

# BYWAYS OF STEAM



EVELEIGH PRESS





A note from Random002:

For years these older Australian railway books have been out of print.

Rather than hoard limited quantities in dusty baby-boomer book shelves  
these books need to be made available to the railway community as a whole.

Education and information should be made freely available to those who seek it and if it is not  
made available from the publisher then alternative measures will always be taken.

I have spent considerable time scanning and editing these copies for your enjoyment,  
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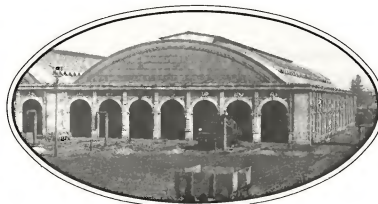
Enjoy.

# BYWAYS OF STEAM

**On the New South Wales Railways  
in the 1960s**



**Eveleigh Press**



**Published September 1990 by**

**Eveleigh Press**

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**Front Cover:** *Saturated 30T class 4-6-0, 3056, heads away from Temora station with the Griffith connection off the 'Temora Mail' in 1964. The composition of the train is MHG goods brake van, CS composite carriage and MHO guard's van.*

*Graham Cotterall*

**Back Cover, Above:** *A sylvan branchline scene as 3059 takes water from the lineside at Gundagai on 21 September 1957. Engines had to cut off their train and run ahead to water here, as the tank was a few yards beyond the platform. To the left are the rudimentary loco facilities: just a coal stage and turntable, with an ashpit on the main line, which was shovelled out at intervals, as is abundantly clear from the ashes on the trackwork!*

*Robert Merchant*

**Back Cover, Below:** *Running bunker-first, dual-control 'heavy' Beyer-Garratt 6017 begins the ascent into Wambool with No.608 eastbound stock and general goods in the late summer of 1965. Evidence of poor water supplies on the Western Division is seen in the staining of the 263t behemoth.*

*Brian Coker*

# Not for resale



*1938 on the up mixed from Batlow against a background of the beautiful Gilmore valley between Wybalena and Wereboldera, on Friday, 19 May 1961. The marker lights on 1938's buffer beam are in lieu of an electric headlight.*

*Ian Wallace*

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*Polished buffers and handrails, and reversed marker lamps distinguish an S class 4-6-4 tank engine as it blasts uphill out of Blues Point tunnel with a down North Shore passenger in 1924. This portion of the original line is now reduced to single track and sees infrequent use as access to the Lavender Bay car sidings. SRA*

# INTRODUCTION

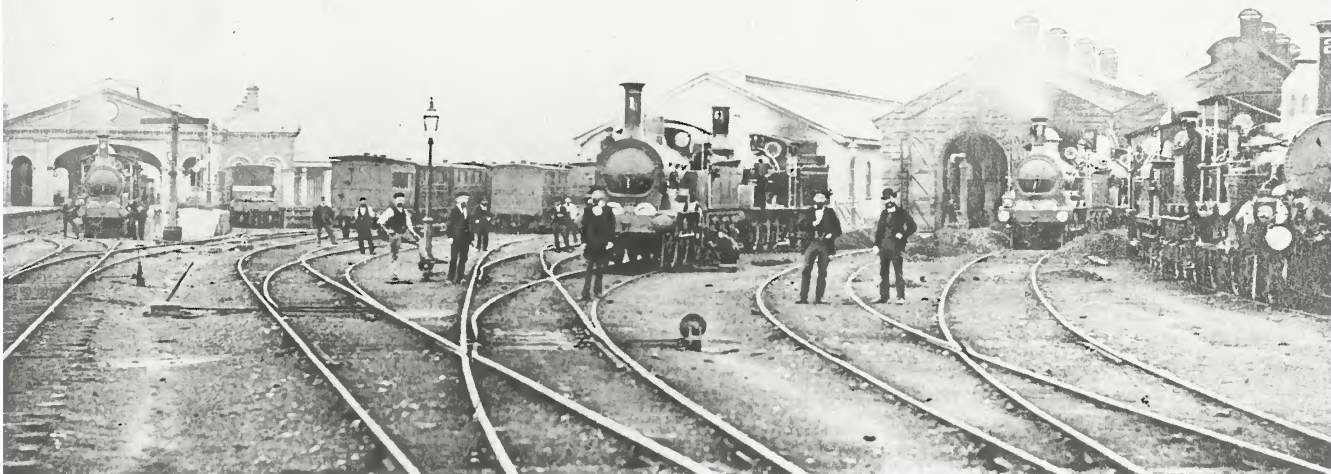
The New South Wales Government Railways have existed for one hundred and thirty-five years. Approximately one hundred of those years formed a continuum of development, with a few hiccoughs along the way, but no major redefinition of parameters took place. The NSWGR was recognisably the same railway in 1955 as it was in its jubilee year of 1905. Progress had been made, certainly, but the infrastructure and rollingstock changes were evolutionary, not revolutionary. Even the introduction of that item of motive power which was to cause the most profound changes, the diesel locomotive, was an evolutionary process, with tentative steps beginning in the 1920s and steady progress made in the railcar field throughout the ensuing four decades.

In the last decade, however, the railways of New South Wales have changed beyond recognition as they seek to grapple with a myriad of distressing influences: overwhelming competition, a backlog of investment, a rapidly changing society, breathtaking technological change. Today's efforts to re-enter the mainstream of the country's economic activity have rooted out the majority of past institutions, practices and infrastructure by which 'the Railways' were recognisable to those whose interest lay in the study of them. The State Rail Authority of 1990 bears little resemblance to the New South Wales Government Railways of 1970.

Enthusiast interest tends toward the historical, so we are fortunate that the middle generation of railway enthusiasts took an active interest in recording the everyday workings of the railways in the 1950s and 1960s. This book is intended as the first in a series which will document those aspects of railway infrastructure, rollingstock and operation which characterised the NSWGR and made it unique, even as every other railway system has its own, idiosyncratic character. The authors are all experienced observers of their chosen topic, and the information has been painstakingly researched to confirm their field observations of two and three decades ago.

The title *Byways of Steam* continues a series of articles by Robert Booth in the journal of the New South Wales Rail Transport Museum, *Roundhouse*, between 1977 and 1989. These articles captured the essence of the NSWGR in its heyday, and the authors agree that it conveys the mood they are endeavouring to recreate in this book.





**Above:** The year is 1876, 21 years after the opening of railway services in New South Wales, and Sydney depot displays six fine locomotives of the period. On the left is engine No.1 (0-4-2), with O60 class, No.61 (0-6-0) behind; engine No.2 (0-4-2) is the leading locomotive of the middle group, with another O60 class, No.65 behind. To the right, G23 class 2-4-0 No.23 (later 1406) stands ahead of No.57, an I48 class (2nd) 0-6-0 tender engine of 1875. Sydney depot consists of two magnificent stone structures, complete with arched doorways and four smokechutes on each ridge of the ventilated roof. SRA

**Below:** Eveleigh locomotive depot was opened in the mid-1880s, and exemplified the great advances which were being made in the railways of New South Wales. Eveleigh locomotive shed was the largest, the depot had more locomotives on allotment than most other depots, and the principal trains of the system were worked by Eveleigh crews. In this photograph (circa 1890), Beyer, Peacock T14 class 2-2-2 passenger engines rub shoulders with American Baldwin J131 class 2-8-0 engines fitted with bogie tenders. SRA







*Nearly a century after the opening of railway service in NSW, the design of locomotives and their depots has changed significantly. Large roundhouses service large locomotives, and Broadmeadow depot in the 1950s and 1960s was a prime example. The scene is Broadmeadow No.1 shed, (part of the roundhouse is on the right), and the date is 28 June 1964. From left to right, 6019, 6001, 6002 and 6026 rest on a fine Sunday afternoon.*

*R.D.Love*

# THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE DEPOTS IN NSW

*by Ray Love*

## Introduction

The publication of *Byways of Steam* sees the commencement of a second series dealing with historical and general details of the locomotive depots in New South Wales.

The initial series was produced in the house journal of the New South Wales Rail Transport Museum, *Roundhouse*, and covered the history and details of ten depots which, at some time or other, played an important part in the railway operations of this state. An accurate reference to the previous series of articles is given at the conclusion of these notes.

In 1950, eighty-four locomotive depots and sub-depots (or out-depots) were in operation throughout New South Wales.

The words 'locomotive depot' require some explanation. On first thought, one thinks of a steam depot as being an arrangement of engine sheds, coal stages and pits, all adjacent to a turntable. However, in the New South Wales Government Railways' industrial determinations, a locomotive depot or out-depot is defined as a location where enginemen are employed and this does not always mean an associated arrangement of coal stages and buildings. This legal definition is used by both the railway administration and the relevant unions. However, in these articles reference is often made to "... the depot buildings" or "the depot consisted of...". This use of the term assists in the description, but, generally speaking, the series of articles is



**Table 1**  
**NSWGR Locomotive Depots**

No.	Depot	No.	Depot
1	Eveleigh	19	Clyde
	Campbelltown	20	Pt. Waratah
	Richmond	21	Thirroul
2	Broadmeadow		Waterfall
	Dungog		Wollongong
	Gosford	22	Valley Heights
	Morpeth	23	Lithgow
3	Goulburn		Mt Victoria
	Queanbeyan	24	Wallerawang
	Canberra	25	Mudgee
	Cooma		Capertee
	Yass Town		Coolah
4	Bathurst	26	Cowra
	Blayney	27	Cootamundra
	Oberon		Tumut
5	Junee	28	Narrandera
	Wagga Wagga		Griffith
6	Enfield		Tocumwal
	Mittagong	29	Orange
	Moss Vale		Yeoval
	Penrith	30	Moree
7	Wellington		Inverell
8	Harden	31	Albury
9	Werris Creek	32	Temora
10	Narrabri West		Lake Cargelligo
11	Armidale	33	Culcairn
	Glen Innes	34	Tenterfield
12	Casino	35	West Tamworth
	Yeerongpilly	36	Parkes
	Murwillumbah		Menindee
13	Picton		Broken Hill
14	Singleton		Euabalong West
15	Dubbo		Ivanhoe
	Narromine	37	The Rock
	Coonamble	38	Hornsby
	Nevertire		Hawkesbury River
16	Nyngan		South Grafton
17	Taree		Glenreagh
	Wauchope		Binnaway
	Kempsey		Muswellbrook
	Macksville		Merriwa
18	Murrurundi		

**Note:** The numerals 1,2,3 etc., are the numbers allocated to certain locomotive depots in a numbering scheme applied during the early 1900s. Smaller out-depots were not numbered and in this table they are placed, in most instances, adjacent to their parent depot. In recent years, many of the original major depots have themselves become out-depots.

based on the location as defined more closely, i.e. where enginemen are employed.

Like the previous series, these articles will deal with both large depots, as well as smaller out-depots, and no particular order of preference will be used.

The locomotive depots, and out-depots (also known as sub-depots), existing in the year 1950, are listed in Table 1, at left.

In addition to those listed, a number of suburban electric train depots existed at the time, including Hornsby, Flemington, Central, North Sydney (approximately eight in total), but these are beyond the scope of this series.

For comparison purposes, it is worthy of note that at the time of writing (1990), forty years on, only twenty-six of these depots still exist in N.S.W.

This number is expected to decline even further in the next few years.

