

RAILWAY

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Railhead for the Macleay District

1916 TGR CAMPANIA ACCIDENT

Remembering the 1916 incident and its fatalities

LAUNDERING RAILWAY LINEN

History of laundering linen on the NSWGR



Alco 442 Class 'Jumbo' locomotive 44209 sits in the loop at Kempsey Station with the Down pickup freight train as the Observer checks the load on Saturday 29 April 1989. The adjacent goods shed road is filled with bogie freight wagons used for sleeper traffic. ROD MILNE PHOTO. Rod's article for the Centenary of the railway opening to Kempsey commences on page 4.



The scene at Campania following the derailment of the M Class Garratt locomotive and the damaged carriages on the Launceston to Hobart Express on 16 February 1916. The overturned Garratt locomotive M1 and the remains of the first carriage are on the right with a badly damaged carriage on the left. ILLUSTRATED TASMANIAN MAIL, 17 FEBRUARY 1916. Les Morley's account of the accident commences on page 12.

EDITORIAL

Rod Milne opens this month's magazine with his account of the opening of the North Coast Railway of the NSW Government Railways to Kempsey on 27 November 1917 to mark the Centenary of this event. The article covers the impact of the railway on the town and the author's recollections of the 'Alco era' of the 1960s, 70s and 80s when diesel locomotives of the 43, 44, 442, 45 and 48 classes dominated on the freight trains passing through the town. It concludes with the decline of rail freight services on the line in recent decades as road hauliers took over the inter-state transport business.

The article is illustrated with images from NSW State Archives and Records, the ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre and the author.

Les Morley reviews the Tasmanian Government Railways 1916 Campania accident in which the Launceston to Hobart Express headed by M Class 4-4-2+2-4-4 Garratt locomotive M1 derailed at speed entering a sharp curve at Campania with the loss of seven lives (including the driver) and serious injuries to 23 passengers and the fireman. The experience of various passengers and the subsequent coronial inquiry are covered in the article.

Jim Longworth turns to a subject not regularly covered by railway historians, the dirty linen and similar items generated in the day-to-day operation of our railway systems. Jim's account covers the efforts of the NSW Government Railways to launder its dirty linen and cotton waste in-house, early tenders for laundering sleeping car linen and the shift to contracting commercial laundries for these services from the 1930s.

Peter Clark presents his assessment of the construction and numbering of the TF Class 2-8-0 Standard Goods locomotives from 1915. Apart from ten early locomotives, they were fitted with Schmidt superheaters as built, giving them a significant boost in haulage capacity over the earlier T Class locomotives. Peter focuses on correcting the numbering of these engines in the 1924 renumbering system. The article is illustrated with photographs and a superheater drawing from the ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre collection. A short Explorer item from Greg Hallam, a review of Nic Anchen's latest book and 'Letters' round off the issue.

Robert Ferro Kilop

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Cover Image: Alco diesel-electric locomotive 4533 approaches the Macleay River Railway Bridge with a Down freight train on 31 May 1983. TNT containers are prominent in the loading.

N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RRC, 451908

Editor and Layout: Bob McKillop

Editorial Team: Ben Barnes, Ray Love, Craig Mackey, Neil Munro, Shane O'Neil, Bill Phippen, Peter Sellars, Ross Verdich

Editor Emeritus: Alex Grunbach

Phone (Editor) 02 8394 9017

Email: editorarh@arhsnsw.com.au

Website: www.arhsnsw.com.au

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Newcastle Branch Secretary: John Barnes Phone: 02 4952 8637

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Information and Research Railway Resource Centre Manager: Bill Phippen Phone: 02 9699 2736

Email: resources@arhsnsw.com.au **Hours:** 9am-4pm Mon-Fri **Reading Room:** 67 Renwick Street, Redfern, NSW 2016
Hours: Noon-4pm Tue, 10am-3pm Sat

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Letters: We publish a selection of letters depending on space allowances. Letters should be kept to around 250 words and preferably be sent via email.



The crowd at Kempsey Railway Station for the official opening of the North Coast Railway from Wauchope to Kempsey by Mr R T Ball, Minister for Railways, on 28 November 1917. The official train has arrived at the station. COURTESY MACLEAY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KEMPSEY: GATEWAY TO THE MACLEAY DISTRICT

Rod Milne

Editor: The Macleay District community celebrates the centenary of the opening of the North Coast Line to Kempsey on Monday 27 November, so the following article commemorates the formal opening on 28 November 1917. The Macleay District Historical Society has organised the unveiling of a plaque by the Honourable Melinda Pavey MP at Kempsey Railway Station on Monday 27 November 2017 with a Centenary cake. CPH rail motors bringing visitors will arrive on Sunday 26 November, with the formal celebrations to be held at the station the following day. A luncheon for past and present railway employees will be held on Saturday 25 November at the Kempsey Macleay RSL Club.¹

The November 1917 opening

In 1917, a 37 member committee of community gentlemen with the Mayor, Alderman C A Lane, as chairman planned the celebrations for the opening in great detail, the official opening being set for Wednesday 28 November. Regular meetings were held each Monday evening as the plans were firmed up, often with considerable banter among the delegates.²

The official opening on Wednesday 28 November 1917 was covered in detail by the local newspaper which reported:

The weeping skies of recent weeks gave way on Wednesday morn to the azure depths of a glorious summer day, and the rain-washed town needed no other decoration than the ten-thousand units of happy humanity who thronged from far and near to

celebrate the official opening of the railway that had only now, November, 1917, crept wearily into Kempsey to discover a people grown prosperous in the face of adversity, and despite the malignant opposition of certain politicians.

It was estimated that 10,000 spectators, including some 50 politicians and prominent public men, had come to the town for the occasion. Some 1500 people from the Manning and Hastings River districts arrived by a special 14 carriage train just before noon. A lengthy procession, led by the mounted police and the Taree brass band commenced at the northern end of Smith Street at 11.30am. It included a number of 'handsomely decorated' motor cars, with Mr A W Scott's traction engine ingeniously fitted-up as the 'Bellbrook Express' being 'the most striking item'.

The official train had arrived from Wauchope earlier in the morning, while the noon train brought visitors from the Hastings and Macleay Valleys, enabling the formal opening ceremony to commence. Mayor Lane stepped forward to welcome the official guests before going into a long presentation on how the railway would bring great benefit to the town of Kempsey and its district. He then asked Mr R T Ball, the Minister for Railways, to officially declare the line to Kempsey open. Ball stated that opening the line from Sydney to Brisbane would enable a fast passenger and mail service between the two cities, while also opening large areas of land to settlement. He also explained that the four sections of the line that were in operation had been operating at a signifi-

cant loss over the past two years, while construction costs were also high, so the government needed to address this issue.

Having declared the line open to Kempsey, Mr Ball handed a pair of inscribed silver scissors to the Mayoress, Mrs C A Lane, to cut the ribbon. Having done so, she 'expressed her pleasure in a neat speech as well as extending thanks to the visitors on behalf of the ladies of Kempsey'. The official party then adjourned to the banquet hosted by Mayor Lane at the Victoria Theatre, which had been taken over for the event. Many toasts were drunk!³

Kempsey celebrates the centenary of opening the North Coast Railway to that centre on 27 November 2017 and this article marks this occasion. The North Coast Line linking Sydney and Newcastle via a standard gauge line to South Brisbane Station finally opened in its entirety on 27 September 1930. Isolated sections between Murwillumbah and Lismore, Lismore and Casino and onto Grafton, had opened in 1894, on 19 October 1903 and 6 November 1905 respectively, but construction of the intervening sections were spread out over a lengthy period amid controversy regarding the priority for the line.

New South Wales had experienced a major economic depression from 1890 to the mid-1890s. The renowned engineer John Job Crew Bradfield was appointed to oversee railway and tramway design in the Public Works Department in 1906 and the 310 mile (499km) North Coast Railway from West Maitland to South Grafton headed his responsibilities. Its purpose as a standard gauge interstate link to Brisbane was not foreseen at this time and it was proposed to lay the permanent way with lightweight 60 pounds per yard rails. The heaviest section from Gloucester to Taree required several tunnels and a large bridge over the Manning River.

Authorisation of construction work for this section was obscured by removal of the Railway Commissioners in 1906 following conflict between them. A new team of Commissioners led by T R Johnson, formerly Assistant Engineer of the Great Northern Railway in Great Britain, was appointed.⁴

Bradfield's main responsibility remained the North Coast Railway



The arrival of the official train headed by a P Class locomotive at Kempsey for the opening of the line on 28 November 1917. Evidently rail safety requirements were somewhat different from today's regime! STATE RECORDS NSW, 17420_A014_A014000664

until his transfer to oversee the expansion of the Sydney suburban railways and the associated Harbour Bridge in 1911. Back in 1902 the Minister for Public Works, E W O'Sullivan, had sought advice from the Public Works Committee on ways to help fund the North Coast Railway and it proposed a betterment tax on existing landholders, together with using part of the revenue from Crown lands in the area to help write down the capital cost of the line. A change of government brought C A Lee to the role of Minister for Public Works in 1906. He sought another report from the Railway Commissioners without these conditions. This in turn led to conflict between the government and the Labor opposition.

Construction of the first sections of the line was let out to tender, but several of these were taken over by the Public Works Department at the request of the contractors in 1911. Several sections from Macksville to Glenreagh were taken over under the Norton Griffith contract, but this was cancelled in 1917 and the work was completed by the Public Works or Railways Departments.⁵

The mid and north coasts of New South Wales relied largely on coastal steamers for their transport needs until after Federation, with the main North Coast Railway spine being a relatively late construction task spread out over many years. Indeed, Kempsey did not see its first train until late 1917, when the link north through the coastal scrublands of Kundabung was opened. The length from Wauchope had some difficult construction components, notably in the form of a large steel

truss bridges over the Hastings River at Wauchope and the even larger Macleay River Bridge bringing the line into Kempsey. In time-honoured NSW Government Railways tradition, the new terminus was not by the river port, but at West Kempsey which was already established west of the town centre. The name Kempsey evidently honours a small village in the Severn district of western England.

With the railway opening, it was hoped that the extension of the overnight mail train to Kempsey would draw many travellers through the district. Local mayors such as C A Lane gave priority to achieving good railway access in those days. Officially, for now at least Kempsey was the northernmost terminus of the North Coast Line, though there were of course, two isolated sections of railway further north with no through connection south. The train service terminated at Kempsey until mid-1919, when another extension opened through the hilly forest lands of Eungai to Macksville on the Nambucca River. Due to the Spanish flu epidemic, a formal opening ceremony was dispensed with at Macksville. The first passenger train left Kempsey for Macksville on the morning of Tuesday 1 July 1919.

IMPACT OF THE RAILWAY

West Kempsey blossomed after 1917 with the arrival of rail, becoming a commercial centre in its own right like South Grafton. There were three hotels there, one adjacent to the main level crossing, as well as shops and a post office. As the line was completed north-



4-6-4 tank locomotive 3077 shunting four-wheel 'S' and 'CW' freight and livestock wagons in Kempsey yard circa 1960 with two bogie livestock wagons in the background.
 RT CLARKE PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 355038.

wards, the railway gained more traffic.

In 1923, connection of the isolated Raleigh–South Grafton section with Macksville enabled trains to reach South Grafton from Sydney for the first time, with a train ferry conveying loading across the river to Grafton for the isolated system extending from there to Casino, Kyogle, Lismore, Byron Bay and Murwillumbah. In 1930, Brisbane was connected to the standard gauge as well though it took two more years for the magnificent steel lifting bridge to span the Clarence River and link the Grafton and South Grafton railway stations directly. From that point on, Kempsey was on a busy main line railway indeed, with large daily tonnages of timber, stock, fish, milk, fruit, fuel and general freight passing through to Brisbane and Sydney.

As a town, Kempsey grew as the Macleay River flood-plains were settled. Much of the settlement occurred down river, at Smithtown and other places. In 1961, a marine tanker mooring opened at South West Rocks and the small coastal settlement of Crescent Head began to blossom. The mainstays of the economy were the timber, dairy and cattle industries, with the town of Kempsey becoming a strong regional centre in its own right with a population of some 10,400 residents in 2011.

Many Australians remember Kempsey for the disastrous flood of August 1949. The Macleay River burst its banks, reportedly covering 2000 square miles of land and splitting Kempsey in

three. Trains were held up either side of Kempsey for days, and food was air lifted to the isolated town. However, the floods receded and Kempsey again prospered, although further major flooding occurred in 1950.

While this article outlines Kempsey's railway history since inception of rail access in 1917, the emphasis is perhaps on the later period of time when my familiarity with the district developed. Steam locomotives operated most traffic up until 1958, but Kempsey still sees a variety in train movements, locomotives and traffic in today's diesel era.

Station environs

Kempsey station environs can be neatly described as the section between the Pacific Highway crossing south of town and the one-time stockyard siding on the northern side. There is an overpass at this southern point, the line approaching from the south through a difficult hilly and winding stretch of coastal forests containing scribbly gum and other eucalypts.

North of this crossing point, the line drops down past the former Middleton Street siding. A loop, subsequently a dead-end, on the western side of the main line had a rather interesting career, briefly acting as a temporary terminus during the great flood of 1949. A 600ft long loop siding was opened there on 17 September 1949, and it was briefly worked as an electric staff station from 8 July 1950. There were sources of freight traffic here: notably a large Spraypave bitumen depot by the siding receiving bulk supplies of bitumen for

many years, while Caltex had a depot nearby which received fuel by rail at Middleton Street, through a gravity valve by the siding from 1956. Last but not least, Kempsey's diesel-operated power station was on the eastern side of the main line, being operative until the power grid arrived in town circa 1959. In 1934, arrangements were put in place for tankers of oil to be discharged for the Kempsey Electric Light Company works at 312m 32ch. Converted on 1 September 1969 to a dead-end, Middleton Street latterly could only be shunted from the Kempsey end.

Now the scenery improves markedly as the railway negotiates an impressive large steel bridge noted for its steel spans on concrete piers across the Macleay River. The south bank of the river is the high side, with the north bank much lower and essentially a flood plain, so the northern approach spans are numerous as the track passes over the low-lying parts of Kempsey. The view from the train is attractive, particularly looking west up river towards the inland ranges beyond Burnt Bridge, or east downstream towards the main town centre dominated by its central traffic bridge.

