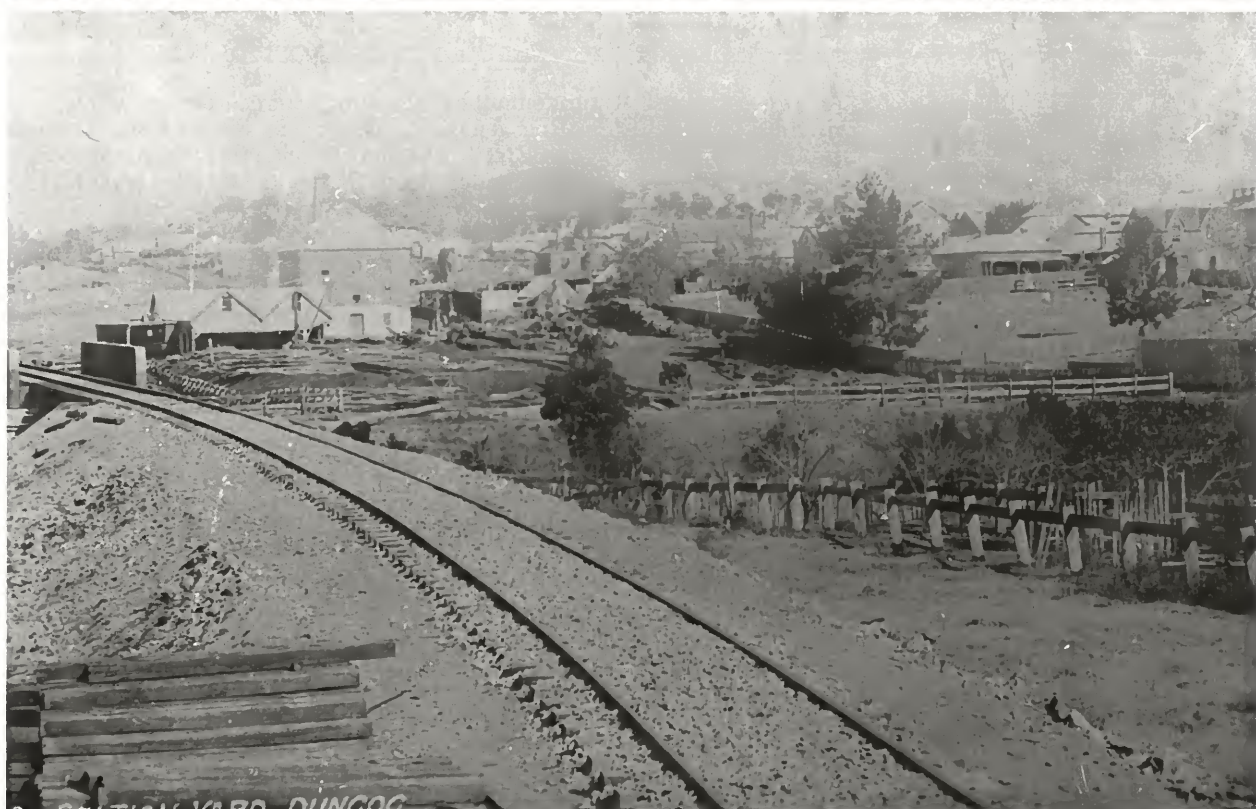
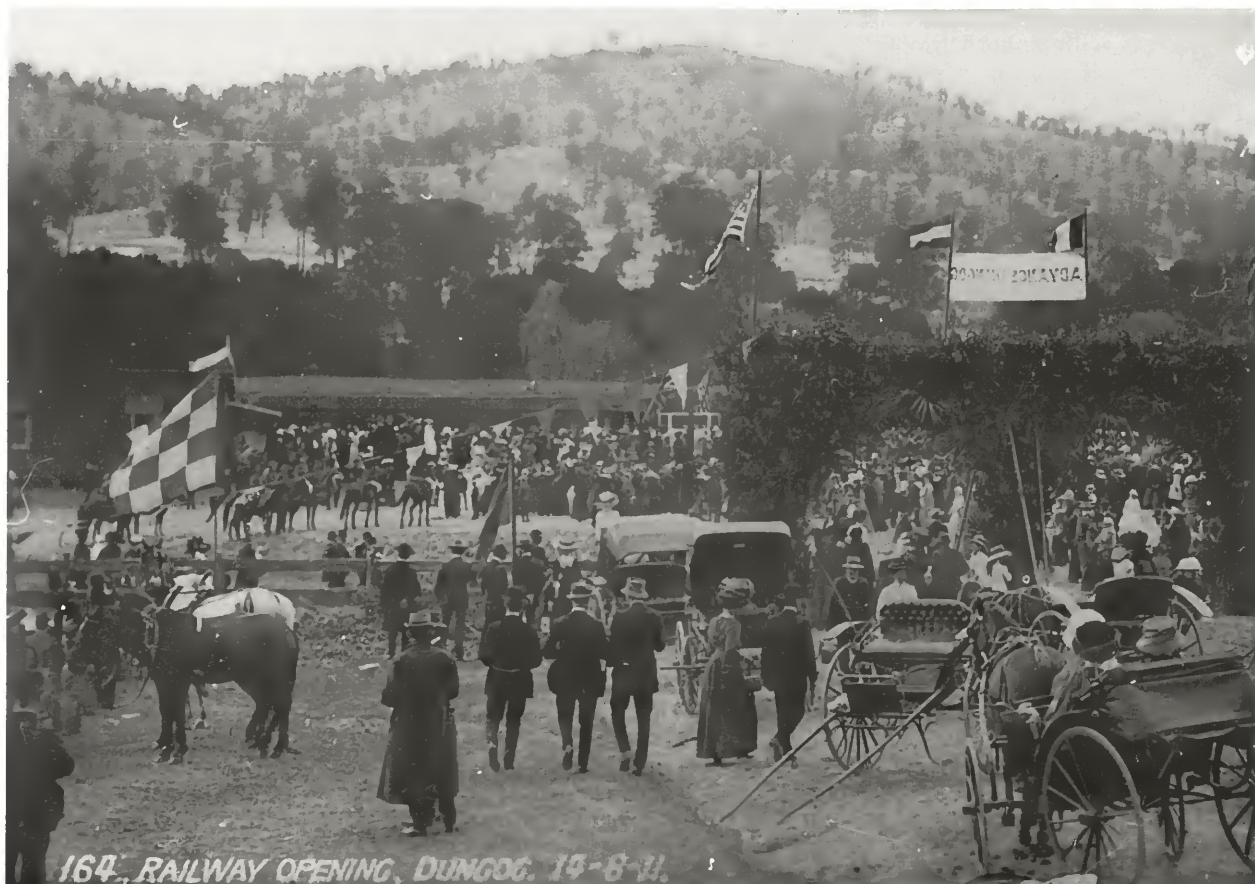
- Reg Anstess: Driver at Taree, Mt. George (1921/1922 period), Macksville and Kempsey.
- Alexander Gray: Driver at Mt. George, 6/1/21.
- Robert Green: Driver, Mt. George.
- James Howell: Fireman, Mt. George, 14/5/21.
- Robert Lindsay: Driver, Mt. George (stationed twice at Mt. George).
- Richard Ings: Driver, Mt. George (May 1920/Dec 1921).

In the 1940s, through to the late 1950s, twelve drivers, twelve firemen and a solitary cleaner were working out of Dungog locomotive depot.

Of the twelve drivers, six were 'diagram' men, working the rostered passenger, mail and express trains, whilst the remaining six drivers were on goods working. Dungog firemen would spend six 'fortnights' on the passenger roster (Sydney and Kempsey running), then drop down the roster and spend six fortnights on goods work, before starting back on the passenger work.

Dungog was a crew relay point for the mail and express passenger trains, as well as a number of rostered goods trains.

Locomotives worked through, between Broadmeadow and Taree (135 miles) on both passenger and goods trains; only the crews were relayed at





A closer view of Dungog locomotive shed, 14 December 1957. This photograph is taken from approximately the same location as the construction photo but some 46 years later. The shed had been reduced in length in the early 1940s, the final style being illustrated here. Note the absence of smoke chutes on the roof. Also of note are the wider eaves as compared to the 'builder's photo' shown previously, possibly altered during the rebuilding in the 1940 period.

I.K. Winney

Above Left: *On 14 August 1911, the railway was opened into the small town of Dungog. This photo (one of a series taken in the district by G.Kelly) is a view of the western side of the station on that historic day and illustrates the importance of the event to the local people. Today, this is still the main approach road to the station area.*

G. Kelly / G. Zimmerman Collection

Left: *Railway construction from Dungog towards Taree continued in the 1913 period. At the northern end of Dungog station, the line immediately crosses two waterways, Myall Creek and the Williams River. This photo shows the northern end of the historic town and the bridge over Myall Creek. A siding for the Dungog Butter Factory was later provided in the area to the right.*

G. Kelly / G. Zimmerman Collection

Dungog. Normal motive power on these trains included 32, 35 and 36 class engines on the passenger trains, with these, plus the Standard Goods engines, on the goods trains.

In most instances, the locomotives working through Dungog were allocated to either Broadmeadow, Taree or Casino depots. On odd occasions, a 'ring-in' from distant depots such as Enfield or Eveleigh would turn up on goods or passenger trains.

The depot was under the control of the Station Master at Dungog; there was no Chargeman or Driver-in-Charge, which is the usual situation in most depots. Crew calling was supervised by the SM or ASM, and the Junior Porter was usually the lucky

person designated to wake the sleepy crews. All rostering was made out by the Roster Clerk-Broadmeadow, this depot also supplying relief crews in the event of sickness or holidays. When the senior men in the depot went on holidays, it was usual for the senior acting driver in Dungog to go onto the top passenger roster on a temporary basis.

Dungog crews on the passenger roster worked the mail and express passenger trains to Sydney in the south (152 miles) and Kempsey in the north (161 miles).

Typical rosters, applying weekdays, were as follows (slightly different on weekends):

No.2 Brisbane Limited Express

Dungog - Sydney (relay engine at Broadmeadow)

- to barracks in Sydney.

No.1 Brisbane Limited Express

(prepare 38 class engine in Eveleigh) Sydney - Dungog (relay engine at Broadmeadow) - Sign off.

No.1 Brisbane Limited Express

Dungog - Taree (take engine to loco, take prepared engine for No.11 Mail, return to station), work No.11 North Coast Mail to Kempsey (relieved on arrival) - to barracks (in Kempsey).

No.14 North Coast Mail

Kempsey - Taree (take engine to loco, take prepared engine for No.2 Brisbane Limited Express, return to the station), work No.2 Limited to Dungog (relieved on arrival) - Sign off.

No.14 North Coast Mail

Dungog - Sydney (relay engine at Broadmeadow) - barracks (in Sydney).

No.11 North Coast Mail

Sydney - Dungog (relay engine at Broadmeadow) - Sign off.

On weekends, this working varied and Dungog crews often worked a 'double', Dungog - Taree - Dungog.

From the above examples, it is obvious that Dungog crews ran long mileages on the passenger roster.

In addition to these passenger trains, Dungog crews worked the regular goods trains on a roster system. In most cases, the goods working involved 'changeovers', whereby the crews exchanged with another train coming in the opposite direction, each then returning to its home depot.

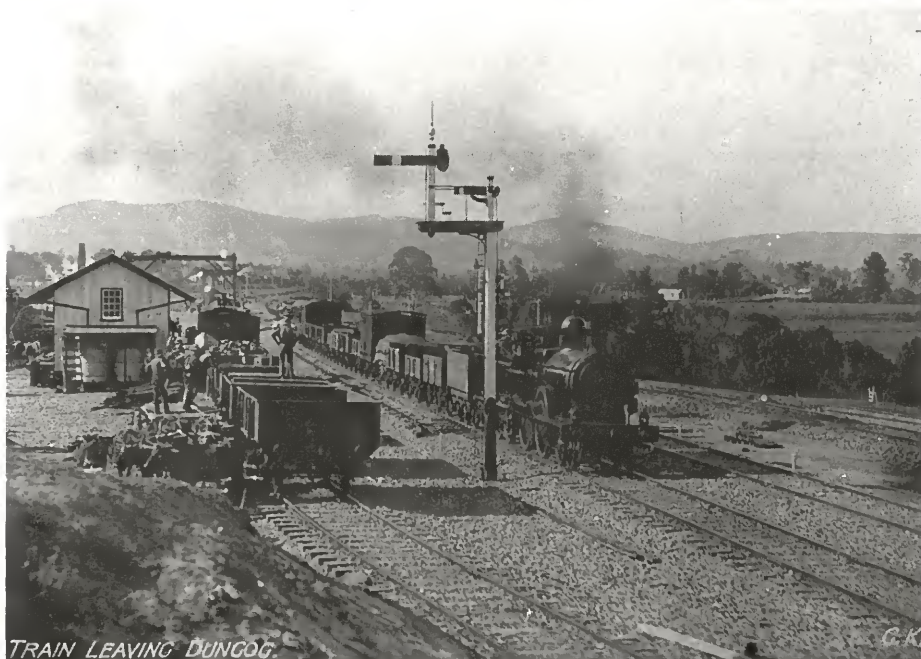
A typical goods roster applying at the time, was as follows:

No.177 goods, arr. Dungog 4.18am (Broadmeadow crew), relieved by Dungog crew, work to



Truss bridges such as this abound on the North Coast Railway, between Maitland and South Brisbane. The Williams River bridge, a few hundred yards north of Dungog station, is shown, the photograph taken c.1913 from the northern end, with part of the old, historic town in the distance. G. Kelly

Both photos from G. Zimmerman Collection



The southern, or Maitland end of Dungog yard and a clean D255 class (later 15 class) departs with an up mixed, c.1913. On the left of the photo, goods are being loaded (or unloaded) beside the newly constructed goods shed, bullock teams being used to haul the drays. A locomotive is attached to these vehicles, just visible beneath the gantry crane. The down home signals, fitted with a wooden arm for the platform road and a smaller somersault arm for the loop, are in the centre. The refuge loop is on the other side of the train, with the shed and turntable roads beyond. G. Kelly

Bundook (7.51am), cross No.52 up goods (Taree crew), changeover, work No.52 back to Dungog, sign off.

Apart from this, Dungog crews were called on to work goods trains through to Taree or Broadmeadow on barracks jobs, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

An example of passenger and goods work on the same shift is shown:

No.5 Kempsey passenger, arr. Dungog 1.11pm (Broadmeadow crew), relieved by Dungog crew, work No.5 to Berrico, cross No.142 goods (Taree crew), changeover, work No.142 back to Dungog, sign off.

Prior to 1935, No.5 Kempsey passenger was worked to Dungog by an Eveleigh crew, relieved there by a Kempsey crew to continue northward. At this time, the return working, No.6 up Kempsey passenger was also worked by a Kempsey crew to Dungog, with an Eveleigh crew out of Dungog barracks then continuing on to Sydney. It is perhaps of interest to note the composition of No.5 and No.6 Kempsey passenger trains in the 1930/1931 period. The down Kempsey passenger (9.20am from Sydney, arrive Kempsey 10.42pm - 13½ hours for 300 miles) was marshalled, ex Sydney, from the rear, LFX, BX, EHO, LFX (detach Dungog), LFX (detach Newcastle). On the return trip, No.6 Kempsey - Sydney passenger was marshalled, from the rear, LFX, BX, EHO brakevan, with an LFX attached behind the engine on arrival in Dungog, and an LV four-wheel van of milk being attached to the rear of the same train for conveyance to Newcastle.

By August 1935, Broadmeadow crews took over

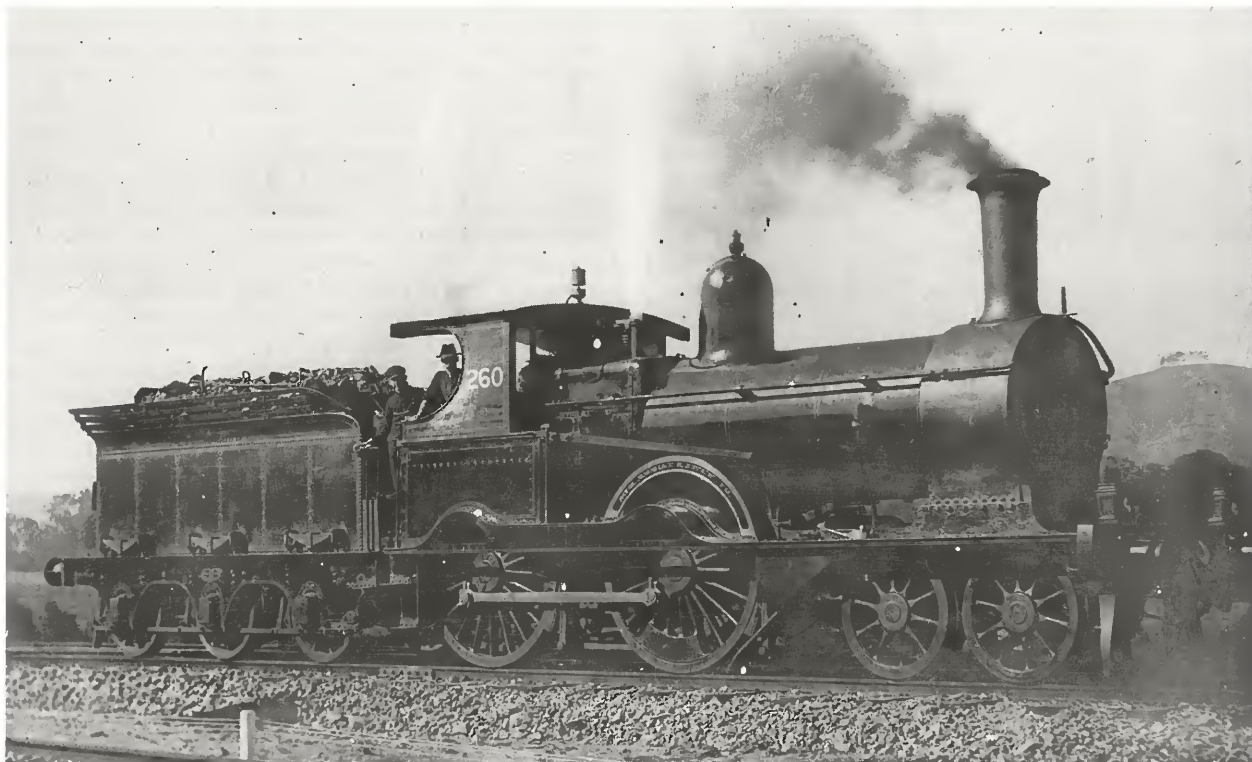
the working of Nos 5/6 Kempsey passenger trains. It was usual for these Broadmeadow men to work No.8 up North West Mail to Sydney, then return working No.5, back to Broadmeadow, the same morning. A fresh Broadmeadow crew then continued on up the coast to Dungog.

From the late 1940s, through the 1950s, 35 and 36 class engines normally worked Nos 5 and 6 Kempsey passenger between Broadmeadow and Kempsey. The down train (No.5) usually ran through No.121 down goods at Dungog about 1.15pm, the goods following the passenger out as soon as the section was clear. With the passenger allowed eight minutes at Dungog for crew change and water, it was an opportune time to give the rocker grates on the engine 'a bit of a shake', before the fresh Dungog crew continued on to the north. On occasions, however, this procedure met with some problems, when the rockers jammed or something else went amiss during this brief stay. The engine off 121 goods (usually an old 'Standard Goods') was grabbed, so No.5 could continue on towards Taree. Meanwhile, the minor problems on the original engine were fixed in Dungog and it then carried on later, with the goods. John Stormont, a signalman at Monkerai during this period, noted the use of 121's engine on No.5 passenger on quite a few occasions, the sight of former K class engine, 5561 roaring up the long 1 in 80 grade towards the box, being particularly memorable.

The Dungog school train, which conveyed students to the Maitland high schools and colleges from the nearby north coast stations, was also worked by a Dungog crew on the 'goods roster'. On arrival in



The North Coast Railway was officially opened through to Taree on 4 February, 1913. The following day, the first rostered mail train from Taree to the south entered the town of Dungog. This photograph (by G. Kelly), shows the arrival of the first up mail, hauled by P 83 (later to become 3300), as it steams across the Williams River bridge into town.



At the time of the opening of the North Coast Railway through Dungog, a total of 120 4-4-0 tender locomotives was in service. Five classes of locomotive were represented including C (later 12 class), Cg (14), D (15 and 16) and H (17) class. Numerically, the largest class of the 4-4-0s was the C class, with a total of forty-eight engines. The smallest class was the D255 class, later renumbered as the 15 class, with only six representatives. The D255 class engines were built by Beyer, Peacock in 1882, and were similar in many respects to their later-built cousins, the D261 and D334 class 4-4-0s, built by Dübs & Co. in 1883-1885. Both these latter groups were renumbered as the 16 class. All the D class were express passenger engines, with inside cylinders and motion, but the D255 and D261 classes were built with Stephenson valve gear, while the D334 class was built with Joy valve gear. The term 'a Joy-valve D' was affectionately applied to these latter engines, to distinguish them from the other D class. To further complicate matters, the D255 and D261 classes were fitted with the Bissel type bogie; the D334 had the Adams type. The D classes saw many years of work on the North Coast. Early photographs show them in service at the time of the line's opening, and load tables were issued for them in 1913. Taree depot had D255 (1501) on allocation in 1915, and in 1930, one was still working out of that depot. In 1932, the last D class engine allocated to a North Coast depot (a 16 class) was transferred away, ending a twenty-year association with the line. With the opening of the through service to South Brisbane, it was no place for small 4-4-0s. Even though the 15 and 16 class were passenger engines, most photographs showing them at work on the North Coast line depict them hauling short goods trains. The photo shows D260, which became 1506 in the 1924 renumbering, the last of the class. The location is thought to be Dungog, as noted on the photo. Engine D260 had been reboilered and fitted with a Belpaire boiler in 1901-1902, and was withdrawn in 1929 after forty-six years of arduous service. It was scrapped in 1937.

N.J. Thorpe Collection

Right: *In 1925 engine 3601, the first of a new class of express passenger locomotive, entered service in NSW. They were larger and more powerful than the 32, 34 and 35 classes and immediately displaced these older engines on the heaviest mails and express passenger trains. A total of seventy-five engines was built and this photo shows the last (numerically) in the class. It was not the last to enter service, however, as Eveleigh-built 3610 actually entered service some months later than Clyde-built 3675. The illustration shows the engine in near-original condition, with round-top firebox (and 180lb/sq.in. boiler) and cab fitted with square windows. They were to be seen all over the main lines of the state hauling the mails, expresses and some fast goods trains. Their limits included Albury in the south, Narrandera in the south-west, Parkes, Forbes and Dubbo in the west, South Brisbane on the North Coast and Armidale in the north.*

In the mid-1950s, seventy-three of the class were rebuilt with 200lb/sq.in. boilers, Belpaire fireboxes and improved cabs and, with these modifications, they continued performing top mainline service for another 10-15 years. The cab improvements made conditions more comfortable for the crew, but many old enginemen preferred the original 'round-tops' for performance. These include the author's father, who has fond memories of them working the heavy grades north from Sydney.