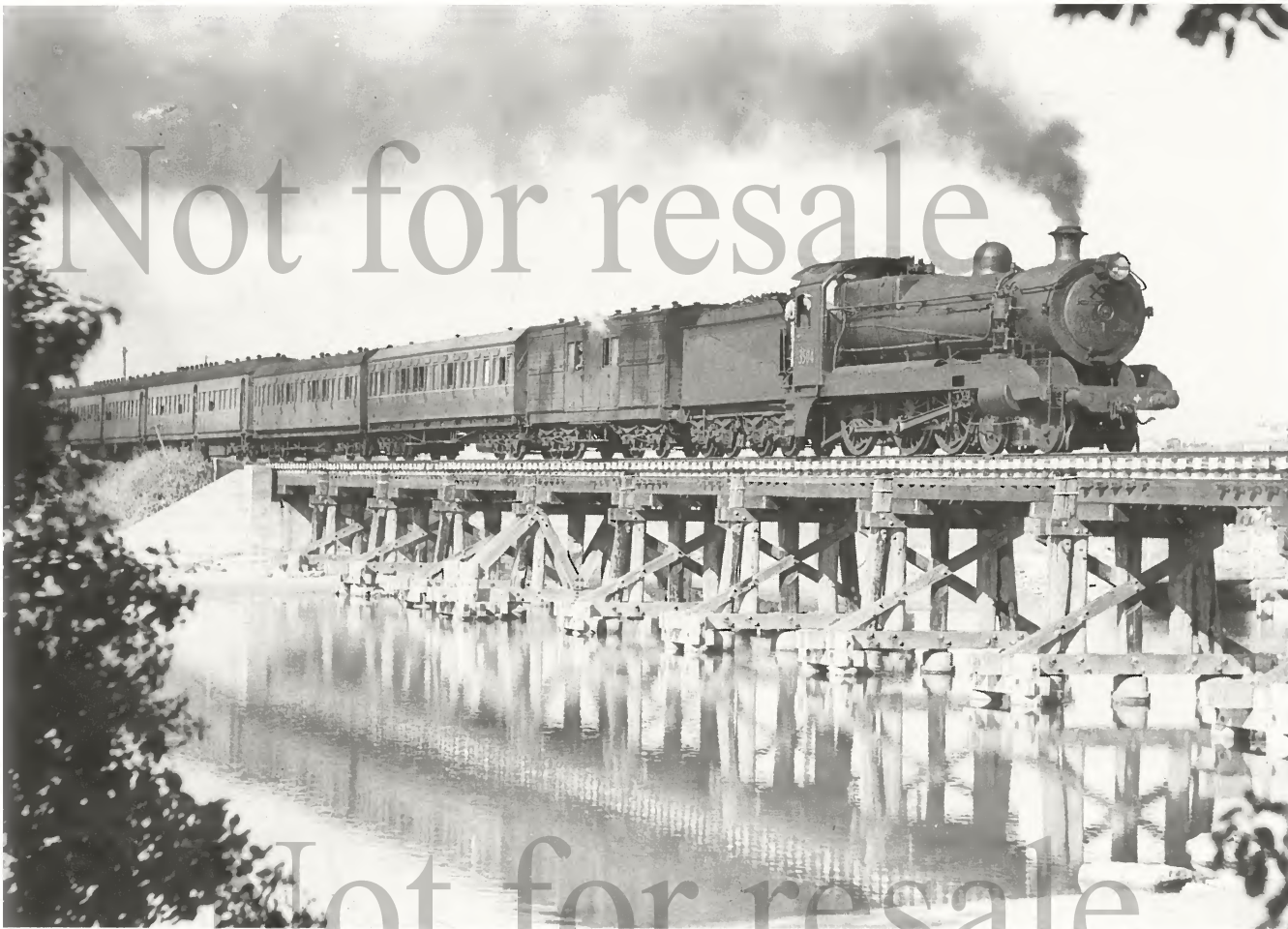
The first series of articles (published in *Roundhouse*) covered the history and details of the following ten depots:

Bathurst Depot:	April 1986
Werris Creek Depot:	July 1986
Orange Depot:	October 1986
Gosford Depot:	July 1987
West Tamworth, Armidale, Tenterfield Depots:	January 1988
Wagga Wagga, The Rock, Culcairn Depots:	October 1988

Apart from the series dealing specifically with depot histories, other depots were dealt with in an associated series in the same publication. This series, 'Byways of Steam' (from which this book takes its name), by R.K. Booth, made reference to and gave details of the following depots: Port Waratah, Murrurundi, Dubbo, Nyngan, Hornsby and Hawkesbury River, Waterfall, and Yass Town.

A word is necessary regarding the presentation of diagrams. Generally, the diagram of the depot is redrawn directly from track layouts and detail drawings obtained from SRA Archives. In some cases, it is deemed essential to change the scales to clarify the presentation and to fit items such as buildings and structures between the tracks. The diagrams, as presented, represent the maximum development of the relevant depot in the steam era, and are usually made possible by the use of photographs and local information obtained from the men who worked there. In most cases, signalling items, goods yards and platform details have been deleted from the diagrams as they are considered to be surplus to an article dealing with locomotive depots.





*North Coast steam at its best. In July 1947, four years before the encroachment of mainline diesels, 3504 departs Coffs Harbour and heads north with No.11 North Coast Mail. The scene is typical of the North Coast railway in the later steam era: 4-6-0 passenger engines, dog-boxes (or express lavatory cars), timber trestles over scenic waterways. The engine would have relayed another at Taree in the early hours of the morning and will have a well-earned break on arrival at South Grafton, where it will go into loco.*

*SRA*

# THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE DEPOTS IN NSW

*by Ray Love*

## **Locomotive Depot No.17 - Taree**

**Locomotive Out-Depot - Wauchope**

**Locomotive Out-Depot - Kempsey**

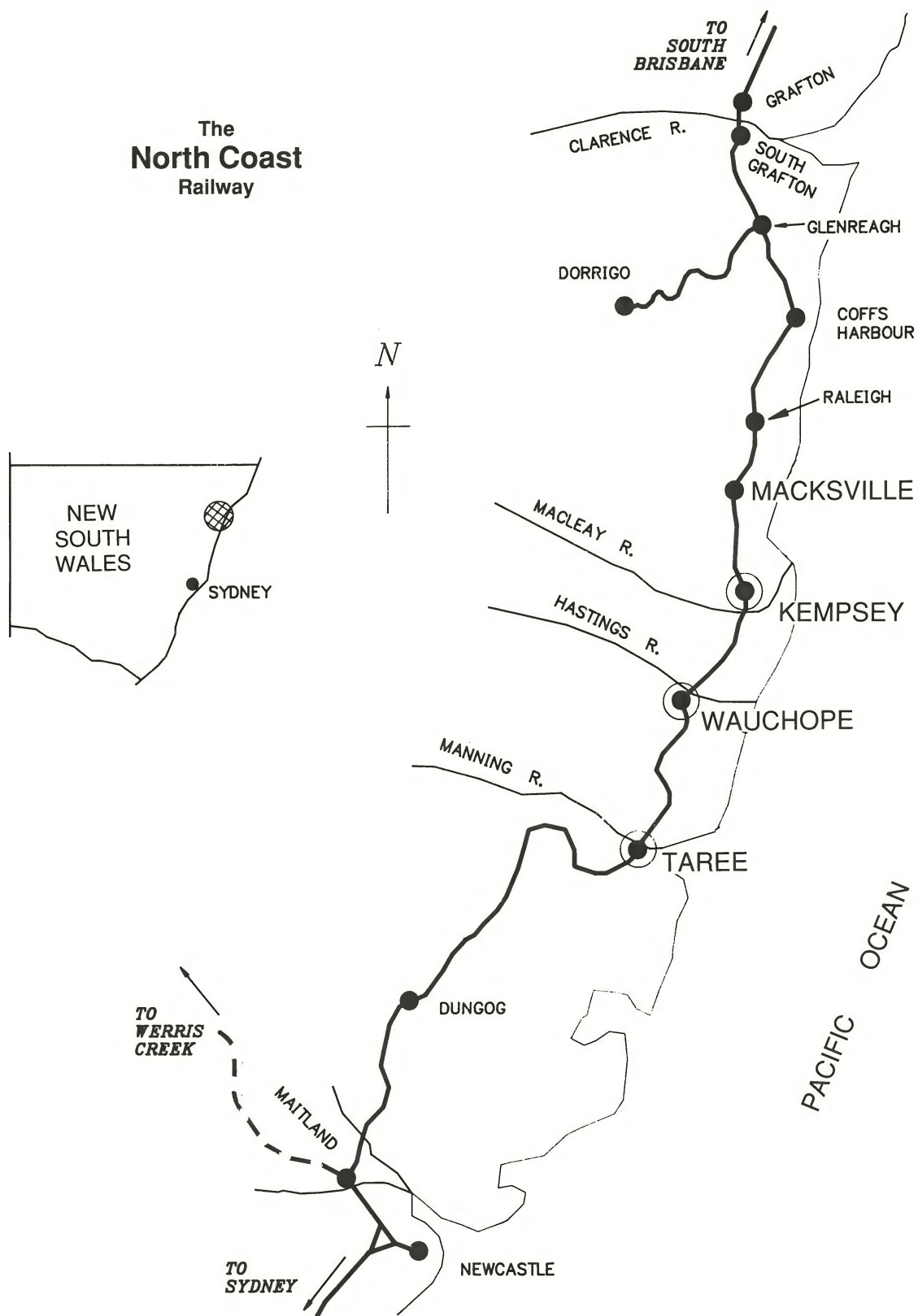
**Locomotive Out-Depot - Macksville**

### **Preamble**

This essay is part of a continuing series dealing with the history and final years of the steam locomotive depots in NSW. It was the original intention to record the passing of the long-gone depots as quickly

as possible, quite simply to make use of the information which was still available before it too completely fades from the scene, just as the depot buildings have done. So many depots, sheds and

# The North Coast Railway







*Celebrations in Taree as the official train, hauled by P854 (later 3344), approaches the ceremonial ribbon stretched across the track on 4 February 1913. SRA*

*Another view of the opening ceremony at Taree. The local interest and importance to the towns along the Manning River can be judged by the number of people present. Engine P854 was later modernised and returned to Taree 50 years later, in 1963, at the head of the vintage train. By then, it was re-numbered 3344. SRA*







*The year is 1912, and Gloucester has been reached with northward railway construction. A D261 class 4-4-0 (later 16 class) tender engine and two cars form the inspection train in the platform. SRA*

roundhouses have passed into history in the last twenty years that the task of recording information, reminiscences and memories has become of prime importance. Even as these notes are being written, plans are in place for the complete closure of a number of depots in the country areas and transfer of the remaining men to nearby large depots, thereby further reducing links with past days.

Geographically, the series of articles has covered

depots in the Main West, Main North, Short North and Far South of the state.

This essay covers the history and details of four depots located on the North Coast line (later the main Sydney-Brisbane through route), those at Taree, Wauchope, Kempsey and Macksville.

The North Coast railway separates from the Main Northern line at (West) Maitland and the four depots covered here were located along the resultant single-line route to Brisbane.

### **Brief Area History**

The railway reached West Maitland (the station now known as Maitland) in 1858 and in the next 20 years, construction of the Main Northern line proceeded onward to Singleton and Tamworth. It was to be another 30 years before construction commenced on a line linking the existing Sydney-Maitland railway with the then isolated sections existing in the Casino/Lismore area.

On 14 August 1911, Dungog was linked by single line to West Maitland, the main contractors for construction of this 32½ mile (54km) section being Carson, Cary and Simpson.

Messrs J.C. Willcox, in conjunction with Public Works Department day labour, completed construction of a further 38 miles (61km) to Gloucester.

On 14 February 1913, the line was opened into Taree, linking with West Maitland, 184km to the south. J.C. Jones and PWD day labour had been respon-



*The official inspection party at Gloucester Railway Station. Construction of the residence attached to the station building is proceeding. SRA*





*On 11 July 1947, nearly 35 years after the opening of the railway into town, the railway depot presents an extremely busy sight. On the left, a coal-grab works in the coal stack sidings, while two engines (including a green 36 class) are serviced on the right.*

SRA

sible for construction of the section between Gloucester and Taree.

Construction continued during the next four years, carried out by day labour under the direction of the Public Works Department and on 27 November 1917, Kempsey was reached. A single line, 215 miles long (344km) linked Newcastle with the major North Coast river towns of Dungog, Gloucester, Wingham, Taree, Wauchope and Kempsey.

By 1923, South Grafton, on the south bank of the Clarence River, had been connected to the system, forming what was in effect a branchline from West Maitland, northward along the coast, some 311 miles long (498km).

Seven years later, the missing links in the isolated far North Coast sections of the route then in existence, between Grafton (on the north bank of the Clarence) and Brisbane, were completed and a standard gauge NSW train entered South Brisbane late in 1930. There was, however, one break in the 613 mile (981km) route between Sydney and Brisbane, the bridge over the Clarence River at Grafton.

This final connecting link in the Sydney to Brisbane Uniform Gauge Railway, as it was known at the time, was completed some two years later, with the opening of the Clarence River Bridge between South Grafton and Grafton.