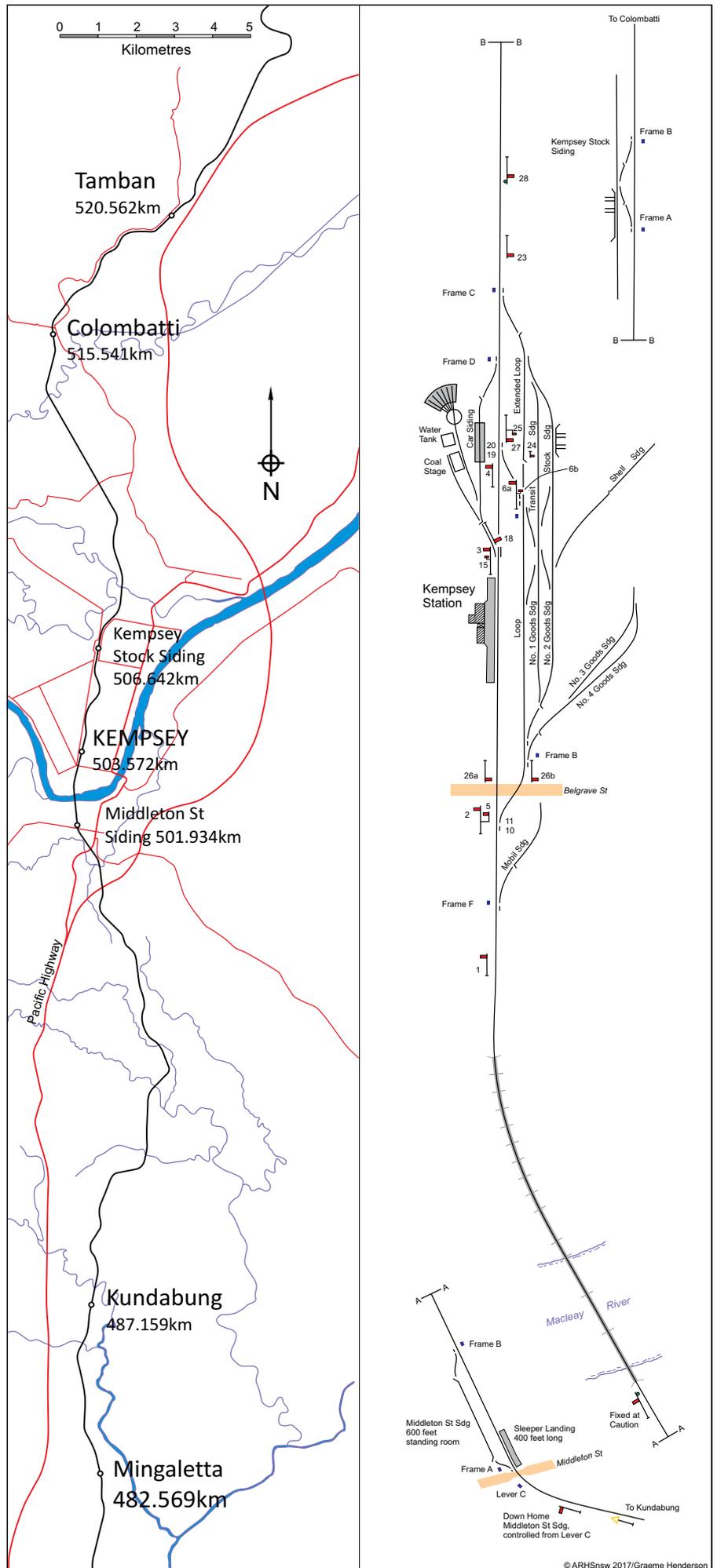
Descending from this high bridge, the line drops to cross the main thoroughfare of Kempsey, Belgrave Street, and enters the station yard proper. **Kempsey Station** is located on the western side of the main line. It is a curious structure composed of bricks forming a pleasant if not overly elegant building that adequately serves the needs of the regional town. The building has two storeys to cater for the RRR facilities, but, like most country stations nowadays, it is a sad reminder of far busier times when a good number of people were employed there. Included in this building was a signal box, once very busy in the days of electric staff and semaphore signals. Those days came to an end in 1982 with the installation of CTC on the North Coast Line, though a local panel was retained in the signal box for the station staff. A fascinating thing to watch, it was always good to see the approach of an XPT train down from Tamban displayed in lights on the board.

In the pre-CTC days (over 60 years), electric staff working was used at Kempsey. The next electric staff station to the north was Tamban, opened in 1934, the previous section extending all the way to Eungai.

South of the Kempsey, there was a long electric staff section to Kundabung, which for many years had an ASM in charge. Both Tamban and Kundabung had signalmen for all trains, with mechanical semaphore signals and interlocking being in use pre-CTC. Automatic staff exchangers enabled staff changes with trains at speed. Alas, the splendid double-bracket home signals were taken down with CTC, and replaced by colour light signals with perhaps not the same degree of character and charm. In September 1982, pre-CTC equipment was installed, with formal change over three months later. In semaphore days, Kempsey had no fewer than three home signals on the northern approach, the third one being installed on 25 March 1935. South of the station, a down outer distant signal was in use after 12 July 1949.

The Kempsey yard proper is on the eastern side, the tracks coming off the loop line which was extended in recent years some distance to the north. The once busy goods yard is now somewhat sad, the easternmost line of the yard running past a former large yellow galvanised iron goods shed. There was a five-ton gantry crane too, while two oil sidings extended from the yard. The longer of these was the Shell siding, opened on 14 March 1927, and curving away behind the goods shed to cross Gladstone Street and enter the fuel depot. Once drawing a substantial amount of fuel by rail tankers, this siding fell out of use after 1961. At the southern end, another fuel siding served the Vacuum (Plume), subsequently the Mobil depot, between 26 June 1951 and late 1966. For many years, this Mobil depot was a distinctive landmark in town with its vertical tanks and its large red flying horse sign.

Prior to their shift out of town on 15 September 1969, the stockyards were within the Kempsey interlocking at its northern end. Ironically, they were relocated as stock traffic began to wane. The original yards once despatched large numbers of cattle, calves, horses and pigs, for the Macleay district is a rich grazing area. Many bogie BCW and four-wheel CW cattle wagons stood in this siding awaiting stock through the years, the site being leased to J Murray-More following the relocation of the stockyards in 1969. This company, which traded largely in steel and steel fabrication, constructed a large, visually unappealing shed on the site and drew



traffic by rail for a period.

In the heyday of rail, Kempsey's opened in 1934, supplies, with the goods shed a scene of bustling activity. Traffic volume was sufficient to warrant a direct PMG phone line to the goods shed from 1937. In later years, a five-ton gantry crane was provided, with the original five-ton hand-crane having been removed in 1926. Bulk handling commenced at Kempsey in November 1955, with bulk trucks coming in from Darling Harbour with general loading for the town. Increased traffic resulted in the opening of a 679ft dead-end No. 3 goods siding and a transit siding on 4 October 1949. Opened on 22 November 1950, the No. 4 goods siding was 429ft in length.

The opening of a freight centre at Taree in the 1970s diverted a lot of this traffic and it declined further with the ever increasing use of road transport. Some truckload freight business persisted, however, including milk powder loaded in container wagons from the large dairy factory down river at Smithtown. One interesting commodity railed was rabbit skins, conveyed in bogie Victorian Railways louvre wagons to the Akubra factory near Melbourne. Finally, although it was essential departmental traffic, sleepers were loaded in large tonnages, the product originating in Macleay district timber mills.

On the northern side of the station platform, on the western side of the running line, was the old locomotive depot area, much diminished since the last steam locomotive based there was replaced by an X200 Class rail tractor



Mechanical signals are still controlling traffic at Kempsey station as Goodwin-Alco 4440 heads No. 641 freight train out of the passing loop on the authority of signal 6A on 31 October 1976, while an Up freight train stands on the adjacent line.

N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 465012

in 1964. In steam days, a small depot met the needs of locomotives, with water, coaling and ash pit facilities all available. Once the depot closed, the sidings lingered partially as wagon storage roads. Over time, this area was rationalised, the carriage shed siding being converted to a dead-end on 25 October 1981, the connection to the main line at the northern end being opened in 1929. The coal siding was abolished early in 1941.

Adjacent settlements

At the north end of Kempsey, there is a long extension to the loop line, both main line and loop swinging around a reverse curve past a farm crossing before climbing a hill on a levee above the river flats. At the top of this climb,

the passing loop rejoined the main line at Kempsey Stockyards (314m 65ch), which opened in place of the old town yards on 15 September 1969. The location was at the summit of a rise, with several tracks being provided to enable the loading of cattle and horses. The North Coast Line was one of the last strongholds for cattle traffic by rail in New South Wales, but even this business succumbed to road transport, so the sidings are now disused.

While Kempsey stockyards and Middleton Street represented the natural outer reaches of the local station area, the next rural township to the north was Collombatti, but the Department of Railways used the spelling Colombatti for its infrastructure there. The platform opened in 1919 and closed in 1975, boasting a goods siding that was removed on 30 September 1974. During the Second World War, military traffic was handled at Colombatti, with the Director of Emergency Supply having a site in the yard from 1941. It is presumed shunting trips worked out to this point from time to time from Kempsey. The yard shunting locomotive there also working trips to Middleton Street for bitumen and fuel tanks, and to Kempsey stockyards for livestock loading.

Colombatti was the scene of an incident on the morning of Monday 24 August 1931, when a sleeping car attached to the *Brisbane Express* derailed



80 Class locomotive 8048 heads a Down ballast train through the passing loop at Kempsey Station on 21 August 1987. ROD MILNE PHOTO



Commonwealth Engineering built 80 Class locomotive 8006 heads a Down freight train through the passing loop at Kempsey on 29 April 1989. ROD MILNE PHOTO

there. Fortunately, the delay was not long, with this prestigious train being able to continue on its way.

Actually, there was another rather infamous accident at Kempsey in 1935. This collision occurred at the north end of the yard on Wednesday 27 March, when a heavily loaded fruit express freight train from Brisbane went past the Up home signal and ran into a stationary goods train. The driver and fireman of the latter train saw the southbound train approach, and jumped for their lives, and there were no serious injuries, though as can be imagined there was serious damage to both trains. Another notable incident for the area involved a butter van (presumably an iced wagon) behind the locomotive of the *North Coast Mail* train which derailed on Friday 11 December 1931 dragging some carriages off the line. The location was described as near Kempsey, though the actual spot is not identified. Much later, on 14 January 1971, a fire in a brake van on the second division of the *Brisbane Express* delayed trains at Mingaletta, just south of Kempsey on the Kundabung–Telegraph Point electric staff section.

Timber, milk and fuel

Until the 1980s, the North Coast Line freight train service was characterised by a plethora of small trains limited in size by grades and lengths of the crossing loops. This feature was perhaps understandable in the steam era when locomotive loads were generally

much lighter; but after diesel locomotives began to work this way in the 1950s, the general expectation was of longer train loads. But the North Coast Line was, and still is, a challenging line to work because of its serpentine alignment and difficult grades. In many ways, the types of train handled changed little over that first 70 years of rail service.

Most trains were destined for distant centres, with Grafton, Casino, Clapham, South Brisbane and Murwillumbah all having freight trains running to these destinations daily. These increasingly ran with bogie rolling stock, enabling faster transit times and greater line capacity, although loops eventually had to be lengthened to upgrade line capacity. Prior to that

time, timber traffic was brisk on the North Coast, with high-sided four-wheeled K trucks regularly conveying sawn timber from mills on the coast as well as on the Dorrigo Branch. The latter lost its regular goods trains following a landslide in 1972.

Fruit was also big, including bananas from most centres and interstate fruit to and from Queensland, with louvre vans, such as the once abundant MLVs, carrying much of this loading. Livestock was also railed from most centres. The line was a veritable conduit for primary products, with bulk milk being despatched to Sydney from several dairies on the line; notably Murwillumbah, Old Casino, Grafton, Raleigh, and other centres south, while meat was also despatched from a number of abattoirs in iced MRC and TRC wagons, together with newer refrigerated wagons.

Northbound traffic included fuel in rail tankers to Kempsey, Macksville, Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Casino and Lismore, as well as general supplies for towns and store goods. Most of the large centres received bulk louvre wagons of goods from Darling Harbour, Kempsey getting several a week loaded with commodities for local businesses. Cement went to most places and for a long time, Arnott's biscuits went north in old biscuit vans to bigger towns. A lot of the shunts for Kempsey were on the daily pick-up trains, which did the real intermediate work along the line. These were motley trains with fascinating consists, milk tankers, open trucks, stock trucks,



Goodwin-Alco locomotives 4845 and 4503 pause at Kempsey to shunt the Down Grafton Pick-up freight train on Friday 28 April 1989. ROD MILNE PHOTO

tankers of fuel and other odds and ends all jostling together.

In its heyday, Kempsey received fuel tankers for Shell, Mobil and Caltex each week, bitumen tankers for Spraypave at Middleton Street, trucks for milk powder, rabbit skins for the Akubra hat factory, sleepers and truckloads of steel. So pick-up trains spent a good while attending to Kempsey's traffic needs on their slow meandering path north. By the 1980s, the Down goods train was usually ambling through Kempsey in the early afternoon.

Mail trains and XPTs

Again, passenger services remained relatively stable on this line through the years, there once being an overnight passenger train carrying the esteemed title, the Kempsey Mail. As the name indicates, this mail train terminated at Kempsey. The 'other' mail train, the North Coast Mail originally terminated at Murwillumbah, but was later cut back to South Grafton. Local daylight services were provided by the evocatively named North Coast Daylight Express, which replaced an earlier slower service in 1941. Through interstate trains comprised the Brisbane Limited Express and the Brisbane Express, with both being allowed a booked stop at Kempsey when needed during the night. On 17 June 1963, the three days per week *Kempsey Day Train* was replaced by a two-car diesel train.

The advent of diesel locomotives resulted in trains speeding up considerably from the 1950s. Passenger train schedules changed little until the 1980s, although the *Brisbane Express* had evolved into the *Gold Coast Motorail* in 1973. With the introduction of the XPT services in 1982, the old style North Coast passenger service was on the way out. For a brief time, there was a Kempsey XPT. This service commenced on 31 May 1982 but ceased on 1 September 1985 when XPT services on the line were revamped. A sad year for some was 1988 when the long standing stalwart of the section, the *North Coast Mail* made its last journey, while the end of the *Brisbane Limited Express* (the once esteemed N1 and N2) in February 1990 was a savage blow indeed. Today Kempsey still enjoys three XPT services in each direction daily.