SRA Archives



The 35 class 4-6-0 express passenger engines saw more than 50 years of regular service with the NSWGR. The thirty-five engines in the class were built by Eveleigh Workshops in three groups, entering service between 1914 and 1923. Commencing in the late 1930s, these engines were rebuilt in Eveleigh Workshops and in their final form, were fitted with (amongst other things) the modified standard smokebox arrangement, valances above the driving wheels and improved cabs. The tenders were also rebuilt.

In this photo, NN1041 (later re-numbered 3515) shows off some of its original features, which were lost with the rebuilding, including timber front buffer beam, smokebox door fitted with locking 'dogs', water injector 'clack valves' mounted in front of the firebox, cut-away cab and staff exchanger in the lower cab side.

The 35 and 36 class locomotives ruled the North Coast goods and passenger trains for many years, with the old 32 class being relegated to lesser jobs. All that changed in 1949, when the 35 and 36 class were banned from the coast for nearly two years, due to track deterioration. During that period, the 32 class returned to heavy mail and express haulage. The 35 and 36 classes returned to their home territory when conditions improved and resumed working the heavy trains along the North Coast Railway.

SRA Archives





Nearly 120 miles south of Dungog, and a 50 class assists a round-boilered 36 class up the 1 in 40 grades of Cowan Bank with No.14 up North Coast Mail. No.14 was a regular job for Dungog crews, the men going into barracks in Sydney and returning that evening with No.11, the down Mail.

SRA Archives

Above: In the steam days, Dungog men worked passenger trains through to Kempsey in the north, 161 miles. With goods trains, Taree was the limit of working. Often, change-overs with crews coming in the opposite direction were arranged and Bundook featured in these exchanges. In this photo, Belpaire-boilered 3668 stands in the platform at Bundook whilst round-boilered 3622 on a goods, enters the loop for a crossing. It is quite likely a Dungog crew is on the goods train. The date is 18 January 1958, and 3622 has only a few months to go before final withdrawal. This engine and sister 3663 were the only two of the type not to be reboilered and were withdrawn and scrapped in original condition.

I.K. Winney



The 35 class locomotives worked the North Coast line for many years, performing all kinds of work. In 1949, Taree depot had seven engines allocated, whilst Casino depot had an allotment of twelve. Here, lined green 3505 shows her speedy profile to anyone showing interest.

SRA Archives

Newcastle, the crew took the engine to Broadmeadow loco, booked off for 4 hours, then returned the train from Newcastle to Dungog in the afternoon.

As stated earlier, Dungog worked in conjunction with Kempsey, Taree and Broadmeadow depots as far as train operations were concerned.

Extracts from the Memo Books of Broadmeadow driver Vince Waters illustrate the working which applied to Dungog, during the last months of World War II.

On 20 April 1945, driver Waters worked No.107 down goods from Broadmeadow to Wallarobba on engine 5526. Dungog driver Fred Gaven relieved driver Waters at Wallarobba (probably came down 'passenger' from Dungog to meet No.107) and worked the train on but driver Waters travelled 'passenger' (usually in the brakevan) on to Dungog and went into barracks there. He then signed on in Dungog at 5.25pm, later relieved Dungog driver George Hinit on No.142 goods (engine 5548) and worked home to Broadmeadow.

On 27 May 1945, Vince Waters signed on at 9.50pm and worked No.149 goods (engine 5326) to Dungog, signing off at 4.38am. He went into barracks there, signing back on at 12.54pm, relieved Dungog driver Gibb on No.6 up Kempsey passenger (engine 3328) and worked on to Broadmeadow.

On 29 March 1947, driver Vince Waters signed on at Broadmeadow at 5.30am to work No.121 goods, with engine 3534. At Dungog, he relieved Dungog driver Dick Carrall at 11.19am on No.130 goods (engine 5515) and worked back to Broadmeadow. After stabling 5515 in loco, Vince Waters signed off at 3.04pm.

In the years after the war, the Memo Books of

Broadmeadow driver Jack Watterson illustrate the working which applied then.

On 3 August 1955, Jack Watterson signed on at Broadmeadow at 6.02am, worked No.121 goods, engine 5918, load 525 tons, to Dungog. At Telarah, the load was built up to 685 tons. At Dungog, he was relieved by Dungog driver Bob Salter. Jack and his mate signed off at 10.42am, and signed back on at 1.06pm. They then relieved Dick Carrall on No.6, the up Kempsey passenger, engine 3663, and worked back home.

On 26 October 1955, driver Watterson signed on at Broadmeadow at 1.47pm and worked No.735 Dungog passenger, ex Newcastle, with engine 3316. (This was usually worked by a Dungog crew). At Dungog, Jack Watterson relieved the Dungog driver on No.118 up goods (engine 5919, load 679 tons) and worked back to Broadmeadow.

On 19 February 1957, Jack Watterson signed on at 10.55pm at Broadmeadow and travelled 'passenger' to Dungog on No.11 down North Coast Mail. At Dungog, driver Watterson, together with Dungog fireman Kevin 'Cobbler' Johnson, took over No.4 up Brisbane Express, with engine 3504. At Broadmeadow, 3811 replaced 3504, and Jack Watterson and Kevin Johnson continued on to Sydney. The load was 335 tons and they were assisted from Hawkesbury River to Cowan by Hawkesbury River driver Bob Rankin with 'banker' 5037. On arrival in Sydney, they went into barracks. That evening, driver Watterson and fireman Johnson signed on in Sydney at 6.31pm, prepared 3810, whistled out of Eveleigh (7.41pm), and departed Sydney on time at 8.03pm. On arrival at Broadmeadow, 3810 was relayed by 3628 for the run north (load: 9 cars, 360 tons). Dungog driver Cec Holland and his fireman



Monkerai crossing loop was opened in September 1930, and is located six miles north of Dungog, on a 1 in 80 rising grade on the approach to the nearby Monkerai tunnel. On the morning of 9 November 1950, engine 5384 at the head of No.177 down goods slowly approaches the signal box, passing through on the main line. The wooden box containing the ground staff exchanger is shown in the bottom left of the photo.

J. Stormont

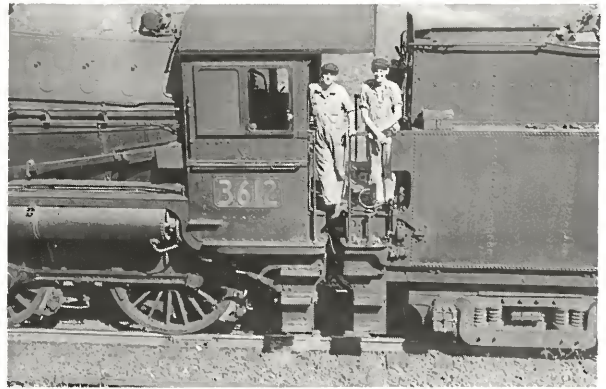
relieved Jack Watterson and Kevin Johnson on arrival in Dungog at 12.33am and continued on to the north. Driver Watterson then returned home passenger on No.14 mail.

Extracts from the Memo Books of Broadmeadow driver Pat Sharkey also give an indication of the working for the 1953/1954 period.

On 14 March 1953, Driver Sharkey worked No.5 Kempsey passenger to Dungog with engine 3602, relieved there by Dungog driver Ken Rule, who continued on to the north. Driver Sharkey and his mate then worked back home on No.52 up goods.

On 19 May 1953, Driver Sharkey worked No.107 goods to Wallarobba (engine 5565), changed over with Dungog driver Ritchie on No.144 up goods, engine 3203.

On 1 July 1953 Dungog driver Jack Wade arrived at Broadmeadow with No.1 Brisbane Limited Express (having worked out of Sydney with engine 3826). Pat Sharkey took prepared engine 3668 out of Broadmeadow loco, relayed engines on No.1 at Broadmeadow station and returned 3826 to loco. He then prepared 5608 and worked No.177 goods to



Dungog enginemmen Bob 'Spieler' Shield (left) and Jack Ritchie pose for their portraits at Monkerai whilst working No.121 goods with round-boilered 3612 in April 1952. This engine was one of three 36 class known to be fitted with cab-side number plates at the time, the others being 3610 and 3655.

J. Stormont

Dungog driver Andy Mahon and fireman Albert Clarke take a break whilst working No.52 up pick-up goods at Monkerai on 31 May 1952.

J. Stormont



Dungog, going into barracks there. Later, in the afternoon of 2 July 1953, driver Sharkey (ex barracks) relieved Dungog driver Steve Turner on No.6 up Kempsey passenger (3668) and returned to Broadmeadow.

On 25 September 1953, driver Sharkey travelled 'passenger' to Dungog, relieved Dungog driver Holland (who had worked in from Taree), worked No.2 Brisbane Limited Express to Broadmeadow, with Dungog firemen Dave Walters, on engine 3625. (Normally, this was a Dungog job; obviously a Dungog driver was unavailable). At Broadmeadow, 3634 replaced 3625, and the crew worked through to Sydney, going into barracks. That same evening, Pat Sharkey and Dave Walters then worked No.3 Brisbane Express (with 3804) to Broadmeadow. Driver Sharkey was relieved at Broadmeadow, but fireman Walters continued home to Dungog on the Express with another driver. (Dungog fireman Dave Walters is a cousin of famous cricketer Doug Walters, who also hailed from the town.)



During the late 1940s, the Kempsey Day Train ran every day (except Sunday) between Sydney and Kempsey. The train stopped all stations after leaving Maitland, taking 8¼ hours to traverse the coastal section of the trip. Dungog crews worked the train (and its return counterpart, No.6) in the section north of Dungog, with Eveleigh and Broadmeadow men working the train between Sydney and Dungog. On 10 July 1947, 3618 coasts around the shores of Mullet Creek with 10 cars on No.5 passenger, a mere 270 miles to journey's end.

SRA Archives

On 5 January 1954, Driver Sharkey prepared the following engines in Broadmeadow loco:

3644 for No.1 Brisbane Limited Express

3516 for No.149 goods

3207 for light engine to Dungog.

He then worked 3207 'light' to Dungog, being relieved on arrival by Dungog driver Steve Turner, and went into barracks. Out of barracks on 6 January, he then relieved Dungog driver Ken Rule on No.6 Kempsey passenger (engine 3608), and worked home to Broadmeadow.

Again returning to Jack Watterson's Memo Books, the early years of dieselisation of the coast are shown as applicable to Dungog working.

On 28 August 1960, Jack Watterson signed on at Broadmeadow at 2.55am and worked No.407 goods to Dungog, engine 4012. Dungog driver Ken Rule relieved him there at 8.36am, and Jack Watterson went into Dungog barracks. He signed back on at 5.30pm that evening, and relieved Ken Rule on No.418 up goods, engine 4014, then worked 418 home to Broadmeadow. Obviously Dungog driver Ken Rule had 'changed over' with a Taree crew near Gloucester or Bundock.

It is of interest to note that the air-conditioned North Coast Daylight Express (Nos.27 and 26) which entered service between Sydney and Grafton in late 1952, was not worked by Dungog men at all. Broadmeadow crews worked the train both ways through Dungog in the early days (late 1950s), then later, Taree men worked through from Taree to Sydney, returning the following day.

The cleaner based in Dungog also had plenty of work to do. His duties included attending to the engine detached off the weekday school train, usually a 32 class. This locomotive was not 'put to bed' in the depot, but kept ready near, or in, the shed, standing as 'pilot engine' for all the express and mail trains passing through during the night. In the early part of the evening, this engine was used for some yard shunting, including milk tankers from the nearby milk depot. The engine was then left facing north in case it was required for the down passenger trains. Early the next morning, it was turned and made ready as a pilot for the string of up passenger trains passing through. In addition to the job of looking after this engine, the shed cleaner also shovelled down the tenders of the express and



Driver Geoff Southern leans from the cab of round-boilered 3651 (keeping an eye on the photographer perched on the bracketed down home signal and about to be covered with smoke and soot) whilst working No.121 down North Coast goods toward Monkerai on 5 September 1951. Part of the load includes coal for the North Coast locomotive depots, conveyed in S and G wagons.

J. Stormont

mail train engines on the main line during their eight minute stop for water and crew change. The shed cleaner was in fact an acting fireman and was qualified for mainline work if required. If the rostered mainline firemen failed to appear for some reason or another, the cleaner could find himself heading for Broadmeadow or Taree on one of the evening mail or express trains.

Not all express and mail trains relayed engines at Dungog. Broadmeadow and Taree crews worked through the town on the Kempsey and

South Grafton mails, as well as the North Coast Daylight Express, previously mentioned.

Generally, Dungog men were qualified for working all classes of passenger engine (32, 35, 36 and 38 class being usual) and the three classes of Standard Goods engines - 50, 53 and 55 class. (Oil burning 55 and, later, the oil burning 59 class engines were also worked by Dungog men). All of these, except the 38 class, were normal motive power on the North Coast trains and of course, the 38 class worked the expresses and some of the mails



Christmas and Easter holiday rail traffic produced the most unusual train compositions. January 16, 1951 was no exception. In drizzling rain, 3233 drops down out of Monkerai tunnel, hauling the up relief Brisbane Express (No.4a), crossing a down goods in the loop. The load of 4a includes three 'dog box' express lavatories, an eight car LUB set of American suburbs and a van. An exhilarating ride from South Brisbane to say the least.

J. Stormont



The air-conditioned North Coast Daylight Express went into revenue service in 1952, running between Sydney and Grafton. The train was worked by Broadmeadow men through Dungog during steam days; Dungog crews did not get a look in. In the mid 1950s, reboilered 3607 gets into stride with a seven-car RUB set on No.27 express, near Waratah.

M. Farrell

The Dungog school train conveyed students from the Paterson /Dungog area to the high schools in Maitland and Newcastle. The usual composition was a set of American suburban cars, hauled by a 32 class and worked by a Dungog crew. The train is typically represented in this photo by 3221 heading north across the twin Ironbark Creek bridges near Sandgate, in late afternoon, 26 November 1965.

R.D. Love



between Broadmeadow and Sydney. It must also be noted that the 34 class 4-6-0s worked the North Coast trains in the early 1930s. The five members of the class were allocated to Taree depot at the time and no doubt Dungog enginemen worked them as well.

In later years, Dungog crews qualified for the early classes of mainline diesel-electrics working in the area, including 40, 43, and 44 class. Dieselisation brought efficiencies to a number of facets of operation and utilisation. Crews were able to perform more work in a given amount of time and, as a result, crew numbers were affected in many depots. With the delivery of the 42 and 43 class mainline units from 1955 onward, men from Taree depot were asked, and agreed, to operate Nos 1 and 2 Brisbane Limited Expresses through from Taree to Sydney and return without a crew change. This involved a trip of 235 miles, the longest in NSW at the time. The previous requirement of relaying crews at Dungog and locomotives at Broadmeadow was thus removed and the crew strength of Dungog depot was seriously affected as a result.

When Nos 1 and 2 were worked through by Taree men, the rosters at Dungog were then altered so that Dungog men worked Nos 3 and 4 Brisbane Expresses in lieu. Later, this was again changed, with Dungog crews working Nos 11 and 14 North Coast Mails. By this time, the writing was on the wall for the small depot.

Over the next two or three years, many Dungog enginemen transferred to other depots, such as Gosford, Taree and Broadmeadow. By the 1960 period, only five drivers remained. These were A. Cook, J. Pluis, S. Turner, K. Rule and R. Carrall. They worked with Broadmeadow firemen, who had been placed on loan from the parent depot, in effect, forming five sets of enginemen. Their work over the next few years involved Martin's Creek ballast trains (steam, up until the early 1970s) and regular tabled diesel-hauled goods trains. The Dungog crews were not involved with the short-lived return of through steam working, between Broadmeadow and Taree in 1968/1969, using coal-burning 59 class.

Crew numbers declined over the next few years, with retirements and transfers. By the mid 1980s, drivers Ken Rule and Steve Turner remained in Dungog and were then rostered together. On 4 April 1987, the last Dungog engineman, Ken Rule, retired. This marked the end of Dungog as a locomotive depot.

A number of retired Dungog drivers still live in the small town.

General Notes

As mentioned previously, the line was opened into Dungog on 14 August 1911, when No.1 Mixed steamed into town, cutting the official ribbon. The following Monday (only seven days later), a more important train (especially as far as local children were concerned) arrived in Dungog. The Wirth Brothers circus train, conveying a full load of 363

The North Coast Mail and the Brisbane Limited Express were Dungog jobs in the Dungog-Sydney section during the last years of steam operation. The 38 class were in common usage on these trains in the Broadmeadow-Sydney section, and Dungog men were qualified to work them. In this photo, a Hawkesbury banker assists a 38 class (Dungog men) on No.14 North Coast Mail up toward Cowan, the view taken from the cab of 3822 on the down Northern Tablelands Express.

J.M. Sullivan

tons, arrived at 7.00am (as D51 Special), performed in the small town and departed (as E52 Special) at 2.00am on Tuesday, 22 August, a stay of only 19 hours. The usual motive power on the Wirth circus train at the time was either a T class engine (later 50 class 2-8-0) or two B class engines (later 24/25 class 2-6-0s). The locomotive(s) on the circus train would have been serviced in the 'brand new' engine sidings.

In the early years of this century, horse and pony races were held in most country towns, these events being one of the main sources of community entertainment. The year of 1915 is taken as a typical example and shows the arrangements needed and the degree of interest these popular events generated in the district.

The Dungog Pony Races were arranged for 'Pay-Saturday, January 9, 1915' and were typical for the period. A 'Guaranteed Special Passenger Train' was tabled to leave Newcastle at 11.10am, arriving Dungog at 1.12pm, running as D25 special. The train was tabled to leave Dungog (E24) at 5.05pm, arriving at Newcastle at 7.11pm. The load of the train was to be 180 tons, and... 'Loco Inspector, Hamilton, to provide a 'P' class engine.' Horse boxes were to be conveyed as part of the load.

Dungog Jockey Club Races were scheduled for April 10, the same year, 1915, and the same timetable and arrangements were shown in the Weekly Notice.

A few days later (April 15), the West Maitland Show was held and special passenger trains were tabled to and from Dungog (as well as other centres such as Singleton and Newcastle) for this important event. The specials to and from Dungog were to convey a load of seven cars and to be worked by D





class engines.

Two weeks later (April 28/29), the Dungog Show was held. Special trains were tabled from Newcastle to Dungog (12 cars, worked by P class) and from Taree (also 12 cars, worked by P or TF class).

Dungog Pony Club Races were again held in June 1915, and again, the previous arrangements applied, with a special train conveying 150 tons, horse boxes and a P class supplied by Hamilton Loco.

In all the cases shown above, the locomotives would have been serviced in the new loco shed in Dungog.

Dungog locomotive depot was a sub- or out-depot of Broadmeadow, the large headquarters for locomotives in the Northern Division of the NSWGR.

No locomotives were ever allocated to Dungog and, consequently, there were no 'Dungog' shed or cab-side depot plates fixed to locomotives. In addition,

there were no fitting, mechanical or boilermaking staff there.

In the latter months of 1915, the Weekly Notice announced the 'Re-arrangement of Locomotive Districts, Northern Division'. This was a result of the extension of the North Coast Railway through to Taree.

On Sunday, 31 October, 1915, Steam Shed Inspectors (SSI) were stationed at Port Waratah, Singleton, Taree, Murrurundi and Moree. The SSI at Taree then assumed jurisdiction over the section between Martin's Creek and Wauchope, including Dungog locomotive depot.

Some 15 years later, with increased route miles, locomotives, crews, etc., this jurisdiction had changed. Dungog came under the control of the SSI at Broadmeadow.

The chain of command existing for the out-depot



The Standard Goods engines worked the North Coast from the earliest days, with all three classes sharing the work. A down goods, hauled by 5264, enters the platform at Bulliac, some 50 miles north of Dungog, c.1940. Goods working in this section was shared by Taree, Dungog and Broadmeadow crews. SRA Archives

of Dungog for the year of 1930 serves to illustrate a typical line of responsibility for all locomotive depots in the state. In this case, the northern depots are given as example.

Mr H. Kirkby, Divisional Locomotive Superintendent (Newcastle), overall responsibility for locomotives and crews on all lines north of Gosford.

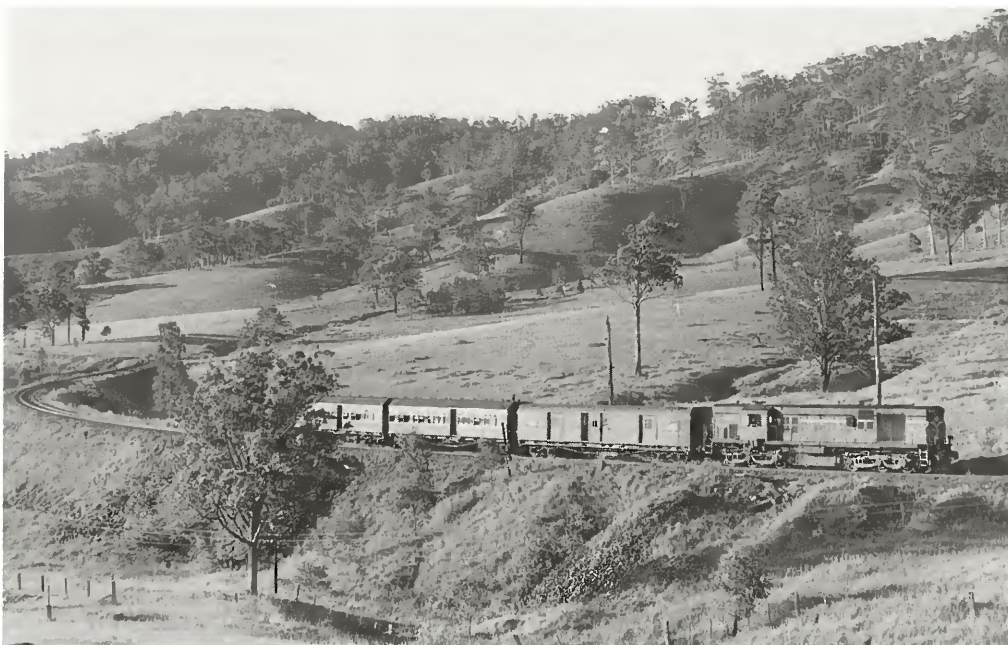
Mr E. Wark, Travelling Inspector (Port Waratah), responsible for crews on all lines, New-

castle to Murwillumbah.

Mr E.A. Loughry, Steam Shed Inspector (Broadmeadow), responsible for the locomotives and crews, West Maitland to Stroud Road.

Mr H.J. Brent, assistant Steam Shed Inspector (Broadmeadow), to assist Mr Loughry.

In the heyday of North Coast steam operations, the early 1950s, Dungog barracks played host to enginemen from Eveleigh, Broadmeadow and Taree



By the 1970s, the Dungog school train was normally formed by 620 class diesel sets. Occasionally, they were replaced by locomotive-hauled trains. On 6 March 1978, main line unit 4516 virtually coasts up the 1 in 80 grade toward Wallarobba tunnel on No.735 down afternoon school train. The load comprises an EHO van and two L type cars, so maintaining the timetable would pose no problem.

P. Attenborough



depots. In the 1940s, the barracks also provided accommodation for men from Kempsey.

The final turntable in use at Dungog was a 60 foot diameter, steel 'Newcastle' type, cone roller race, No.2236.