On the completed route of the North Coast railway, eleven depots were in use during the steam days. Dungog, Taree, Wauchope, Kempsey, Macksville, Glenreagh, South Grafton, Casino, Lismore, Murwillumbah and Yeerongpilly provided crews and serviced the locos which worked on the long

single-line section and the three or four branchlines in the region.

Two of the larger depots (Taree and Kempsey) and two small depots (Wauchope and Macksville) are the subjects of this essay.

## Locomotive Depot No.17 - Taree

### History

On 19 December 1910, a drawing was issued to cover construction of a coal stage in the area to the south of Taree station on the eastern side of the line. In September 1911, a drawing was issued for construction of an eight stall, sector-type roundhouse, in approximately the same location as mentioned above, the area to become Taree Locomotive Depot. This drawing was signed on 23 September 1911 by Mr (later Dr) J.J.C. Bradfield, Assistant Engineer and countersigned by Mr Hutchinson, Chief Engineer, on behalf of the Department of Public Works, Railway and Tramway Construction.

Provision was made in 1913, during construction of the shed "for lighting to be provided by kerosene".

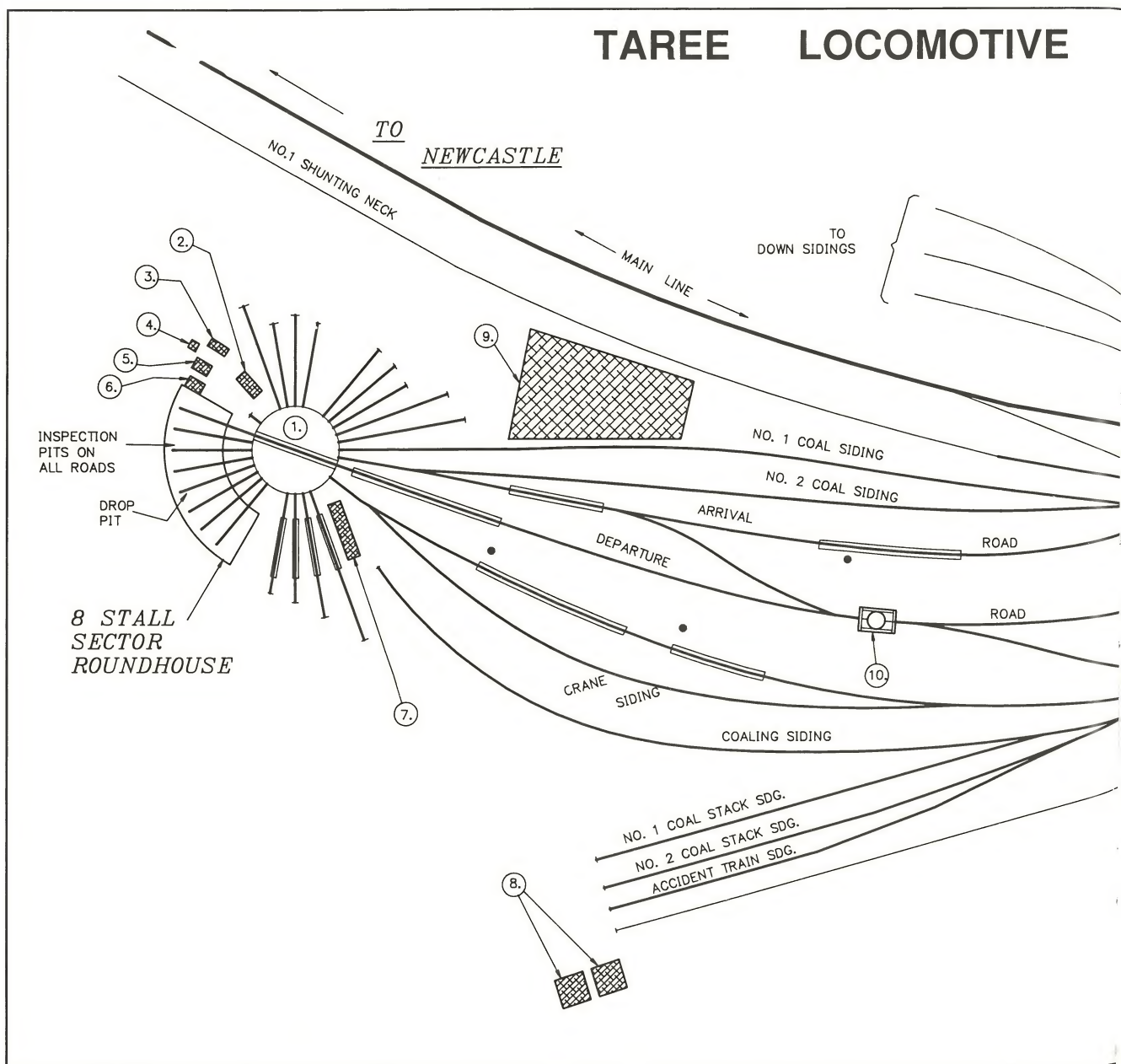
The eight stall roundhouse, fitted with a 60' (18.3m) diameter turntable, was officially opened in 1914.

By mid-1914, the depot was controlled by a fitter-in-charge. A dwarf drop pit was installed on 15 April 1917 and in July 1919 a resthouse, or enginemens' barracks, was provided. Additions and improvements to the resthouse were carried out in 1925, 1944 and again in 1945, obviously as a result of the wartime traffic.



In January 1928, 'type 2511' Duffjacks for lifting locos were ordered for use in the depot.

Approval was sought and received in August 1934 for the installation of a longer inspection pit, an additional water column and, most significantly, the replacement of the original 60' diameter turntable with a 75' (22.9m) turntable. In the next few years, the low coal stage, the nearby sand-house and a number of roads near the arrival road were removed. The trackwork in loco was substantially rearranged and relocated as a result, and a number of new loco and coal stack sidings were added. A single-road carriage shed and siding were removed about the same time and coal stack sidings and



accident train sidings were installed in the location of the former car shed.

Additions and improvements to the depot were carried out on many occasions during the next few years - 1941, 1946, 1947, 1949, 1952, 1955 and 1956.

Like many steam depots in New South Wales, the development reached a peak in the early to mid-1950s. The impending dieselisation of the system thwarted any further improvements. This particularly applied to the North Coast depots.

The use of mainline diesels along the single-track route was in full swing by the time the 44 class arrived in 1957 and the steam servicing points, including Taree Depot, were becoming redundant.

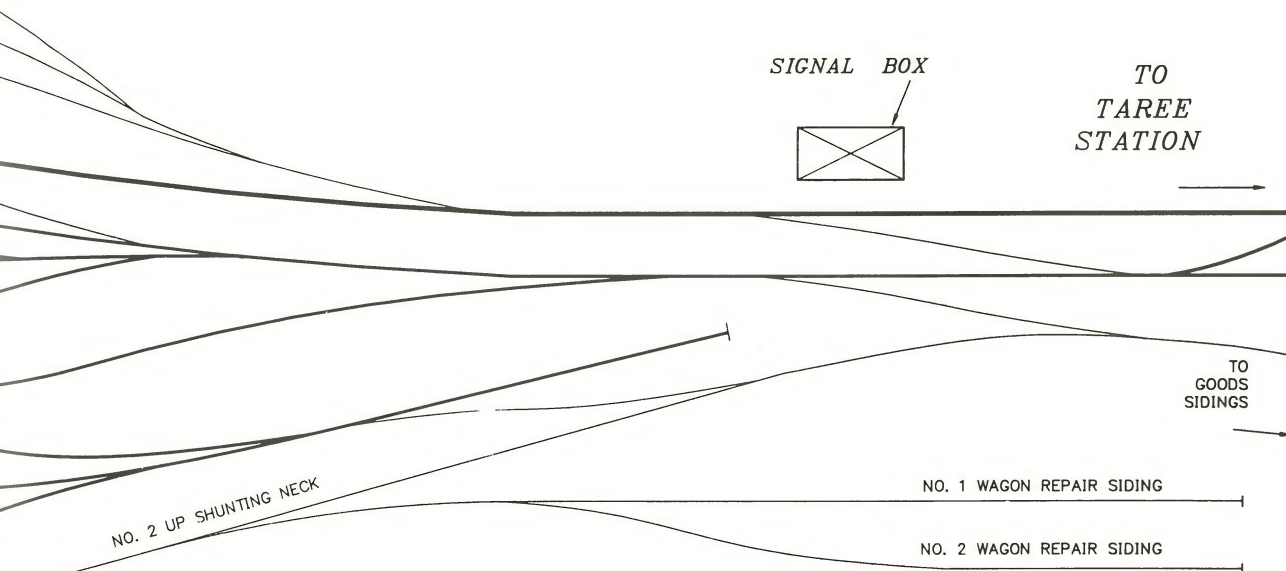
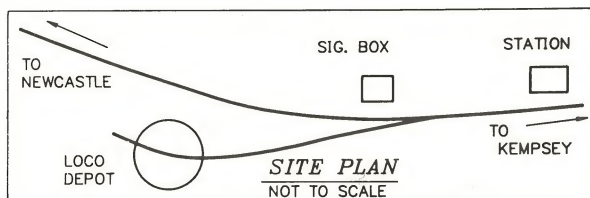
The shed gradually fell into disrepair as its use declined and in mid-1966, demolition of the remaining sections of the 52 year old roundhouse was in progress. Some of the associated buildings and structures in the depot area were used for a few years after the main roundhouse was demolished, mainly to service the steam shunters. Some of these facilities came back into use in the late 1960s during a short steam revival (referred to later in these notes).

### Description

Taree roundhouse was built during the 1911-1914 period and the details of construction are

## DEPOT 1945

NORTH  
(APPROX.)



### Key to Symbols

1. 75' diameter manual turntable
2. Chargeman/Roster clerk's office
3. District Locomotive Engineer
4. Locker and shower room
5. Meal room
6. Fitters and boilermakers
7. Oil and general store
8. Elevated water tanks
9. Coal bin

10. Elevated sand storage bin
11. Crew barracks (near goods shed)
- Water column

— — — — — Ash or inspection pit

11. BARRACKS — — — — —  
OPPOSITE THE STATION  
NEAR THE GOODS  
SHED

**NOTE:** This diagram shows the depot at its maximum development. Various tracks and buildings have been added from observations.





*The proximity of the mainline is illustrated in this photo. 5130 and a 35 class bring a down goods into Taree, past the signal box. The roundhouse can be seen above the train. SRA*

shown on a drawing entitled:

NSWR  
North Coast Railway  
Gloucester to Taree  
Engine Shed at Taree

The shed was an eight stall, sector-type roundhouse fitted with a ventilating-ridge roof. The roads were numbered 1 to 8 in an anti-clockwise direction, No.1 road being titled the 'in' road, directly opposite the engine 'departure' road. Each road was fitted with a 70' (21.3m) long inspection pit within the shed, with four steps at each end of each pit.

A 60' diameter turntable was fitted at the time of construction. The leading support columns for the roof were 60' (18.3m) back from the edge of the turntable pit and the length of the two side outer walls of the shed was 80'0" (24.4m). Vertical support posts for the roof and walls were 12" x 12" (300mm x 300mm) timber, with steel bracing where required, the bottoms of the support posts being bolted to metal straps set in concrete blocks as the shed foundations.

Smoke flues, one on the leading slope of the roof, one on the rear slope (16 in total) were installed during construction. The principal cladding

material of shed walls, roof and smokechutes was fibro-cement slates, mounted on timber framing.

Timber-framed windows fitted with small glass panes were fitted in the two side walls and the outer perimeter wall. At the time of construction, seven timber work benches, each 20' long (6.1m) were placed virtually end-to-end along the outer perimeter wall under the windows.

So completes the description of the ornate structure at the time of installation.

In the initial design, loco servicing facilities were minimal, with a 30,000 gallon (136.2kl) water tank and a low timber coal stage, located beside the 'in' road near the turntable.