Arguably 1990 was the defining year for Kempsey, with the demise of traditional locomotive hauled passenger



The old mechanical signals at Kempsey yard had been replaced by colour light signals as branchline Alco locomotives 48159 and 4810 head a Down freight train, while main line locomotive 8030 heads an Up freight train in the Kempsey crossing loop on 14 November 1984. N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 467182

trains. In general, the local rail scene for passenger services has lacked variety ever since with XPTs running all trains. There was however, one interesting return to the "good old days" in the late-1990s, when an occasional train, the *Great South Pacific Express*, commenced to run between Cairns and the southern states. Worked by an NR Class diesel-electric locomotive and hauling a train of wooden carriages purpose-built by Queensland Railways, the train was unique in that it was bogie exchanged in Brisbane on each leg north and south.

An Alco wonderland

As mentioned before, steam's role in shunting Kempsey yard ceased in 1964 when an X200 Class shunting unit was provided in lieu of the steam loco. Arguably, the late 1960s, 70s and 80s comprised the great Alco-era on the main line through Kempsey. Dominating the local hauls were the 44, 442 and 45 Class locomotives built by A E Goodwin, but even the smaller 48 Class branchline locomotives got a daily look in, hauling the pick-up trains or alternatively coupled to a 45 Class locomotive as lead unit to address union bans imposed on the 45s in 1984. Some called the '1½s' (namely the 48 + 45 combos) working the North Coast Line as 'North Coast Jumbos', though the term 'Jumbo' was mainly applied with affection to the main motive power for the section, the 40-member 442 Class locomotives.

In this era, from the late 1960s to the late 1980s, the North Coast Line was a

remarkable operating curio, with many small trains cramming a winding alignment hauled by locomotives that were approaching their use-by date rather quickly. Anyone who witnessed that era will recall the uncertain way many of the early Alcos idled away, creating doubts as to whether said locomotives would complete their journeys to destinations at each end of a rather busy corridor.

Prior to this fascinating change, another equally interesting transitional era of steam and diesel working occurred. Sharing the rails with the 59 Class US-built Mikados were some quaint 'Generation One' diesels. Odd as it sounds today, it was once possible to regularly see a 42 Class locomotive on the line through Kempsey before they were banished to other areas of the state, while the pioneer 40 Class locomotives were once daily sightings along with their newer sisters with 4001 noted working the *Kempsey Day Train* on 7 January 1961. Although only a numerically small class, the 43 Class Alco-powered locomotives were also regular on the North Coast for many years, contrasting nicely with their unusual noses and distinct sounds.

On 13 June 1972, a pair of 73 Class diesel-hydraulic locomotives in multiple (7326 and 7327) failed at Kempsey on an Up freight train.

New diesel locomotives were delivered to their owners in various states from Queensland and it was fascinating to see them pass through under power. For instance, in December 1966, English Electric locomotive K 208 on



43 Class Goninans GE/Alco locomotives were less frequent visitors to Kempsey, but Neil Munro photographed 4304 approaching the Macleay River Bridge with a short No. 275 freight train on 1 November 1975. Bitumen and petrol tankers are in the Middleton Street siding in the background. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 465016

its delivery run to Western Australia, worked an Up freight train through Kempsey. Built at the English Electric (Australia) works at Rocklea in suburban Brisbane, the Ks (as well as similar locomotives for Goldsworthy Mining) were sent west by this slightly unusual mode, local crews gaining a fast understanding of working English Electric locomotives! Also in the curious category was the combination of 4304 and 4503 working a train through Kempsey on 20 July 1973.

The main muscle on the North Coast Line at this time was provided by the 442 Class 'Jumbos' and the equally brutish 45 Class Alco-powered diesel-electrics, which seemed to be the North Coast's own. The fact that most of these classes were deployed daily on this service emphasises the connection between them and the railway through Kempsey.

Alas, all this largely came to an end in one swoop in the early 1990s. The change was so savage and brutal that within three years, the famed great Cardiff locomotive sale of 1994 saw most of the Alcos sold for scrap or to private railway operators. The mechanical state of many of these locomotives was poor, suggesting strongly that the railways got their value out of them. Towards the end, the Alcos had been 'flogged', but numerous members of these classes continued to serve the various private operators in New South Wales.

Afficionados like me will always remember the 'Alco-era' on the North Coast with enduring fondness. There

was rarely a better sight and sound than trains crossing at a mechanically signalled loop like Tamboon, with a 48 and 45 Class combo waiting patiently in the loop by the starting signal, as a 442 and 45 Class rumbled through with a more high profile train. The latter would disappear noisily into the distance as the signalmen retrieved the electric staff and reset the road. The starter signal would drop with a bang, the driver of the 48 Class locomotive would have his new staff for Kempsey as the locomotives opened up, leaving a pall of black smoke behind! It was a fine spectacle of sight and sound, and once the pick-up was in the distant south making for Kempsey, the peace and rural quiet would return to Tamboon for now.

The North Coast Line was always a good line to see trains in those days, especially when electric staff controlled movements and all loops were manned. The signalmen were friendly guys and only too willing to share the 'gen'. A five minute chat would reveal the next few hours of train working, with perhaps the advice: "the pick-up's down at Telegraph Point and is expected to cross the fruit express here". A much more relaxed approach to life prevailed, though ironically, there were far more trains plying the length than nowadays with CTC. By contrast, today's controllers have it easy.

The goods trains led by branchline 48 Class locomotives were always fun, and a few of them passing through the Kempsey area in August 1987 are listed below for interest.

Date	Locomotives	Train
Th 13 8 87	48108/48119	Down
Fr 14 8 87	48101/4520	Up
Fr 14 8 87	4895/4508	Down
Sa 15 8 87	48117/4507	Down
Su 16 8 87	48119/4538	Up
Su 16 8 87	48116/4508	Down
Tu 18 8 87	48110/4511	Down
We 19 8 87	48106/4505	Down

CONCLUSION

The 1970s brought big changes to Kempsey as the Public Transport Commission of NSW (PTC) embarked on a rationalisation of freight services in the state. Foremost in this process



The Middleton Street siding looking south with NTBF bitumen tank wagons at the Distributors facility. ROD MILNE PHOTO



Goodwin-Alco locomotives 4470, 4515 and 48155 head a Down freight train into Kempsey on 16 August 1987 with the former Plume fuel depot on the left.

ROD MILNE PHOTO

was the development of regional rail freight centres, where freight would be railed from Sydney to the major facility in each region for distribution onwards by PTC road trucks. On the North Coast Line, rail freight centres were at Coffs Harbour and Taree. Despite the size of the town and district, Kempsey then received all but wagon-load freight by road trucks from these two centres.

Despite the approach taken by the NSW PTC, an impressive tonnage of rail freight to Kempsey continued. This included rabbit skins, milk powder, livestock and sleepers, which warranted shunting from passing trains on most days. Alas, fuel traffic largely disappeared after the tanker mooring opened in 1961 at South West Rocks. Then reorganisations brought us State Rail, Freight Rail and Freight Corp, but all struggled to maintain regional rail freight given the rise of road transport. The final collapse of state operated rail freight came in 1994 with the launch of National Rail, but this focused on interstate services and overlooked regional rail access, which degenerated quickly. As governments

failed to introduce appropriate pricing for road use by heavy vehicles, local and interstate road hauliers quickly took over most of the freight business, both within the state and interstate. Fortunately, rail passenger traffic held on, but it has been a sobering decline for rail in most Australian regional cities since the 1980s as fuel guzzling road transport has become the dominant power.

The situation at Kempsey is not entirely bleak though. National Rail, subsequently Pacific National, continues to run three or four interstate freight trains through Kempsey daily each way, the northbound steel train being one of the few regular daylight freight trains passing through in the early afternoon. A cement train still runs to service Wauchope and Boambee, but the days of milk pots and banana vans are sadly long gone. One of the few bright lights has been the introduction of additional interstate rail services on the corridor by QR National, now Aurizon, and SCT. Running several times a week these trains brought variety back on the

corridor, with brand new 6000 and LDP Class diesel locomotives hauling the train (older locomotives of the CLP and G Classes were also used), while several private operators ran special workings through Kempsey.

For those of us who witnessed the splendour of the Alco days through Kempsey and mechanical signal boxes at every station, today's scene offers a more austere and threadbare experience, though the appearance of the QRN/Aurizon trains and the odd special working by other private companies has returned some cheer to our hearts.

Acknowledgements

Particular thanks are extended to Jon Eggins, Belinda Back, Belinda Clark-Dickson, Scott Jesser and the Macleay River Historical Society for their assistance with this article.

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ARHS_{NSW} AUTHOR'S GUIDE

Readers may have picked up some changes in the presentation of articles in this and the October issues of *Australian Railway History*, particularly relating to the use of capital letters.

Following a review by the ARHS_{NSW} Publications Committee and contributions by our various reviewers, we have reduced the use of capital letters in ARH articles and better defined the use of railway terms such as main line and mainline. There are also new guidelines

regarding the use of end notes in articles submitted for publication.

An updated version of the *ARHS_{NSW} Author's Guide* has been prepared and will shortly be made available on our website at: www.arhsnsw.com.au

I trust that you find the guide a useful tool in the preparation of material for the magazine.

Editor

THE 1916 TGR CAMPANIA ACCIDENT

Les Morley



Beyer, Peacock & Company built M Class 4-4-2+2-4-4 Beyer Garratt locomotive M1 with an early passenger train at Wynyard Station. A G GREGORY PHOTO, LES MORLEY COLLECTION

In 1912 the Tasmanian Government Railways (TGR) purchased four Garratt locomotives from Beyer Peacock of Manchester, namely two M class 4-4-2+2-4-4 passenger engines (Builder's Nos. 5523 and 5524) and two L class 2-6-2+2-6-2 units for freight operations (Builder's Nos. 5525 and 5526) on the 3ft 6in gauge railway system. The M class were once described as 'the most remarkable locomotives ever operated on our 3ft 6in gauge—perhaps the most remarkable Garratts ever built'.¹ Their 5ft diameter driving wheels were the largest used on an Australian 3ft 6in gauge railway, while a unique feature was their eight simple expansion cylinders—two outside and two inside on each engine unit—of 12 inch diameter with a 20 inch stroke. They were based at Launceston and assigned to operating the express trains to Hobart and return. They were good steamers and remarkably good riders at speed.

A problem was found with the M class locomotives, for when running north to Launceston with the chimney leading, smoke entered the cab. Accordingly, it was decided to operate this leg with the locomotive running in reverse, due to smoke in the 1 in 40 climb through the narrow Rhyndaston Tunnel.

THE CAMPANIA ACCIDENT

Locomotive M1 was hauling the Express to Hobart comprising four passenger carriages and a van on 15 February 1916 with 200 passengers on board when it derailed near Campania with tragic results, as five people were killed and 23 injured in the accident. Another two passengers died in hospital from their injuries. As the express approached the northern horseshoe bend (described as either one, two or three miles from Campania) with driver Louis Goodchild at the controls and his fireman, Doug Bessell, on the left, the brakes were applied to slow the train prior to entering the bend. However, as the train came out of the bend there was

a sudden jolt as the two-wheel Cartazzi truck of the locomotive's rear unit left the line.

This threw the locomotive off the track and it ploughed down the earth embankment, turned and came to rest almost upside down at its foot, in the process demolishing the first wooden carriage. The second carriage nearly passed the wrecked locomotive when it dived down the left side of the line and was also demolished. This was a disaster on a high level with passengers screaming through fright and personal injuries. Fireman Bessell was thrown out of the locomotive. Driver Goodchild was trapped inside the cab with escaping steam from a damaged pipe but he managed to open the steam valve. Despite his injuries, 'Darky' Bessell surveyed the scene of devastation and realised there was the risk of the locomotive exploding or starting a fire. When he got to the locomotive cab, he saw that Goodchild was trying to get out, so he reached up for his hands to assist him, but as he took hold of his arm, his skin came away in flakes. Reaching down into the cab his arms were badly scalded, but despite the pain, he managed to get his mate out. Sadly, Goodchild had been practically cooked alive and must have been in awful agony. He was taken to Hobart General Hospital, but passed away in the early hours of the following morning.

The scene beside the track was one of utter devastation with the leading carriage's body ripped off its frames and smashed to pieces, while the third carriage was half demolished. It ended up off the line facing down a 45 degree embankment, with the front half taking the major impact. Four passengers in the first carriage were killed instantly as the locomotive came crashing down on them, namely a Mrs Olive Howell, aged 41 of Geelong, Victoria, nurse Miss Margaret Barrass, aged 51 of Bendigo, Victoria, while two male fatalities were initially identified as Private Hall of Lilydale and a man named Stubbs from Ulverstone.² In

the following coronial inquiry, these victims were named as James Quinn, age 18, labourer of Bradshaw's Creek, and William Robert Orr, aged 18 of Lilydale, gunner in the Expeditionary Force. From the coronial inquiry, it appears that two other passengers subsequently died of their injuries, namely John Wesley Castles, aged 20, labourer of Latrobe and John Thomas Houghton, aged 70, warehouseman of Melbourne.³ The Reverend H N Baker of St John's Church in Launceston had been flung under the turning locomotive, but the Lord must have been with him as he was saved from death by the bodies of the two women and his luggage bag. Many passengers were injured, some of them severely.⁴

There was a large numbers of soldiers on the train returning to the Brighton Camp from leave, while other young men were on their way to Hobart to enlist in World War I. They assisted with rescue work even though a number of their mates were injured. An eye witness to the accident was working in a field some distance from the scene when he heard the almighty crash and saw a cloud of dust and steam rising from the railway line. He and his fellow workmen sped across the field at a lively pace to give assistance, while one of their number was sent to the Campania Railway Station two miles away to notify the station master of the accident. Staff there had seen the express coming down the bank from Lowdina and then disappear behind the hills into the horseshoe bend, then they too heard the loud crash.