Epilogue

As with many other small depots in the state, the fate of Dungog as an important crew relay point, was sealed when diesel-electric locomotive 4001 was delivered from the manufacturers.

Dungog declined in importance over the next 30 year period, until in 1987, it could no longer be regarded as a depot with the retirement of the last man.

The small town of Dungog is still served by local passenger trains. A 620 (or 660) class, two-car diesel set runs a number of daily services from Newcastle and terminates, returning after a short stay in the back platform. These are worked by CityRail crews

from Newcastle station.

Dungog joins many other depots like Hornsby, Murrurundi, Singleton and Harden as casualties of through working of the diesels. With closures of other depots on the North Coast, only Broadmeadow, Taree, South Grafton and Yeerongpilly remain (as at 1994) as the major crew change points. Even Casino has now joined the list of depots on the 'closed' list. At the time of writing, little evidence remains in Dungog to show that steam locomotives worked through on the heaviest of passenger trains or that crews were relayed day and night for many years. The loco shed area is simply a pile of broken foundation bricks and some timber in the long grass south of the station. The points leading to loco from the loop have long been dismantled. The barracks and the toilet block are still to be seen on the hill west of the main line opposite the spot where the engine shed once stood. They are currently in use as part of a children's kindergarten. ▲



Above: Through-working of the diesel-electrics started the decline of Dungog depot. On 14 December 1957, Alco-GE unit 4304, then only a few months old, works across the Paterson River bridge into Paterson with a lengthy up goods, with either a Broadmeadow or Taree crew in charge.
I.K. Winney

Left: The sight of a 40 class on a passenger train implied a feeling of speed, as their time-keeping reputation was well known. By the late 1960s, Nos 5/6 Kempsey day train was a usual 40 class run, but their capacity to 'move along' was seldom called for on this all-stations trip. With the normal SIB set a 72'6" corridor car and a van, 4006 coasts down Fassifern bank with No.6 passenger.
George Wright



THE ENGINEER'S DODGE

Leon Oberg

Railway administrators worldwide have for many decades used specially adapted road vehicles to run on railway tracks. In recent times, vehicles able to make the switch between road and rail modes have acquired the generic title of 'hi-rail' vehicles. In doing so, they have been pressed into a multitude of roles - from fettlers' vehicles to weed-spray units, from track-recording cars to executive inspection transporters.

But the concept is not new for, almost from the very popularisation of the motor vehicle, engineers started to dabble with ideas to use them on rail. Indeed, early rail motors capable of serving light branch lines grew from those fertile minds.

Perhaps the most successful early vehicle of this type in NSW was converted from a standard 1928 Dodge Brothers' tourer. The work was completed early that year at the Goulburn Permanent Way Workshop and it was authorised to enable the Goulburn-based Divisional Engineer to inspect his huge territory more expeditiously.

At that stage, the Southern Division extended as far south as Bombala, west to Hay, Hillston and Lake Cargelligo and south-west to Albury, Corowa, Tocomwal and Tumbarumba. It was felt that a

motor car capable of running on either road or rail "had to be a great asset for inspection purposes".

Accordingly, the Goulburn workshop was given the task of designing modifications and converting the brand new Dodge and, in May 1928, it underwent a preliminary trial from Goulburn to Breadalbane (12 miles). The outward journey was made in road mode and, on arrival at Breadalbane, the vehicle was placed over a level crossing within the yard, where the 31" diameter wheels were exchanged for 24", specially-built rail wheels. Goulburn workshop was a leader in early tricycle and quad track machine construction and the car's rail wheels followed early practice, using rolled steel tyres, steel bosses and wooden felloes forced in under hydraulic pressure. The five bolt holes in the rail wheel bosses coincided with the bolt holes in the road wheels so that the interchange of wheels meant the car simply had to be jacked up.

That initial trial established that the change from road to rail configuration could be effected in 20 minutes and the car could be removed from the running rails in just eight minutes, after the front wheels were exchanged and the steering unlocked. The car's rear wheels were removed after the vehicle



*NSW registered
131-HOI, a 1928 Dodge,
with the hi-rail wheels
fitted (above) and standing outside
Goulburn station master's residence.*

had left the rails.

The vehicle was deemed a success and the Divisional Engineer arranged a much more elaborate trial a few days later, taking the car to Bombala, a distance of 193 miles from Goulburn. Grades of 1 in 40 and curves of 10 and 12 chains radius abounded over that now largely-closed route. A surviving account of that trial said the car's ride was "exceptionally comfortable with an absence of oscillation and roughness." It went on to say that a very thorough inspection of the track could be made over the bonnet and the trial proved the car exceptionally good for inspection purposes. It was noted that, because of the smaller diameter rail wheels, an indicated reading of 31mph was, in reality, just 24mph.

When constructing the car, engineers provided two locking-stops to the car's conventional steering. These were permanently attached to the front axle forging and extended over the steering cross-rod with a clearance of about 3'8" above the collars, shrunk and pinned to the steering cross-rod. Both the front axle and steering cross-rod worked in unison on the road, which allowed for no upward movement between them.

The actual locking was by means of the locking bolts which fitted snugly around the cross-rod and bolted through the locking-stop. To place them in position, the front wheels were swung around until the collars moved clear of the locking-stops, the upper packing blocks having been deliberately cut

as return angles to stop them sliding off.

While the accompanying half plate glass negatives have survived the passage of time, no details of the Dodge's fate seem to be preserved in official repositories.

However, retired fitter and machinist, John Wilson who started working for the NSWGR at Goulburn's 'old loco' in 1926 (and retired from the city's Perway Workshop in 1976), recalled the car's initial trials and said there were several earlier tests involving road vehicles. He remembered how 'old loco', because of its advanced machinery, was called upon to assist in many trial engineering projects.

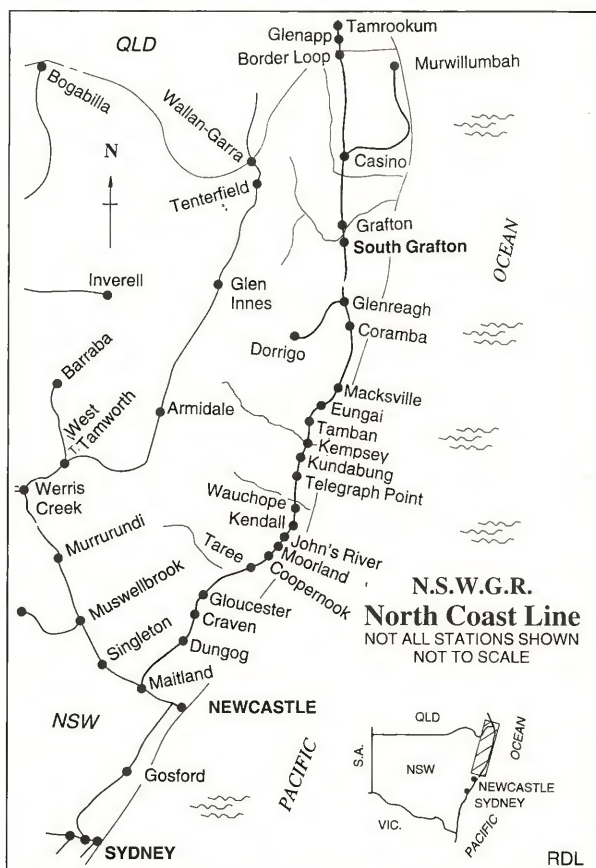
Mr Wilson said a 1927 conversion carried out in Goulburn, which involved a 20-seat English bus chassis, was followed up with an experimental conversion of a 'very small' tourer (thought to be the Dodge in this story). And his former colleague, Bob Bodel, also living in retirement at Goulburn, recalled a similar tourer in use as a pay car on the North Coast during the 1930s.

Mr Bodel worked as a fettler at The Risk between 1935 and 1939 and recalls that anyone could buy a ticket and travel on the car into Kyogle to shop. Security was an unknown word for those 'locals'. But when he was appointed machinist at the Goulburn Perway Shop later in 1939, he was adamant there was no 1928 Dodge 'hi-rail' to be seen. Was the vehicle on the North Coast the same one or were several built?



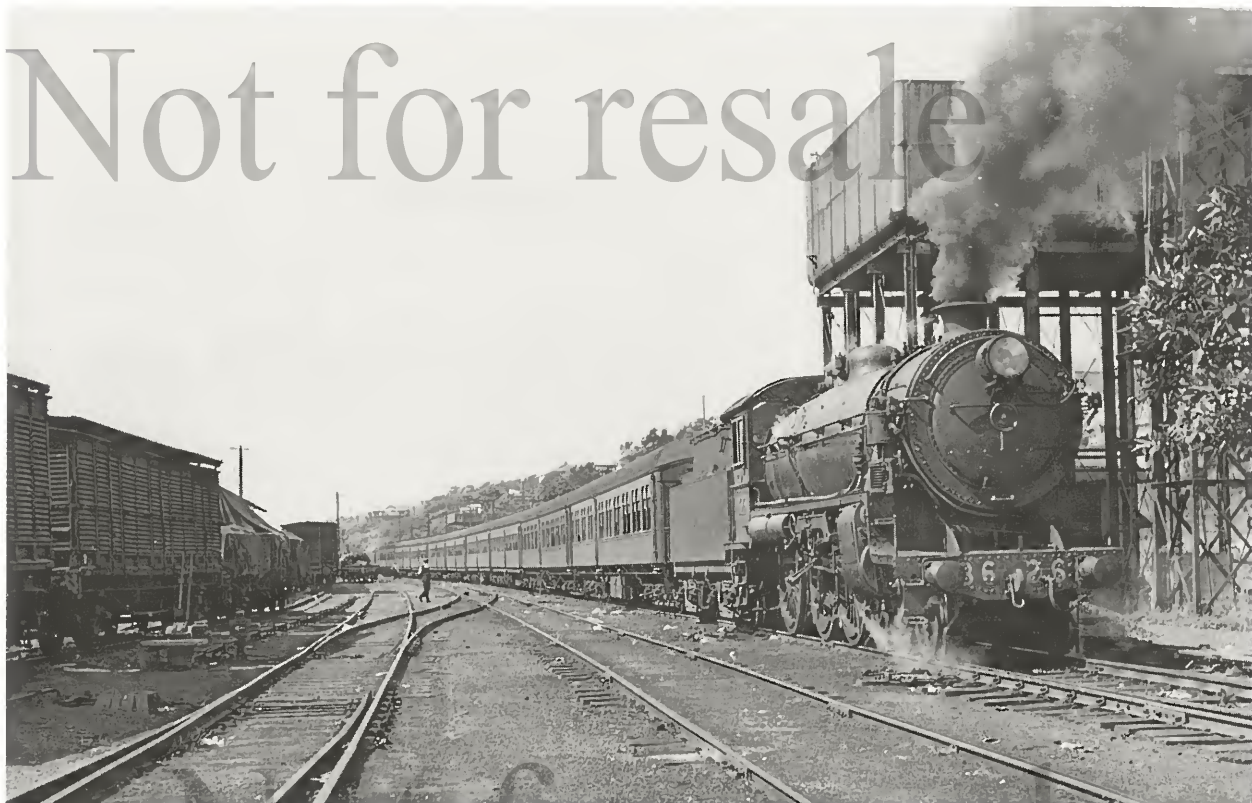
Above: In a scene re-enacted thousands of times in NSW over the years, the signalman exchanges the electric staff 'on the sling' at Leeville, seven miles south of Casino. In this state, miniature electric staffs have been exchanged using cane slings since about 1914. The driver of 3636 in the loop looks on whilst 3668 passes through on the main line. Wal Jenkins performed safe-working duties similar to this whilst working at many North Coast stations during his career.

SRA Archives



Above Right: In steam days on the North Coast, all down trains stopped at Coffs Harbour for 'loco purposes' and water. Some of the passenger trains also stopped for refreshments and whilst the customers were partaking, there was action up the front. The fireman watered the engine from the large elevated tank, whilst the driver oiled around and checked the bearings. Ahead lie six miles of 1 in 80 rising grade with five tunnels. In December 1948, the fireman on 3626, at the head of ten cars on No.3 down Brisbane Express, builds up his fire before departure.

I.K. Winney



Not for resale

The ASM

North Coast and Over the Border

Wal Jenkins

Johns River, 259 miles from Sydney and 17 feet above sea level, is situated north of Taree between Coopernook and Kendall. The station was opened on 12 April 1915, and closed on 30 June 1974. The construction name was Stewart's River, Stewart Parish, Macquarie County. Johns River was named after the parish immediately north of the Stewart's River which, in turn, is north of the station. The parish was named after John Stewart, an early settler in the district. The school was opened in December 1870 and the post office opened on 7 July 1889.

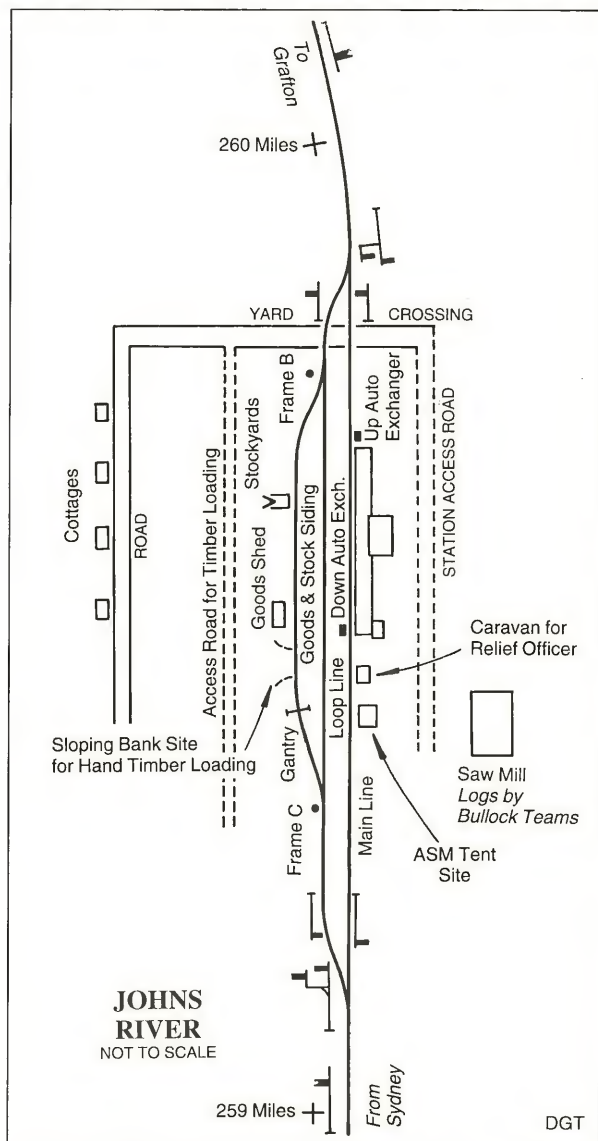
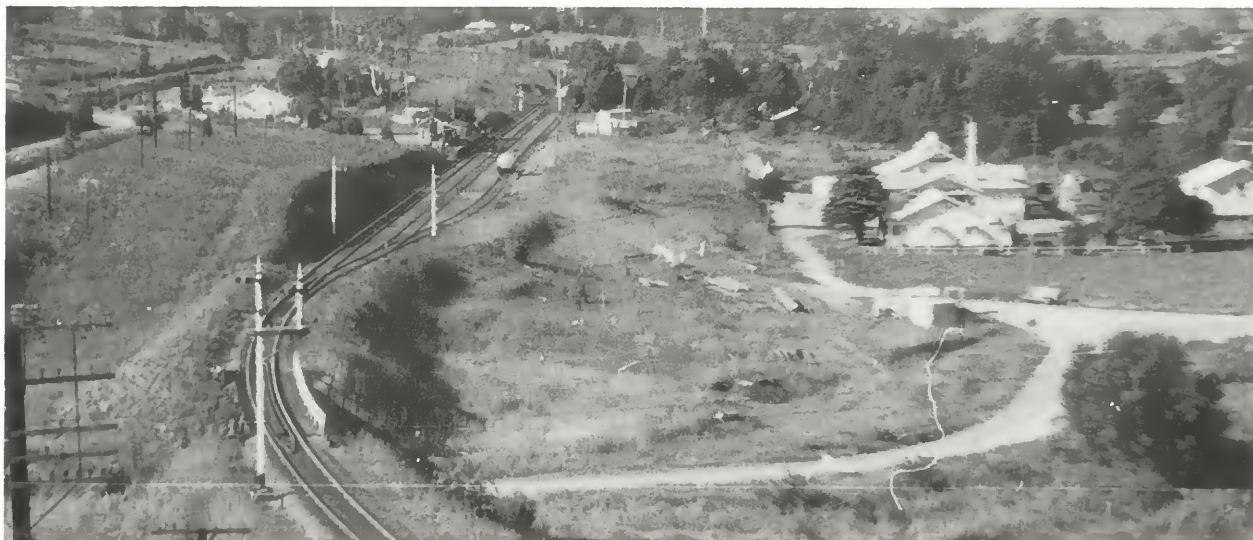
As I explained in the previous chapter, I was offered a railway caravan at Johns River which had been provided especially for the use of relief officers. The caravan (unofficially called a 'chalet') was only about 20 yards south of the station, on a slight rise. It was sitting on blocks, with the wheels removed, and even had a canvas annex erected. This was to be my home and haven, and it was that, indeed. A look inside revealed, of all things, a real 'fair dinkum' mattress, a cupboard for my clothes and built-in seats and a collapsible table.

It was still winter in mid-1951 when I arrived at Johns River, with the nights as cold as those at Eungai, but the difference was I could now keep warm by having a mattress to sleep on. Even the flame of the Primus, when I made a cup of tea, warmed the interior of the 'chalet'.

It wasn't difficult settling in at this new location, the main reason being the presence of a small shop which was no more than a 'hop, step and jump' from the station on a road on the opposite side of the tracks. This store was run by Seventh Day Adventists and no purchases could be made on Saturday until after sunset.

A forest backed up to the very rear of the station, with no housing at all in there. On the opposite side, facing the station, there must have been 20 or more houses in the village. The main employers in the area were the timber industry and the railways so, in reality, the residents all worked in those occupations.

Almost opposite the 'chalet' was located a saw mill which processed logs from the forest. Much to my delight, the logs were hauled to the mill by



The typical North Coast station had a loop and a goods siding adjacent to the main line, as shown in the view above of Coramba in 1971. Wal was stationed at Coramba in 1951, as described last chapter. The station is protected by a bracket signal each end, with starting signals on the main line and loop. A feature of Coramba was the milk factory to the right of the station. Products from the factory were trucked up to the siding, where tankers were filled and despatched. The oval tank standing in the goods siding awaiting loading is a four-wheeler, painted white with the 'Peters' name applied in green to the tank side. Not so clearly visible, adjacent to the goods siding, is the Divisional Engineer's van, a modified 'Improved Redfern' car. It stood on its own section of track, which was not joined to the running lines.

Bob Gallagher

bullock teams driven by the 'Kidd brothers'. I will never forget the sight of those beautiful animals pulling their load out of the bush. I had seen photographs of this action, but to see it first hand was a revelation that I will never forget.

The only problem with the mill being in close proximity to the 'chalet' was my inability to sleep during the day because of the continual buzz of the huge saws. To obtain a little extra cash, the ASM, Les Johnson, in his spare time, loaded sawn timber from this mill into trucks located in the siding by means of wooden skids which sloped down a bank onto the edge of the truck.

Mr Johnson, with his wife and baby, lived about 20 yards further south of the 'chalet' in tents that he had made very comfortable indeed. Timber flooring had been installed and, by means of a special bucket, a hot shower could be enjoyed. I was invited to use their 'bucket shower' and, for a small payment, Mrs Johnson cooked a hot meal for me every day.

In later years, my brother Bob, himself an assistant station master, was to use this same camp site to erect his own tent as a home for himself, his wife

and children. Bob had been working as a signalman at Valley Heights in the Blue Mountains and had been promoted to Johns River. He had previously been employed with the Railways but had resigned to work as a diamond driller at the building of the Warragamba Dam in 1945. Five years later, on 2 January 1950, Bob was re-employed and it would have been in 1953 that the family were in Johns River, two years after my stay there.

The Watson Taylor Lake was located a few miles north of Johns River, right alongside the railway track. It was supposed to be teeming with fish. The perway ganger arranged for Les Johnson and myself to spend a day fishing with him on the lake, provided we supplied our own transport. The only set of wheels we had was the station tricycle, so this was commandeered and off we went. I can tell you that this vehicle was only meant to carry one person and the second person was sure to get a sore bum. As Les reckoned he was the senior man and so entitled to the only seat, I received the sore bum!

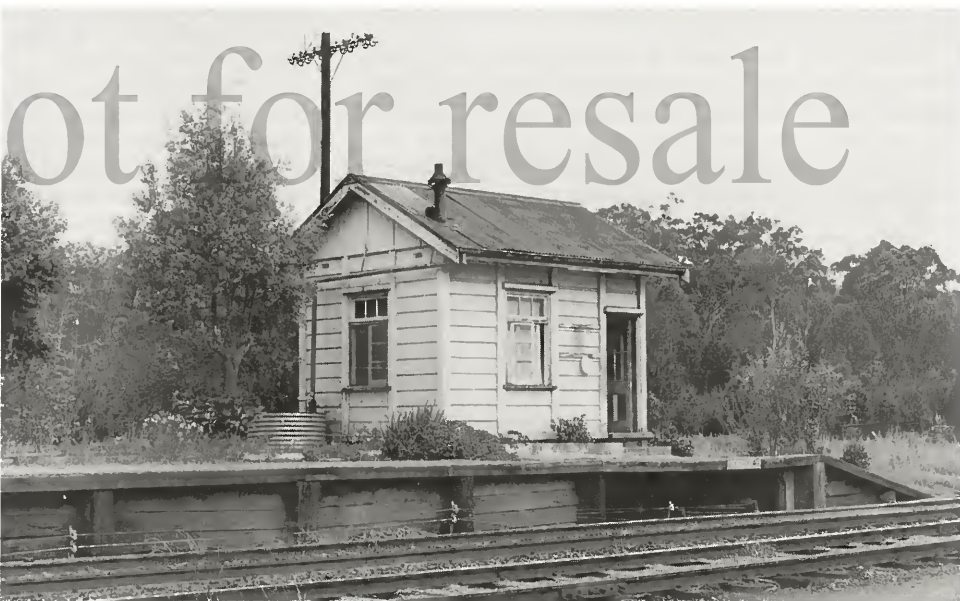
The Watson Taylor Lake came within a hundred yards of the main line about three miles north of Johns River (about half way to Rossglen station) and we took the tricycle to this point. It was possible to walk across the lake at low tide, which we did, and caught a few fish into the bargain. The return home in the afternoon was no better than the forward trip. The action of pulling the handle of the trike to get movement is similar to rowing a boat. Over the years I was to travel many miles on these 'one man horrors'.

A tennis court was located in the village, with many a game of 'hit and giggle' being enjoyed with any enthusiastic locals. It must be remembered that



In 1971 decay of many station buildings was well advanced. The timber buildings on Johns River had been demolished, with the lone, concrete-block signal cabin and shortened timber-faced platform remaining.