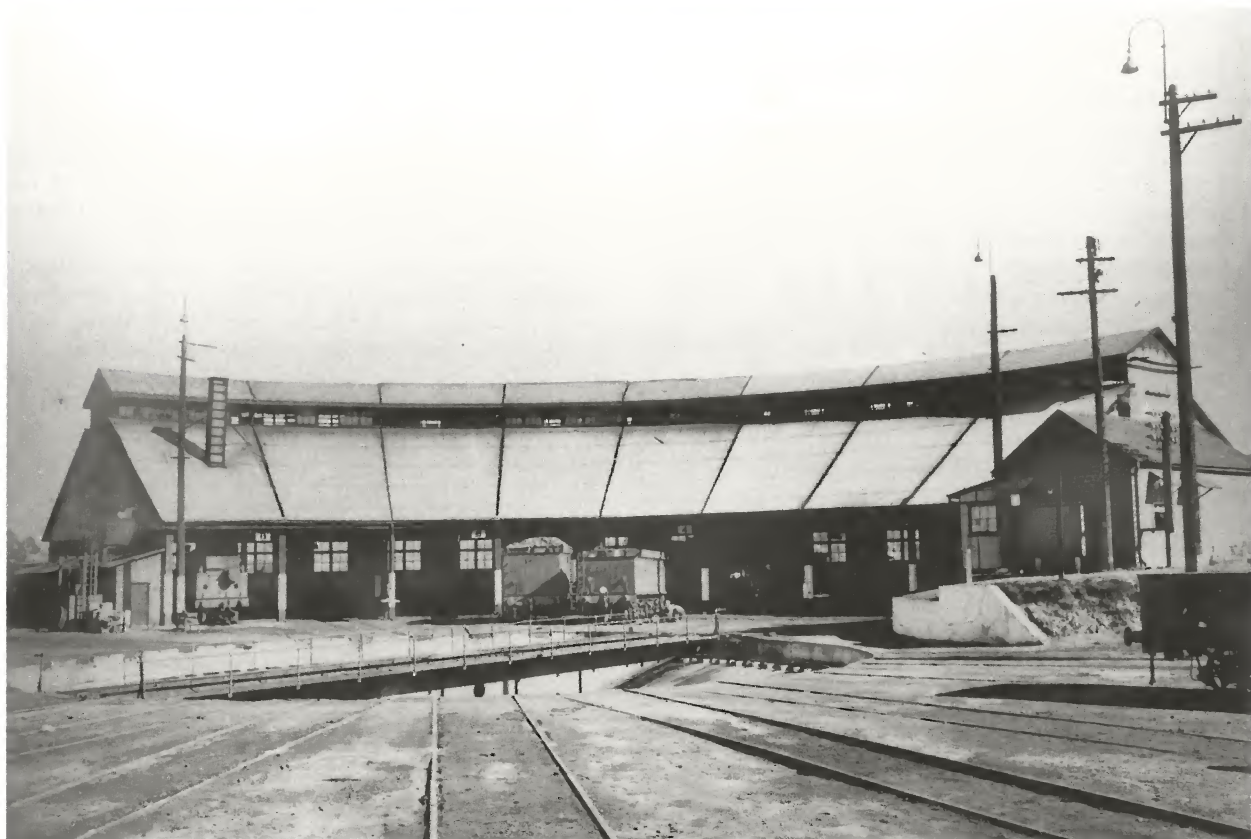
By the 1940s, after all the improvements brought about the increase in traffic (due to World War II), the completion of the North Coast route to Brisbane and the use of much larger locos, Taree depot had increased substantially in size and importance. Apart from the eight stall, sector-shed constructed 25 years earlier, thirteen outside roads of varying lengths radiating from the turntable, plus four approach and departure roads (also from the turntable) had been added, giving much needed stabling and servicing roads for the larger locos.

Although each road in the shed had two

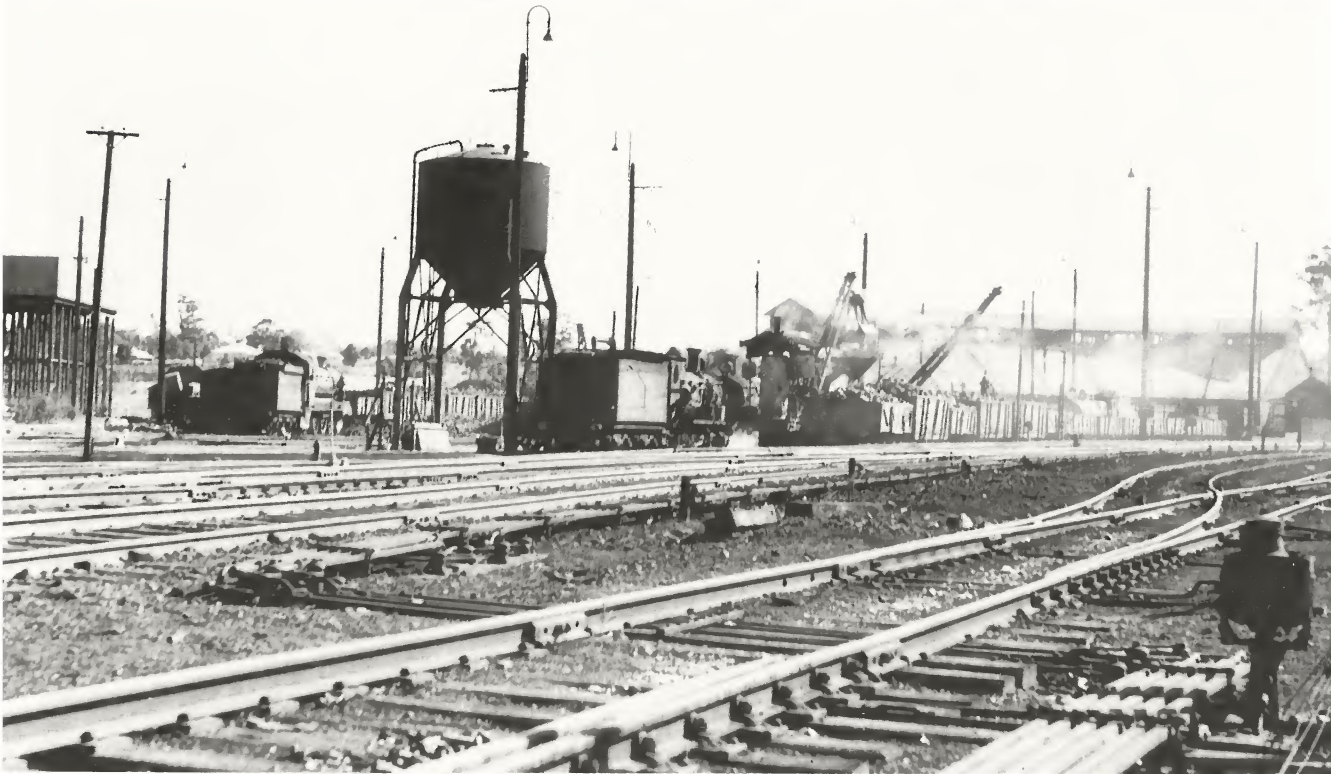


*A view in the opposite direction to the previous photo. Engine 5393 and van return to loco after a shunting trip. The railway station is obscured by the large signal box on the left, while a 44 class waits to depart the yard with an up goods.*  
*R.K.Booth*

*Taree roundhouse viewed from the north. Details to note are the 75' (22.8m) manual turntable, ventilating ridge shed roof, and a single smoke chute on Road No.8. A 13 class tank engine is located on Road No.8, whilst 3522 and a Standard Goods engine are situated on Roads 5 and 4 respectively.*  
*SRA*







*An overview of Taree Locomotive Depot and its facilities viewed from near the signal box. From left to right can be seen the large elevated water tanks, coal stacking sidings and sand tower, and on the right is the roundhouse. Three coal cranes are at work in the coal sidings. SRA*

smokechutes mounted on the roof initially, only one (on road No.8) was evident by the 1940s. In some places, the original fibro-cement slates had been replaced by corrugated iron or fibro sheeting. Four inspection pits, each 70' (21.3m) long, were located on the four outside roads adjacent to the roundhouse. A drop pit was located on road No.5 within the shed.

The watering facility for locos in Taree depot was originally provided by a tank with an 8" (200mm) jib and this lasted well into the 1930s. Many improvements were made, including some to the watering arrangements, and by the 1940s, loco water was provided by three 9" water columns (230mm), one adjacent to the ash pit, another adjacent to the inspection pit and a third serving both arrival and departure roads. Two large, elevated, cast-iron, water tanks supplied the columns, one tank of 60,000 gallon (272kl), the other of 48,000 gallon (218kl) capacity. Local supply from council mains had been connected in 1927, but in 1944 the size of the council main was increased to 6" diameter (150mm), obviously for supply to the large, elevated tanks.

An elevated sand storage bin straddled the departure road. These bins were not commonly used in NSW. Similar installations existed at Eveleigh, Bathurst, Lithgow and Cootamundra depots. The units had a capacity of 95 tons (95.6t) of dry sand, the sand being forced up into the overhead bin by

an air pressure piping arrangement. The bins were obviously designed for use with locos with boiler-mounted sandboxes (38, 57, 59 class engines) and when used to fill locos with low sandboxes (32, 35, Standard Goods), long canvas hoses in conjunction with metal funnels and buckets were used. Operation of the sanding installation was performed by the shed fireman and his mate, or the stabling engine crew. The elevated sand bin lasted through the diesel years and again saw use in the servicing of steam locos in 1969 when the coal-burning 59 class returned to the North Coast (referred to later in this article).

Coaling of locos in the earliest years of the depot was by hand shovelling from the original low, timber coal stage, but by the late 1940s three self-propelled steam coaling cranes were in use. Two coal cranes (or grabs) were used to coal the loco tenders directly from S and U trucks, the coal trucks standing end to end on the No.1 coal siding, the cranes on the No.2 coal siding, with the engines standing on the 'arrival' road. The third steam crane was fully occupied either loading or unloading coal from rail trucks in the coal stack sidings, a large storage area for the depot coal supply. When the coal grabs failed, hand coaling by the fuelmen and labourers resumed.

In the 1960s, when steam operation in the area was limited to the shunting engines, later joined by a short period of coal burning 59 class operation, the



*The view from a passing train, the 'North Coast Daylight Express' in October 1957. A 35 class rides the turntable, whilst to the right of the photo a mobile fuel tanker, containing bunker oil for oil-burning 55 and 59 class engines, stands on an outside shed road. A small vertical boiler is located beside the tanker, whereby steam is used to heat the thick oil to aid in rapid filling of locomotive bunkers.*

*H.J.Wright*

*The Hodgkinson three-ton electric coaling crane, a resident at Taree for many years. Similar cranes were used at Gosford, Temora and Eveleigh Depots.*

*SRA*





steam-driven Harmon cranes had long gone and a Hodgkinson 3 ton (3t) electric crane came into service in the depot. It was also self-propelled, on its own pair of isolated rails, and was similar to coal cranes in use at Eveleigh, Gosford and Temora depots.

Between the western end of the roundhouse and the mainline were several small buildings and offices including Chargeman/Roster Clerk's office, an office for the District Locomotive Engineer, a crew meal room and a locker/shower block. The workshop containing machinery was housed in a small structure attached to the western wall of the roundhouse. The depot store was located between the crane sidings and the outside roads.

Opposite the station building, adjacent to the goods shed, an enginemen's barracks was built, consisting of 12 bedrooms, kitchen and washroom facilities. During the 1940s and 1950s, the height of steam activity, Taree barracks played host to enginemen from Broadmeadow, Dungog and Kempsey depots.

This describes Taree Depot at its maximum development, an extremely busy place in the 1940/50 period, situated on a very heavily trafficked interstate route. One significant aspect of the depot was the lack of an overhead coaling system. Most other depots in a similar location on an important mainline possessed either a coal elevator or a trestle-type coal stage. Taree was the only depot at such a major loco relay point which never possessed this luxury.

As stated earlier, Taree roundhouse was originally constructed with a 60' turntable, but in the mid 1930s, a manually operated 75' turntable was fitted, and remained in service for the life of the depot. The decision to install such a large turntable was probably the result of a minute from the Senior Locomotive Officers' Conference of July 1930, chaired by Mr E.E. Lucy, Chief Mechanical Engineer. A senior officer remarked on the approaching need for the installation of a 75' turntable at Taree "... as in the near future, fruit and express trains would be running through Taree. In the last month, 36 class engines were split fifteen times to turn on the turntable."

Senior Locomotive Engineer, Mr W.A.G. Douglas said "... a 75' turntable was proposed for Kempsey and this would meet requirements when Kempsey was again brought into use. Taree would only handle freight trains." It must be remembered that, in 1930, the North Coast line was still broken at the Clarence River. Heavy through trains were not running and the roundhouses at Taree, Kempsey and South Grafton were not at maximum utilisation.