A PASSENGER'S ACCOUNT

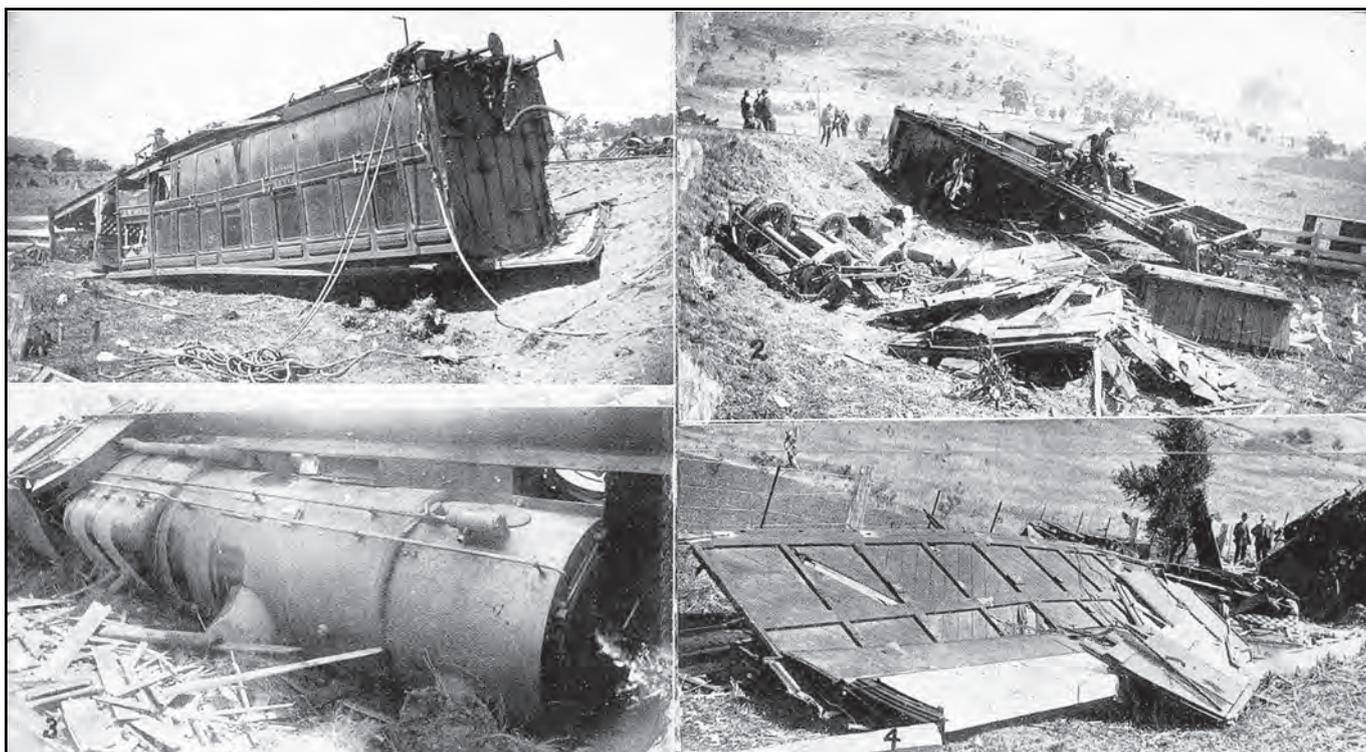
Hobart's *Daily Post* newspaper carried an interesting account of the accident by a passenger, Miss Gwen Varley from Melbourne in a letter to her mother in Melbourne:

"The express from Launceston to Hobart dashed right off the rails, and I have only God to thank that I was not killed, as the compartment I was in was only three doors from the engine,"

she says. "Our carriage was smashed to splinters, half of it off the line down the embankment, while the other two compartments, with the engine, were right off. It was only next door that two of our party were killed. I have not a single cut even. I do not think I can explain, except that suddenly there was an awful jarring of the brakes, a fearful bumping of heads, and then I felt myself flying head first into space. I then felt certain that I was to be killed, but instead there was a whole crowd of us all muddled up together. The girls were wonderfully calm. Somebody was on top of me, and at first I could not move. I was afraid of the wreckage falling in and crushing us, so I finally managed to crawl out through a tiny space, and then called for help."

"As for the sights, I won't describe them. They were too awful for words. But, water was quickly got, and with handkerchiefs we bathed and tied up their wounds, and put umbrellas over them to give them shade. The moans were terrible; and the worst part was hacking the train to pieces to get the passengers out. Oh, the men were so brave, and the girls all splendid. We were scared the engine was going to catch on fire and explode. I can still imagine the hot steam pouring out upon us as we crawled out. Unfortunately, I had taken my boots off earlier in the train, as I was feeling hot and tired, so I had to go round in my stockings. Comforting those that were wounded and trying to make light of their wounds was the most trying. I helped a poor old lady who was nearly mad with pain; she thought she was dying, while really only her arm was badly smashed. It was very swollen, so a gentleman with a penknife cut the sleeve open and then put it in a splint, and with three men we lifted her on to a stretcher and carried her up to a little railway house. She was fearfully heavy, and it took the whole four of us to carry her."

"I don't know so much where our girls got to, but we all flew round helping, and you can imagine how pleased we were as we met and found one another safe. Poor Miss Hardie must have been mad with anxiety to see if we were all out of the wreckage. The railway authorities were disgraceful. They sent a train up from Hobart with a doctor after over two hours' waiting. Then



A collage of photos of the accident, with the half demolished second carriage on the 45 degree embankment and the M class Garratt locomotive and demolished first timber carriage in the lower photographs.

ILLUSTRATED TASMANIAN MAIL, 17 FEBRUARY 1916, PP17-18, ARCHIVES OFFICE OF TASMANIA



A second photo collage of the Campania accident site with the overturned M class Garratt locomotive in the top right, centre and bottom left images, additional damaged carriages top left and the overall accident scene with the relief train in the background. WEEKLY COURIER, 17 FEBRUARY 1916, PP18-19, ARCHIVES OFFICE OF TASMANIA

we were all seated about 7 o'clock, while the accident occurred at a quarter to 4. The engine of the new train could not pull us up the hill, so we had to wait and get another, finally arriving at Hobart at 11 o'clock. I was so sorry for the injured. I believe five were killed. All my luggage, money, and ticket are safe, but my jacket and skirt is all torn. After all the help I could give and there was nothing more to be done, I got my camera and went round and took eight photographs of the scene."⁵

AFTERMATH

On 17 February 1916, a crowd of hundreds of people gathered at the Launceston Railway Station to meet the express train from Hobart that was carrying the body of Louis Phillip Goodchild, who was seen as the hero of this railway accident. They wished to pay their respects to a man who, in his devotion to duty as the driver, thought nothing of himself and his terrible injuries, but only of his passengers.

A coronial inquiry into the accident commenced in the No. 1 Criminal Court in Hobart on 21 February. Among the early witnesses were the fireman Doug Bessell and Dr Gregory Sprott of Hobart Hospital. Bessell gave a positive account of driver Goodchild's competence and stated that while the speedometer on the locomotive was not working, he estimated its speed entering the horseshoe bend as 25 miles per hour.⁶ In subsequent hearings, conflicting evidence was given by various officials regarding the cause of the accident. George Oreswell, a civil engineer from the Darjeeling Railway in India, who had been a passenger on

the train, stated that he had calculated the speed of the train approaching the northern horseshoe bend as being in excess of 30 miles per hour, while he noted that the driver did not slow down for curves, although it was also noted that the rails of the curve were worn and needed replacement. Mr Paynter, the Permanent Way Inspector stated that he had inspected the rail on the morning of the accident and found it to be safe. Paynter had also been a passenger on the train when the accident occurred and he noted that the driver had difficulty in slowing the locomotive due to malfunctioning vacuum brakes, so he wondered why he had not applied the steam brake or the hand-brake to slow the train into the curve.⁷

On Thursday 24 February, Locomotive Inspector George Trethewie gave evidence to the inquiry, praising the competency of both driver and fireman on the Express and estimated that the train was travelling between 25 and 30 miles per hour after leaving Colebrook. In particular, he stated that: 'If the train was travelling at 30 m/hr in its approach to the accident site, he did not think it would bring about such an accident as had occurred, assuming everything was in proper order. The only theory he could put forward as to the cause of the accident was that the uncoupling of the first carriage from the engine by the hand-brake being applied broke the coupling of the vacuum brake, which would pull the pressure onto the brake of the train which would turn the engine over'.⁸

On Friday 25 February, the jury were given a demonstration of the vacuum brake automatically being applied when

a locomotive of a goods train was driven out to New Town and back to Botanic Gardens at 20 mph and then uncoupled from its train.⁹

In the aftermath of the Campania accident and its inquiry, railwaymen felt that, given the unfortunate death of driver Goodchild, senior railway officials promoted excessive speed as the cause of the accident with some witnesses claiming the train had reached 60 miles per hour prior to the accident. The State Government paid out £17,904 11s 4d [equivalent to \$1.77 million in today's terms] in compensation for passenger injuries, together with £2903 13s [\$280,075 in today's terms] for damages to personal property.

After the introduction of the R class Pacific locomotives in 1923, Garratt locomotive M1 was withdrawn from service in 1924, while its sister lasted in secondary duties until 1931. Both locomotives were derelict and stored at Launceston by the 1940s. M1 was sold to the Mt Lyell Company minus boiler and bunker in September 1950. M2 was sold for scrap at Mowbray in October 1951, although it may not have been cut up until 1952. One of M1's bogie engine units went to the Launceston Marine Board and the other found its way to the Burnie Harbour Board.¹⁰

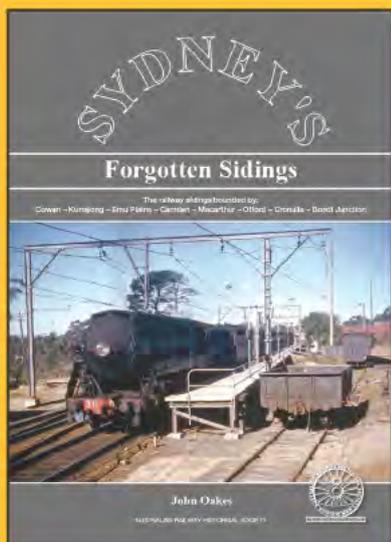


Rescue workers cleaning up following the accident at Campania with the relief train's C class locomotive in the background. LES MORLEY COLLECTION

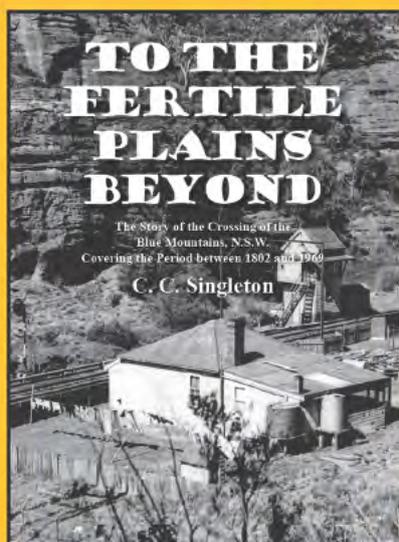
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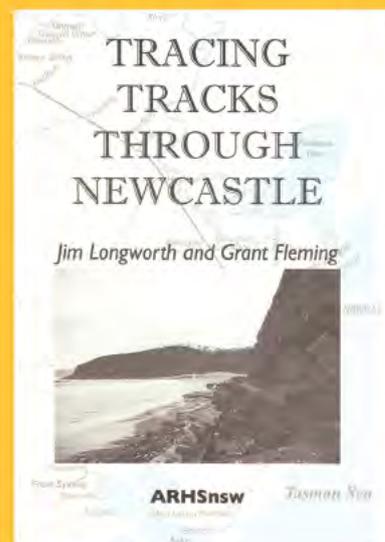
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The brick laundry building at the Muswellbrook Locomotive Depot barracks in 2000. RAY LOVE PHOTO

LAUNDERING THE RAILWAYS' DIRTY LINEN

Jim Longworth

In its heyday the NSW government railways must have produced a lot of dirty linen. This would have included soiled bed sheets, pillow cases, blankets, and towels from sleeping cars, railway hotels, and train crew barracks. Railway Refreshment Rooms (RRRs) generated dirty table cloths, napkins, and tea towels; while carriage cushions, blinds, and carpet runners would also need washing or special cleaning. When regular and widespread on-train catering facilities were introduced, they too became a source of dirty table cloths, and towels. Workshop cleaning rags were a filthy by-product of their activities.

Staff uniforms would also have become grubby: but being issued to employees, they were personally responsible for laundering their own uniforms.

The traditional NSW Railways can typically be described as a vertically integrated organisation. Many, if not most, functions were integrated into a single very nearly self-contained organisation. Nevertheless, cleaning some railway linen was contracted out, some was cleaned in-house and some was left to the employees to do themselves. Laundering the railways dirty linen provides a glimpse into a railway administrative anomaly.

Sleeping Car Linen

Sleeping cars were introduced into the NSW railways from 1877. With them came the need to clean bed linen which had

been dirtied by the sleeping occupants. The earliest reference I can find to a laundering service was in calling tenders for it six years later during 1883. During December 1890 the Commissioners accepted a tender for 'washing sleeping car linen' at various prices from a Mr Dunn.¹

[7186]

Department of Public Works,
Railway Branch,
Sydney, 8th November, 1883.

TENDERS will be received at this Office until 11 o'clock on Tuesday, the 20th November, from persons willing to contract for the washing of Sleeping and Dining Car and Office linen, for the Railway Department during the year 1884. Specification may be seen, and further particulars obtained, at the Office of the Superintendent of Railway Stores, Eveleigh. Tenders are to be endorsed "*Tender for washing of Sleeping Car linen, &c., for Railway Department.*"

The Commissioner does not bind himself to accept the lowest or any Tender.

CHAS. A. GOODCHAP,
Commissioner for Railways.

Notice from *NSW Government Gazette*, 8 November 1883.