Bob Gallagher



these small villages had to provide their own entertainment in those days and it was very rare not to find a hall and tennis court.

The station buildings and signal box at Johns River were the reverse of those at Eungai. Here, the main office and waiting rooms were of timber construction and the signal box was made from concrete blocks. The coal stove had to be stoked up continually to try to overcome the frigid air in this concrete 'ice box'.

The life of a relief officer was meant to be always on the move and I was curious as to where my next destination would be. The staff clerk in the office at



Centralised Traffic Control replaced the electric staff system in the Taree area in the 1982-1983 period. Johns River was affected by the changes, as were most other stations along the line. The platform and remaining buildings were removed and these three photographs taken from the former location of the platform show Johns River in 1994. The views to the north (above left), south (above right) and west (left) show the typical North Coast crossing loop, with concrete block CTC cabin, graffiti and all.

Bob Gallagher

South Grafton was a decent sort of bloke and could be relied upon not to send us poor buggers too far from our home stations.

During my last week at Johns River, the clerk sent out a telegram advising me to report to Telegraph Point to relieve Norm Burgess for his annual

leave. I knew where Telegraph Point was located, having travelled through there a few times by train. Once again, all the gear was packed up and off I went to new pastures.

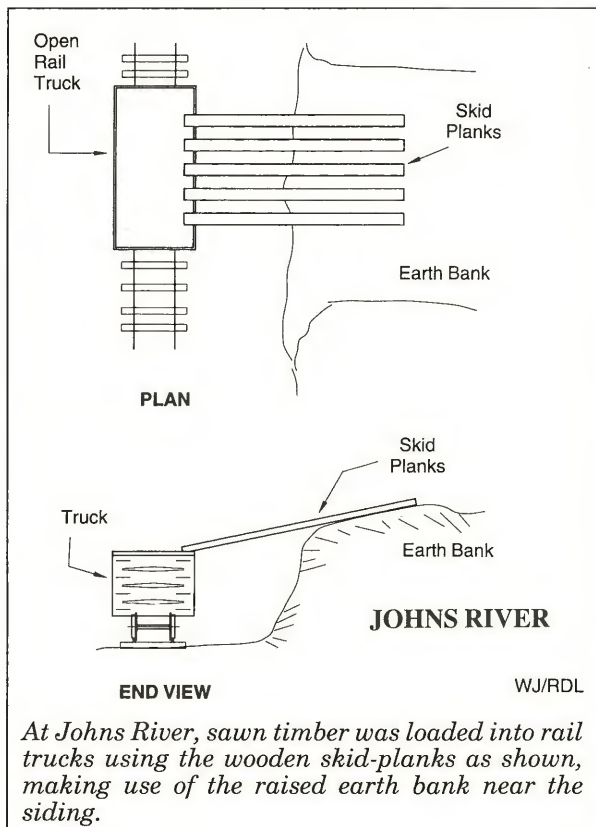
Telegraph Point was situated 294 miles from Sydney and was 22 feet above sea level. It was located south of Kempsey between Kundabung and Wauchope and was opened on 25 November 1917 as a signal box, and as a booking station on 14 January 1929. It was located in the Parish of Prospect, Macquarie County and was named after the location or point where the Port Macquarie to Kempsey telegraph line crossed the Wilson River. The school opened as Cornbury Park in February 1876 but was renamed Telegraph Point in 1883. The post office was opened on 1 January 1872.

This little village actually boasted a hotel and this was my first stop after alighting from the train. The River View Hotel was located in the village across from the rail sidings, with the only access to the village from the railway being by means of a rough track up a bank.

Tom Hall was the publican and ran the pub with his wife Maureen. My room was comfortable but the food left much to be desired. As a matter of fact, from memory, I only lasted a week at the pub after finding maggots in the soup one day.

I rang the office to complain about the situation and asked, quite nicely, if they could supply me with a tent, fly and floorboards. They replied that this could be arranged but wanted to know where I would erect it. I think my answer was that I would find somewhere and that anything would be better than that maggoty hotel.

The tent gear arrived promptly and, with the aid of the fettlers, I erected it at the back of the station. This situation was very irregular in the eyes of officialdom, who said I could not erect a tent so close



At Johns River, sawn timber was loaded into rail trucks using the wooden skid-planks as shown, making use of the raised earth bank near the siding.



Late in 1951, Wal Jenkins was sent to Telegraph Point as relieving Assistant Station Master. Accommodation was not provided, so Wal erected a tent behind the station building and lived there for the duration of his stay. Photo Courtesy Jenkins Family

to the station. I made a few choice remarks in reply and erected the tent anyway. I was to live in this modest accommodation for the remainder of my stay at Telegraph Point and, as the tent was no more than a few yards from the signal box, I had access to hot water from the electric kettle. A clothes line was placed from the tent pole to the wire fence and the laundry was hung there after being washed in a small basin. This same basin also acted as a stand-up bath, with water being obtained from the station tank.

Of course, I never realised then that Telegraph Point was to play a major part in my later life. More of that in a following chapter, where the officer I was to relieve, Norm Burgess, was to come into our reckoning. The other two Assistant Station Masters to share responsibilities were Eric Brandy, the senior officer, who carried out all the day work shifts, and Lex Mann, who shared with me the afternoon and backshifts.

For some unknown reason, the Railway Department always erected one or two houses for the staff, but very rarely was there ever a third house provided. There were exceptions to this rule but, at Telegraph Point, the accommodation only extended to two cottages which were located next to each other on a bank overlooking the station. Lex and his family occupied the older of the two, with Eric and his wife and son in the

newer type construction.

Norm was the unlucky officer who had no official residence, so he constructed his own little cottage about 200 yards away on the station road, south of the platform, on a housing block in a railway paddock. He paid a very low ground rent for the lease of his block.



A station tricycle. These simple, hand-powered 'one-man horrors' were used for a variety of tasks. The prime purpose of this particular machine was to be a means of replacing the lamps in station signals; the rack for holding six lamps is shown fixed behind the seat. Apart from their intended uses, station 'trikes' could be used for transport to the local Watson Taylor Lake for a day's fishing, if needed.

Wal Jenkins

They were very busy times during my relief period. Not only were we in the midst of a flourishing timber industry, with about six or more active saw mills loading the sawn timber at Telegraph Point, but also log loading was centred in the railway yard. All rough logs were hauled into the yard and dressed by the very skilled old timers using 'broad' axes and 'pull' knives. Lorries hauled in the logs in my time but, in the early days, bullock teams were utilised.

There were two active saw mills within the railway yard, one located next to the siding about 50 yards north of the station and the other mill on the same track another 100 yards further north. Both mills, because of the close proximity to the track, loaded directly into trucks and the only cartage they had was the haulage into their yards of millable logs. All the other mills had to haul their sawn timber by lorry direct to the rail trucks in the yard for loading. A three-legged swivel crane was provided for them to load their timber and the staff at the station also used this crane to unload trucks of differing consignments. A man was reportedly killed when using this crane to load logs; apparently the log swung about and struck him a blow on the head.

Naturally, with all this loading, empty trucks had to be supplied to haul the timber products to markets and when these same trucks were loaded, they had to be attached to outgoing trains. These movements provided much shunting work for us and at times we never had an opportunity to have a cup of tea and something to eat, especially on the

11pm backshift.

The diesel-electric locomotive era had not yet arrived on the scene and all trains were steam-hauled during my time at the 'Point'. Passenger trains were hauled by the 32, 35 and 36 class locomotives and goods trains hauled mostly by 50 class engines. A 20,000 gallon overhead tank supplied water for the steamers, and there was an ash pit alongside.

The main passenger trains to run through the station were as follows: the up and down *Brisbane Limited Express* (Nos 1 and 2), *Brisbane Express* (Nos 3 and 4), *North Coast Mail* (Nos 11 and 14), *Grafton Mail* (Nos 15 and 26) and the Kempsey passenger - morning and afternoon (Nos 5 and 6). All of these trains ran both ways daily. Fruit express trains were usually hauled by the large-wheeled 36 class, affectionately known as 'Pigs' because of the hump in their boilers and the headlight nose. The 35 class were nicknamed 'Nannies' after their pre-1924 classification as NN class.

Vegetables were a valuable commodity grown on the outskirts of Telegraph Point at Red Hill, together with passionfruit. This area was red soil of volcanic origin, with all of the produce being despatched by rail to Darling Harbour in Sydney. It was not unusual for the whole of the platform area under the verandah awning to be covered with hundreds of bags of passionfruit waiting to be loaded into a fruit express.

Port Macquarie was the nearest large town and I made an occasional trip in the school bus to take in the ocean views, as there was no rail head at the Port. It was much more convenient to catch the early passenger train to Kempsey for any supplies not



Left: Vegetables were grown around Telegraph Point and were transported by train from the local rail sidings to the markets in Sydney. However, the area is renowned for its forests, and quite a few sawmills loaded timber in Telegraph Point yard. This five-ton, hand-operated crane was used extensively for loading the local products into railway wagons.

Wal Jenkins

Above Right: Moorland is located four miles north of Coopernook and in the 1950s the Pacific Highway crossed the North Coast line by a level crossing. A fatal accident occurred there, whilst Wal Jenkins was stationed at Coopernook. Some years later, the level crossing was replaced by an overbridge and in November 1969 Alco 4018 hauls a goods under the bridge, heading for Taree.

G.C. Taylor

Right: In May 1952, signalman Wal Jenkins and his wife moved from Kundabung to Tamrookum in Queensland. At the time, most trains, including the expresses, were steam hauled. Ten years later, in January 1962, and three miles south of Tamrookum, 4302 races the up Brisbane Express through Innesplain heading for Sydney, 600 miles away.

G.C. Taylor





Tent life was not ideal, but was an improvement on the questionable alternatives available in the small town. This photo of the interior of Wal's small abode shows (from left), the primus stove and lamp, a battery radio and his small cot on the right. The other two photos indicate some necessary house-keeping (? 'tent-keeping'), and Wal 'dressed for work'.

Photos courtesy Jenkins family

obtainable from Campbell's local store, with the small butcher shop being convenient for snags and an occasional sirloin steak.

Tent life was made a little easier because of the warmer weather of late spring and early summer. However, it was a lonely life and I was never much of a mixer. Joan and I were engaged by now, and we both longed to settle down. I had no intention of starting married life in a tent, so I applied to be regressed to a position of signalman at Tamban, the next signal box north of Kempsey.

There was a vacancy at Tamban and I knew that there were three beautiful houses on site for the staff. Joan agreed that it would be a good place to settle down and I was actually appointed to the position as a 7th Class Signalman on 1 December 1951. We were sitting pretty, just waiting to finalise arrangements for our marriage when fate stepped in, not long after the paper work had been completed for the position. As a result, I never took up as a signalman, as apparently another young chap had also applied for the position on promotion. Even though I was much higher qualified than he, the preference always went to a promotion and not to a regression in a grade.

Joan and I were both disappointed at the Railway's decision regarding Tamban, but decided that we may have never been meant to be there. This premonition was borne out in later months.

My days at Telegraph Point came to an end with advice from the office that I was to pack my swag and head north to Kundabung to relieve Bill Mayhew for annual leave. When I say north, this was correct, but only for a distance of about 10 miles from Telegraph Point, because Kundabung was the next station along the line.

Kundabung was situated 303 miles from Sydney, was 24 feet above sea level and was located between Kempsey and Telegraph Point. It was opened on 3 December 1917 and closed as an accounting station on 30 June 1974, but not as a signal box. The construction name was Smith's Creek in the Lincoln

Parish, Macquarie County. The name of Kundabung is derived from an aboriginal word for 'wild apples'. The school opened as Smith's Creek in June 1909, was changed to Kundabung in 1940 and closed in December 1967. The post office opened on 1 January 1927.

As usual, the problem of where to lay the head came to the fore again and it was just pure luck that there was a vacant tent in the extra gang's camp not far south of the station. Usually these work camps were fully occupied by men repairing the track but ganger Boyd assured me that the tent was mine for as long as I liked. The camp had all the requirements necessary for cooking and showering, even though they were very basic. It would be many years into the future before these men would be provided with air-conditioned comfort in modern huts.

There was always the option for relief staff either to bunk down in the goods room on the station, or find alternative accommodation - of which there was none. In my case, a tent was much preferred to sleeping with rats.

It was at this camp that I was taught a method of cooking fish that was the essence of simplicity and yet a delight for the taste buds. The fish was not required to be scaled, only gutted. It was wrapped in sheets of wet newspaper, just placed in the hot ashes of the fire and, after about 15 minutes, the package was raked out and the fish unwrapped. The steam from the burning wet paper had cooked the fish to perfection, with the skin and scales sticking to the paper.

Two brother officers worked at Kundabung. I was relieving Bill Mayhew and working with Paddy Mayhew during my time there. They were both perfectionists in their work outlook and expected all relief staff to follow their method of running the station. I never got to know Bill, because of his absence, but had a lot of respect for Paddy while working with him.

Both men lived at Kempsey and travelled to and from Kundabung as their shifts required. Paddy

was renting a small timber hut from the Railways, situated across from the station, and he slept in there occasionally. In consideration of his work-mates, he would bring out cases of bottled soft drink from Kemspey to be sold to them. Naturally he made a small profit from each sale, but his little business was much appreciated in the summer months.

Something that really struck me on alighting from the train to commence duty was the neatness and cleanliness of the station and surrounds. I was to find out why, when Paddy showed me the ropes. The first thing he showed me was a garden rake with the teeth worn down so much that only about an inch remained of them.

These men must have been working at Kundabung for over 20 years and the rake that Paddy had shown me could have been one of many that they had worn out between them. Not only would they rake the gravel platform regularly, but also the entire railway yard from end to end! Any match stick found was taken back to the signal box and placed in a special pile that must have been feet deep.

The same care and attention was paid by them to the interior cleaning of the premises and we were expected to do the same. Naturally, the bookwork was very neat and tidy, with no errors. A special hairpin was used to keep telegraph forms together on the phone and, on my first shift, I chucked this pin out the window thinking it was a useless gadget. The next day Paddy laid down the law to me regarding the loss of his favourite pin, saying that it had been in use for many years and for me to get busy and find it and return it to its proper place. I never did find it and the pin was replaced.

As we were all qualified in First Aid, all small stations were the focal point for the treatment of cuts, abrasions, burns, insect bites, etc. Kundabung was no exception. Not only were railwaymen given attention, but the local people also, if required. I remember one particular case when Paddy was on day work, when a Mrs Scaysbrook approached the door with a fish hook embedded in the soft flesh beneath her left eye. Very professionally, Paddy pushed the point of the barb through, cut it off with a pair of pliers and extracted the entire hook complete. He applied 'Te-Solva' antiseptic and the woman went away very thankful, with a promise to watch out in future for flying hooks.

A locked ambulance box was provided in each signal box and contained many items for first aid treatment, such as castor oil for cinders in eyes, picric acid for scalds and burns, 'Te-Solva' as an antiseptic, safety pins, cotton wool, 'Sal Vital' for upset stomachs, lint bandages, two and four inch bandages and large triangular bandages to be used as slings for broken bones, etc.

Over the years, gradual changes were made to the contents of these boxes as new products came onto the market. Because the antiseptic iodine caused burns to allergic people, this was withdrawn and replaced with 'Te-Solva', which in turn was replaced with 'Dettol'. Picric acid powder was replaced with 'Pyropax' ointment for the treatment of burns. In later years, 'Adaptoplast' band-aids were placed in all boxes and were a real boon for small cuts.

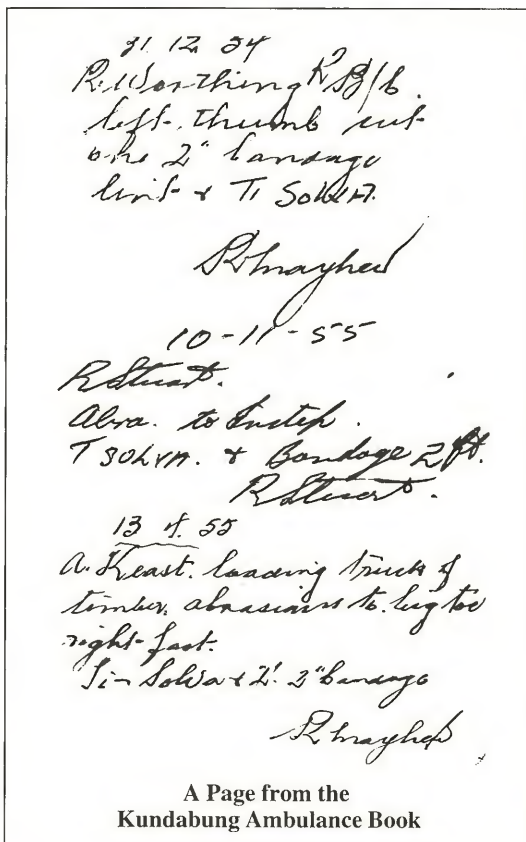
A small book was placed in all boxes to record the names and dates of injuries. Also recorded were any items taken out for the treatment of injuries. This book was checked by the Inspector on each of his visits, by initialling the entries and showing the date. Any items used had to be ordered from the office so that no shortage existed in the box. This was very important because an emergency could occur at any time.

This small ambulance book is now in my possession. With entries dating from 16 November 1931 to 6 February 1978, it covers a period of 47 years and gives much insight into the history of this station.

One item dated 30 March 1952 relates to an injury to my left ankle, sustained when I jumped from the platform to the track and landed on a rail. A tight bandage was applied to my badly sprained foot and a visit to a chemist in Kempsey confirmed that it was not broken. I can remember hobbling around for a week, not being able to use a shoe because of the swelling.

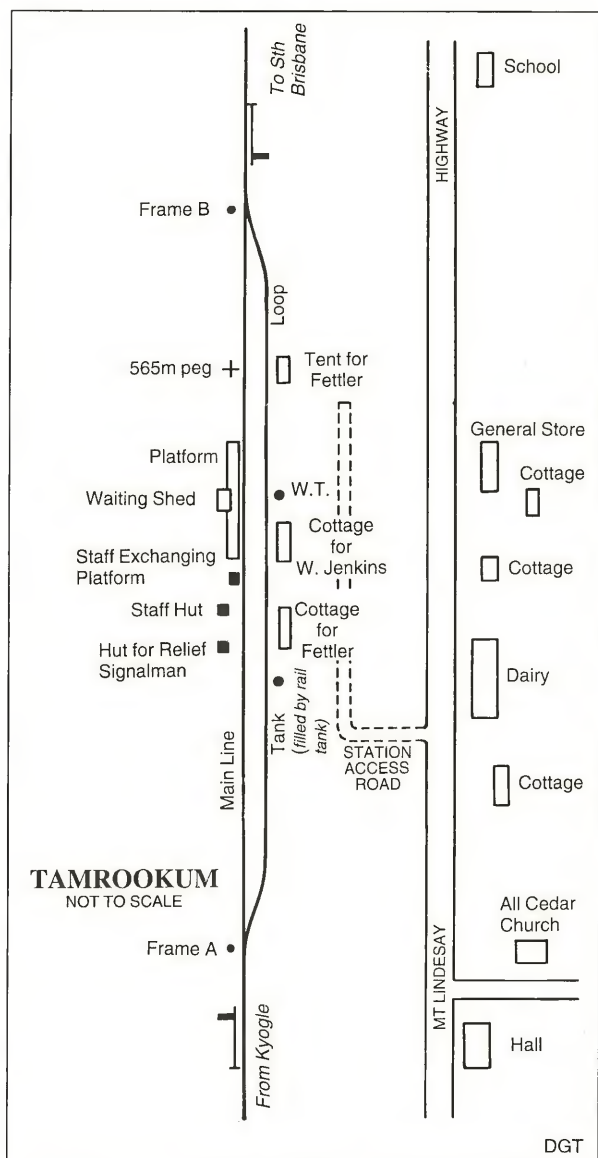
Up to this stage of my career, I had never been called upon to stem bleeding from severed limbs and the same was to apply until I retired. Even though we were fully qualified for this type of railway accident, I was very thankful for not having to apply first aid to these dreadful injuries.

Deaths have occurred at various locations near where I had been stationed, and one particular case comes to mind, whilst I was relieving at Coopernook. The small siding at Moorland was



under the control of Coopernook. Located only a few miles north of the station, it was in the middle of a citrus growing area. All of the fruit was loaded at Moorland for despatch to various markets and Barry Smith, a porter, ran this siding during daylight hours, with a lady gatekeeper and two gate boys controlling the gates which were opened and closed across the Pacific Highway.

These boys worked eight-hour shifts and, in my opinion, were always underpaid for the responsibility they carried. During the night, on one of my backshifts, I received a phone call that a train had struck and killed a motorist on the level crossing at Moorland. There was nothing that I could do apart from notifying the police, ambulance and railway authorities, but my heart went out to the young lad who witnessed the mess. My memory is dulled regarding what happened in the following weeks but it is an event that I will never forget.



Of the seven stations at which I had relieved, only two had gates controlled by the station. They were Coopernook and Telegraph Point and, at the latter, a lady gatekeeper was employed during the day-time, with boys working the 3pm and 11pm shifts. Coopernook gates weren't a worry because the gates were always closed against the road and only opened on request. Telegraph Point was a continual menace, as the gates were open at all times to both road and rail, and only closed against road traffic when a train was due. It was difficult for some lads to remain awake during the night and it was our responsibility to ring them on the phone now and again, not only to check if they were sleeping, but also to let them know the time of the next train.

Recreation wasn't a problem at Kundabung - because there were no facilities - no tennis courts to pass the leisure hours off duty. However, it was possible to catch a train to Kempsey to watch the matinee at the local theatre on a Saturday.

Flying foxes (bats) often caused havoc among the local fruit orchards at Kundabung. Usually they began their forage flights at dusk and passed overhead in untold thousands. They always returned before daylight with their bellies full of the orchardists' fruit.

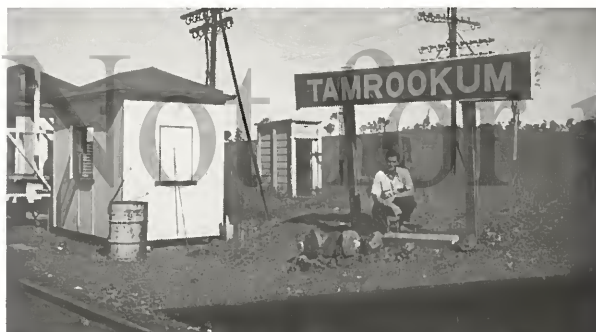
Even though I had missed out on the job and the house at Tamban, I had kept in touch with the staff clerk and asked him to advise me when the next vacancy that included a house came up. Word did come through eventually that there was a vacancy with a cottage for a 7th Class Signaller at Tamrookum, which was situated in Queensland, about 21 miles north of the NSW border.

I was advised that I would have to regress downwards from my position of an ASM to accept the signaller's job, with a reduction of salary, and also a second class pass only would be available. After consulting Joan, we decided to accept the position, even though it would mean her moving many hundreds of miles from her home in Lithgow.

I was appointed to the position on 19 January 1952, to take over from the existing signaller, Mark Leedham, who had been appointed to another position.

The years spent relieving men at the seven locations on the North Coast could be classed as the transition from a raw recruit with little knowledge of practical railway working, into an adult railwayman. Experience can only be gained by physical work, where one gets out in the field and learns the fundamentals of shunting, pulling levers and book balancing.