At the time of the 1930 conference, Mr Douglas probably assumed that a 36 class (then only five years old) could run from Broadmeadow to Kempsey (212 miles) before relaying. In practice, however, Broadmeadow to Taree (135 miles) proved to be the

most satisfactory location for relaying express and mail engines, and the need for a 75' turntable was apparent.

### Locomotive Allocation

In December 1917, three years after the opening, the allotment of engines at Taree Depot stood at eight, they being 255 (1501), 583 (3260), 923 (3386), 676 (5093), 732 (5102), 739 (5109), 765 (5121) and 872 (5157). The 1924 numbering is shown in brackets; all engines were saturated.

At the time of the opening into Taree in 1913, load tables were issued for C class (later the 12 class), D class (15, 16 class), L class (21 and 22), A class (19), B class (24 and 25), P class (32) and T class (50), and no doubt Taree Depot serviced them all in the early years.

By 1923 the North Coast line had reached South Grafton, all the gaps had been filled, and a continuous single line from West Maitland joined all the large river towns. The traffic along the route increased as a result and Taree became an important loco changeover and crew relay point.

Some interesting loco allocations took place in the 1920s.

In the early months of 1924, G1204 (later 2701, Hunslet 2-6-0 of 1913) was transferred from Narrabri West to Taree for use by the Construction Branch on the Glenreagh-Dorrigo branch (the branch was opened late in 1924).

In January 1925, with the opening of the Dorrigo branch, two 50 class (5024 and 5178, both saturated,) were released from Eveleigh Workshops and sent to Taree. The allocation was noted "... fitted with electric headlights for use in the section Glenreagh to Dorrigo ...". This is interesting in itself as saturated 50 class were usually not fitted with electric headlights, the only exception being a few shunters in the 1960s, some forty years later.

The year 1925 must have been one of trial for motive power on the Dorrigo branch, with its many miles of 1 in 30 grades and 7, 8 and 10 chain curves for, in November 1925, 5441 (TF class) was transferred from Eveleigh Shops to Taree for work on the Dorrigo Branch. The transfer of this engine, which would probably have proved to be unsuitable, as it had flanges on all driving wheels, did not in fact take place and 5441 was transferred to Enfield instead. Two other 2-8-0s were transferred from Lismore to Taree Depot for work on the line in early December 1925, engines 2803 and 1009, the allocation being noted in Weekly Notice No.49 of 1925 as "... for use on Glenreagh-Dorrigo line." Both engines were Baldwin J131 class engines (nicknamed 'Crocodiles' or 'Old Man Yankees') of 1879, later to become the 28 class, although some of the class, like 1009, were taken into the duplicate stock with 10 class numbers. Both had been employed by the Public Works Department during 1916 and 1917 and may have proved their worth on lightly constructed lines of the





*The prime source of water supply to Taree Depot, the two large elevated water tanks adjacent to the roundhouse. The tanks had been connected to the local council supply in November 1927.*

*SRA*

*A continual job in Taree was shunting the yards and industrial sidings near the town. 5253 with match truck L835 in January 1964.*

*I. Wallace*





period.

In late December 1925, another former J131 class, 2802, was transferred from Honeysuckle Workshops (the Newcastle area loco works of the time) to Taree "... for use on the Dorrigo Line." It must be remembered that the North Coast line effectively terminated at South Grafton up until 1932 (when the Clarence River Bridge was completed) and Taree serviced and maintained the engines for the Dorrigo branch. During the 1930s, 19 class 0-6-0 tender engines became the usual motive power for the branchline, up to five of the class being on Taree's allotment at one time. South Grafton depot later assumed responsibility for the Dorrigo line engines (referred to later in the General Notes).

In 1928, 3402 (N class, 4-6-0 express tender engine) was sent north to Taree depot for working of passenger trains to Newcastle and by 1929, all 34 class engines were allocated to Taree for North Coast working. They worked the most important express passenger trains in the area. The Locomotive Officers' Conference of January 1931, chaired by Mr E.E. Lucy, dealt with a problem: "... on 10 December 1930, Taree engine 3403 lost 45 minutes near Taree whilst working No.2 up Brisbane Express, with a hot axle box on No. 2 tender axle."

Their working on the sharp curves which prevailed on the North Coast line was fairly short-lived and, by the end of 1935, all had been returned to the Main South depots.

It is also known that the newly converted 30 class tender engines (known as the 30Ts) worked the North Coast goods and pick-up in the late 1920s and early 1930s. These were possibly Broadmeadow-based engines. By the time of through working in 1932, loads of all trains increased dramatically and these smaller locos left the scene for branchline-type working in other parts of the state.

Some typical locomotive allocations are shown:

1930	1933	1940
1 - 15 class	3 - 19 class	1057, 3510
4 - 19 class	5 - 32 class	1064, 3523, 5238
2 - 32 class	4 - 34 class	1075, 3532, 5241
1 - 34 class	4 - 35 class	1901, 3534, 5245
3 - 35 class	15 - 50 class	1913, 5039, 5256
6 - 50 class		1929, 5046, 5269
6 - 53 class		1941, 5055
		1957, 5079
		3219, 5149
		3376, 5222
		3377, 5236
23 (total)	31 (total)	24 (total)
		+ 3 coal grabs

The 35 class engines became the mainstay of North Coast passenger and express trains during the 1940s and 1950s, in fact right up until the dieselisation of the line. Nine or ten of the class were allocated to Taree for quite a few years and could be



*In the 1910 depot numbering system, Taree was No.17. Both cast-iron and brass depot plates were fixed to the cab-sides of Taree-based engines in the steam days. A cast-iron Taree plate, last fixed to locomotive 3617, is illustrated here.*

found on all types of trains in the area.

Taree was the last depot at which the 16 class (former D class) 4-4-0s worked. Engine 1608 transferred from Narrandera to Taree in 1932 and remained there for eight short months before being withdrawn.

As with the 35s, the new (1925) 36 class made their presence felt on the North Coast soon after their introduction. Engine load tables were issued in November 1930 and 36 class were permitted to run to South Grafton. In 1931, Broadmeadow had a 36 class on its allotment and by the mid-1930s they were working over the full length of the North Coast line (following completion of the bridge over the Clarence River). The year 1935 saw 36 class engines 3634 and 3650, later joined by 3603 and 3670, sent to Taree Depot but they only stayed for a few months and then returned to Eveleigh.

In the day-to-day operations of the North Coast railway, Taree depot had developed as a normal loco (and crew) relay point. Engines were changed on all express, mail and goods trains in both directions. Other usual relaying depots along the way were Broadmeadow and South Grafton (or Casino). For the biggest express engines in use on the Coast at the time, the 36 class, it was usual for the engine which had come in from Broadmeadow (sometimes having been through-worked from Sydney, being shovelled forward at Broadmeadow) to be relayed at Taree by a fresh engine. The new engine would then work through to South Grafton, being shovelled forward at Kempsey. It was quite usual for all up and down express trains to be shovelled forward at Kempsey. In the up direction, the 36 which came on at Taree also often worked through to Sydney (235 miles, or 376km) without changing, coal being shovelled forward at Broadmeadow, a long, hard run for an engine of this size.

In the late 1940s, 38 class engines commenced working the heavy express trains along the North Coast route between Sydney and Brisbane. The usual loco relaying arrangements applied, with engines being changed and serviced at depots like

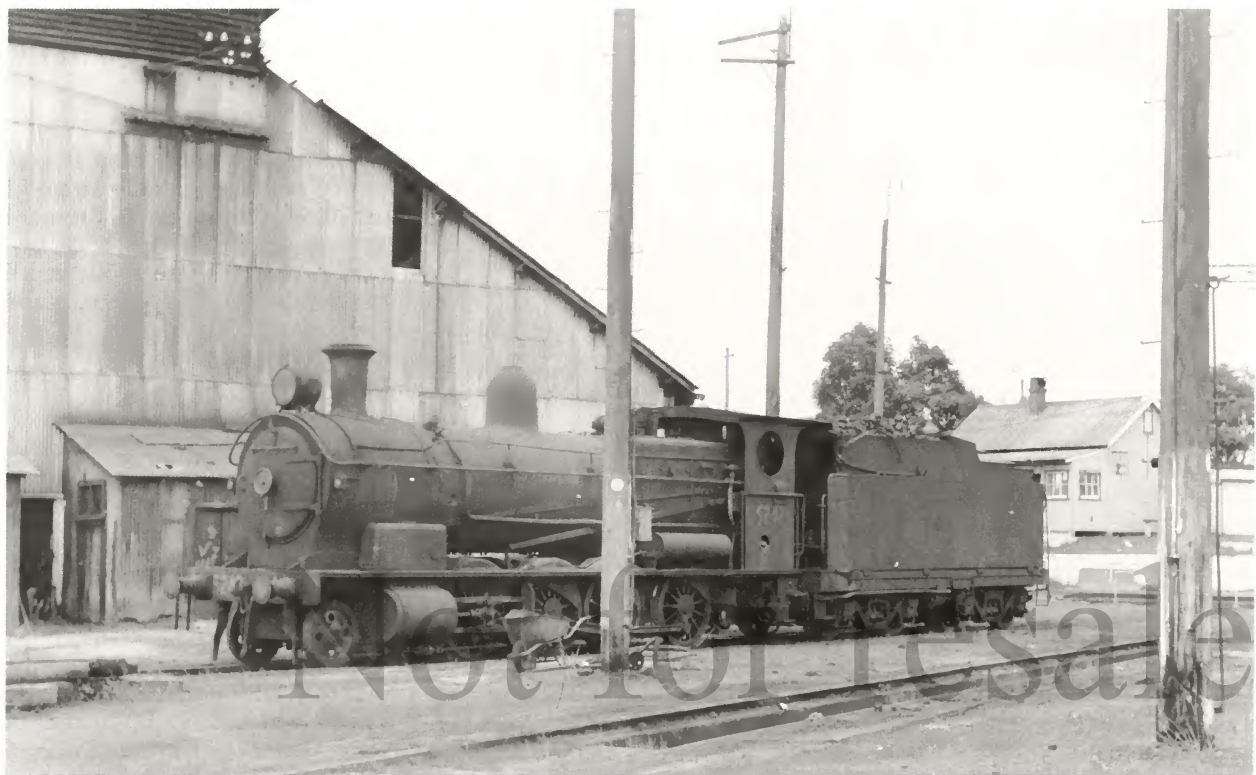


*The sand tower, water column and the jib of the coaling crane surround turret-tendered 5040 in Taree loco in 1964.*

*I. Wallace*

*Turret-tender fitted 5242 on an outside road adjacent to the roundhouse wall. One of the depot office buildings is in the right background.*

*I. Wallace*





Broadmeadow, Taree, South Grafton and Yeerongpilly. Consequently, crews from these depots were qualified in the operation of these engines. They were not particularly popular or successful on the twisting route - one comment by a long-time Taree engineman sums up many feelings "... *what I recall was their ability to buck on the tight curves and they quickened the already evident deterioration of the track. They were too long and heavy for these runs ...*".

The use of the 38 class was relatively short-lived. In June 1949, following a derailment to No.1 *Brisbane Limited Express*, the North Coast line was deemed to be unsuitable for the operation of 35, 36 and 38 class engines and they were removed from the line. All trains reverted to 32 class operation, a situation which existed for almost two years (see later references).

By January 1951, improvements to the track had taken place and 35 class were permitted to work to South Brisbane, and 36 class only as far north as Kempsey. Some months later, more restrictions were lifted and double-headers were permitted, but 36 class still could not go beyond Casino.

By the mid 1950s, the 36s were back working through to South Brisbane. More allocations of these locos to Taree depot followed in 1956 and 1957.

3608 and 3655, August 1956;

3663, December 1956;

3622, February 1957;

3628\* and 3632\*, June 1957.

(\* Belpaire-boilered engines)

In early 1956, the *Brisbane Limited Express* was dieselised (42 class), followed in August 1958 by

No.3 *Brisbane Express*, cutting short the life of express working by the rebuilt 36s. In September 1958, the last 36 class engines were withdrawn from the North Coast line, they being 3622 and 3663, both being in their original, unrebuilt form.

Allocation of locomotives for the last ten years of steam working on the North Coast railway is shown in Table 2.