In 1933, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge endeavoured to make contractual capital out of alleging that the Roman Catholic Convent of the Good Shepherd, Ashfield, a refuge for girls and women who wanted to reform their lives, was unfairly competing for and securing railway laundry contracts. Being a religious institution, the convent

did not have to pay award wages. The railway advised that the contract was held by Wilson's Steam Laundry Ltd.²

During 1944, 700 laundry employees, most of whom were women, struck for increased wages and better conditions. At that time, sleeping car conductors were making up 1000 berths each night on trains travelling to and from Sydney. When the railway used up the last of its store of clean sleeping-car linen, the Secretary for Railways, Mr S R Nicholas, proposed that sleeping berth passengers should provide their own towels, pillow-slips, and sheets. The last of the railway clean linen, which had been laundered in Albury, was used on 40 berths in two sleeping cars for Canberra. Once the employees returned to work, the Department announced that there would be no need for sleeping car passengers to continue to provide their own linen. Nevertheless, passengers boarding sleeping cars at Dubbo found each bunk had been made up with a single sheet.³

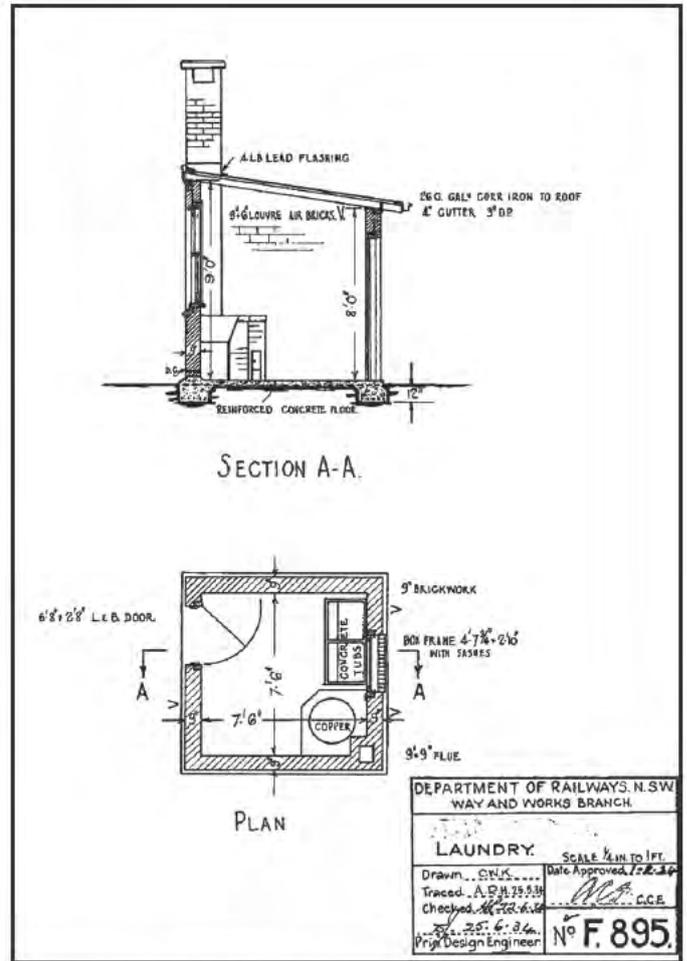
Again in the following year, 1945, owing to staff shortages laundry contractors advised that they would be unable to supply sufficient linen for sleeping car berths. Thus the railway advised intending passengers that only one sheet and one pillowslip would be provided for each sleeping berth, although travellers were allowed to provide their own linen to make up the deficiency.⁴

By 1950, the firm Bishop's held a £500 per year annual stores contract to supply the service of washing and finishing bed linen, towels, etc, from the sleeping cars of the Sydney-Brisbane trains.⁵ D F Burrell held the 1954 contract for washing and finishing of linen from express trains at Albury. To maintain a supply of clean bed linen, towels, etc for the railways Traffic Branch a two year supplementary contract, from 1 July 1960 to 30 June 1962, was entered into with the North Shore Power Laundry Pty Ltd for £48,638.⁶

The railways organisation produced detailed instructions for train crews on what they were to do with dirty laundry and how to fill in what was to be the accompanying documentation. The conductor was responsible for the safe custody of the soiled linen, which was to be sent to the linen room at Sydney, where it would be checked in.⁷ Dirty linen was packed into large grey or green calico bags on the train, which were removed at Sydney and dumped into large rectangular wicker basket trolleys for pushing to the linen room. In addition to carrying linen, these wicker baskets were also used for moving packaged food from the kitchen through the Terminal Station tunnels to dining cars, which gave them the nickname of 'hampers'. While the bags started out



A preserved NSWGR four-wheel wicker basket, photographed in November 2016. COURTESY TRANSPORT HERITAGE NSW



June 1934 plan for a brick laundry at Muswellbrook Loco Depot. Facilities for washing were basic. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE

white, despite being washed themselves they soon became notably grey. Some people remember the barrows as the large flattened 'V' shaped 'Yankee barrows', while others remember them as woven cane baskets. The Linen Room was located along the back of Platform No. 1. Girls at sewing machines patched worn sheets, rather than replacing them with new ones. The girls were a boon to local staff when they needed a button sewn back on, or minor repair to their uniform.

Train crew rest house laundering

Train crew rest houses, referred to as barracks, produced dirty bed linen, so bed linen, but not the blankets, were to be changed and beds made up after each use.

At large and busy barracks, the barracks attendants laundered the bed linen. Sometimes on a weekend with no attendant on duty, particularly at small locations, the train crew would have to make their own beds. Train crews also used the barracks laundry to wash their own clothes. At some stations, their staff also attended to the linen.

The laundry for a rest house was typically contained in a small separate building, though some newer laundries were included as a room inside the larger building, eg, Glen Innes (1967). Wet washing was air-dried on multiple clothes lines strung between wooden poles with cross arms, and propped up with long timber props as necessary. As barracks were usually located near locomotive depots, soot was a common air-born pollutant.

At least one fire was started in a barracks laundry. The one at Goulburn started when flames from a fire under the

copper escaped from a broken flue and ignited birds' nests and rubbish between the ceiling and the roof.⁸

Sometimes the service was contracted out, such as at Eskbank during 1935.⁹ By 1950, the railways tenders for annual stores included: 'Washing & Finishing of Bed Linen, Towels, etc' for rest houses located at: Albury; Metropolitan; Newcastle and district; Broadmeadow; Lithgow; Narrabri West; South Goulburn; Cootamundra; Orange East Fork; Bathurst; Dubbo; Muswellbrook; Kempsey; and Armidale. D F Burrell held the 1953 and 1954 contracts for washing and finishing of bed linen, etc, for the Metropolitan area rest houses.

Railway refreshment room laundering

Like barracks, laundries were provided at Railway Refreshment Rooms (RRRs) which were initiated under contract to the government railway. In 1916 the Railways Department established its own RRRs, which then assumed control in-house.¹⁰

Most of these rooms were called 'Laundry', although the separate laundry building at the Glen Innes RRR was referred to as the 'Wash Shed' (1925). The Kempsey Steam Laundry had among its clients, contracts to launder linen from the RRR and the *Brisbane Mail* train dining saloon.¹¹

Sometimes the service was contracted out to local businesses by being included in a larger tender for RRR supplies and services. When tenders were called for supplying the Bathurst RRR with aerated waters, bread and rolls, ice, ice cream, meat, milk and laundry services were included. Similarly, tenders for the Wagga Wagga RRR included supply of bread and rolls, meat and milk. Supplying the Penrith RRR included laundry together with bread and rolls, cartage, meat, milk, ice, ice cream, aerated waters, and cordials.¹²

By 1950 the railways tender for RRR services included laundering individually for the metropolitan and country networks. That for the Metropolitan District was to be split one-third to the Atlas Laundry and two-thirds to the Sudco Electric Laundries Pty Ltd. Contracts were in place for laundry services for RRRs at: Wollongong; Moss Vale; Goulburn; Yass Junction; Harden; Junee; Cootamundra; Wagga Wagga; Albury; Temora; Penrith; Mount Victoria; Bathurst; Blayney; Orange; Mudgee; Wellington; Parkes; Dubbo; Nyngan; Cowra; Gosford; Werris Creek; Tamworth; Gloucester; Taree; South Grafton; Newcastle; Singleton; Muswellbrook; Armidale; Glen Innes; Kempsey; Narrabri; Burrell; and Coffs Harbour. Many of the RRRs were grouped together on a roughly geographic basis, sharing a common contractor.

Workshop laundering

Vast amounts of cotton waste were used in railway workshops for cleaning. The waste was produced from discarded textiles, such as old clothes and bedding. During use, the waste accumulated oils, greases, and grit, but it could be cleaned for reuse. The cost of buying new material was reduced by washing the dirtied material in laundries located across the railway network, with large laundries being established at the Eveleigh and Clyde locomotive depots.

At a quarter past one o'clock one morning, the Newcastle Fire Station received an alarm from the railway, and found an outbreak of fire at the locomotive section of Honeysuckle Point Workshops storeroom. The place was used partly for general purposes and partly as an oil depot, and for other inflammable material. In a short time the firemen had the flames subdued and it was reported that the outbreak had

occurred among a quantity of waste received from the railway laundry.¹³

One day Mr T D Richards, foreman of the Coffs Harbour carriage sheds, was examining an area of waste land through which ran the euphoniously named Stinking Creek, when he developed the idea of cleaning oil for its reuse. The creek was so named because it happened to be in the vicinity of the railway's laundry where oily waste was washed, not with the idea of recovering the oil but with the object of preserving the cotton waste.¹⁴

Under Railway Commissioner Reg Winsor's economy drive, intensifying the railways' salvage campaign to include gathering up discarded cotton waste became a priority. Oily, dirty cotton waste, which was collected and sent to the railways' reclamation laundry was washed, dried, and sent out for use again. Also to that laundry went sponge cloths, dusters, and protective clothing—tons of it every week. This service alone saved the railways thousands of pounds.¹⁵

Eveleigh steam laundry

Around 1891, construction started on a steam powered laundry adjoining the then new erecting shop at Eveleigh. The building was a rectangular corrugated iron shed located on the southern side of the workshops. It was equipped with engines, boilers, revolving washing machines, hydro-extractor, boiling tanks, etc. Special ovens dried the sponge-cloths and cotton waste used for cleaning all over the railways.¹⁶

The Chief Mechanical Engineer, William Thow, entreated the local locomotive shed inspectors to send in all dirty waste cloth once a week. This waste cloth was to be transported on the rear of locomotive tenders.¹⁷

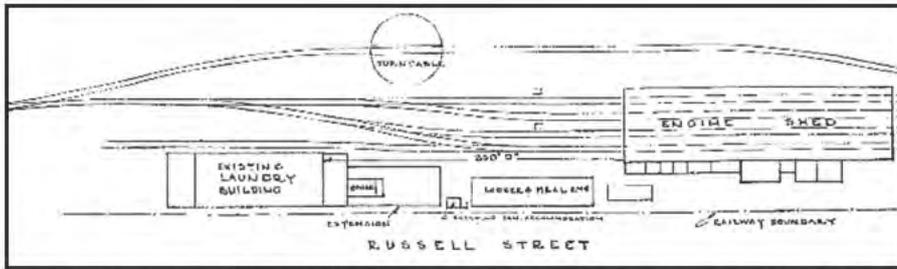
Clyde sponge cloth laundry

The other large workshop laundry was the 'Sponge Cloth Laundry' located in Clyde Yard, near the locomotive shed. The building was constructed of brick with a corrugated iron gable roof, c1911–1912. Two foot gauge trolley tracks provided rail access into and out of and around the inside of the building. £65 was spent during 1912 on providing a siding specifically to the facility. The drying facilities were improved during 1934.

The laundry washed 70 tons of cotton waste, thousands of sponge cloths and carriage dusters and many tents each year. Good quality cotton waste could be washed at least twice and, as washing softened the material washed was preferable to new for some purposes. All washing was by machine, using a solution of concentrated ash and soap chips. The cleaned cotton waste was dried in the sun, while sponge cloths and dusters were artificially dried. The cost of washing was allegedly a quarter the cost of buying new material. One of the driers acted like a rocker, resulting in the production of fluff. The fluff was saved, bagged, and sent to locomotive depots to be used for kindling in lighting up locomotive fires.¹⁸

A major extension was completed in July 1946, at a cost of £1934, and a new water service was provided to the two fire hydrants at the laundry. The extension was a large building with wire mesh walls and a hip roof. A manually operated three-ton gantry crane for handling washing machines, etc, was supplied and installed during 1955.¹⁹

As well as laundering railway cotton waste, railway workshops overalls, washable material from the Government Printing Office and Bus Division was laundered. Because the



Location plan of Clyde Sponge Cloth Laundry with the proposed additions, dated 7 May 1945. ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre

soiled waste was frequently manhandled between the delivery bag to the washing machine, from the washing machine to the spin drier, and from the spin drier to be re-bagged, foreign material contained in the waste could injure the laundry employees. Foreign matter included bottles, broken glass, torch batteries, dirty gloves, pieces of steel, broken light globes, open sardine tins, rope, bag hooks, split pins, pieces of rail, drink cans, etc. Most dangerous were the extremely sharp metal shavings spun off lathes, milling machines, etc.

Into the 1960s–1970s during the morning, bags of dirty linen from sleeping carriages were loaded at Sydney Terminal Station into the leading carriage of a locomotive-hauled empty carriage set heading out to the Clyde carriage sheds or an electric parcels van. In Clyde yard the train was shunted down to the locomotive depot, while electric parcels vans would have their pantographs lowered to be shunted into place along the unwired track by a yard steam or diesel locomotive. There the soiled laundry would be unloaded for laundering. Clean laundry would be bagged and loaded into a trailing parcels van, or in the evening into an empty carriage of a locomotive-hauled empty carriage set heading for Sydney. One loathsome inspector tried to have the practice banned, and forced the men to carry the bags a considerable distance, but the rail union was called in and the practice of shunting resumed.²⁰

Parcels vans also collected bags of soiled carriage-cleaning rags from Flemington and Mortdale carriage sheds and some large stations for delivery to the Clyde laundry. Bags of cleaned rags would be returned by a van heading in the reverse direction.

Following a review of the Public Transport Commission's (PTC) subsidiary activities, the decision was made to close the Clyde laundry. Operation of the laundry was to cease completely on

30 September 1975. The Stores Branch would thenceforth issue new cotton waste in lieu of washed waste.²¹

Central Station's struggle

Sydney sees itself as the central focus of the state, and Sydney Terminal Station was always seen as the centre of the state-wide NSW Government Railways. The adjoining Central Electric Station was aptly named as the centre of the Sydney metropolitan network.²² All railway distances are measured from Sydney Terminal Station, with Up trains heading towards Sydney Terminal; and Down trains travelling away from Central. Carriages were housed and cleaned in the adjoining two carriage sheds. Accordingly, this locality was seen as a fitting location for the railway's central laundry.

A scheme for a 'Proposed Laundry at Central Railway Station' was developed during 1913. A two-storey brick building was designed to sit in the triangle of land outside the bend in Chalmers Street north of the entry to the pedestrian subway, but it was never built.

A more audacious scheme was devel-

oped during 1919–1920 when adding an entirely new storey to the western wing of the station building was proposed. This would have turned the single-storey section along the elevated approach road into a two-storey building, with the two storey section along the sunken lower approach being three storeys high. The proposal involved extending the then existing brick walls upwards and capping the structure with a hip roof. The walls were to be pierced with semi-circular windows on regular spacings. Again, this proposal did not eventuate. A third design was documented during December 1928, which would convert part of the basement underneath the main building into a steam laundry, but it also did not proceed.

One carriage cleaning service that was established at Sydney Terminal Station was that of cleaning carriage carpet runners. When the new Sydney Terminal Station was designed, two large carriage sheds were incorporated, one to the east and one to the west of the station throat. At the north end of the eastern carriage shed, on the southerly extrapolation of the space between platforms 15 and 16, a large two-storey brick building with a four repeating gable end roof was built. It provided covered spaces for ancillary functions associated with the East Carriage Shed. Functions have included workshops, offices, roster office, lockers, and shower rooms. Notably, the building housed electric powered vacuum reciprocating pumps and a carpet runner cleaning



The electric powered two-cylinder pump for the carpet runner cleaning machine at Sydney Terminal Station, 9 August 1996. The machine was a British Vacuum Cleaner Company product. GARRY ARMSTRONG PHOTO



The drying racks at Burrell's Laundries Limited with long rows of sheets and blankets filling the space between the main building and Gannons Road. COURTESY SUTHERLAND SHIRE LIBRARY COLLECTION

machine.²³ Although the East Carriage Shed has been demolished the ancillary building remains.