The correspondence courses I had been through were a preparation for experiencing the actual work that would come with taking charge of a station. I can look back over those relieving years and feel much respect for the men I worked with and the trials and tribulations gone through while gaining experience. Mistakes were made, which is a natural progression in the learning process, and I must state that the only bad mistake is one that is made twice. I was guilty of many errors over the years, but I



On 28 May 1952, Wal Jenkins commenced duty at Tamrookum, as a 7th class signalman. Wal poses beneath the nameboard soon after his appointment. The hut housing the electric staff instruments, frame key and telephones is at the left of the photo, with the pan 'dunny' down the backyard. The local fettlers had the unenviable task of emptying the pan.

Wal Jenkins

learned from them and to this day I have never known anyone who has not made a mistake. I like to think that my 'apprenticeship' years were served during my relieving days, and I give thanks for them.

Tamrookum

My relief days on the North Coast ceased at Kundabung after relieving Bill Mayhew for holidays in April 1952.

Annual leave was then taken, during which Joan and I were married on 3 May 1952 at Stanmore. On completion of our holiday, we moved into a small cottage at Tamrookum and I commenced duty on Friday, 28 May 1952 as a 7th Class Signalman on a wage of 6 shillings, 3 and 9/10 pence per hour.

Our home could be best described as prefabricated, of timber construction, oblong-shaped about 40 feet long, 12 feet wide, with a back verandah about 10 feet wide running the length, and a kitchen taking up about 12 feet of this at the southern end. A small bathroom was attached to the house at the northern end, with water tanks behind it and pipes leading into the bathroom and kitchen.

A separate small laundry with corrugated iron walls and roof was located about 6 feet north of the bathroom and a pan toilet was at the end of the yard. The back of the cottage faced the loop line about 10 feet distant, with the main line next to it. We were never bothered by high speed trains passing through at night, as each train worked itself through in automatic working (as explained later).

The verandah overlooked a paddock which fronted the Mt Lindesay Highway some 100 yards distant. On the other side of the highway, exactly opposite our cottage, was located a country store that stocked everything required by the locals.

Tamrookum is situated in Queensland, 21 miles 15 chains north of Border Loop on the NSW/Queensland border and 48 miles 24 chains from South Brisbane. It was given the name in the 1890s because

the residence of the local member for Albert, Mr R.M. Collins, carried this name.

Even though Tamrookum was located in Queensland, it was controlled by the NSW Government Railways. The 4'8½" gauge rail system which ran from NSW right into South Brisbane terminal was Queensland-owned, but NSWGR operated. All passengers from NSW requiring to travel northward, transferred a short distance across to Roma Street onto trains of the 3'6" Queensland Railways gauge.

Engine 3320, with driver Henderson and fireman McDonald as crew, brought the first Interstate Express gingerly into the South Brisbane yards on schedule on Saturday, 29 September 1930 at 4.30pm, with every locomotive in the yard joining in with a welcoming cacophony of ear-deafening blasts.

The stations after Border Loop were Glenapp, Tamrookum, Kagaru, Greenbank, Beaudesert Road, Clapham, Yeerongpilly and South Brisbane. The two sections that concerned the train running for Tamrookum were Glenapp staff station, 13 miles 32 chains to the south, and Kagaru staff station 18 miles 11 chains to the north.



The cottage at Tamrookum. It was of pre-fabricated timber construction, in Queensland Railways' style, with tank water, and although located beside the loop, it was a paradise when compared with the previous accommodation tolerated in 'out-of' rooms and tent dwellings.

Wal Jenkins



The view from the front verandah of the signalman's cottage at Tamrookum. The typical country store (opposite the residence) was located beside the Mt. Lindesay Highway, with the Logan River beyond the paddock in the distance.

Wal Jenkins



In late 1952, Joan Jenkins' parents, Mr and Mrs Thompson, travelled 650 miles from Lithgow to Tamrookum for a visit. The photograph indicates the facilities provided for signalmen stationed there.

Wal Jenkins

The running time for Brisbane Expresses from Glenapp to Tamrookum was 18 minutes, Tamrookum to Kagaru 24 minutes, and goods trains generally required 29 and 30 minutes respectively depending on shunting time required at Bromelton Meat Works between Tamrookum and Kagaru.

Tamrookum could be described as an Automatic Crossing Loop, which was manned in daylight hours by a signalman and reverted to automatic working at night. The safeworking system was miniature electric staff and, for this working, a small staff hut was provided to house the two instruments for the sections to Glenapp and Kagaru which, in turn, had their own instruments.

These instruments were given frequent attention by the railway signal electricians. Their main job was to check the batteries, keep them filled with water and to make sure the instruments worked correctly.

Automatic home signals were provided at the approaches to the crossing loop and these were, as their name suggested, cleared automatically if the line was clear. If a crossing was to take place, the trains had to be manually worked through by the signalman with hand signals.

As there were no levers to pull over, my main daywork duty, if there was to be a crossing, was to remove a 'key' from a lock placed between the two staff instruments which set both home signals at stop. It was then necessary to walk towards the train that you reckoned would arrive first at a home signal, place the key in the frame lock, pull the points across and pilot the train in, giving the driver a hand signal by means of a green flag and obtaining the staff or token from him. When the train was in the clear, the points were reversed and, with the key taken out, it was necessary to walk back to the staff hut and replace the key.

On arrival back at the staff hut, the key was inserted to enable the standing train to enter the main line. The staff that I had carried back with me was inserted in the instrument, a three bell arrival signal tapped out and a 3-1 or 1-2-1 signal sent, depending on the type of train, either express or

goods train, etc.

These bell signals indicated that a train had arrived complete at Tamrookum and that another staff was required for the next train to proceed into the section. On departure of the main line train, the reverse movements had to be carried out to release the loop train. The only consolation for the signalman in these situations was obtaining a ride on the loop train down to the departure points to release them. The main daylight crossing was the up and down Brisbane Expresses, about 1.30pm from memory.

Instructions for the movement of all trains had to be obtained from the Control Officer in the Train Control Rooms located in the Superintendent's office at South Grafton. An officer in one room controlled all train movements from South Grafton to Taree and another Train Controller in the room next to him controlled all movements from Grafton to South Brisbane and on the Murwillumbah branch.

It was the Train Control Officer who advised signalmen by a special train control telephone what to do for every train at, and passing through, each station and signal box. A report was made to him advising the times of each train, which he recorded on a special paper graph.

This system of train control working applied throughout the NSW rail network and enabled each control officer to confer with every station and depot to arrange locomotive deployment, drivers' and guards' movements, with special attention to their hours of duty, and to record all crossings on the single line.

As Tamrookum was purely a daywork job, all trains at night were worked through without a signalman. It was the responsibility of the guard to insert the incoming staff and obtain the outgoing staff to enable the train to proceed. This entailed a lot of walking for the guard, however time was built into the working timetable for these movements.

If a non-stopping train was to pass through Tamrookum during daytime, a small platform with steps leading up was situated next to the staff hut



New diesel-electric units 4020 and 4019 hauled the down Brisbane Limited Express through from Sydney to Brisbane without a change of locomotives, in order to ascertain running times for diesel haulage. Wal Jenkins was on hand at Tamrookum to record the passing of the train, an MHO van and the dynamometer car leading the consist.

Wal Jenkins



Left: *The station office at Tamrookum was of simple fibro-cement construction and contained a desk for the signalman on duty as well as a bed for the use of officers sent there on relief. Signalman Wal Jenkins stands near the office with the staff exchanging platform and oil lamp to the right.*

Wal Jenkins

Right: *Joan Jenkins stands near the doorway of the Tamrookum waiting shed. Tamrookum had a short platform, used by occasional passengers in this remote location.*

Wal Jenkins



to enable the signalman to exchange staffs in cane slings with the crews.

About ten yards north of the staff hut, a small platform and waiting room were located to cater for occasional passengers. The 'Tamrookum' nameplate also stood on this platform.

An office building was situated on the south side of the staff hut for the use of the signalman to record train movements in the Train Register Book located on a small table. This building also contained in one corner a bed and mattress for the use of relief signalmen and also for a weary daywork man to take a rest now and again. I can tell you that on some of those hot Queensland days many a 'lie down' was had. Of course, one was never caught in a horizontal position when the Traffic Inspector may have been around.

I have no idea as to what year Tamrookum Loop was opened but I can assume that, with the long section of 31 miles from Glenapp to Kagaru, Tamrookum may have been constructed during the war years of 1939-45 to alleviate lost time in crossing trains, especially the huge numbers of troop and equipment trains.

During those war years, the American forces erected an army camp at Round Mountain, 3 miles north of Tamrookum and at war's end, it was dismantled.

Six miles further on from what is now known as Round Mountain Quarry, and 9 miles from Tamrookum, an abattoir is located at Bromelton. This place used to really sicken me, because in those days they only slaughtered horses and to see truck loads of these poor unfortunate animals passing through Tamrookum was most upsetting. Bromelton also boasted a small platform to cater for Queensland passengers who travelled four miles by road from Beaudesert.

Like everywhere else on the system, kerosene signal lamps had to be attended to each week by means of the proverbial three-wheel tricycle. It was a bit of a break for the poor overworked signalman when there weren't that many to do - only two

landmarks, two homes and the point indicators.

Tamrookum had a moment of glory in 1989 when the visiting 4472 *Flying Scotsman* entered the loop to cross the express train from Brisbane. Hundreds of enthusiastic people crowded the paddock and platform to obtain photographs and to touch this steaming monster from over the seas.

I have very fond memories of our brief stay at Tamrookum. During one very hot summer day the conductor of No.3 *Brisbane Express* leaned out of a carriage and handed me a large block of ice, nearly knocking me off my feet. Speaking of feet, I can recall returning home to Tamrookum after a visit to Lithgow. I had been through the train, collecting all the spare newspapers to throw out to 'Narrow' Williams, the ganger. I kept on looking out of the window for the gang and when I spotted them in the distance, got ready to throw the rolled up bundle to them. Narrow (the thin ganger) told me the next day that he had got the papers alright, but they had hit him behind the knees, knocked him off his feet, and dropped him like a bag of potatoes.

A vehicle of some description was necessary to enable us to do our main shopping at nearby Beaudesert, Queensland, about 20 miles distant, so when the in-laws arrived on a visit from Lithgow, my father-in-law and I travelled to Brisbane by train to buy a car.

After our purchase of a 1926 Chevrolet motor car for £65, we drove back to Tamrookum where we christened the old girl *Betsy*. I later travelled to Beaudesert and obtained a ten year driver's licence at no cost. This little car served us faithfully right through to my transfer to Gresham.

With the death of my father in February 1953, we decided to try to transfer to a location near Lithgow. An application was lodged and I was advised that I could take promotion back up again to an ASM at Gresham, west of Bathurst. This was the closest location available, so we packed up all our belongings and, with our newly born daughter, headed off into the sunset.



Above: Toronto is an outer suburb of the city of Newcastle, located beside Lake Macquarie and the terminus of a short branch line from Fassifern. Local passenger trains provided a regular service to the steel city, steam-hauled until the late 1960s, then, later, by two-car diesel sets. On 4 February 1967 tank engine 3048 leads five American suburban cars past the co-acting arm signals at Fassifern with No.805 local passenger for Newcastle.

R.D. Love



Above Right: In the pre-electrification days, Hornsby had a spectacular variety of semaphore signals including this co-acting example incorporating home and distant arms. Complicated track arrangements sometimes required arms for both up and down signals to be mounted on the one post.

SRA Archives

Left: Current signal modernisation schemes result in fewer semaphore oddities these days. The last remaining example of co-acting arms in NSW is at Moss Vale. A 1993 view shows now vintage 4468 + 4458 close by this co-acting signal. Days are numbered for both the engines and the signal.

P.C. Booth



SIGNAL SURVEY

CO-ACTING SEMAPHORES

Robert Booth

Among the signalling oddities of the semaphore era were the co-acting arm signals. Overhead bridges, station awnings and curved cuttings can obscure the sighting of signals. The use of a tall post setting the semaphore arm above an obscuring object overcomes the problem for long distance observation. This was necessary to give a driver sufficient braking distance should the signal be at stop. However, close range vision then becomes difficult and so a lower arm working simultaneously with the upper arm, both on the one post, was necessary when a driver was stopped at such a signal waiting for it to clear.

Both arms of a co-acting signal were worked by the one lever in the signal box, but each arm had its own separate counterweight. The heights above ground level of the two arms varied with circumstance. The height of the upper arm varied from 25' to 50', with 38' - 40' being the most common. The height of the lower arm was more consistent at 15', although there were variations. As best as can be gleaned from the records, the tallest co-acting arm signal was at Katoomba, while the shortest was at East Maitland.

Archival records preserve many, although not

all, of the track and signal circulars issued by the NSW Railways. In the absence of these, early photographs which have an incidental inclusion of signals reveal or confirm the earlier use of co-acting arms. Only the earlier diagrams indicate the heights of the two arms, explaining many omissions in the following table.

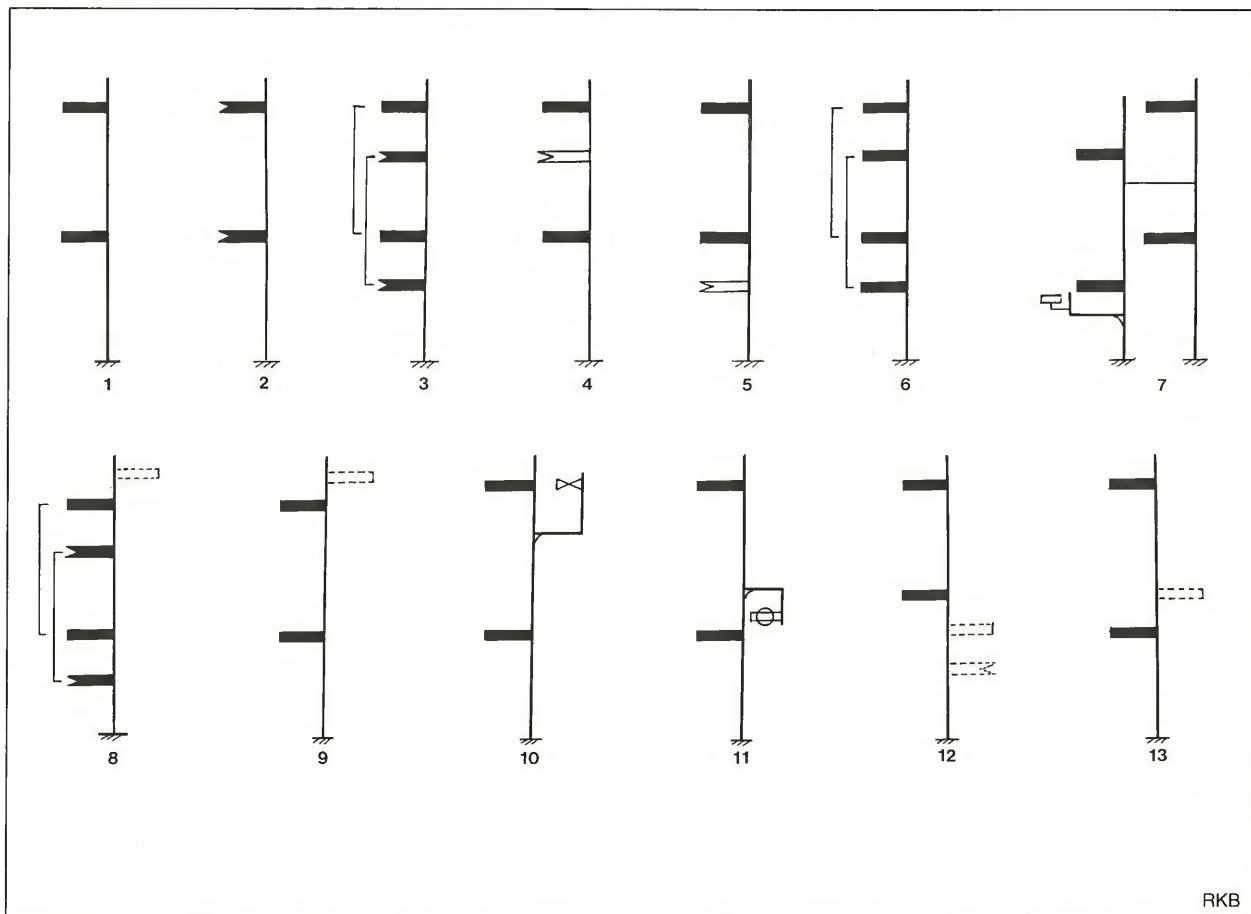
A word of caution is not out of place here. Early signalling practice for single-line crossing loops was to have both the main line and loop starting arms on the one post. At first glance, this could be misinterpreted as a co-acting arm, although the different lever numbers assigned to each arm shows this not to be the case. This doubtful practice was discontinued when a separate post was provided for each starting signal.

The earliest examples of co-acting arms were at Newtown (old site) in 1884, while both Petersham and Lithgow had them erected in 1885. The majority were installed between 1890 and 1915. All of these would have followed the McKenzie & Holland practice of having 5' wooden arms and that company's pattern of spectacles and lamps. Spindle bearings were the through-the-post type. Subsequent replacements or new installations would have used

TABLE OF CO-ACTING ARM SIGNALS IN NSW

Place	Signal Designation	Diag. Ref.	Time		Height		Comments
			In	Out	TA	BA	
Ashfield	Up Fast Home	12		~1914			Earliest diagram shown - 1903. Ashfield's Down Fast starter and Croydon's Down Fast distant attached.
Blacktown	No.31 Loop to Up Main Starter	1	1942	1955			
Bogan Gate	Up Distant Branch	1	1908	1921			Arms separated by only 2'. Lower arm added subsequently.
Burwood	No.4 Up Fast Starter	1	1892	~1914	38½'	14½'	Station awning obstructed view.
Burwood	No.18 Down Fast Starter	1	1892	~1914	38½'	17½'	Stood on Up Fast platform for sighting.
Cardiff	No.7 (later 4) Up Starter	5 then 1	1904	1951			Also had No.16 Sth Wallsend Jct Distant arm at bottom. This was removed in 1945.
Cootamundra North Box	No.35 Down Third Home	5	1939	1942			No.24 Cootamundra South Down Distant attached.
Croydon	No.10 Down Slow Starter	9	1903	~1914	33½'	13½'	Also had Up Slow Home arm at a height of 38½'.
Croydon	No.13 Down Fast Starter	9	1903	~1914	33'	13'	Also had Up Fast Home arm at a height of 40½'.
Cowan	No.4 Up Starter	1	1907	1909			Eliminated on duplication.
Coffs Harbour	No.3 Down Home, later No.2 Down Home	1	1934	?			Down call-on arm added 1944.
East Maitland	Down Starter	1	1908	1914	25'	15'	3rd station site near Pitnacree Road. Lower arm added in 1908 to existing signal.
Eastwood	No.2 Down Home	1	1892	1920	31'		Renewed using a higher post in 1915.
Erskineville	Down Starter	1 then 3	1891	1912			Old site of signal box. Donald Street Inner Distant (co-acting arms) added 1910 - four arms altogether.
Erskineville	Up Home	11	1891	1912			Old site of signal box. Up Illawarra to goods yard signal added as an inverted bracket in 1902 having a ringed arm.
Fassifern	No.15 Up Home	1	1891	1910			Single line era.
Fassifern	No.2 Up Home plus No.6 Up Home Main to Branch	7	1910	1988			Double line era. No.9 Up Main to Branch Loop bracketed to left hand post. Signal had two posts - one for the main line and one for the Toronto branch. Wakefield Road overbridge hindered view.
Flemington Car Sidings	No.74 (later No.75) signal	1	1934	?			Only example on NSWRR using 2' shunting arms. Signalled No.1 Arrival Road to Section A of car sheds.
Glenbrook	No.17 Up Starter	1	1913	1922			Pedestrian bridge.
Gunning	Down Home Main and Down Home Main to Loop	6	1890	1901	39' 33'	21' 15'	Single line period. Earlier practice of not splitting signals into a bracket arrangement.
Gunning	No.2 Down Home	1	1920	1958			Double line period. Renumbered No.3 Down Home when automatic signalling was introduced outside interlocking.
Goondah	No.2 Down Home						Co-acting spectacles only. Perhaps spectacle lower than arm?
Hornsby (Hornsby North Box)	No.3B Up Starter and No.2A Inner Distant	8	1909	1928	37½'		A - Hornsby Station Box. B - Hornsby North Box. No.18B Down Home (not co-acting) on the same post.
Hornsby (Hornsby Station Box)	No.5 Up Starter Main Line	1	1916	1928			
Katoomba	No.2 Down Home	1	1902	1956	50'	15'	Curved cutting.
Kiama	No.4 (later No.3) Down Starter	1			40'	14'	Overhead bridge. Recently removed.
Kogarah	No.3 Down Starter	1	1914				Replaced with an inverted bracket signal.
Kogarah	Up Starter	5	1914				Up Rockdale distant at lower level only also on post.
Leura	No.11 Up Home	1	1912	1946?			

Place	Signal Designation	Diag. Ref.	Time		Height		Comments
			In	Out	TA	BA	
Leura	No.9 Up Starter	1	1912	1956?			Shown on 1956 T&S diagram.
Lithgow	No.1 Down Distant	2	1885		40'	15'	Later Eskbank Down Starter was added.
Lithgow	?		1903	1921			Previous signal with Home arm substituted for Distant arms and a Distant arm substituted for the Home arm.
Liverpool	No.29 Down 2nd Home	1		1925			
Mt Victoria	No.2 Down Home plus No.5 Down Main to Crossing Loop	6	1898		45' 40'	20' 15'	Right hand working days.
Mt Victoria	Down Home	1	1902	1911			No.5 arms removed from previous signal. Normal double line running.
Mt Victoria	No.47 Down Home	1	1911	1958			Double track extended westward. Signal box re-locked.
Mt Victoria	No.3 Up Starter	1	1911	1958			On Up platform. Wrong road arm later.
Meadowbank	No.4 Down Home	5	1911	1928			Ryde's Down Outer Distant arm attached.
Mittagong	Down Home	1	1912				
Molong	Down Home	1	1908	1924	40'	13'	Replaced by upper quadrant signal.
Moss Vale	No.38 Up 2nd Home	1					Still in use. On 1925 T&S diagram. Present earlier, but shifted in position.
Murrumburrah	Up Home	1	1928				Pedestrian bridge.
Newtown (Newtown Station Box)	No.12 Down Home	13	1884				No.3 Up Starter also attached. Probably associated with the interlocking of points and signals in 1883.
Newtown	No.13 Down Distant	2	1884				
Parramatta	No.3 Down Starter	1	1891	1920	45'		Station building.
Parramatta	No.28 Up Starter	3 then 1	1891		46'	29'	Harris Park Up Distant attached, but later removed.
Petersham	No.17 Down Starter	1	1885	1892			Double line period. Overhead bridge.
Petersham	No.7 Down Fast Starter	1	1892	~1914			Four tracks period.
Pymble	No.14 Down Starter	1	1909	1928			Station building and overhead bridge.
Pymble	No.2 Up Home	1	1909	1922			Replaced with a single arm signal plus a separate signal on down side. Curved cutting.
Rockdale	No.3 Down Starter	1	1892 1907	1907 1922	31' 40'	16' 16'	Higher post substituted when new footbridge was opened.
Rookwood (Lidcombe 1914)	Down Starter	1	1908	1916?			Definitely present in 1908. Electric signals installed west of signal box in 1916.
St Peters	ID5 (Illawarra Line)	3	1913	1918?			Co-acting Home and Distant arms. Pneumatically operated lower quadrant automatic signals.
St Peters	BD5 (Bankstown Line)	3	1913	1918?			As above. Bankstown later renamed Illawarra Local Line.
Stroud Road	No.4 Down Starter	1	1912	1980s			Became No.6 Down Starter in 1944.
Sydenham	Up Relief Starter for Bankstown trains	1 then 5	1895	1913			Footbridge installed 1895. In 1907, Edgeware Road Up Distant added.
Sydenham	Up Bankstown Starter	1	1913	1918			Pneumatically operated.
Tumulla	Up Home	1	1911	1942	40'	15'	Overhead bridge.
Turramurra	No.14 Up 2nd Home	1	1909	1928			Footbridge.
Ultimo Street Signal Box (Darling Harbour)	Starter for sidings (Nos 5 to 11) to Departure Road	10	1904		34'	15'	William Henry St. bridge. Wrong road shunting arm bracketed to post.
Valley Heights	No.4 Up 2nd Home	1	1902	1913			Reinstalled 1914. Date of final removal unknown.
Wagga Wagga	No.9 Down Through Road Starter	1	1937				



RKB

NSW Railways standard fittings. Finials, too, varied with the era of installation - the older examples having McKenzie & Holland finials (last remaining example at Murrumburrah), while those from about the 1920s onwards were fitted with the standard Signals Branch type, either the four-finned or squat pyramid varieties. The Fassifern signal had no finials at all, even though the top of the posts had the timber cut away to accommodate a finial. All posts were wooden.