By the mid-1950s, the oil-burning 59 class were added to the locos working on the North Coast, working out of Taree and Casino depots, but their range extended over the entire 500 mile (800km) line.

With increasing dieselisation, the loco allocation to the North Coast depots fell dramatically in late 1959 and by 1960 only a small number of steam locos were at work along the single-track route.

Taree's allotment over the next four years was only a shadow compared with previous years.

1/3/60	1/1/61	1/1/64
1307	1081	1081
1308	1307	X37 coal crane
5909 (0)	5909 (0)	3-50 class
5916 (0)	5914 (0)	(on loan from
	5916 (0)	Broadmeadow
		for shunting)
(4)	(5)	

The allocation of the coaling crane X37 and 1081, plus a small number of Standard Goods engines on loan for shunting, remained static for the next nine years, until the demise of steam in 1973. In the late 1960s these shunting engines could often be coal-burning 59 class, alternating with locos supplied from Broadmeadow.

## Crews and Working

In 1936, *The Locomotive Journal* quoted 18 sets of men working out of Taree depot. Only 10 or 12 years later than this, 70 sets (70 drivers/70 firemen) were based at Taree.

From the 1940s through to the late 1950s, more than 200 men were employed at Taree loco, made up as follows:

- 70 drivers (two salaried class)
- 70 firemen
- 30 cleaners
- 20 fuelmen
- 2 boilermakers
- 8 fitters
- 10 fitters' mates
- 3 storemen.

Office staff included a Roster Clerk, four Assistant Roster Clerks, one Principal Clerk, an office boy and four timekeepers. Supervision was carried out by a chargeman for each shift and a day-shift sub-foreman for the shed staff. The depot was under the control of a District Locomotive Engineer. In 1930, Taree depot was under the control of Steam

Table 2

Jan 1950	Jan 1955	Jan 1958	22/1/59
1081 3502	1081 5017	1081 3622	1308
1301 3507	3207 5020	1308 3628	1313
1316 3510	3266 5035	1313 3663	3242
1931 3519	3501 5036	3207 5035	3501
3246 3520	3510 5050	3242 5050	3508
3334 3523	3513 5056	3501 5117	3510
3387 3535	3519 5117	3510 5162	3518
3219 5017	3522 5194	3518 5194	3519
3222 5020	3523 5204	3520 5204	3520
3227 5036	3530 5234	3522 5207	3522
3229 5050	3534 5273	3523 5229	3523
3237 5056	3535	3530 5249	3530
3243 5058		3534 5273	3534
3262 5117		3535 5278	3535
3281 5194		Stored: 3632	5207
3285 5211		5017	5229
3322 5234			5278
3328 5238			
3378 5239			
5273			
(39)	(23)	(28)	(17)



*By late 1963, parts of the old roundhouse were falling into disrepair and demolition of the shed on Roads 1 to 4 reduced it to a four-road variety. Complete demolition took place not long after this photo was taken.*

*I. Wallace*

*Another view of 5242 with the oil-store in the background on 20 January 1964.*

*I. Wallace*







*Taree Depot played host to a 50 ton (50.8 tonne) accident crane during the late 1950s and 1960s. Crane 1081, a product of 'Industrial Brownhoist', with its jib support vehicle, is shown at Taree in early 1964. I.Wallace*

*Yard and trip shunting engine 5040 stands on the arrival road in 1964. To one side is the elevated sand tower, with the coaling crane closest to the camera. Note the electrical cable trough between the engine and the crane, with the control box mounted on the low post.*

*I.Wallace*



*A slightly different view of the remaining section of Taree Roundhouse. Vintage train engines 381 (1709) and 854 (3344) occupy the shed roads. The year is 1963, the arrival of the vintage train in town marking the celebrations of 50 years of rail service.* SRA



Shed Inspector J.H. Lavers and at that time his responsibility for locos extended from Stroud Road in the south to South Grafton in the north, including the Dorrigo branch. In later years, the Dorrigo branch came under the control of South Grafton.

Taree can be classed as a large depot in terms of men employed there, although not a large depot in terms of engine allocation, due in part to its being a through-working depot, rather than a junction

depot.

The depot was probably at its peak in the early 1950s, in terms both of men and machines, until the influences of the diesel-electrics were being felt. During this time, Taree men could be found working all manner of trains along the 256 mile (410km) section of the North Coast railway from Broadmeadow in the south to Raleigh in the north. Taree men worked express, mail, passenger and goods

*In 1968/69 the coal-burning 59 class returned to limited North Coast goods working. A range of motive power is shown in this photograph, standing on former shed roads. From left to right, 4013, 3246, 5906 and 4537 all look set for action on 22 December 1968.* John S. Glastonbury





trains south to Broadmeadow (135 miles, 216km) and similarly worked passenger and goods trains north to Kempsey or Raleigh (130 miles or 208km). In most cases, the working involved barracks rosters but, on occasions, crews changed over or exchanged with men from adjacent depots at some point along the way where crossings took place. This reduced the incidence of barrack work, much to the agreement of all concerned.

With the advent of dieselisation, the working limits increased, and Taree men commenced working through to Sydney on all the passenger trains, and most of the passenger trains to Grafton.

A short steam revival on selected goods trains in 1969 saw Taree men return to working 53 and 59 class on the Taree to Broadmeadow section (referred to later in General Notes).

In addition to through goods trains, Taree men were used on local pick-ups, trips to the large yards of Wauchope and Wingham and shunting the Manning River siding to the north of the town. Yard shunting at Taree, with its large array of oil sidings, timber mills, etc., was a full-time job for engines and crews.

### **Taree Loco Depot - General Notes**

In the locomotive depot numbering system, Taree was No.17, and either brass or cast iron plates were attached to the cabside of the allocated engines. Some of these plates were still in evidence in the late 1950s. The sub-depots of Wauchope, Kempsey and Macksville were not numbered, and no locomotives were actually allocated to them, being attached to the parent depot, Taree. Consequently, no cabside plates were to be seen.

As previously mentioned, the 35, 36 and 38 class engines were, in 1949, banned from working on the North Coast due to track damage. The damage had been a result of a number of circumstances, including lack of maintenance during the war years, continual heavy wartime goods and passenger traffic, and the use for a few short years of the heavy 38 class engines between Broadmeadow and South Brisbane. Whatever the causes, the result was interesting.

The operation of all passenger trains reverted to the 32 class 4-6-0s. These 50-year-old veterans took over all trains which normally would be been worked by 35 or 36 class, even Nos 1 and 3 Brisbane express trains (as well as their return counterparts). Most trains were single loads, double-heading only when necessary, it being more usual to run a second division (also P class hauled) in preference to double-heading.

The use of those old-time locos on these tough runs has been praised in all quarters, both from a reliability and performance viewpoint. To quote a long-time Taree driver "... it was a strange sight to see. A 38 class would roar into Broadmeadow Station on a Brisbane express, uncouple and then we

*Steam locomotive servicing facilities came back into continual use during the short steam revival on the Coast: elevated sand tower, ash pit on the arrival road, and coaling crane adjacent to the 59 class.*

*John S. Glastonbury*

*would run our little P class back onto the same train, and away we went. The P class was the best all-round engine we ever had."*

The ban on the use of the heavy engines continued from 1949 until 1951, when 35 and 36 class engines again took over all the heavy mail and express train workings. The 38 class never returned to the regular North Coast trains but, following track and bridge upgrading in much later years, 38 class worked into Taree on a number of rare occasions on special enthusiast tours. The engines were serviced and/or turned in the depot. On one tour in 1974, 3820 worked a train into Taree and ran to the depot for turning and coaling. The turntable was not used to rotating with 201 tons (205t) loaded along its length and mid-way during the turning process, it seized. All turning efforts by the many rail enthusiasts present failed to encourage the turntable to continue (or even reverse) and 3820 seemed destined to remain in Taree forever. A nearby 442 class diesel saved the day with a long towrope and 3820 returned to its tour train with little loss of pride. The North Coast line does not take kindly to 38 class.

Utilisation of crews and locos in steam days in the Taree area is best shown by the regular working of No.1 *Brisbane Limited Express*. A Dungog crew would work into Taree on No.1 from the south, cut the loco off in the station (the Brisbane expresses always changed engines at Taree), take the loco into Taree depot, stable the engine, take charge of another engine and return to the station. They would then wait for the arrival of No.11 *North Coast Mail*. With the fresh engine, they would then couple up and work No.11 to Kempsey, where they would go into barracks. Later that evening the reverse would apply, (with another Dungog crew going the other way): No.14 Mail to Taree, into the depot, pick up a fresh engine, wait at the station for No.2 *Brisbane Limited Express* and work it home to Dungog.

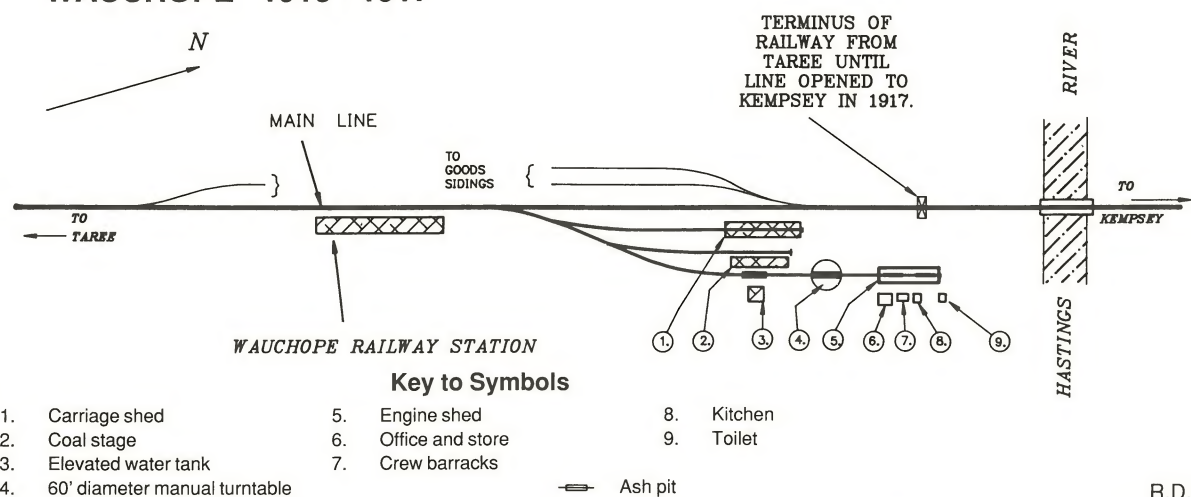
Taree's involvement in all this was, of course, the servicing of the engines but, as is often the case, a few short cuts were used, much to the benefit of all. Usually, a Taree shed crew would do the relaying and the dirty work and thus allow the Dungog men to have a cup of tea at the station, instead of running to and from the depot.

In 1968, a statewide motive power shortage brought about the unthinkable (in dieselisation terms) - the return of steam to mainline use on the North Coast after an absence of more than ten years. Coal-burning 59 class, based at Broad-





## WAUCHOPE 1913 - 1917



meadow depot, commenced working selected freight trains over the 135 mile section between Broadmeadow and Taree. One or two trains daily in each direction were hauled by the 59s, often double-headed. Sometimes, a shortage of these engines resulted in the use of 53 class engines, also Broadmeadow-based.

As stated, they were Broadmeadow engines but both Taree and Broadmeadow crews shared the working and, again, Taree loco depot serviced steam locos in mainline service. The coaling crane, the overhead sanding bin, turntable and pits all came back into regular use. This arrangement lasted about six months, until mid-1969, when steam operations ceased and the diesels resumed control over this scenic section of the line.

## Locomotive Sub-Depot - Wauchope

On 12 April 1915, the North Coast railway was

extended a little further when the 47½ mile (76km) section from Taree to Wauchope was opened for traffic. The town of Wauchope is located on the southern bank of the Hastings River, a substantial waterway which rises in the ranges some 60 miles (96km) to the west and flows eastward until reaching the sea at Port Macquarie.