Despite the above intentions, the nearest Sydney Terminal Station came to having a railway laundry was a couple of small linen rooms in the West Wing on the level of Platform 1 established around 1946.

The Railways laundry at Woollooware

Despite years of contracting out laundering services and several attempts to bring the service in-house, much railway laundering continued to be provided by external contractors, with just a small proportion being undertaken in-house.

Burrell's Laundries Ltd, was first registered in July 1928, with a capital of £5000 in £1 shares. The company was formed to acquire and carry on the business then known as the Marrickville Steam Laundry. During 1939, Douglas Frederick Burrell acquired a block of land on Gannons Road, Woollooware, on the corner of Denman Avenue. The building was built with the capacity to be converted into a gas attack and air-raid victim cleansing station, which accounts for its austere architectural style.²⁴ Burrell had a contract to launder Australian Army linen.

By 1950, Burrell's Launderers & Dry Cleaners Pty Ltd were contracted to provide £22,561 worth of laundering services to the railways Metropolitan District rest houses (equivalent to \$1,124,698 in 2016 terms).²⁵ Unfortunately, 90 per cent of the company's work was under contract to government agencies including the railways, which meant that it did not receive its due money for two or three months after completing the work. By 1954, the company was in financial difficulty and could not pay its staff of about 100 people. The company was taken to court for breaking the Laundry

Employees Award, where Mr D F Burrell pleaded guilty. The company closed down the general section of its laundry business during 1954, and put much of the mechanical equipment up for sale. The railways seem to have acquired the land through a three-way land swap involving itself, Sutherland Shire Council, and Mr Burrell in a process that required the passing of a special Act of Parliament.²⁶

By 1956, the NSW Railways had established an industrial award under the NSW Industrial Arbitration Act (1940) for 'Government Railways (Laundry Employees) Award—Original, No. 34,221 9d.'²⁷

The Railways spent £11,799 on purchasing the land and buildings of Burrell's, plus £243 on providing additional drying lines to provide hanging space for 900 6ft long rugs, during 1957. Several railway plans of the facility are dated pre-1957, suggesting that the railways may have occupied and operated the laundry prior to its actual purchase. Nevertheless, the Railway Department was somewhat confused as to the site location, identifying it variously as being at Cronulla, Woollooware, and Caringbah. Not being on then railway owned land and having no railway siding connection made the purchase somewhat anachronistic for traditional railways practice. Road motor trucks would have to deliver the dirty and take away the clean linen. Perhaps it was the best available commercial laundry then for sale.

Burrell's Launderers & Dry Cleaners Pty Ltd was finally struck off the register and the company dissolved under the NSW Companies Act (1936) in December 1958.²⁸ Railways use of the laundry seems to have ceased during 1960. Afterwards the building was used for light industrial purposes.²⁹

Conclusion

Laundering the NSW Government Railways dirty linen provides a variously sourced partial exception to the organisation's generalised character of vertical integration, as the bulk of laundry work was contracted to the private sector.

Acknowledgements

This article was researched and prepared with generous input from: the ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre at Redfern, Ian Dixon, Geoff Lillo, Matthew Moore and Bill Phippen.

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Large industrial laundry equipment dominates this interior view of Burrell's Laundry on Gannons Road at Woollooware. COURTESY SUTHERLAND SHIRE LIBRARY

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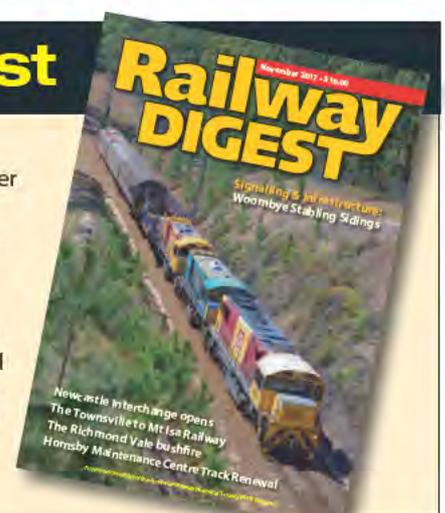
In this month's **Railway Digest**

The Townsville to Mt Isa Railway

Stretching 966 kilometres from Stuart, 10 kilometres south of Townsville on Queensland Rail's North Coast Line, to the inland mining city of Mount Isa, Queensland Rail's Townsville to Mount Isa Line has played a significant part in the development of North Queensland. John Hoyle reports on an interesting and historic railway that has seen its fortunes wax and wane, but now looks towards a promising future.

Newcastle Interchange opens

Nearly three years after the last passenger train left the old Newcastle station in controversial circumstances, just before midnight on Christmas Day 2014, the new 'Newcastle Interchange' station at Wickham opened for business, with the first passenger service departing around 2.00 am on Sunday 15 October. We take a look at the new 'Jewel in the Crown' of the *Revitalising Newcastle* program.





Running tender-first, 53 Class 2-8-0 5475 with Commonwealth turret tender heads a short Up through goods train past Broadmeadow Station on 10 September 1972. N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 450522

REFLECTIONS ON THE NSWGR TF CLASS LOCOMOTIVES LATER 53 CLASS

Peter Clark

As far as I know, 180 TF (53) Class locomotives were built for the New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) with superheaters and ten without built by Clyde Engineering. The ten saturated locomotives were ordered in 1915, when the British Government seized all superheater elements being made in Britain as some sort of over-reaction to war supply difficulties. By the time the ten TF Class engines were complete, the superheater elements had been released for use in the TF Class locomotives that had been put into service without them, but with superheater flues in the boiler. These locomotives had to run with the superheater damper closed and were rated at the load of a B Class 2-6-0 locomotive, probably on a good day. So the ten Clyde locomotives were superheated during their first boiler overhaul.

Only 40 of the 50 Clyde locomotives of the first order—939 to 978—were built with smokebox superheaters. All the Eveleigh-built locomotives had Schmidt superheaters as built, since Clyde built the additional ten saturated locomotives and completed ten with Schmidt superheaters and boilers of the original design.

Thus, the reported 105 locomotives with smokebox superheaters must have included other classes fitted with smokebox superheaters. The P (later 32) Class were definitely fitted, because John Forsyth's article in the ARHS *Bulletin* mentions

trials between a P Class engine so fitted and a conventional locomotive between Strathfield and Hornsby.

Schmidt superheaters

The smokebox superheater was also designed by Schmidt when he discovered that his original superheater, which had multiple elements in a large central flue, raised the steam temperature so much that the cylinder and valve oil carbonised and the cylinders wore out very quickly. It was the development of high temperature lubricants to overcome this problem that took so long, and the smokebox superheater was a 'make do' that gave some of the fuel economy while allowing conventional oil to be used.

In New South Wales, the smokebox superheater was used in place of the steam pipes from the regulator and consisted of multiple small tubes in parallel in a sort of 'S' shape, with two double-headers at the top and bottom of the 'S' and single-headers at each end leading to the pipe from the regulator and to the cylinders. There were two of these, one each side of the smokebox, curved to fit the inside of the smokebox.

The use of multiple small tubes with thin walls and the multiple passes allowed the exhaust heat in the smokebox to be transferred to the steam increasing its energy and reducing the condensation in the cylinders. This allowed the locomotive to work at smaller cut-offs and saved fuel, as demon-

strated in the P Class trials to Hornsby.

Unfortunately, the smokebox was also full of corrosive gases which condensed on the superheater tubes and these corroded away fairly rapidly. Because the Schmidt superheater was available about the same time, and since it did not suffer from corrosion to the same extent because the gases were hotter in the flues and unable to condense to cause the corrosion, the use of the smokebox superheater was given up in the TF Class locomotives. The locomotives were then called 'saturated' locomotives until fitted with Schmidt superheaters.

NSWGR Superheater Applications

The two prototype locomotives, P 937 and T 938, were supplied with their safety valves set at 150psi rather than the 160psi used by the saturated equivalent locomotives, but with larger diameter cylinders (by one inch) to maximise the advantages of the superheaters while maintaining the same tractive effort.

The NSWGR thought about this for maybe a fraction of a second and decided to keep the higher boiler

pressure with the larger cylinders, thereby gaining a ten percent increase in the goods load for superheated locomotives.

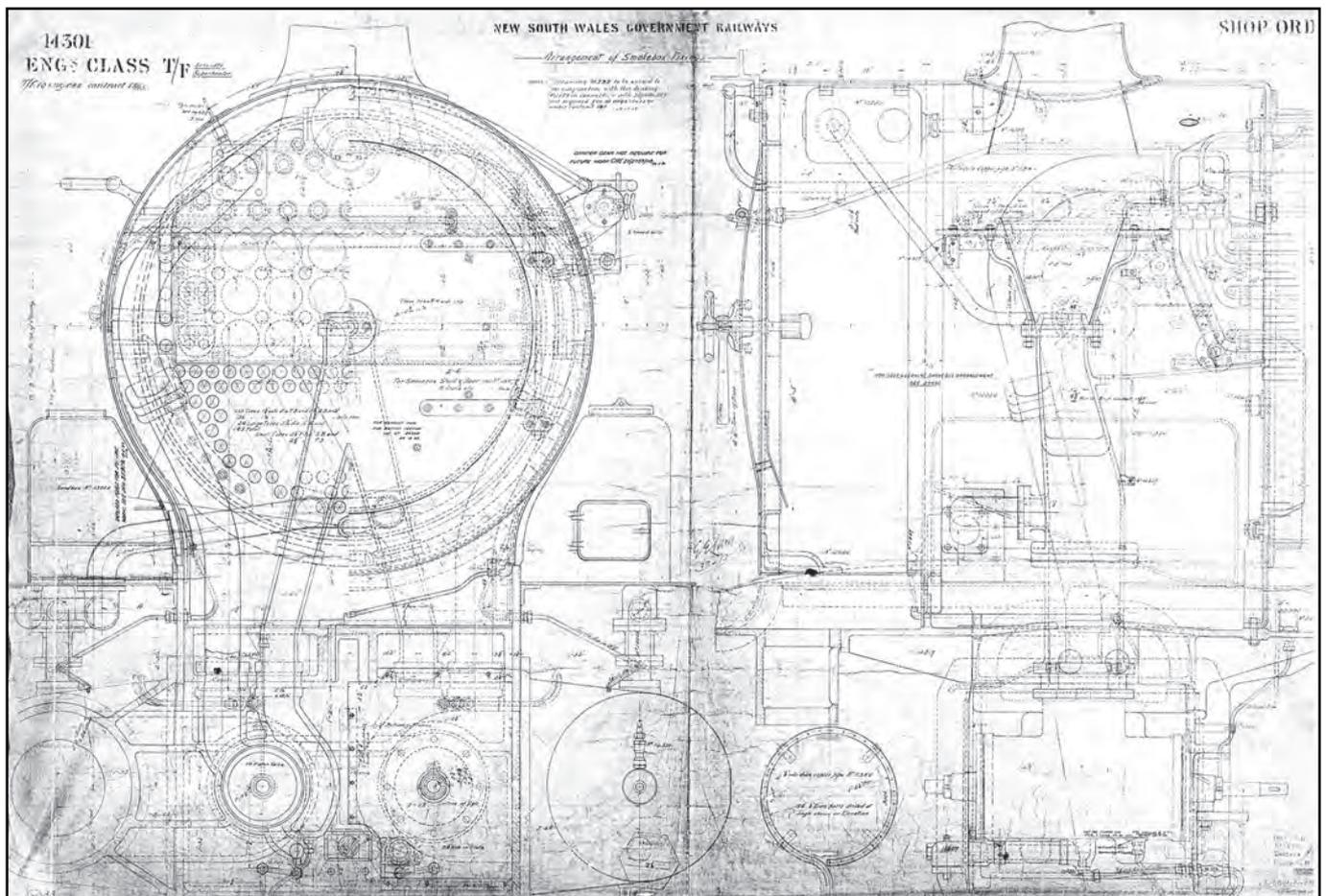
All the T/50 Class after the first 30 and all the TF Class had piston valves as built. On the saturated T Class and the first 50 TF Class locomotives, these were outside admission eight-inch diameter piston valves with 21-inch cylinders. Schmidt equipped locomotives had ten-inch inside admission piston valves and 22-inch cylinders.

Inside admission means the inlet steam is contained between the piston valve heads and risk of leakage through the piston valve glands is reduced. Outside admission with the live steam outside the valve heads, was standard for slide valves so the same valve gear was used, but with superheaters, this put a greater pressure on the valve glands and better packing was required. Once the advantages of superheating were realised, older locomotives were converted as boiler work was required.

The T and TF Class were among the first, since their piston valves were suitable for superheated steam, even the outside admission type. Almost no P Class locomotives were superheated

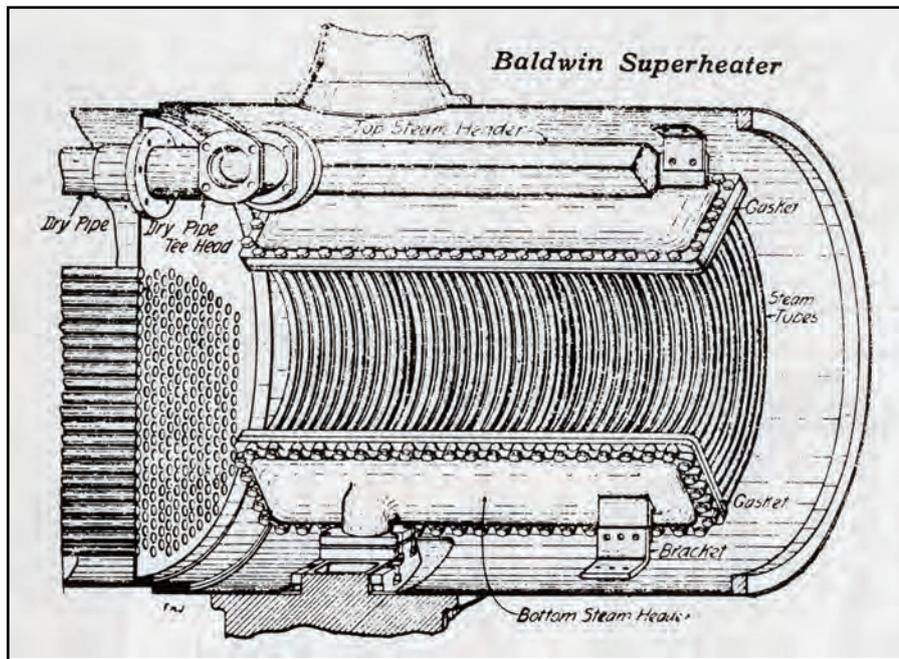
until about 1929 because their slide valves were unsuitable for superheated steam owing to the large flat areas in contact requiring lubrication. I guess that by 1929, the cylinders needed replacement anyway. Nevertheless, with 21-inch cylinders, the converted T and TF Class engines could not haul the ten percent greater load allowed to the engines built with 22-inch cylinders, so, their boiler pressure was increased to 180psi, enabling greater loads to be hauled. The higher pressure was kept until the cylinder casting wore out and was replaced by the later ten inch valve, 22-inch cylinder type.