The last example of a co-acting arm semaphore to survive in NSW is at Moss Vale. Unique as this is today, some of the multi-arm examples of the past must have been truly impressive.

The accompanying table lists all the co-acting arm signals as can be best ascertained from the records. This should prove useful to those with a local interest in railways and to railway historians who enjoy searching for details from old photographs. From 1892 to 1927 there were four tracks between Illawarra Junction and Homebush, the two pairs of lines being called the Fast and Slow lines. This nomenclature has been used in the table.

The accompanying diagram shows the co-acting arms as fully shaded, single arms as unshaded, and arms applying to the opposite direction as a dotted outline.

Place	Signal Designation	Diag. Ref.	Time		Height		Comments
			In	Out	TA	BA	
Wahroonga	No.18 Up 2nd Home	1	1909	1928			
Waterfall (2nd Site)	Down Home	1	1892	1905			South Coast road bridge.
Wollstonecraft	No.3 Up Starter plus No.1 Bay Road Up Outer Distant	8	1910	~1921			Wollstonecraft Down Home signal attached to post.
Wyong	No.31 Up Home	1	1912	1937			Moved forward and replaced by an inverted bracket signal.
Zig Zag Bottom Points	No.14 Down Starter	1	1895	1910	45'		Curved cutting.

TA = Top Arm

BA = Bottom Arm

The co-acting arm signal which stood for many years at Fassifern was a unique installation for NSW. It incorporated splitting co-acting arms for the up main and the Toronto branch. The latter are shown here in the cleared position. The bracket signal on the left controlled up main to branch loop movements and was the uncommon somersault type.

P.C. Booth





Emitting much smoke and noise, 2605 erupts from the bulk loading section of the cement works at Portland as it gathers speed for the short, steep climb to the summit of the line at High Street. The locomotive is passing the single road engine shed in which No.3 can be seen undergoing repairs. The date is 25 August 1973.

All photographs by the author unless otherwise noted.

Above Right: *On 4 August 1969, locomotive No.5 blasts away from the cement works with a heavier-than-usual load for the exchange sidings at Portland station. The four-wheel S truck is loaded with bagged cement, while bulk cement is carried in the bogie wagons. The signal to the left of the engine is the old down home signal which, until about 1960, protected the sidings at the plant from trains approaching from Portland station. Electric staff operation ceased earlier, about the same time that the secondary branch to Ivanhoe Colliery closed.*



PORTLAND

THE LAST DAYS

Peter Attenborough

Preface

Portland is a small town located on the western side of the Great Dividing Range, approximately 113 rail miles from Sydney and sixteen miles from Lithgow. From a railway interest point of view, Portland's claim to fame was the privately operated branch line serving the cement works located in the town.

Although regular steam operations on government metals ceased on the Western Division on 16 August 1972 with the transfer of shunting locomotives 5139, 5408 and 5476 to Sydney, steam continued working the Southern Portland Cement Company's line at Portland. This working was to outlast the government steam locomotives by almost a decade, making it one of the last commercial steam operations in Australia.

Much has been written over the years about the Portland branch line, its motive power and the secondary branch line to the nearby Ivanhoe Colliery. It is not the intention of this essay to repeat, in detail, that which has already been said, but simply

to record the last decade of workings on the branch. A brief review of earlier operations is provided but, for more detail, readers are referred to the excellent article by the late G.H. Eardley in the Australian Railway Historical Society's *Bulletin* No.447 of January 1975.

A Brief History

The first cement works at the site of Portland was opened in October 1883 by the Cullen Bullen Lime and Cement Company which, at the same time, constructed a 3' gauge tramway linking the new plant with the government railway at Portland (then known as Cullen Siding). This line was about 1 mile in length and was initially operated by horses. A secondary line, also of 3' gauge construction, ran from this line to Ivanhoe Colliery located in the hills just to the north of Pipers Flat station. Details of the locomotives used on these tramways are not available, although it is thought that they were 0-4-0 tank engines.

During the depression of the early 1890s, the

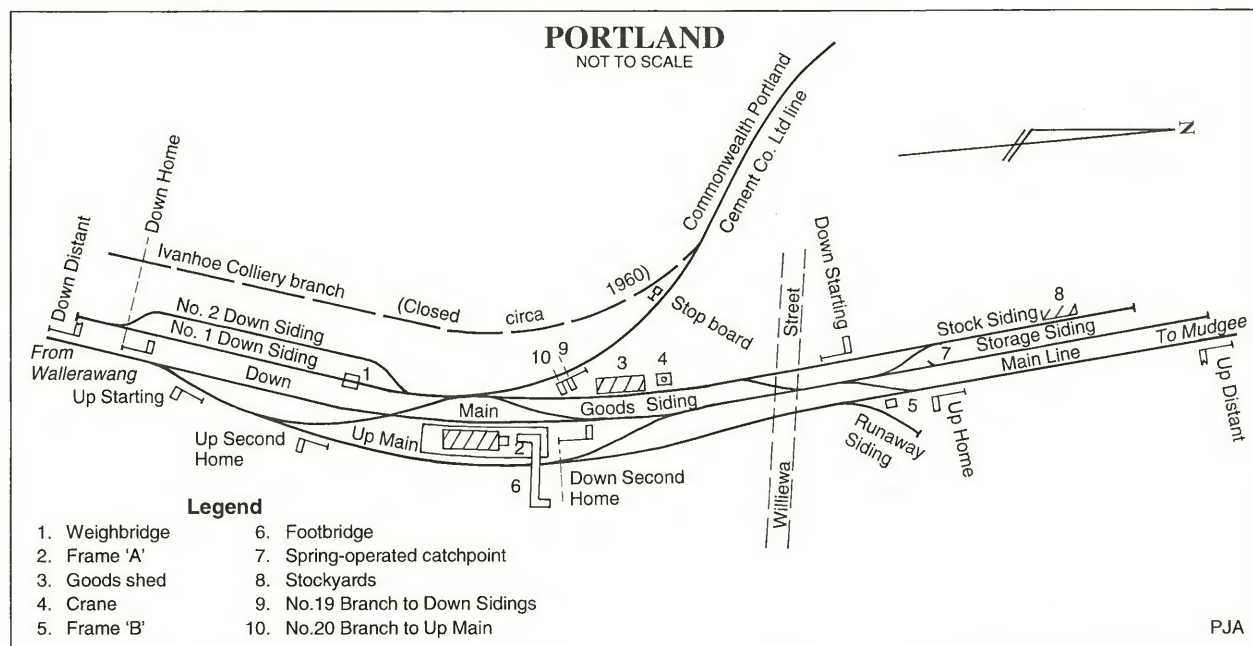


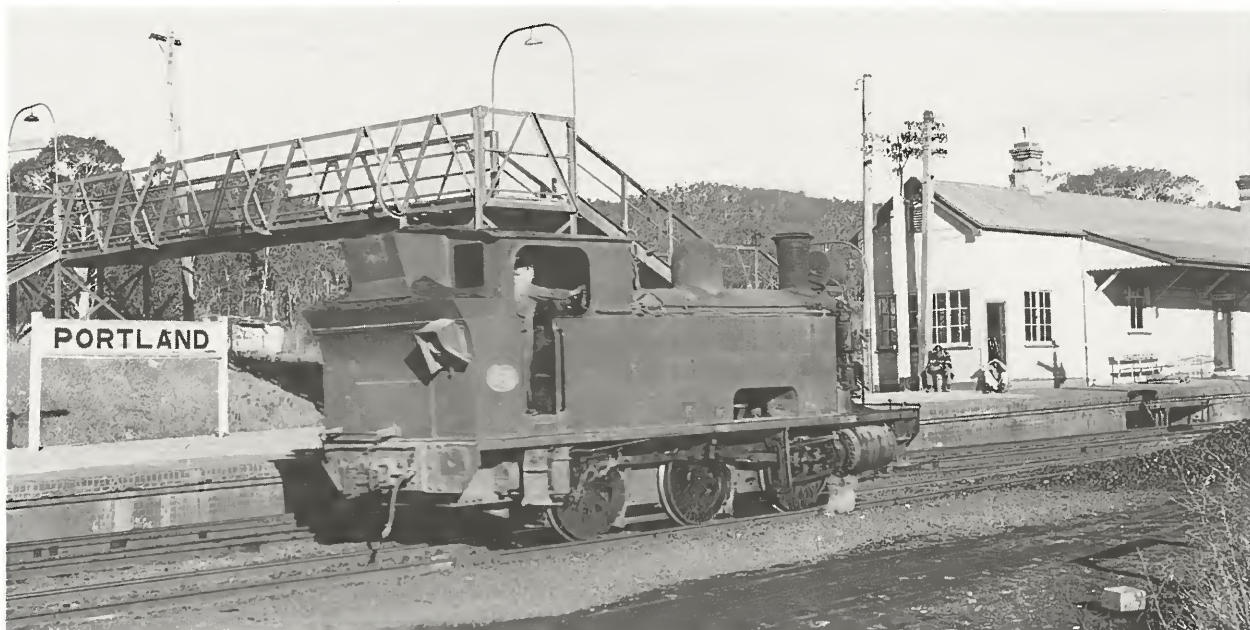
2605 eases to a halt in the goods siding at Portland station while the station assistant walks back to close the Williewa Street gates. The locomotive will then propel its load, consisting of ARX and FRH wagons, into the storage siding to await collection by the afternoon government train on 25 August 1973. Even at that time, the goods shed and adjacent crane were seeing very little activity.

cement works closed. In 1900, control of the site passed to the newly formed Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd and shortly afterwards the plant re-opened. As well as upgrading and expanding the cement works, the company closed the old 3' gauge tramway connecting the works to the main line and replaced it with a new standard gauge link, which opened for traffic on 14 June 1901. A catchpoint was provided 550' from the junction at

Portland yard and it was this point that was the limit of shunting on the branch for government trains. All train movements from the works were required to halt here as well, prior to being given permission to proceed into Portland yard.

The 3' gauge line from Ivanhoe Colliery to the works closed in 1903 after a short standard gauge connection was made between the mine and the yard at Pipers Flat. From that time, government-oper-





Commonwealth Portland Cement Company's No.3 (Andrew Barclay No.1234 of 1911) drifts past the platform at Portland in July 1977 after depositing loaded wagons in the storage siding. The signal box is the building closest to the locomotive, located at the base of the stairs leading to the overbridge which provided access from 'East' Portland, over the up main line, to the island platform. Today, all the railway infrastructure shown in this scene has been removed from the site.

R.D. Love

ated coal trains, often worked by J483 (later Z29) class 2-8-0s, ran from the pit to the sidings at Portland where the private locomotives took over for the run over the hill into the cement works. Due to increased cement production and a shortage of coal hoppers (the government railways considered this short haul a very low priority and wagons were often diverted elsewhere), the Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd constructed a new standard gauge line to the colliery. This line ran off the existing branch to the cement works near the catchpoint and followed closely the formation of the old 3' gauge tramway. The line opened in 1911 and closed about 1960 when Ivanhoe Colliery also closed. The branch to Ivanhoe Colliery crossed the government main line on an overbridge at the top of the cutting, less than half a mile from Pipers Flat station.

Portland Station

The railway came to the Portland district on 15 May 1882 when the first section of the eventual line to Gwabegar, opened between Wallerawang West and Capertee. Wallerawang West, located on the main western line, is the junction for the branch line through Mudgee and on to the terminus at Gwabegar.

The first siding at what was to become Portland was opened in 1887, a few years after the cement works had commenced production. It was known as Cullen Siding. No interlocking was provided, access to the sidings being by guard's key. On 1 October 1889, the siding was renamed Portland after a type of cement mined in the 1800s on the Isle of Portland,

Dorsetshire, England. With increased traffic, a platform was provided in 1902, situated on the up side of the single track main line opposite the points for the then recently constructed standard-gauge, privately operated branch line serving the Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd's works.

As traffic increased even further, a new 300' long island platform was built and all sidings, points and signals were interlocked, this arrangement coming into force on 16 March 1911. An overhead footbridge was provided to connect the island platform to the eastern side of town, crossing over the up main line. A signal box was located at the northern end of the platform between the other station buildings and the base of the stairs leading to the footbridge. A goods shed (36' x 16') and crane were located alongside the goods siding, while sheep and cattle races were situated on the northern side of the Williewa Street level crossing, adjacent to the stock siding. The only other structure of any significance was a 37 ton capacity weighbridge provided at the northern end of No.1 down siding.

An interesting feature at Portland station was the provision on the up main line of a catchpoint leading to a short runaway siding, located just to the north of the Williewa Street level crossing. This facility was installed at the time of the yard modernisation in 1911. The siding was required due to the ever-present risk of wagons running away during shunting operations. Portland was situated on a 1 in 50 grade, falling to down trains. The down main line was protected by the requirement that the north end points were to be set for the storage and stock



Pictured on the steepest part of the branch line, the climb from the cement works to the High Street overbridge, 2605 struggles with a near maximum load of two bogie hoppers on 1 September 1973. Behind the train can be seen a number of features, including the line forking away to the right leading to the bagged cement section of the plant. Beyond can be seen the remains of the down home signal, while the locomotive coal loading bin is above the pile of pipes in the background.

Right: *Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd's locomotive No.5 puts on a smoky display as it heads back to the works with a healthy load consisting of five CSH hoppers loaded with crushed limestone, and three empty HRH bogie wagons on 14 April 1975. Three of the CSH hoppers are fitted with tarpaulin support bars. The train is shown approaching the Williewa Street level crossing, having not long departed from Portland station. The government main line can just be discerned in the background above the bogie wagons. The secondary branch servicing Ivanhoe Colliery, which was also operated by the cement company, junctioned with this line just behind the last wagon.*

Below Right: *A brief burst of sunlight breaks through a leaden winter sky on 25 August 1973 as 2605 pauses between trips to the exchange sidings to replenish its coal and water supplies. The coaling bin, adjacent to the depot sidings, was refilled by coal brought into the plant by truck from one of the nearby mines, while to the right of the locomotive can be seen the distinctive water column. In the background, supported on a stack of sleepers, rests a boiler belonging to No.5, undergoing repairs.*

sidings at all times other than when trains were departing for Cullen Bullen.

A catchpoint was also located on the storage siding where most loaded cement wagons were placed prior to being collected by a government train. This prevented any wagons running onto the

main lines.

As stated earlier, Portland was a staff station with crossing facilities. The section from the south was only 1 mile 11 chains in length, running from Pipers Flat. This section was worked under Electric Train Staff safeworking conditions, with 48 staffs





On Anzac Day 1960, a Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society tour, returning from a weekend in the west, paid a visit to the Portland cement works. The works' locomotives were placed around the yard for inspection. This interesting view of No.5 shows a number of features that were changed after the locomotive had its rebuild in the late 1960s. The large buffers were replaced with smaller ones, the link coupling was removed and an automatic knuckle coupler installed in its place. Headlights were fitted after the overhaul and the wording 'CPC Co. No.5,' stencilled on the locomotive's water tank, disappeared.

R.D. Love

being provided, identified by the letter 'G'. The section to the north of Portland, to Cullen Bullen, was worked under the same safeworking conditions. Again, 48 staffs were provided with eight having keys for unlocking the points leading into the sidings at Renown Colliery near Cullen Bullen. The identifying letter on all these staffs was 'H'. By 1973, 50 staffs without keys and identified by the letter 'A', were in use for the section to Cullen Bullen.

The government facilities dating from 1911 remained virtually untouched during the lifetime of

the branch line. When rail transport from the works ceased in January 1983, the sidings saw very little use. On 4 March 1986, Portland station was closed as a staff and crossing station with the down main, all sidings and all signals being placed out of use pending removal.

Today, the site of Portland station is bare, except for the single track main line running north to the cement works at Kandos (the current terminus of the Gwabegar line from the Lithgow end) and the coal mines at Charbon and Baal Bone. All signs of the station, other trackwork and signalling have been removed. The Williewa Street level crossing remains but it is now protected by type 'F' flashing lights and bells controlled by track circuits.



On a cold, bleak June day in 1976, No.3 and 2605 take a spell between exchange trips to Portland station. On this day, a weather-worn No.3 is the rostered locomotive, while the 26 class is the standby engine - a practice that was common from the mid 1960s when the cement traffic from the Portland works started to decline, requiring the use of only one engine each day.

R.D. Love

The Andrew Barclay 0-6-0 side tank locomotive (builder's No.1470) was built in 1916 and entered service with Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd as their No.5 the same year. It saw active service on the branch line at Portland for nearly sixty years. It is shown here standing patiently outside the bulk cement loading area as wagons are filled on 24 April 1975.



The Locomotives

The cement works' standard gauge line was worked by several locomotives over the years. During the life of the branch, the cement company owned and operated six steam locomotives but at times of engine shortages it resorted to hiring government locomotives. Tank locomotives 2604, 2616, 3003 and 3039 all appeared on the line at various times between April 1960 and January 1967, substituting for company locomotives. As this article deals primarily with the last decade of operations on the line, only a brief description will be given for those earlier locomotives, the details appearing in Table 1.

Nos 3 and 5 were painted green, while 2605 retained its government livery of black, although in practice all engines

Table 1
Steam Locomotives of Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd.

Loco No.	Type	Builder	Year Built	In Service at Portland	Tractive Force (lbs)
1	0-6-0 saddle tank	Hudswell Clarke and Co., Leeds (Builder's No. not available - Note 1)	1878	19/7/1901	11200
2	0-6-0 saddle tank	Robert Stephenson and Co., England (Builder's No.2994 of 1908 - Note 2)	1899	1908	12320
3	0-6-0 side tank	Andrew Barclay, Glasgow (Builder's No.1234 of 1911 - Note 3)	1911	1911	19140
4	0-4-0 saddle tank	Andrew Barclay, Glasgow (Builder's No.1319 of 1913 - Note 4)	1913	1913	10390
5	0-6-0 side tank	Andrew Barclay, Glasgow (Builder's No.1470 of 1916 - Note 5)	1916	1916	21870
2605	2-6-2 saddle tank	Dübs and Co. (Builder's No.2794 of 1892 - Note 6)	1892	30/12/1966	20800

Notes

- Locomotive No.1 was scrapped in 1953.
- Although No.2 carried a builder's plate dated 1908, it appears that the locomotive was built in 1899 during a period of slow orders and was not sold until 1908. The locomotive left Portland in 1964, going to the NSW Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society at Parramatta Park. The locomotive is currently undergoing restoration to working order at the Rail Transport Museum, Thirlmere.
- Locomotive No.3 was obtained by the Central West Railway Preservation Society in 1987.
- Locomotive No.4 was scrapped in 1957.
- Locomotive No.5 saw little service from the mid 1970s due to boiler problems, a new boiler being fitted by 1976, although it never returned to active service at Portland. The locomotive was purchased by the Tallangatta Valley Tourist Railway in Victoria, leaving Portland on 11 November 1986.
- This locomotive entered service on the NSW Government Railways and was utilised on the Illawarra and Western regions prior to being purchased by the Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd. The locomotive retained its original number throughout its days at Portland under private ownership. The locomotive is currently stored at Lithgow awaiting possible restoration.





No.123 goods ran from Lithgow to Portland each weekday morning, delivering empties and returning with loaded wagons from the storage sidings. 4-6-0 tender engine 3001 (complete with cowcatcher) is shown just north of Pipers Flat station with a mixed load of empty four-wheel S and RH trucks destined for the cement works at Portland. The privately operated line serving the Ivanhoe Colliery passed over the top of the cutting immediately behind the photographer prior to its closure circa 1960.

Peter Attenborough Collection

Above Left: *Barclay No.3 slogs slowly uphill past the old home signal which, until the early 1960s, protected the yards at the cement works from trains approaching from Portland station. This view taken on 4 July 1977 shows the 0-6-0 with its normal consist of two loaded bogie wagons heading for the exchange sidings at Portland station.*

R.D. Love

Below Left: *The last rays of a summer sun catch 3222 plodding towards Marrangaroo tunnel, near the site of the old Jeffrey's Siding, with No.120 goods from Portland cement works. The load on this day consists of various types of wagons, both of the four-wheel and bogie type, conveying bagged and bulk cement. The line, at this point, passes directly below the imposing cliffs forming the western edge of the Great Dividing Range. The date is 6 February 1964.*

R.D. Love

were a shade of grey, being covered in a fine coating of cement dust.

The last locomotive to work the branch was D10, a 387hp English Electric diesel-electric locomotive hired by the Southern Portland Cement Co. to replace the aging steam locomotives. D10 worked the line from August 1982 until its closure in January 1983. By 1982, all the remaining steam locomotives at Portland were in need of major overhaul, but

these expensive repairs were not warranted as traffic by this time was limited. D10 was built in 1956 and was used as a shunter at the Australian Iron and Steel Co.'s works at Port Kembla until becoming surplus to requirements following the downturn in the steel industry in the 1980s. As the locomotive was on hire, it retained its orange and black livery while at Portland.