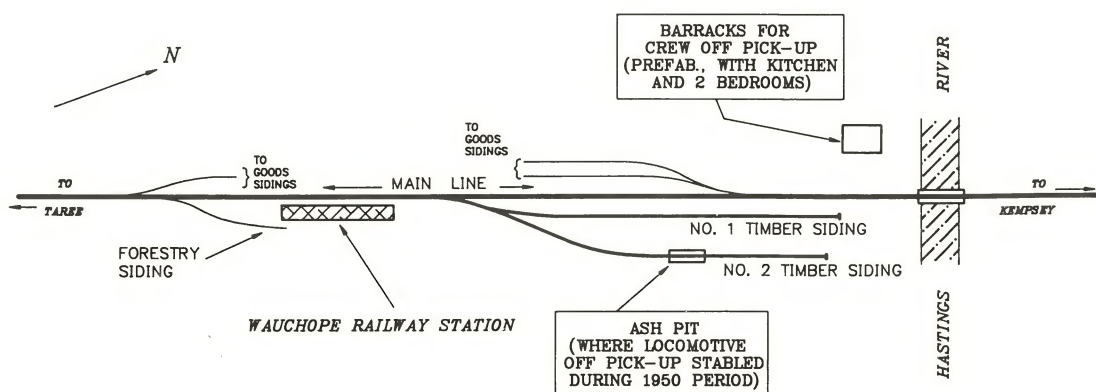
The large steel rail bridge spanning the river, an important link in the northward advance of the North Coast railway, had not been completed and Wauchope became the terminus of the line. This situation existed for nearly 2½ years, until the railway was opened through to Kempsey.

A loco depot was opened in Wauchope at this time, this location being virtually at the terminus of the line from Sydney.

## History and Description

The depot consisted of a single-road engine shed, 120' long (36.6m) by 27'4" (8.3m) wide. A 100'

## WAUCHOPE 1944



# Not for resale



*Up to six Broadmeadow-based, coal-burning 59 class could be found at Taree during the few months of the motive power shortage mentioned. A pair of 59 class have arrived in loco and await servicing, whilst on the left, another 59 class rests between runs.*

*R.K.Booth*

(30.5m) long engine pit was located within the shed. A low-level, timber coal stage, 100' long by 12' wide (30.5m x 3.7m), a 40' (12.2m) ash pit, a 20,000 gallon water tank (91kl), and a 60' (18.3m) diameter turntable completed the engine servicing facilities. An office, store, toilet, barracks and kitchen/meal room were provided for the engine crews, these facilities being located close to the engine shed. A carriage shed 150' long (45.7m) was also provided on an adjacent road.

Wauchope remained the terminus of the line until November 1917 when, upon completion of the large truss bridges over the Hastings River at Wauchope and the Macleay River at Kempsey, the latter town became the terminus. With the opening of Kempsey depot (see separate section), the former importance of Wauchope depot was reduced. In July 1919, the North Coast railway was further extended from Kempsey to Macksville (30 miles, 9 chains or 48.46km), the coal stage and turntable from Wauchope having been transferred to Macksville about one month beforehand. The fate of the single-road engine shed from Wauchope is not known.

All loco facilities had disappeared from Wauchope by the time the 1930 Northern Local Appendix was issued and, by 1944, the former loco sidings had been eliminated, their place being taken by two timber sidings, No.1 and No.2, each 500' (152m) long. One small remnant of the former depot was kept in use, however, the 40' long (12.2m) ash pit on the No.2 timber siding (the former engine shed road), and was used daily for some years hence

to stable the engine off the pick-up goods (referred to later).

## Crews

With the completion of the bridge at South Grafton, through working from Sydney to South Brisbane became possible. The major crew change points in this section of the North Coast Railway between Broadmeadow and Brisbane became Taree, Kempsey and South Grafton. At this time, Wauchope was a relatively important passenger station and railway yard along this route, but possessed no crews.

A pick-up goods (No.19) left Taree, usually on Wednesdays, with a Standard Goods engine and ran tender-first to Wauchope, a distance of 47 miles (75.2km), shunting the various yards and sidings along the way. This was worked by a Taree crew. Often this crew was on 'long hours' (a situation where the crew were still working long after they should have been relieved by another crew), brought about by the extent of the shunting and the continual stream of trains on the single line. Being on long hours meant that shunting at Wauchope could not take place. The fire was dropped on the engine and the crew went to barracks in Wauchope. The next morning the engine was lit up again (the fireman signing on 90 minutes ahead of the driver) and, as No.22 pick-up, running engine first, returned to Taree, again shunting along the way. As had happened on the down trip, the crew again went on to long hours and had to be relieved by a



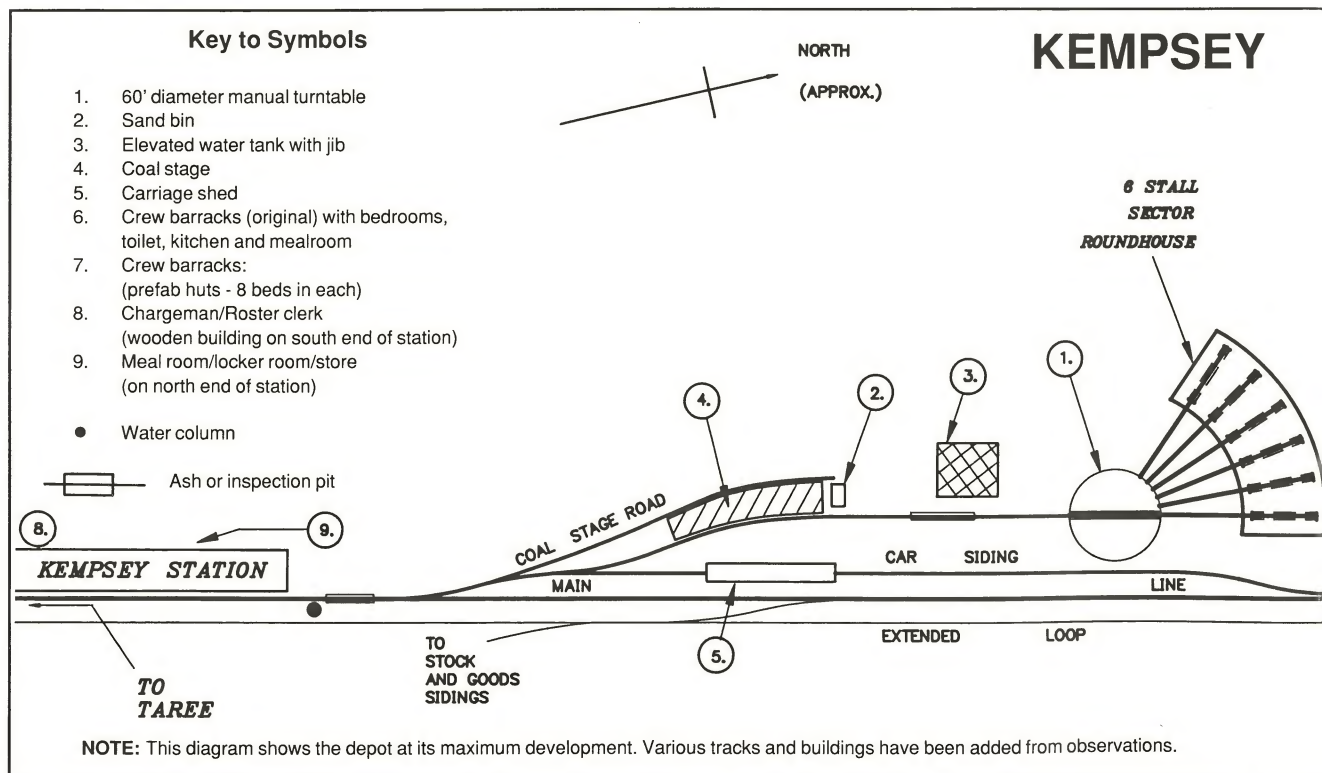


*The year is 1917, the location is the north end of Kempsey yard, and the view is looking toward the south. The photographer is standing on the railway formation leading on from Kempsey to Macksville and the north. On the right of the photo is the rear of the newly completed roundhouse, with depot buildings, elevated water tank and goods shed nearby. The area to the left later became Kempsey goods yard and sidings. SRA*

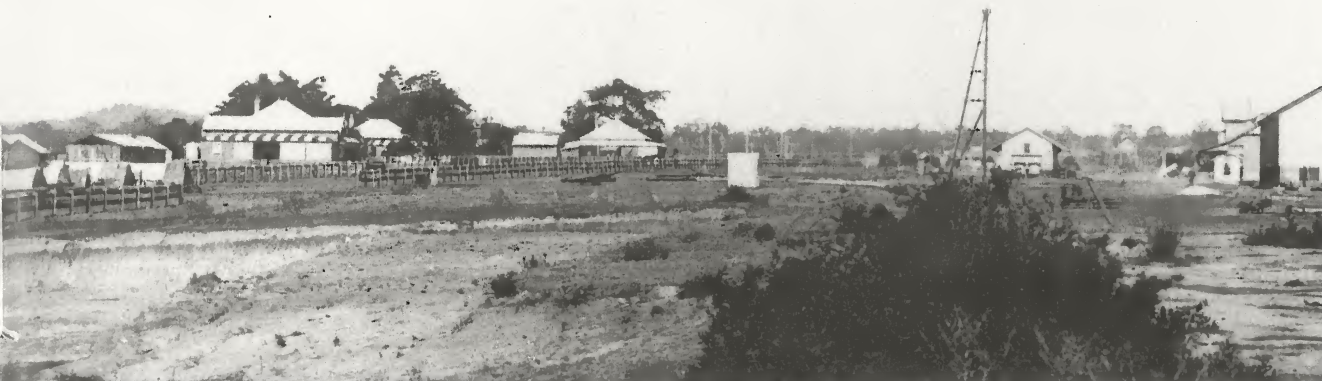
Taree crew sent out especially to meet them along the way.

In 1949, a crew was stationed temporarily at Wauchope, comprising an acting driver (Mr Des Smith) and an acting fireman (Bob Dyball), both men from Taree depot. Both men lived in the barracks during this period and their prime duty was the relief of No.19 crew on arrival in Wauchope around 4.00pm, then shunt the yard. This usually

took about eight hours and, upon completion of the shunt, they would do a partial preparation of the engine, bank the fire and put it away before signing off themselves. The engine was stabled on the No.2 Timber Siding (the former engine shed road), use being made of the ash pit remaining on this road. Early the next morning, the Taree crew would sign on, complete the preparation of the engine and work No.22 back to Taree. This arrangement removed the



# Not for resale



*An enlarged section of the photograph opposite. The station buildings and goods shed are on the right, with future yard area in the centre.* SRA

frequent cases of long hours and allowed shunting at Wauchope to be completed. In 1951 a permanent crew was sent to Wauchope, the original Taree men being returned to their home depot.

Wauchope retained a crew for about eight years; by the late 1950s, with increasing dieselisation, the Wauchope job cut out.

## Locomotive Sub-Depot - Kempsey

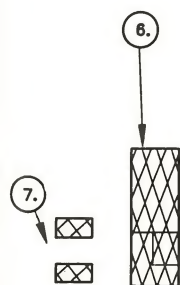
### History

In August 1915, a Public Works Department drawing was issued for the construction of a six-road roundhouse, fitted with a 60' (18.3m) diameter turntable, at the river town of Kempsey, some 78 rail miles (124.8km) north of Taree. In February 1916, another drawing was issued detailing construction of a large timber coal stage (low-level type), 200' long by 20' wide (61m x 6.1m) mounted on 12" (300m) wooden piles.

Construction proceeded during 1916 and 1917 and included a 30,000 gallon (136kl) elevated water tank fitted with an 8" (200mm) jib.