I suspect that a number of P/32 Class locomotives may have kept the smokebox superheater for some time, since they could not be fitted with a Schmidt superheater without a cylinder replacement. Locomotives P 11 and P 12 were superheated about the time of the 1920 Royal Visit by the then Prince of Wales, but few others were superheated at that time, probably because of the cost of new cylinders. A number of 'saturated' P Class engines had extended smoke boxes, which may have been fitted to accommodate the smokebox superheater, right up to the 1930s.



TF/53 Class aperture card drawing of Schmidt superheater in the smokebox with front and side views of the arrangement.

ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE SRA APERTURE CARDS, LOCOMOTIVES, CARD 14301, COURTESY MATTHEW MOORE



The Eveleigh-built TF Class locomotives were fitted with locally designed superheaters. The only available illustration of these is of poor quality, but the author has provided this ATSF Railway drawing of the very similar Baldwin smokebox superheater used on Santa Fe locomotives.

TF Class numbering

Ron Preston has written that TF (53) Class locomotives were: “built in small batches”. This is demonstrably incorrect, although you can get this impression if you look at the post-1924 numbers.

Part of the problem is that some people believe that the 1924 renumbering ‘simplified’ or ‘improved’ locomotive numbering. In fact, in many cases the 1924 renumbering took a simple and clear situation and made a real mess of it. The TF class is a textbook example of how NOT to apply renumbering rules.

Ross Willson insisted that the renumbering must have been given to the dullest draftsman at Wilson Street which is easy to believe. The rules of the 1924 renumbering were as follows:

1. What year was the locomotive introduced?
2. What is its running number?

In 1912, only Clyde Engineering was building TF Class locomotives, so 939 to 952 became 5301 to 5314—so far so good.

The following year, Clyde built 953 to 973, while Eveleigh Workshops built 1017 to 1026 and 1074 to 1083. Lower numbers come first so 953 to 973 become 5315 to 5335 and the Eveleigh locomotives become 5336 to 5355.

It all began to come apart when the 1914 deliveries were renumbered, since Clyde Engineering delivered the last of their first order for 50, being numbered 974 to 988, but also the first of an order for 100, numbered 1104 to 1113, while Eveleigh built 1084 to 1088. Numbers rule, so 974 to 988 became 5356 to 5370, 1084 to 1088 became 5371 to 5375 and 1104 to 1113 became 5376 to 5385. These running numbers suggest that the locomotives were delivered in small batches of 15, five and ten!

In fact these were the 1914 parts of

two Clyde Engineering orders for 50 and possibly 100; and an Eveleigh Workshops order for 30, and 30, 50 and 100 are not small batches. There were no small batches until 1924, when the runs of continuous numbers were broken up by a rule-based renumbering.

I note that Ron Preston even had a diagram drawn up in his book on the 53 and 55 Class locomotives to prove his ‘small batches’ theory, but it is wrong and can only be viewed retrospectively as having any meaning.

Incidentally, I say: “possibly 100”, because the order with consecutive road numbers was split into 60 and 40 by another ‘rush’ order for ten which were built without superheaters as discussed above. This British Government superheater freeze also affected A² Class locomotives under construction at the Newport Workshops in Melbourne for the Victorian Railways, some of which were completed with boilers without superheaters. The ten Clyde-built saturated TF Class engines, 1094 to 1103 carried numbers that had obviously been reserved for Eveleigh locomotives never constructed.

Logically, if the year was ignored:

- 939 to 988 could have become 5301 to 5350;
- 1017 to 1026 and 1074 to 1093, could have become 5351 to 5380;
- 1104 to 1203 become 5381 to 5480; and
- The odd men out, 1094 to 1103, would have been 5481 to 5490.

No mystery, no small batches and locomotives with technical differences all together!

All the locomotives with eight-inch diameter outside-admission piston valves appear as 5301 to 5350; while the rest with ten-inch diameter inside admission piston valves would be numbered above 5351.

But in the words of a former Prime

Table 1: NSWGR TF Class locomotives, by orders

BATCH	Number	Builder	Delivery Dates	Loco Numbers
939 to 988	50	Clyde 76 to 125	4/1912 to 8/1914	5301–5335, 5356–5370
1017 to 1026	10	Eveleigh	4/1913 to 8/1913	5336–5345
1074 to 1093	20	Eveleigh	8/1913 to 9/1915	5346–5355, 5371–5375, 5386–5390
1104 to 1163	60	Clyde 130 to 189	9/1914 to 3/1916	5376–5385, 5391–5432, 5443–5450
1094 to 1103	10	Clyde 190 to 199	3/1916 to 6/1916	5433–5442
1164 to 1203	40	Clyde 200 to 239	7/1916 to 11/1917	5451–5490

Notes: Locomotives built as saturated steam were Nos 1094–1103, renumbered 5433–5422.



53 Class locomotive 5369 and a sister engine put on a spectacular display as they head a Sydney-bound goods train up Raglan Bank on 3 October 1964.

F LONDAY PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 055732

Minister: "life wasn't meant to be easy". What we got was the numbering set out in Table 1:

Assessment

If the point I made is accepted that there were no 'small batches' until the locomotives were renumbered ten years after they entered service, we can ignore the comments made about them. The whole thing about batches

was Ron Preston trying to explain the post-1924 numbers as if they were the original numbers. It is a misunderstanding based on the proposition that the order of 1924 numbers is somehow correct, while in fact it just confused things due to locomotives coming from two builders with different original numbers over multiple years being forced into the rigid year-based

renumbering.

I have used John Forsyth's list. John has fallen into the error of treating the so-called 'saturated' locomotives as if they were built that way. In fact all the 'saturated' engines in his list were from the original Clyde batch numbered 939 to 988, which were built with smokebox superheaters that were later removed. The references to superheating in John's list refer only to Schmidt fire tube superheaters, but the smokebox superheaters are not mentioned. If you read contemporary reports, it's clear that 939 to 978 were described as 'superheated' when built. Even the loco diagram shows this.

One of the problems here is the traffic branch and locomotive loads. Engines with Schmidt superheaters were allowed ten per cent greater loads, and this was indicated by a cross symbol in the tables (and later on the locomotive buffer beam). Engines 937 and 978 with the lower pressure were not counted as superheated (although they were). Because with their lower boiler pressure, they could not haul the heavier loads. Equally, the locomotives with smokebox superheaters could not haul the heavier loads either, so they were not counted as 'superheated' by the Traffic Branch definition. This was



Locomotive 5490 working tender-first heads a goods train across Hannell Street level crossing at Maryville on the Wickham branch line in December 1969. N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 458836

Ron Preston's argument when I was correcting his 53 and 55 Class locomotive book, which I had to do never seeing any of his text, but the main errors were fixed.

Only engines 1094 to 1103 were ordered as saturated locomotives in 1916. They were 1164 to 1173 and had 22-inch cylinders and 10-inch inside admission piston valves like their sisters built with Schmidt superheaters. They were superheated at the first boiler change, I think around 1920-24. John Forsyth's 1974 list shows this.

One of the odd features of NSW diagrams is that the weights are often questionable. The locomotives later described as 'saturated' are always shown as having a heavier load on the pony truck than the superheated locos. This was due to the weight of the smokebox superheater right at the front of the extended smokebox and was probably correct when TF No. 939 was weighed in 1912. But the diagram weights were never corrected, not for the removal of the smokebox superheater and not for the substitution of the standard boiler, which must have weighed less than the tapered boiler.

There was even a diagram drawn of a 'saturated' 53 Class engine with a short smokebox. I do not believe that there ever was one in service because there was no reason to shorten the smokebox. I think the draftsman was just having a bad day and copied the 50 Class diagram. I would love to see a photo of a 53 Class engine with short smokebox, but I do not believe one ever existed. The stored locomotives used on the Harbour Bridge all appear to have had extended smokeboxes from the available photos.

The locomotives sold for scrap were all scrapped before World War II. The scrap was shipped to Japan against the wishes of the Labor party then in opposition. Those locomotives were part of the reason for Prime Minister R G Menzies' nickname of 'Pig Iron Bob', because the scrap may well have been turned into weapons used against Australia from 1941.

Any 'saturated' TF Class locomotives left during WWII were fitted with standard boilers, often retaining the drumhead smokebox which was replaced after the war when more time was available.

Incidentally, the standard TF boiler was not the same as the T Class boiler. It was a compromise design incorpo-



A 53 Class 2-8-0 locomotive heads a 57 Class 4-8-2 on an Up goods train out of Lithgow on 10 August 1940. C C SINGLETON COLLECTION, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 005540A

rating features of the taper boiler and the T Class boiler. The really noticeable change was the increase in the width of the 'water legs', the space between the inner and outer fireboxes. This was bigger in the standard boiler compared to the T Class boiler, and was the same size as the water legs in the taper boiler. So the grate area of the standard boiler was smaller than the T Class boiler but the same as the TF Class boiler. As late as the 1960s there were both 'T Class' and 'standard' boilers in use, and they actually built 'saturated' standard boilers with the reduced grate area, as well as the superheated ones. Those were only used on 50 Class locomotives of course.

I realise that I am putting a hard case here. Even official NSWGR lists prepared in 1929 retrospectively stated that 53 Class locomotives 939 to 988

were built as saturated engines because the corporate memory had been lost. But the newspaper articles are still available and they clearly indicate No. 939 as the first of a class of superheated locomotives.

John Forsyth was not wrong, but his lists are incomplete; while Ron Preston was misled by reading John's lists set out in 1924 number order. If you list the locomotives in order of the numbers they were built with, which is what I have done above, it is all quite clear, at least to me.



53 Class 2-8-0 5408 shunting at Port Waratah with traffic for the BHP steelworks in the 1960s. R T CLARKE PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 353783

Reflections on the 1939 QR Bundamba Accident

Greg Hallam



B18¼ Class Pacific locomotive No. 847 poses for an official photograph at Mayne with what was thought to be the *Rockhampton Mail* carriages. This locomotive headed the No. 17 Down Mail train that collided with a PB15 shunting locomotive at Bundamba on 10 February 1939. QUEENSLAND RAIL PHOTO

Mike Quirk's article in *Australian Railway History* No. 949 in November 2016 was of particular interest to me and my family. I have provided some research assistance to Mike Quirk in his articles about the various accidents on the Queensland Railways for the *ARH* magazine, and have enjoyed being able to assist where possible. Two of Mike's recent articles actually have direct family contact with myself and my wife. The Gillen's Siding derailment in 1924, on the former Mount Perry line, involved my grandmother (mother's side) who was badly injured when travelling on the excursion train from Mount Perry (Mildred Searle) and my grandfather (Walter MacGowan again mother's side) drove one of the engines on the rescue trains sent to the accident site. On my wife's side we also have a direct connection with the Bundamba smash.

My wife Elizabeth's great-grandfather was John Curtis, the driver of the PB15 shunting locomotive, which Ambrose Skehan's B18¼ No. 847 on the ex-Toowoomba passenger train collided with. John Curtis survived the accident as described in the article, but died three days later in the Ipswich General Hospital. When trying to leap from the PB15 just before the B18¼ locomotive collected it, he pushed his fireman off the locomotive. John then jumped; landing on the embankment, but the tender of the PB15 locomotive rolled over and crushed his leg. His leg was amputated on the spot, but he

died three days later of gas gangrene. In some of the press photos I have seen of the aftermath of the accident, you are able to see the parish priest from Bundamba anointing John Curtis in the background.

Elizabeth and myself had a very interesting experience a fair few years back. We were travelling on a steam heritage tour when we fell to discussion with two older fellows, who it turned out were taught by Elizabeth's great-aunt at Bundamba State School in the late 1930s. They clearly remembered the day that the principal came into the room (and I think they said a police officer), to inform her that her father had died in the hospital.

Elizabeth's great-grandfather is buried in the Ipswich General Cemetery, on the old Warwick Road, and with the compensation payout from the Railways, her great-aunt paid for a very large and impressive granite cross to be erected for both John Curtis and his wife. There is also an impressive stained glass window in St Mary's church at Ipswich dedicated to their memory. Going back nearly 20 years ago now, John Knowles and I corresponded about this accident. This confirmed that PB15 No. 455 was not as thought, written off after the smash; established the signalman's actions after the event; and confirmed that the 'the drooping wire' leading to the semaphore resulted in it not giving a clear indication of

clear or danger.

Another interesting account of the Bundamba accident was supplied via Noel Condon, whose father was Jack Condon, around 20 years ago now. Jack was appointed to the Roma Street locomotive depot in 1922. During the 1920s and on into the 1930s and 1940s, Jack worked the Main Range from the Roma Street depot and (post-1927) Mayne depot. Jack Condon (1900–1994) recalled working the Main Range Line, and some of the crews who worked the line in what was termed the 'Links train workings' out of Mayne depot with a regular crew and rostering. He made mention of Harry Liebke, in his account, and his connection to the Bundamba accident:

Six sets of men worked the *Sydney Mail* link. It was known as the 'Big Six' with C18 and C19 Class 4-8-0 locomotives working these services. The Link drivers were Ted Cole, Uriah Jay, Harry Bruce, George Allen, Don Aird, Tom Boyle and Arthur Miskin.

Arthur Miskin lived on the Indooroopilly side of the Taringa Bank. He never carried a tucker box to work. He would stop the *Sydney Mail* train at his house and go through a hole in the fence. Arthur Rigby, his mate, said it would not be too bad if his wife had the box ready; but mostly it wasn't. Miskin would go into the fowl house looking for eggs with the passengers hanging out the

windows to see why the train had stopped. *Smith's Weekly* wrote the story up and Arthur Miskin had to front the Locomotive Engineer, Joey Rees. After this episode, Miskin had to carry his box to work.