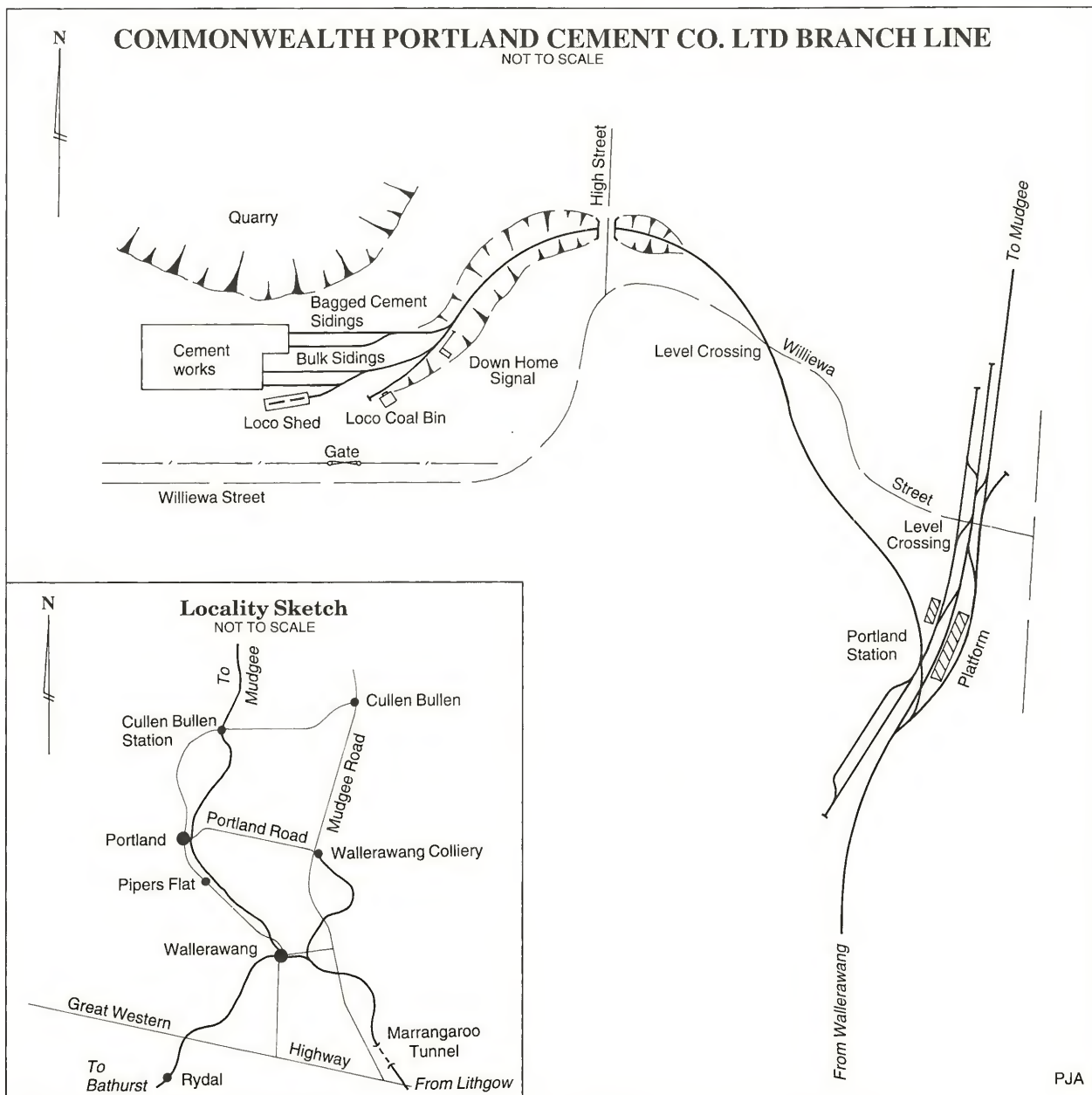
The Branch

As mentioned earlier, the branch line from Portland station to the cement works was approximately one mile in length. It forked from the down main line, opposite the station platform, the points facing to down trains. The line then swept in a north-westerly direction over a low embankment before crossing Williewa Street at an unprotected level crossing. Williewa Street is the main road linking Portland township (where the cement works is located) to 'east' Portland where the station was sited. The line continued to climb on a sweeping curve until passing under the High Street road overbridge. At this point the line was at its highest elevation and situated in a rock cutting about 20' deep.

After passing beneath this bridge, the line began to drop steeply down into the cement works. At the western end of the cutting, the various sidings split into the different yards within the complex.

Within the works there were three groups of sidings. The northernmost sidings (nearest the quarry) were for the loading of bagged cement, while the sidings in the middle of the plant were for bulk cement. The southernmost sidings provided access to the locomotive shed and servicing area. The locomotive shed was a single track, brick structure with a slate roof. Two locomotives could be accommodated inside at any one time. An inspection pit was provided at the eastern end of the shed.

The line to the exchange sidings was operated





During periods of locomotive shortage at the Portland cement works, the company hired government locomotives. On Anzac Day 1960, 2616 stands outside the engine shed while Robert Stephenson 0-6-0 saddle tank No.2 waits patiently with a four-wheel and a bogie bulk cement wagon, close to the maximum load for that engine unassisted on the climb away from the works. Compare the state of the engine shed to that in more recent times. To the company's credit, it did spend money on its railway during the 1960s, a new engine shed roof and the rebuild of No.5 both being major undertakings.

R.D. Love

under Electric Staff conditions from 1911 until the 1950s when the safeworking system was abandoned. A signal post with two arms protected Portland yard from trains arriving from the works. No.19 signal, controlled from Portland signal box,

gave access to the down sidings while No.20 signal allowed the train to cross to the up main line, from where it could reverse into the storage siding at the northern end of the yard. A single lower quadrant signal protected the company's yard from trains

During the mid-1970s, No.5 was given a major overhaul. This overhaul was carried out by the company's own staff in the workshop portion of the locomotive shed adjacent to the works. Although only a single-road engine shed, it could accommodate two locomotives and, as can be clearly seen, the workshop section was quite spacious. No.5 is awaiting the fitting of its wheels in this view taken on 21 June 1976, but the locomotive was destined never to return to service at Portland.

R.D. Love



arriving from Portland, the post being located at the western end of the deep cutting just before the yard. There was no need for a safeworking system on the branch during the late 1970s as there was only ever one locomotive, and hence train, operating on the line at any one time.

During the boom years of the 1960s, when traffic was heavy, it was common for trains to be either double headed or banked in the rear upon departure from the works.

Working the Branch

The mid-1970s saw No.3, No.5 and 2605 providing the branch line motive power requirements.



Each work day one of the locomotives was fired up and commenced working the exchange trips to Portland station, starting early morning and continuing until the afternoon. The actual finishing time was dependent upon the number of wagons required to be moved to the main line for collection.

Most loaded wagons originated from either the bagged cement or the bulk cement areas of the plant. During the 1970s, it was usual for four-wheel S trucks to be loaded with the bagged product while bogie wagons, usually of the BRH, FRH, HRH, PRX and ARX types, carried the bulk cement.

The first trip would depart the works around 8.00am and proceed to Portland station, taking about seven or eight minutes for the run. Due to the steep grade encountered upon leaving the plant, the load was limited to about 180 tons, consisting of either two bogie wagons or up to six S trucks. Once the train had arrived at Portland, it would reverse into either the goods siding or the storage siding and leave the loaded wagons there to await collection by a government service. The locomotive would then run forward to the down sidings to collect any empty wagons for the works. These wagons had been placed in these sidings by a government train at some previous time. The load back to the works could consist of several wagons, as they were empty and the grades encountered on the down journey were less se-

On 9 March 1974, 2605 blasts away from the bagged cement section of the plant with a full load of six tarpaulined S trucks. As years went by, the amount of bagged cement railed from Portland declined, being replaced by bulk movements to major metropolitan distribution points. The lines diverging to the right once connected the major sidings at the eastern end of the works to those lines serving the quarries to the west and north. These quarry lines saw very little use during the last decade of steam operations, with most crushed stone being moved by truck.



By the mid-1970s, Barclay No.3 was in poor mechanical condition and was only being utilised as a standby engine. On 20 August 1976, the ageing locomotive, with steam leaking from many joints, struggles away from the cement works. Various types of bogie cement wagons could be found in the works during the last years of rail operations, including the distinctive PCT (NPTF) type with its four spherical tanks.



The halcyon days for the Portland branch were the mid-1960s when a high demand for cement required the frequent use of two locomotives. On 12 December 1966, the company's own Barclay 0-6-0 No.3 and hired 2604 stand at Portland station yard having worked a heavy load from the works. Peter Neve



All locomotives require maintenance, particularly steam locomotives. In the last years of operation, the Portland engines were manned by a driver who performed all manner of duties from driving, through firing, to coaling and watering the engine. He was assisted in these chores by a shunter on most occasions. A job that was always carried out by the driver was the one depicted here - that of oiling the motion. All operational staff (and visiting photographers) were required to wear hard hats within the works. R.D. Love

vere. Usually only two trips per day would convey the empty wagons, the locomotive returning light engine on most occasions. Between trips to Portland station, the locomotive was utilised placing the empty wagons into the correct sidings at the plant for loading.

The sight of one of the loaded trains departing Portland on a frigid winter morning was an experience never to be forgotten. The locomotive would be lurking somewhere within the confines of the many works buildings, the smoke mingling with the ever-present cement dust. When it was ready to depart, a shrill whistle would sound, warning all and sundry to keep clear. The locomotive would erupt from the buildings, gaining as much speed as possible for the climb up to the summit at High Street. The icy atmosphere ensured that the plume of steam and smoke could be seen all over Portland, not that anyone could fail to notice that the train was moving as its exhaust echoed off the iron-clad buildings. On occasion, the train would slip to a standstill on the frosty rails and, after reversing back into the works, the whole procedure would have to be repeated.

The co-operative gatemen at the works would issue photographers with hard-hats (once the usual indemnity form had been signed) which they allowed us to keep all day as we entered and re-entered the works. This generous access to the eastern end of the plant allowed photography along the most spectacular portion of the line.



2605 shunts wagons in the down sidings at Portland station prior to returning to the works on 25 August 1973. Various wagon types were usually kept on hand in these sidings and transferred to the cement works for loading as orders warranted. The main line can be seen to the left, climbing towards Pipers Flat on a rising 1 in 50 grade. It was this grade that necessitated special operating conditions when trains were shunting Portland station to help avert any possible run-aways.

Coal and water supplies were replenished from the facilities adjacent to the southernmost siding near the locomotive shed, a small coal stage being provided on the side of a low cutting. As the locomotive was worked by a driver only in the latter years, he also performed all servicing including watering and coaling. However, he was assisted in shunting at Portland station by the government-employed station staff.

Steam operations continued in this manner for many years until finally, in August 1982, 2605 worked the last steam-hauled train over the line. This was the last operation of a steam locomotive in commercial service in the west of the state - an era that lasted well over one hundred years. From that date, until January 1983, when all cement output was transferred to road, the branch line was operated by hired diesel-electric locomotive D10.

Portland Cement Works Today

Following the closure of the branch in January 1983, all cement products were trucked by road from the works. Production continued to decline and the company began to concentrate cement production at its Maldon and Berrima plants located in the Southern Highlands. The Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. had been taken over by Southern Portland Cement Co. Ltd by the time that the branch at Portland had closed.

Although some buildings have been demolished at Portland Cement Works, most, including the engine shed, stand deserted, the scene being one of desolation. Weeds grow through the pavements and windows are broken, but the fine covering of cement dust still lies caked on everything in close proximity. The railway tracks remain along much of the branch line and the route can be easily walked, apart from the section immediately west of High Street, as rock falls have partially filled the cutting.

Mainline Operations

During the mid-1960s when the government trains were still steam operated, Portland could be serviced by up to three return trips from Lithgow each weekday and, on occasions, Saturdays as well. In practice, all trains were conditional and rarely did they all run on any one day. The down trains were No.123 which departed Lithgow at 7.57am and arrived at Portland at 9.15am, No.115 12.30/1.50pm, and No.227 4.37/5.54pm. The return trains were Nos 124, 116 and 228, which departed Portland, bound for Lithgow, at 11.54am, 4.10pm and 8.04pm respectively.

Portland did not have locomotive servicing facilities or a turntable. Therefore, each engine, after shunting the empty wagons into the appropriate sidings, proceeded light engine to Cullen Bullen where water was taken and the locomotive turned



No.227 goods normally conveyed the empty wagons destined for Portland cement works during its last years of rail operation. At times, the train could be quite lengthy, as seen here. On 6 August 1979, 4856 creeps slowly upgrade after crossing Farmers Creek near Bowenfels. The city of Lithgow can be seen in the background with the rugged cliffs of the Great Dividing Range beyond. The government trains had been diesel-hauled for nearly a decade when this photograph was taken but the privately operated branch line was to remain steam-hauled for another three years.

Above Right: *Another view of one of the Portland cement trains. On 13 June 1964, 5340 heads a mixed load consisting of empty S trucks and bogie bulk cement hoppers on No.123 goods. The train has not long left Wallerawang as it passes near the town's cemetery.* R.D. Love

Right: *Although the 60 class Garratts were permitted to run as far as Portland on the Mudgee line, it was extremely rare for them to do so. This photo, taken on 8 July 1965, shows 6002 in the process of making up its train in Portland yard, prior to returning to Lithgow with a full load of cement. The Garratt was allowed 700 tons on the return run to Wallerawang, the ruling grade being the 1 in 50 encountered immediately upon departure from Portland station. When Garratts ran to Portland it was stipulated that only dual-control or 'heavy' types be used and that they run bunker-first in the up direction due to the unfavourable conditions encountered on the climb through Marrangaroo tunnel.* Tony Eyre

on the 60' turntable. In the 1960s, the normal motive power on the Portland cement trains was either a 30T or a 32 class 4-6-0 type or a 50/53 class Standard Goods 2-8-0 engine. Dual-control 60 class Garratts were also permitted to run as far as Portland on the Mudgee line, conveying loads of up to 900 tons on the down journey, but it appears that they did so on only one or two occasions.

During the 1970s all government trains that worked through Portland were diesel-hauled. The timetable of 16 January 1977 showed two trains in each direction each weekday that were scheduled to shunt Portland cement traffic, although through trains to and from Mudgee no doubt shunted there as loading dictated. Nos 3 and 4 were trains to and from the cement works at Kandos and, if required, would drop off and collect wagons from the sidings at Portland. Each train was allowed about 20 minutes to perform the shunting duties. No.3 usually passed through around daybreak, returning as No.4

around 1.30pm.

Nos 227/230 goods were the daily Portland shunt trains, conveying loading to and from Lithgow. No.227 departed Lithgow at 3.15pm, arriving Portland at 4.24pm. After propelling the empty wagons into the two down sidings, the locomotive collected the loaded wagons from the sidings at the northern end of the yard prior to departing for Lithgow at 5.50pm as No.230 goods. Arrival at Lithgow was scheduled for 7.22pm.

The motive power was usually a 44 class mainline locomotive if loading was heavy, or a 48 or 49 class branchline unit if the traffic offering was light. Other locomotives could be found on these trains, including the 47, 45, 442 and 80 classes and double heading was not uncommon. Even Australian National Railways locomotives of the 830 and 700 classes have been noted on Nos 227/230 cement trains, during layovers between mainline duties from Lithgow.





Above: The late August Oberg, the author's father, stands beside 3642, prior to its rebuild, at the Rail Transport Museum, Thirlmere, on 21 September 1975.

Above Right: Throughout much of the 1960s, most of the remaining 36 class engines were working freight and passenger trains over the Western Division, operating principally between Lithgow-Bathurst-Dubbo and occasionally as far as Parkes. Much of 3642's life was spent in that region and it was pictured between assignments at Lithgow depot on 15 September 1965. 5167, hot off a Mudgee goods, was at left.

Photographs by the author.



Left: The maker's identification and information plate which was attached to the boiler removed from 3642. Built in April 1956 by the English firm, the Vulcan Foundry, the imported Belpaire boilers were fitted to 73 locomotives during the mid 1950s, in a move which both modernised the class and provided them with additional power.



THE REBIRTH OF 3642

Olden-Day Skills Not Forgotten At Goulburn

Leon Oberg

Locomotive 3642 was one of those 'grand old ladies' of the steam age. Commissioned on 18 January 1926, it was one of a class of seventy-five similar locomotives introduced just one year earlier for NSW mainline express passenger and mail train working.

Capable of speeds in excess of 80mph, recorded in official tests over the western line in May 1941, the 36 class (as all the engines became known) was, for nearly 20 years, the pride of the State's express services, working such crack trains as the Melbourne, Brisbane, Riverina and Newcastle Expresses.

Until the advent of the 36 class, express trains were being handled by a stud of 35 smaller NN class (35 class from the 1924 renumbering) 4-6-0 locomotives of a design introduced during August 1914, regarded as rough riders at speed, due mainly to their poorly balanced driving wheels (a fault later rectified), and somewhat hard to handle. These engines were being relieved in the far south and northern inland portions of the State by five even older 4-6-0s, the N class, which were even more prone to pitching and swaying due to their rather high centre of gravity and similar sort of undercarriage.

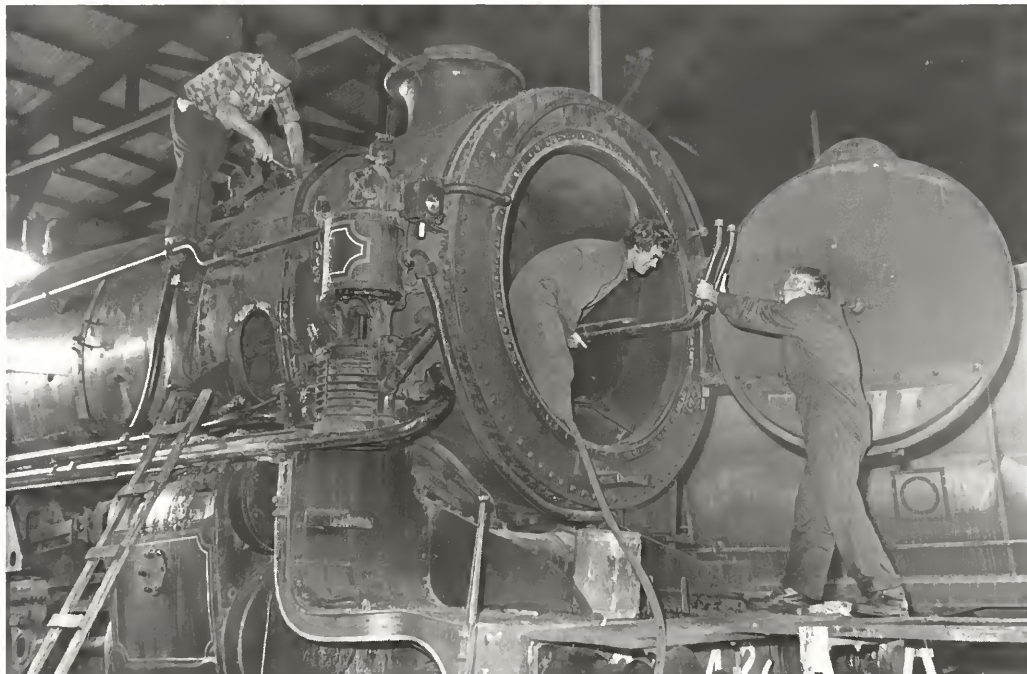
But the real mainstay of the State's passenger services was the trusty 191-member P class (32 class), a classic British-designed and built 4-6-0 which dated back to 1891.

But, alas, despite the P class' complete reliability, ease of handling and fast turn of speed, the increasing weights of the passenger trains of the early 1920s were really taxing the engines. As a result, expensive double heading became necessary on the heavier grades.

Clearly, the administration needed additional, higher-powered locomotives, so an order was placed with the NSWGR's Eveleigh shops in 1922 for an additional five NN class. But while the shops were preparing to manufacture the new engines, some believed the old NN could be greatly improved. Thus, the NN2 (or 36 class as the result was ultimately to become) was born.

All the difficulties being experienced with the NNs were analysed. Whereas the older engines boasted awkward-to-service inside valve gear (hidden between the two mainframes), the new 36 class design provided for outside Walschaerts valve gear.

Because the 35 class' coupled wheels were poorly balanced, a feature which was providing alarmingly



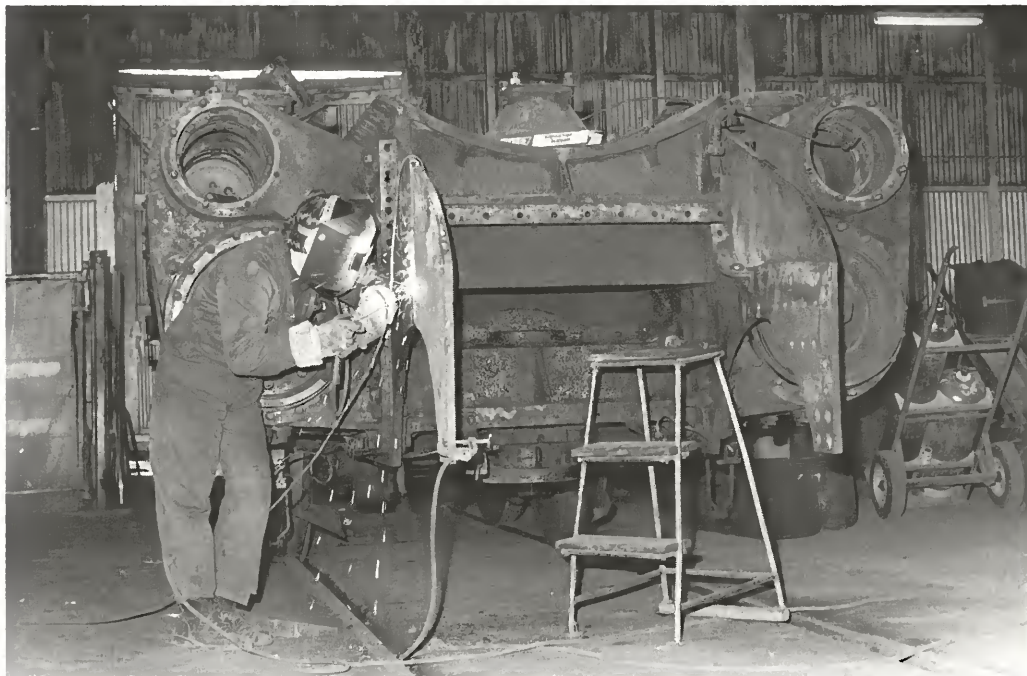
Work had just started on 3642's dismantling when this picture was taken on the morning of 21 March 1979. It shows veteran fitter, the late Les Peterson, removing the regulator coverplate while John Huntley (right) and Paul Watts wrestle with some super-heater tubes.

high hammer blows to the trackwork when operating at speed, finer balancing of the wheels on the 36 class reduced the forces by nearly three-quarters.

Ash content from the firebox, drawn through the boiler during heavy steaming, would bank up in the 35 class smokebox, blocking low-level boiler tubes and thus retarding steaming. So the new 36 class was provided with a larger, better-designed smokebox which produced a greater vacuum action, and ejected the excessive build-up of cinders out through the exhaust.

Another problem was the short range tenders supplied with the 35 class. The new design called for turret tenders which increased the coal capacity from 9½ tons to 14 tons, and the water capacity from 4000 gallons to 6000 gallons.

A radical departure from established NSW locomotive design was the provision of a boiler bearing a round-top firebox. All standard locomotive types then operating were using square-top Belpaire type fireboxes which afforded lower maintenance, particularly to broken stays.