The firemen were Frank Kilminster, Stan Ladner, Harry Liebke and Ambrose Skehan. Harry was a well-known football player, who represented Australia a number of times. On the heavy parts of the Range, he would put a fire on and then hop off the engine and run alongside the locomotive to train for the next football match. The lagging of the boilers was steel blue, with brass bands, kept polished. When Bill Mann would work on the *Sydney Mail*, as the train was loping along, shut off between Toowong and Milton, Bill would be out along the boiler wiping it down as this was the side that would come into the platform at Central Station, where a lot of people would be waiting to greet the passengers. Bill would like the people to admire the locomotive.

Ambrose Skehan was the driver of 17 Down in February 1939, which passed the Bundamba Home Signal at Stop and collided with a shunt locomotive, killing himself and the driver of the shunt engine, John Curtis. A number of passengers were injured. Harry Liebke was a passenger on the ex-Toowoomba train and assisted in the rescue.



View of Bundamba station and signal box in the 1890s.
QUEENSLAND RAIL PHOTO



Interior of the Bundamba signal box in the 1890s.
QUEENSLAND RAIL PHOTO



LEFT: PB15 4-6-0 locomotive No. 455 was repaired after the Bundamba accident and continued in service until December 1969. Here it shunts goods wagons at North Ipswich in 1969.
QUEENSLAND RAIL PHOTO

IRON ROADS IN THE OUTBACK:

THE LEGENDARY COMMONWEALTH RAILWAYS BY NICK ANCHEN

Sierra Publishing, Melbourne 2017. Hard cover, 217 pages, 280 x 223mm; 161 colour photos, 68 b&w historical photos and five maps. RRP \$70.00 (plus P&P if applicable) from the ARHSnsw Bookshop, 67 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016

Issued in September 2017 to coincide with the centenary of the standard gauge Trans-Australian Railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie line, Nick Anchen's *Iron Roads in the Outback* is the grandest publication of his Sierra Publishing house to date. Profusely illustrated with wonderful colour and greyscale photographs this book covers the two original narrow gauge lines that became the Commonwealth Railways and the standard gauge Trans-Australian Line opened in October 1917.

While these railways and the evolution of the trains that operated on them are at the core of the book's contents, there

are also fascinating diversions that cover the attractive natural landscapes through which they ran, the people who worked on the railways and other key elements of the Australian outback. These sections feature great images by Nick of classic outback scenes, native flowers and wildlife, Aboriginal communities and some of the prominent characters of outback settlements. Melbourne photographer Peter Ralph features in a chapter highlighted by his 1956 photograph of these people and their lifestyle.

A stunning photograph by Bernie Kelly across pages 68-69 catches the sun on locomotive GM32 heading *The Ghan* against a dark storm background with a field of 'Paterson's curse' (or Salvation Jane as the caption notes) providing a sea of purple in the foreground.

A short chapter covers early exploration of the region and the Overland Telegraph line which connected Adelaide with London on 22 October 1872. This leads into ten chapters covering the history of the Central Australia Railway in both narrow gauge and standard gauge eras, with profiles of some of the men who operated the trains and maintained the line. The legend of *The Ghan* and its piano playing chef are particularly interesting features.

The North Australia Railway from Darwin to Birdum is covered in seven chapters, including good coverage of its

construction and early operations, together with the key role it played in World War II. Weston Langford contributes a chapter on NAR operations in 1965 which is illustrated with his photographs taken at that time, while the Rolling Stock Foreman Bill Donaldson presents a chapter on NAR operations from 1970 to 1974, culminating with the destruction wrought by *Cyclone Tracy* on Christmas Day 1974.

Six chapters cover construction of the Trans-Australian Railway, the evolution of the *Trans-Australian Express* and the *Tea and Sugar* train over the years, Jack Slattery's story as a locomotive driver in the steam era, while Ron Howrie pres-

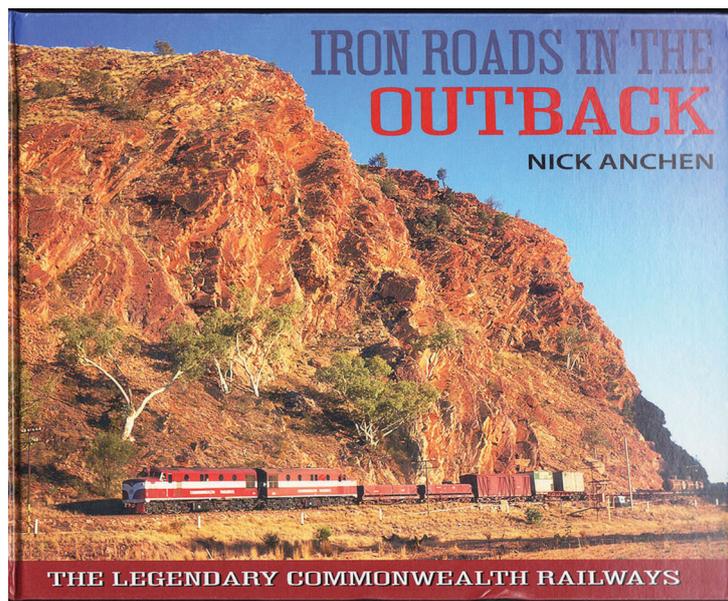
ents his account of driving trains across the Nullarbor in the diesel era. A particularly interesting contribution from Cathy Beck tells of her life in the isolated settlements on the Trans-Australian Railway, commencing at Cook in 1966 when she was eight years old. She also spent time at Reid, Forrest and Tarcoola before she and her husband went back to Cook in the 1980s.

As the narrow gauge Pichi Richi line from Quorn to Port Augusta was a key link from Adelaide to the Trans-Australian Railway at Port Augusta in its early days, it

gets a concluding chapter. There is little on its early operations with the focus of the text and images being on today's Pichi Richi Heritage Railway. Finally, Nick Anchen presents eight of his landscape and nature photographs taken in the Flinders Ranges. The cover photograph is a delightful shot of the NSU class locomotives heading a southbound freight train through Heavitree Gap near Alice Springs.

At \$70 from the ARHSnsw Bookshop, this book offers excellent value and is highly recommended.

Bob McKillop



From Steam to Diesel and Electric, Part 1

ARH 958, August 2017

I have just received my copy of the August edition of *Australian Railway History*. On page 19 there is a photograph of three 400 Class Garratts with the caption: 'being prepared for duty at Peterborough Locomotive Depot in 1969'.

In fact the photo depicts Garratts 400, 401 and 404 at Port Pirie (note the large 450 ton coal plant in the background), on the occasion of the

running of the ARHS 'Farewell Narrow Gauge' rail tour from 10 to 13 October 1969. Garratt 401 had worked the train from Terowie to Port Pirie, with 404 taking over the running from Port Pirie to Peterborough on Saturday 11 October 1969.

While the train was at Port Pirie, the opportunity was taken to position 401 and 404, together with 400, which was stabled at Port Pirie over the weekend,

for photographic purposes.

I hope this helps in terms of 'setting the record straight'.

John Evans, Hawthorn SA 5062

Editor: Thanks to John Evans for pointing out this error. We will adjust the caption for this image in the ARHSnsw RRC database.

The Katanning–Donnybrook Line

ARH 957, July, 959 September 2017

Rod Milne's two-part article reminded me of my experiences on this line in early 1967. The 3 February that year was a particularly busy day on the Katanning–Donnybrook line, with two trains approaching one another with both headed by W Class 4-8-2 locomotives.

They were both scheduled to cross at Wilga, but one or both were too long for the crossing loop. The first to arrive headed by W 941 stopped with the van still foul of the points at the other end, so when the second train arrived behind W 942, an impasse seemed inevitable. The driver of W 941 solved the problem by drawing his train forward onto the lead into the sawmill so it passed the sign stating: 'Locomotives Must Not Pass This Point', with predictable results.

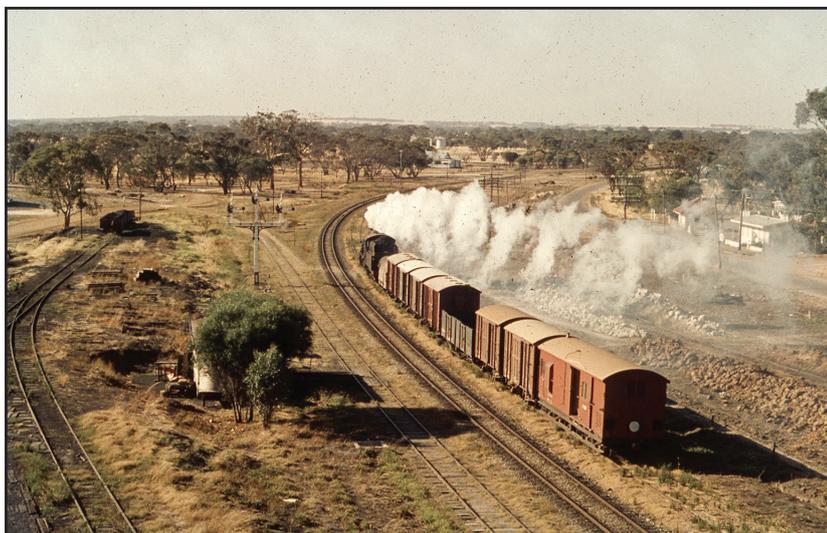
With a resounding crash, W 941

collapsed the track and ended up with the leading bogie and all eight driving wheels on the ground. The opposing train, with a clear track ahead, promptly departed. After assessing the situation, it was decided to drag W 941 back with the second locomotive, which was accomplished with a great deal of noisy wheel slipping. The locomotive moved back lurching from side to side and, one by one, the wheels found their way back onto the rails as better quality track was reached.

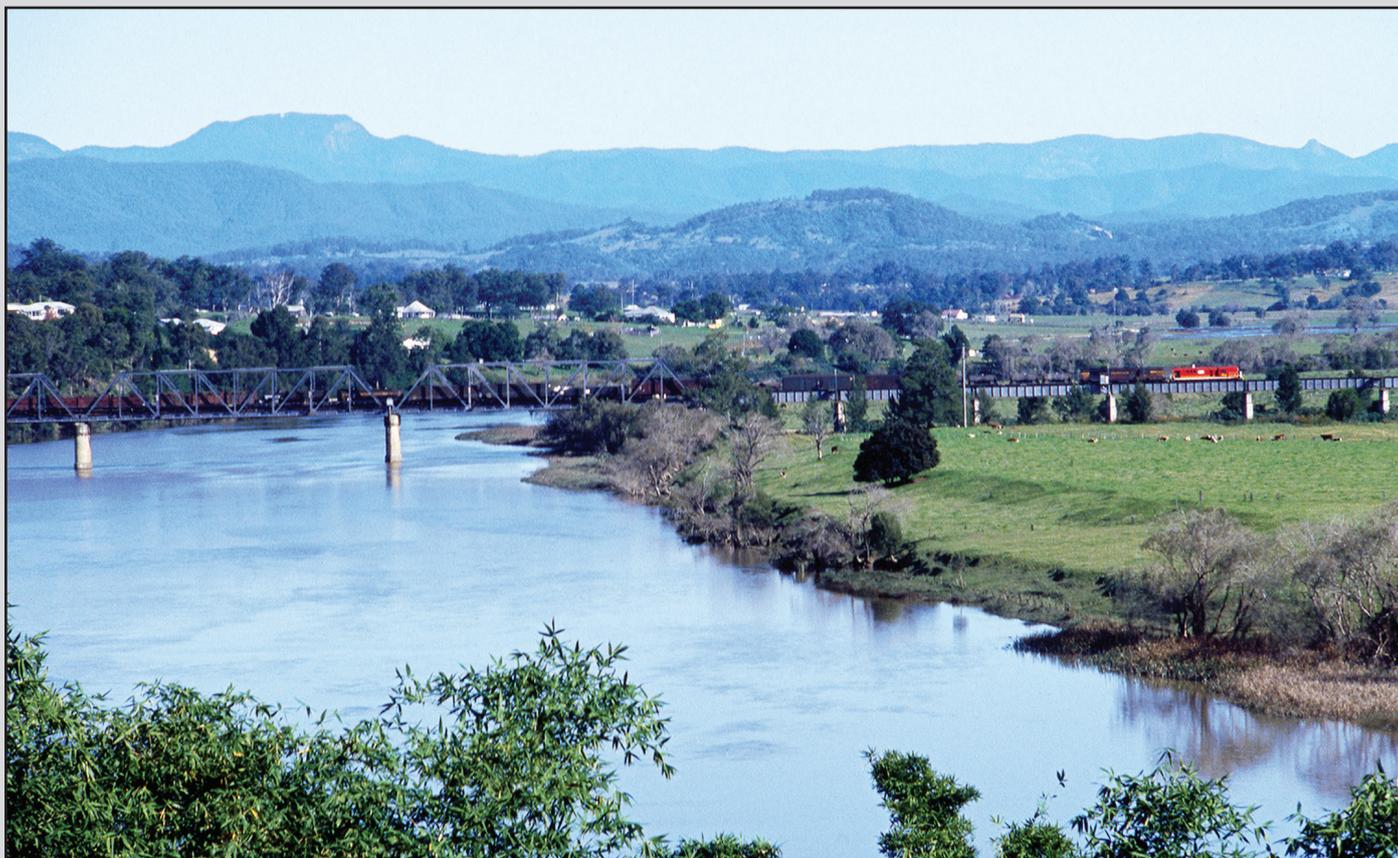
Within ten minutes everything was back in order apart from the sawmill track, which was in a sorry state. The local ganger had come over while the re-railing was going on and was engaged in earnest conversation with the driver of W 941. Money appeared to be changing hands and soon Wilga had returned to its slumbers.

Ten days later—Monday 13 February—I revisited the cross-country line, but this time on the train. Departure from Perth was on No. 15 fast goods to Bunbury just after midnight with locomotive V 1217 in charge. At Bunbury, connection was made with No. 21 goods train headed by W 942, which led to a delightful day wandering across the countryside and watching the local railwaymen going about their business. I noted that the sawmill siding at Wilga looked as good as new! It was a long day with darkness falling by Kojonup. We arrived at Katanning in time to catch the Albany Progress train to Perth behind diesel-electric locomotive X 1023. A day well spent! Some photos taken on my journeys are included.

Dave Macartney, Ballarat VIC 3350



View of W Class 4-8-2 locomotive departing Katanning on 13 February 1967 via the cross-country line to Donnybrook and Bunbury. DAVE MACARTNEY COLLECTION



The Macleay River Railway Bridge and the impressive coastal ranges south of Kempsey offer a grand backdrop as Alco-powered locomotives 4875 and 4531 head a Down freight train across the structure on 31 May 1983. The Centenary of the line opening is featured in this issue of *Australian Railway History*. N W MUNRO PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 355038

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