Goulburn depot boilermaker, Bob Dominick, repairing the front portion of 3642's frame in June 1979. Because the engine had been involved in some previous collision, heavy repairs were necessary throughout the frame, and to the bufferbeam.



3642's old boiler, No. 3642B, swings from the jib of steam crane 1048, marking the start of the engine's complete restoration. The date: 19 March 1979.

When the first 36 class appeared on 7 January 1925, it was a very fine engine indeed. Although it was marginally more powerful than the older 35 class, it quickly demonstrated it could do the job much better.

Costing £14,580, the original Eveleigh order for five engines had by now been increased to 25. In addition, the Sydney locomotive builder, the Clyde Engineering Co., was contracted to construct 50 more.

However, difficulties within the Railways' workshops later saw Clyde complete the final 15 of the Eveleigh order, all 75 locomotives finally being delivered by November 1928.

Originally delivered in black livery, the introduction of 'named' trains during the 1930s found a number of 36 class locomotives provided with green paintwork. For more than a decade, they were to be seen speeding over principal main lines with the elite express services. Engine 3642 was one the green engines.

With the arrival of the magnificent 38 class Pacific 4-6-2s from January 1943 (a class of thirty glamorous, modern steam locomotives, which even today are held in the highest regard), the 36 class

was gradually relegated to lesser services, including use on all stations early morning newspaper mixed services.

Moreover, by 1950, the 36 class locomotives were starting to show their age, with most of their boilers nearing the end of their economic lives. Accordingly, Railway design staff prepared drawings for an updated version of the 36 class, incorporating many features of the 38 class.

One of the more radical departures from the old design was the provision of British-built Belpaire boilers which, when fitted, increased the locomotives' boiler pressure from 180psi to 200psi which, in turn, increased the tractive effort from 30,498 lb (at 85% boiler pressure) to 33,887 lb.

New, better styled and more comfortable sedan cabs were also provided.

The first engine to appear in this form was 3643, on 24 July 1953. By December 1957, 73 of the class had been similarly rebuilt, but advancing dieselisation and electrification of the system's main lines saw the rebuilds for engines 3622 and 3663 cancelled. Accordingly, both were scrapped as their boilers failed.

3642 received its rebuild in December 1955. As



Peter Broadhead (at left) and Michael Marmont indulge in a little blacksmithing the old way, when straightening 3642's accident-damaged buffer beam.

most of its life had been spent working out of Sydney's Eveleigh passenger depot, the locomotive was returned to that shed upon rebuild. But electrification of the main western line to Lithgow, with the subsequent withdrawal of steam over that steeply-graded route, saw it transferred to Lithgow depot during March 1958.

There it worked the various express and mail services and, afterwards, goods trains, punctuated with occasional visits to the workshops for overhauls, until transferred to Sydney's Enfield goods depot in January 1966.

At Enfield, 3642's prime stamping ground was the 130 mile route to Goulburn. But, in September that same year, it was returned once more to the western division - this time to Bathurst depot - for further general service.

Its condition soon caught up with it and 3642 was finally taken out of service during April 1967 and placed in store at Enfield, along with a host of other steam locomotives made redundant due to increasing dieselisation.

Soon afterwards, however, it was returned to traffic, along with a number of other 36 class, to replace withdrawn 35 class engines at Newcastle's Broadmeadow depot. This reprieve was very short-lived for, after just a handful of return journeys to Gosford, 3642 was returned to Enfield for scrapping.

Gathering rust and grime, with weeds starting to grow from its tender and buffer-beam, 3642 presented a sorry sight as it awaited its fate.

But a certain star must have been guiding the veteran engine for, due to increases in traffic throughout the state which were taxing the growing diesel fleet to the limit, a decision was made during mid-1968 to return a handful of 36 class to traffic to

ease the situation. 3642 was one of the few selected and, in May that year, was forwarded to Eveleigh workshops for a light overhaul and the fitting of power reversing equipment and reverse sanding. The 36s were working pick-up goods trains between Sydney and Goulburn and Broadmeadow and Gosford. The drivers objected to the eighteen turn screw reverse when so much shunting was entailed.

Put back to work at Broadmeadow for Gosford goods working a few months later, the locomotive was again withdrawn to Enfield's 'rotten row' in March 1969.

Surely its days were by now over. But, no!

Continuing increases in goods traffic saw it returned to the active Enfield roster two months later. As such, it was one of just four steam locomotives working over the mainline to Goulburn.

When that line was fully dieselised five months later, 3642 was again set aside, only to be resurrected late in 1970 for the Newcastle-Gosford service (along with a few other surviving mainline steam types) to help handle the volume of traffic generated in connection with the Pope's NSW visit in December of that year.

Although it enjoyed just a couple of weeks' work, enthusiast bodies, including the NSW Rail Transport Museum, began taking a keen interest in the locomotive's destiny, more so since it had been used on a number of specially chartered excursions around that period.

As a result, 3642 was retained by the administration, along with a number of various steam locomotive types, for continuing limited excursion and promotional service. In this guise, 3642 remained a 'trafficable' engine in an all-diesel railway until condemned, due to a firebox fracture, in August

Boilermakers, Bob Dominick (left) and Alf Tooth joining the repaired (and straightened) buffer beam to the engine frame, using rivets fashioned from dog spikes.



1973.

During its promotional life, 3642 appeared with the Railways' popular 'Vintage Train' and even travelled to South Australia in October 1972 to help celebrate the opening of the Commonwealth Railways' Whyalla line. The use of 3642 on that

historic occasion came about through the direct wishes of CR's Commissioner, Mr K.A. Smith. Being a man with considerable 36 class experience, and because CR once operated similar locomotives over its Trans-Australian Railway, he felt it fitting that a locomotive of that type should take part in the

Carpenter, the late Les Goode (right), prepares a new floor for 3642's cab as boilermaker, Barry Charlton, attends to some panel beating, on 26 June 1980.



celebrations.

Upon retirement, 3642 became a static exhibit at the Rail Transport Museum's compound, first at Enfield and more recently at the organisation's Thirlmere site. There it joined two other sister engines, 3609 and 3616 which have been retained for static exhibition.

Rebuild Begins

Due to a growing enthusiast following for 36 class locos and the NSW Rail Transport Museum's desire to have an engine capable of long distance, mainline excursion service, an administrative decision was made late in 1978 to overhaul 3642.

Accordingly, Goulburn's depot's District Manager, Tony Smithson, received a call from his old friend, Max Croft, the (then) Superintendent of Locomotive Running, seeking his support to strip a 36 class of all fittings in preparation for a boiler change. Such work was to be done on an available time basis. At that time, it was intended that Goulburn stow the parts and the stripped locomotive would be towed to a Sydney workshop for the actual boiler change. Boilers the size of 3642's had never been changed 'in the bush'.

Despite the fact that most NSW steam locomotives had been scrapped, a collection of lightly-overhauled 36 class boilers had been retained at Chullora workshops - stored for future use as steam plants at workshops around the state. An inspection of them all found one 'reasonable enough' for 3642's planned restoration.

Accordingly, 3642 was towed to Goulburn on 17 January 1979 under the supervision of Mr Croft. By then, Goulburn's Tony Smithson felt his staff could perform the entire rebuild, including the boiler exchange and the absence of a heavy lift overhead

crane did not daunt him. After all, he had the use of his 30 ton accident crane, 1048. As a result, the special movement conveying 3642 also consisted of a well-wagon carrying the silver-painted replacement boiler (No.3646B), along with 4-6-0 steam locomotive 3016, which was on delivery to the ACT Division of the ARHS.

It was not new for Goulburn depot to have steam repairs in hand since, in recent years, the staff had been performing a number of mechanical and boiler repairs to many of the RTM's active steam fleet. But none of the jobs received to that point was as daunting as the task ahead.

Stripping started on 21 March 1979, with fitters and their mates first removing the superheater tubes, the regulator coverplate and then the main steam-delivery pipes, which carried the steam into the cylinders. While that work was progressing, boilermakers were in the cab stripping gauges and backplate fittings. Within a couple of days, 3642 resembled a beached whale - a lifeless hulk. All its parts were stored in a withdrawn MBC bogie covered van.

19 March 1979 was selected as the day for the historic big boiler lift and the elderly steam crane was anchored to one of the depot's radiating round-house roads and the remains of 3642 pushed in beside it by Alco branchliner, 4880. In what could only be described as a perfect operation, the old boiler, No.3642B, came out as easily as could be imagined. Now the real work began.

The frame had to be steam cleaned for examination, during which several bad cracks and fractures were located.

In addition, due to wear and corrosion, the old boiler's expansion slipper and brackets (located at the rear of the chassis), had to be re-made, and this



Senior fitter, the late Les Peterson, drives home a pin in the old express locomotive's brake rigging during re-assembly of the locomotive. The new boiler was yet to be restored to the frame.

3642's big turret tender was virtually rebuilt from the frame upwards. This picture shows boilermakers, Danny Casey (left) and Barry Charlton cutting new plate steel for the tender's upper turret, on 5 March 1981

work was given to Eveleigh workshops. These brackets were so bad that the boiler had been twisted in the frame for some time, contributing to the various cracks and fractures mentioned earlier.

All the wheels were removed from the frame for attention, and fitting and machining staff gradually reconditioned the various bearing brasses, axlebox liners, bogie centres, brake cylinders, pistons and valve gear.

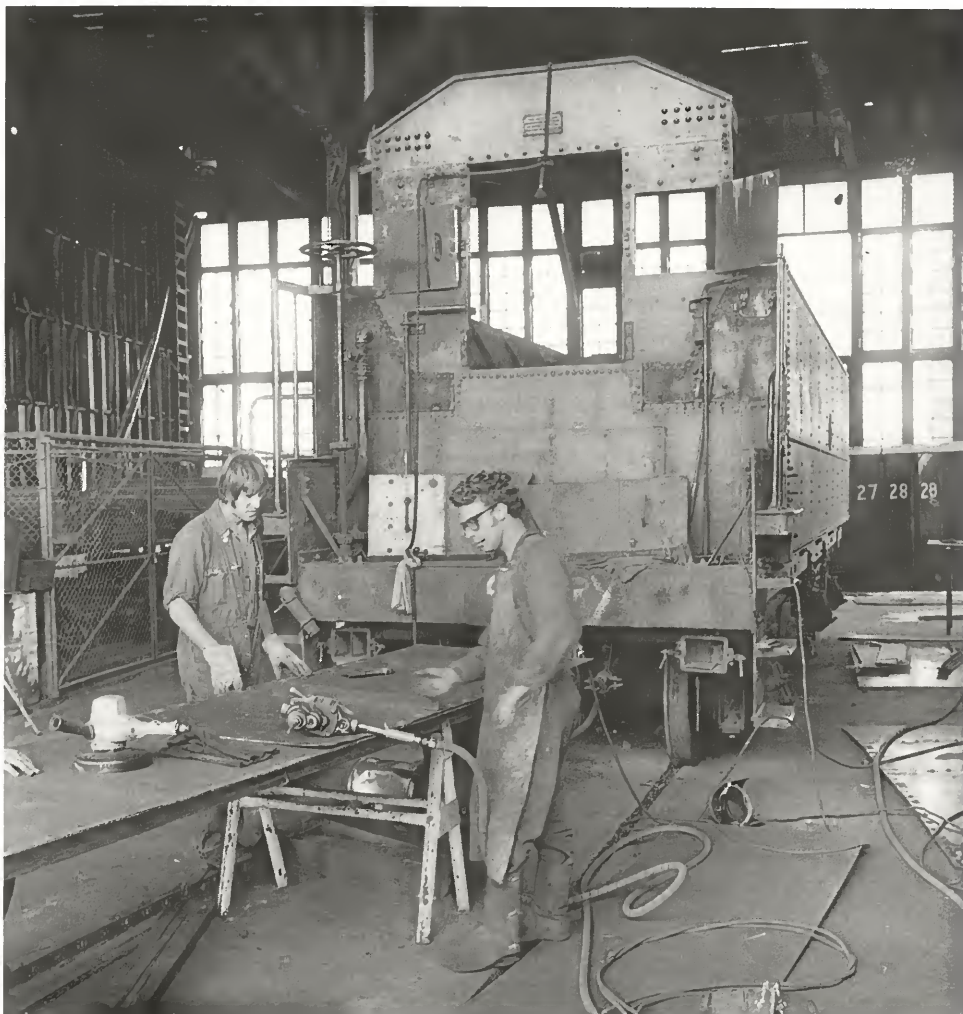
The tyres were also found to be hollow through wear and were forwarded to Junee depot which possessed a suitable wheel lathe to complete the job.

Boilermakers also started to take an active interest for, apart from having to effect repairs to metal work in the cab, the new boiler had been overhauled simply for workshops steam generation use so it came minus main internal steam pipes and equipment. All of these items had to be replaced from reconditioned equipment salvaged from the old boiler.

In addition, a host of boiler mounting studs had to be machined in the Goulburn workshop, as these also were missing.

Throughout the restoration, staff were assisted by the availability of many specification sheets and blueprints still held in the SRA's extensive archives section. However, some problems presented themselves for, when boilermakers turned to rebuild the deteriorating ash pan, no prints could be found. So they simply took what measurements they could from the old unit and successfully manufactured a new one.

This ingenuity was multiplied many times during the job and, when it came time to replace the front buffer beam following repairs to the front



frame (bent during some earlier accident while in general traffic), dog spikes were fashioned as rivets to complete the assembly.

Since the air compressor required new piston rings, and none remained available from the Railways' Stores Branch, new ones were manufactured at Goulburn.

Finally, the new boiler was hoisted into the restored frame on 30 September 1980, again through the use of the depot's steam-powered crane. The boiler was hoisted skywards and 48165 gently pushed the restored frame underneath.

While up until now all work had been done as an 'available time' venture, the newly created State Rail Authority (SRA), recognising the obvious tourist potential of the locomotive and, wishing to use it in connection with the re-opening of the refurbished Sydney terminal station late in November 1981, asked Goulburn to complete the engine by that date.

Goulburn depot then became a hive of diversified steam activity as fitters replaced the sundry reconditioned items such as grab rails, the whistle, lubrication lines and final cab fittings. Painters arrived on the scene first to undercoat the locomotive and



This picture was taken at Moss Vale during 3642's successful trial on 11 November 1981 and posing for the camera are (from left): the driver, Stewart Raymond; the then District Manager at Goulburn, Tony Smithson; the fireman, Peter Corby; and the senior boilermaker, Bob Dominick.

Right: 3642's initial road trial took place between Goulburn and Moss Vale on Remembrance Day, 11 November 1981. And it will be remembered well by the fitters and boilermakers who travelled with it. Although sure of their work, they took some spare parts along in an S truck. The FHG van carried the staff. The movement was pictured as it paused for this photo stop near Wingello.

This unit, also built by the Clyde Engineering Co. and originally delivered attached to sister engine, 3665, was noticed to require all new sheet steel plate above the side catwalks. In addition, a completely new front section below the shovelling plate had to be constructed by depot boilermaking staff.

then to restore the veteran with a shiny coat of Dulux Verdant Green livery, suitably lined out in red and yellow.

While these tradesmen were continuing their tasks, the senior electrician at the depot, Pat Mullins, another veteran of the steam era, began completely rewiring 3642 from memory!

He recalled that all re-usable fittings such as switches, marker lights, the 500W turbo-generator and plugs were all completely refurbished during the operation.

The Tender Too . . .

Due to its age, corrosion had also set into much of 3642's big turret tender.

Deep inside the tender, a number of the internal baffles and allied structuring required repairs and complete de-scaling.

Following this work, the tender body was hoisted from its bogies and all wheels were forwarded to Junee locomotive depot for tyre turning.

Because machines which would have made the job of turning the tender's axlebox brasses an easy task had long vanished, the depot's senior fitter and turner, the late Duncan Cotton, had to demonstrate just one additional facet of a typical railwayman's ingenuity by adapting a drilling machine to perform a function which, years before, would have been done on a milling machine.

Everything gradually came together. Following



a complete bogie overhaul, the tender was re-attached to the almost-completed locomotive during mid-October 1981.

6 October 1981 was certainly a day of celebration at Goulburn's locomotive depot. After more than 2½ years' gradual work, during which time 3642 had been totally stripped, staff were now looking at the fruits of their labours as steam slowly started to wisp out of the various controls.

Recalls Ron Power, "Due to its long time out of service, we wanted to bring it up to operating pressure very slowly."

Standing in the depot's compound that evening, one thing pleased both Ron Power and District Manager, Tony Smithson, and that was the absence of any steam blows from anywhere around the locomotive. Normally, when a steam locomotive is standing at night, minor blows of steam will escape into the atmosphere from joints and valves.

The tradesmen who had put 3642 back together had done their jobs exceedingly well!

For two days, 3642 simmered away before it was slowly eased out into the light of day under its own power. While the locomotive's deep and powerful sounding exhaust beat echoed off adjacent buildings as it majestically gathered speed during a trial run to Goulburn's signal box (the extent of the the locomotive department's free territory), it was plainly

evident that the fitters who still remembered the skilled valve-setting operation also had done their jobs with style.

The loco was held in steam while minor adjustments were being made to the lubrication system and the air compressor, and painters returned to the scene to complete the tender's lining out. While this was happening, arrangements were being made to run a trial to Moss Vale and return on Thursday, 5 November 1981. A crew was appointed, along with a guard (because the depot's Tony Smithson did not want to take any chances with a failure and insisted an S truck of essential parts accompany the trial).

The day of the trial dawned hot and fine. Driver Stewart Raymond had oiled around, blown the boiler down in the shed and even hosed the gleaming engine down because some soot had deposited itself on the paintwork. He was about to reverse out onto the turntable when a runner came up from Mr Smithson's office to say the trial was cancelled as someone had forgotten the engine had to have a boiler certificate. In the aura of the occasion, the sweat, dedication and effort that went into actually getting 3642 up and operational, no-one had even thought of the boiler certificate. Sure, the depot had completed a series of hydrostatic and water tests, and had steam tested the vessel, but the SRA boiler inspector, Tom Croake, had to have the final say.

Immediately, a sense of deflation came over everyone and, as if to compensate the participants for the let-down, Tony Smithson allowed Driver Raymond to back his gleaming steed out onto the turntable to at least allow this author (and those staff members with cameras) the opportunity to obtain some pictures.

Tom Croake turned up the very next day and, in certifying the veteran fit for traffic, insisted the boiler's pressure be reduced from the original 200psi to 185psi *for the moment* due to the unit being out



of service for such a lengthy period and because it had only received a light overhaul originally to suit the less-exacting depot steam plant requirement.

Another road trial was organised for 11 November 1981. Travelling with the locomotive was Mr Smithson, foreman fitter Ron Power, senior fitter Les Peterson and senior boilermaker Bob Dominick. A few other staff who were close to the project rode in the FHG brakevan which trailed the S loaded with parts.

This author was also cleared officially to ride the loco, and to take photographs, and to fire, and to well! ...

Again, no problems were detected and, under Driver Raymond's experienced hand, the engine simply sang.

As a mark of gratitude to the many railwaymen who were associated with the engine's restoration, the Administration agreed that Goulburn could keep the engine a little longer to enable it to haul the Southern District's annual railway picnic train to Bundanoon and return on 23 November.

To the delight of not only the men, but their families and friends, enthusiasts also were treated to a field day, since steam had not operated an SRA passenger train for more than a decade.

3642 was finally despatched to the Sydney station celebrations, and a subsequent career as an excursion train locomotive, the following morning.

Many readers will remember its initial use in Sydney at the head of Sydney-East Hills line special excursion trains, in which there was virtually standing room only.

The popularity of steam-hauled excursions was epitomised by the fact that in just a few days of the SRA's earlier 125th anniversary celebrations, more than 30,000 tourists were carried behind vintage, former NSW steam locomotives.

The rest of the story has become history. Although 3642 was returned to Goulburn a couple of times to help correct a minor coupled-wheel axlebox overheating problem, its main servicing 'depot' became Thirlmere and, in 1992, the big engine, now completely repainted again, remains fully operational for tour train use. ▴

Above Right: *With steam roaring out of all safety valves and the blower set on 'full', a newly-painted Verdant Green 3642 looked a picture of sheer majesty as the boiler inspector checked it out on 6 November 1981.*

Right: *3642 backs its train into Goulburn's carriage sidings following its trip to Bundanoon (and Moss Vale to turn) with the Southern District's railway picnic train of 23 November 1981. And how Goulburn Yard has changed since then. The shunters' humpy (behind the tender), the fuel oil tanks (at lower left) and the carriage sidings have gone, as have the endless rakes of stock vehicles that used to grace Goulburn South Yard. Oh, and it is rare to see a goods brakevan in the city also.*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REFERENCES

The authors make the following acknowledgements for assistance with preparation of their essays, and cite references.

Leon Oberg THE REBIRTH OF 3642

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the management and staff of the now-closed Goulburn Locomotive Depot who, throughout the restoration of 3642, provided every opportunity to record the historic rebuild on film and gather the material for this story.

Further Reading

- 36, by Rev. John Thompson, NSWRTM 1988.

Peter Attenborough PORTLAND

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Thanks are extended to Ray Love for assistance in the preparation of this essay and for the provision of photographs. Thanks are also extended to Tony Eyre and Peter Neve for supplying additional photographs to help illustrate this article and to Graeme Bolton for his assistance with research.

Further Reading

Those readers requiring further material on the Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd's branch are directed to the excellent article by the late G.H. Eardley, which appeared in the Australian Railway Historical Society's *Bulletin* No.447, January 1975.

The *Bulletin* No.560, June 1984 provides additional detail on many Andrew Barclay locomotives that worked in Australia, including those at Portland!

The NSW School Railway Club's Association publication *The Railway News*, August 1989, also gives a summary of railway operations on the Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd's branch.

Various details of the government operation at Portland can be obtained from the State Rail Archives and the assistance of Victor Poljanski from that section is acknowledged.

Units of Measurement

Since the essays in this book deal with a period when the Imperial system of measurement was used in Australia, that system has been retained. As an aid to conversion for those who are so minded, the factors in the accompanying table may be used.

Furthermore:

A mile could be divided into 80 chains (ch) of 22 yards (66 feet) each.

At the date of currency conversion (14 February 1966) £1 equalled \$2. (There were twelve pence to the shilling and 20 shillings to the pound.) However, inflation both before and after this date makes conversion of monetary amounts meaningless unless various economic indicators, including such inflation factors, are known.

1 inch	=	25.4mm
1 foot	=	305mm
1 yard	=	0.914m
1 mile	=	1.609km
1 gallon	=	4.546L
1 pound (lb)	=	0.454kg
1 ton	=	1.016t
1 horsepower	=	0.746kW

R.K. Booth

SIGNAL SURVEY - CO-ACTING SEMAPHORES

References and Acknowledgements

- Richard and Robert Henry - research notes taken from track and signal circulars and from Weekly Notices.
- ARHS Archives - Track and signal diagrams.
- SRA Archives - Track and signal diagrams.

Stephen Halgren T.P.O. WEST - 1948

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Ray Love

DUNGOG LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT

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- Local Appendices and Working Timetables.
- NSWRTM *Budget* and *Staff* magazines.

Further Reading and References:

Byways Of Steam: *The Steam Locomotive Depots in NSW - Taree, Wauchope & Kempsey.*

Wal Jenkins

NORTH COAST TO THE BORDER

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