On Wednesday 28 November 1917, at 8.10am, the first train steamed into the newly completed Kempsey railway station with the parliamentary party from Sydney aboard. The opening of facilities was to be performed after the arrival of a second special train from Wingham, conveying people from the Manning and Hastings River districts and, at 11.45am, engine P922 (later 3385) steamed into town and broke the ribbon stretched across the track near the station. Many speeches by parliamentarians, local leaders and other important people followed, with references such as "... the locomotive shed is built on the roundhouse principle, and has standing room for six engines under cover ..." and "... a passenger station has been provided at Munanbang (later Pembroke), a passenger station and station master's residence at Telegraph Point, a passenger station at Smiths Creek (later Kundabung), while at Kempsey there is a passenger station, refreshment room, goods shed, roundhouse for engines, carriage shed,

## LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT 1936

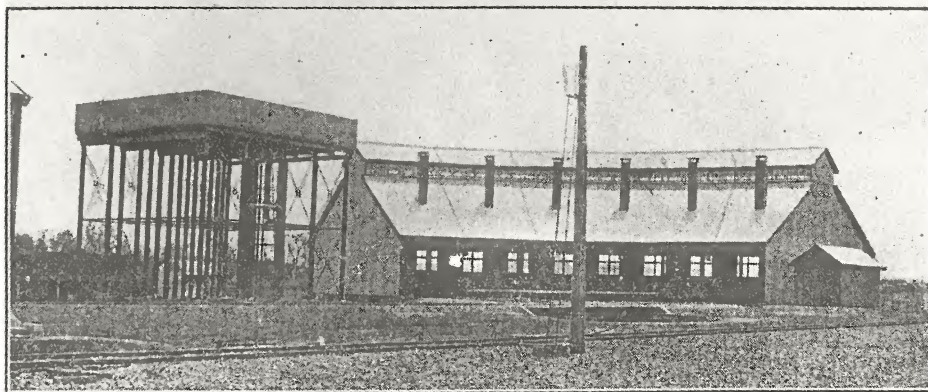


TO  
GRAFTON

TO  
STOCK  
AND GOODS  
SIDINGS

R.D.L.





ENGINE AND CLEANING SHEDS AT KEMPSEY.

*The new roundhouse at Kempsey in 1917, showing the elevated water tank, six stall sector shed and other structures provided at the time of the opening. This design of shed was similar to Taree and South Grafton roundhouse buildings, the only differences being in the number of engine stalls provided.*

*Reproduced from 'Staff Magazine*

weighbridge and station officer's residence . . ." (quotes from *R&T Magazine*, January 1918, p.113). Kempsey Locomotive Depot was officially opened.

Not many changes were evident in the 45 year history of the depot. In July 1925, additional ash pits and watering arrangements were added and, in 1937, a water softening plant was added to the 30,000 gallon (136kl) loco water supply tank. Generally speaking, however, the roundhouse and its facilities remained unaltered during the heavy traffic steam years of the 1930s through to the 1950s.

It is not certain when the shed was demolished, certainly it was gone by the mid-1960s. The crew barracks were retained for some time after this, but in October 1985, a Mr R.J. Smith purchased and demolished the building for the agreed price of \$1255.

## Description

As noted above, Kempsey depot changed little in its 45 year history. Taree, Kempsey and South Grafton roundhouses were all built between 1914 and 1917 and were all of a similar construction, varying only in the number of stalls in the shed. Kempsey Depot, as built, consisted of a six stall, sector-type roundhouse and, as in Taree incorporated a ventilating ridge roof, smokechutes on both the front and rear of a steeply sloping roof (on each road) and large windows (fitted with small panes) on the outer perimeter wall. Similar construction materials and methods were used in the three roundhouses: heavy timber and steel frames with steel strengthening straps where required, wall and roof coverings being fibro-cement slates. The smoke flues (or chutes) were also timber-framed with fibro-cement sheet covering, with double thickness sheets on the top of the flue to prevent entry of rainwater.

All shed roads were fitted with full-length inspection pits and were numbered 1 to 6 in an anti-clockwise direction. A drop-pit was provided on road No.6. A 100' (30.5m) long ash pit was located on the

loco road near the water tank. An unusual aspect of Kempsey roundhouse was the absence of outside storage roads leading off the turntable (probably due to the proximity of the mainline) and the absence of short over-run roads opposite the shed roads, usually provided in case an engine over-runs the turntable when leaving the shed.

By the 1950s, little had changed in the appearance of the depot. A sand bin was located at the north end of the timber coal stage, this being the most significant addition to loco servicing facilities. Barracks accommodation was originally provided in the form of a single building containing a meal room, kitchen, 12 bedrooms and toilets. With the increase in traffic after World War II, additional barracks accommodation was added in the form of two prefabricated huts, each containing eight beds. All these structures were located immediately north of the roundhouse. Unusually for a depot like this, not all facilities were located near the shed. A meal room/locker/shower room, together with a small oil store, was to be found on the north end of the platform at Kempsey, whilst the chargeman (Mr Bill Street in the 1950s and 1960s) was housed in a small wooden building at the south end of the platform.

## Crews

By the early 1950s, prior to the advent of dieselisation of the North Coast, there were about 30 men working out of Kempsey Depot, including 12 sets of enginemmen, four cleaners, plus chargemen. No fitting staff were employed there at all by this time and crew call-outs were performed by the junior station staff.

Of the 12 Kempsey drivers, six were salaried on passenger diagram work, with the remaining six on goods or pick-up work, relieving on the passenger diagram as required.

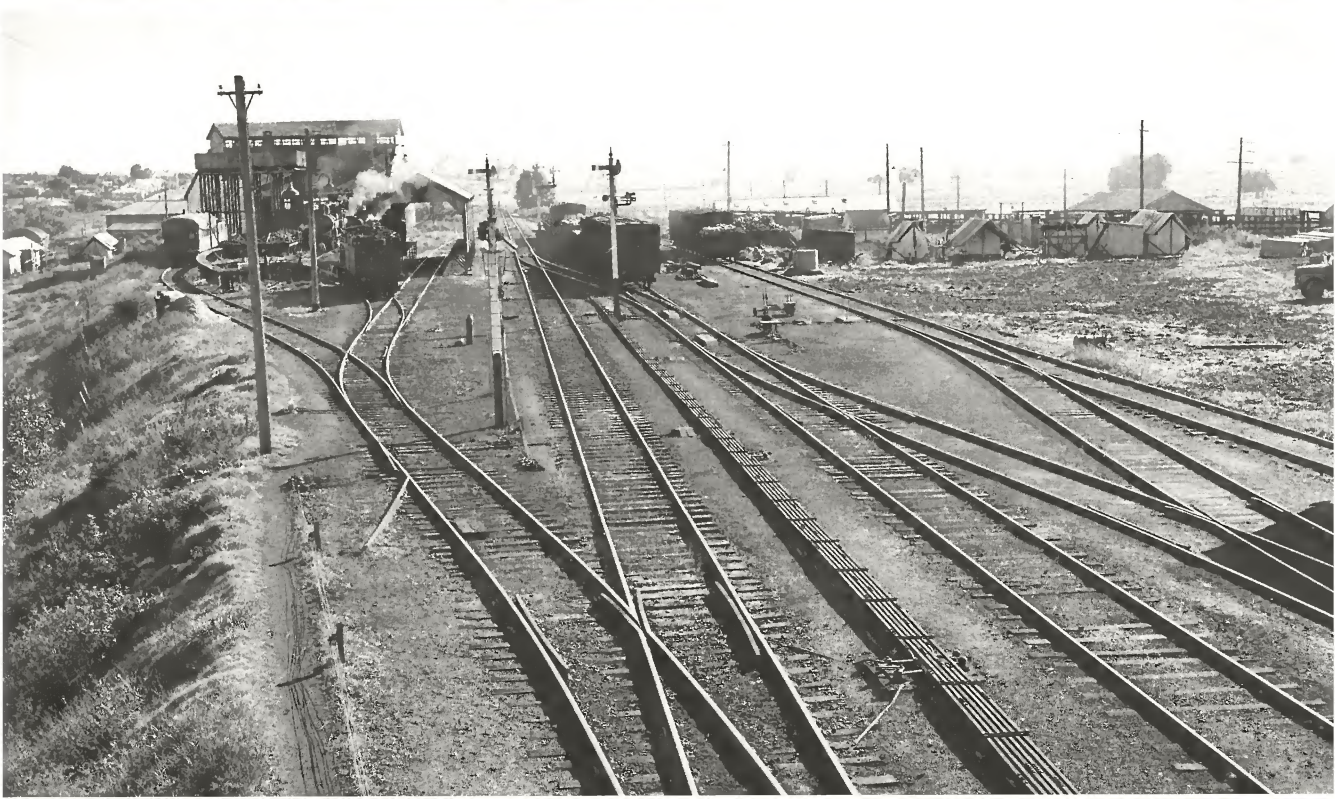
Kempsey crews worked express and passenger trains to Dungog in the south and Grafton in the north, both jobs involving barracks working. Return (or double) trips to Taree were also part of Kempsey





*The date is 27 November 1917, and one of the official trains rolls into Kempsey Station, with P922 (later 3385) in the lead. Typical of the period, such an event meant great excitement, with flags, banners and local celebrations.* SRA

*Kempsey Depot viewed from the north end of Kempsey Railway Station. On the left of the photo a carriage (probably a workmen's van) stands in the coal stage road adjacent to the coal stage, the roundhouse and elevated water tank being seen beyond. The carriage shed is between the depot and the mainline, which in turn disappears between the lower-quadrant starting signals, en route to Grafton and beyond. In the yard to the right can be seen the once commonly seen fettlers' tents.* SRA

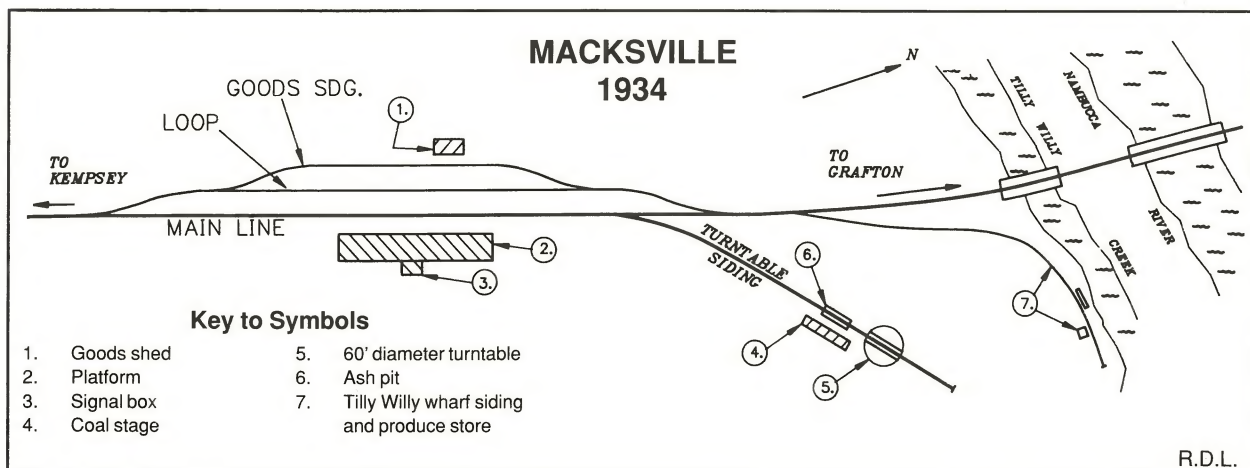






*In 1967 the vintage train visited the North Coast and train locomotives 1243 and 1709 were serviced in the former Kempsey depot area. The roundhouse has been demolished but pits, roads and turntable were still usable. Part of the barracks can be seen beyond the work vans.*

SRA





*Another scene of the wooden trestle north of Coffs Harbour Station. A 53 class locomotive, complete with Laird crosshead, drumhead smokebox and small tender, heads north towards Grafton. In steam days, crews from Kempsey and South Grafton shared the goods working in this section of the Coast.* SRA

working. Goods train working involved barrack jobs to Taree (78 miles or 125km) or to Grafton. On certain days of the week, part of Kempsey's regular roster was to work No.2 *Brisbane Limited Express* to Taree, stable the engine, prepare an engine and work No.1 *Brisbane Limited Express* back to Kempsey.

### Locomotives

Kempsey was an out-depot (or sub-depot) of Taree and consequently had no locos of its own on allocation. Relaying of engines on some trains, both goods and passenger, took place at Kempsey. The depot and staff carried out servicing on most classes of engines at work in the area, the probable exception being 36 class, the main through-running locos for the North Coast at the time. As well as engines on goods and local pick-ups, the locos off the Kempsey passenger trains (Nos 5 and 6), and the Kempsey Mail, were also serviced and prepared there.

A local service commenced running between Taree and Kempsey in January 1957, hauled by one of the 13 class 4-4-2 tank engines based at Taree. The train departed Taree at 5.12pm on Tuesday,

Thursday and Saturday, returning to Taree on Wednesday, Friday and Monday, a long run (78 miles or 125km) for a small tank engine. The 13 class engine was serviced overnight in Kempsey loco depot. This service was discontinued after 12 months with the issue of the new timetable in December 1957.

### Locomotive Sub-Depot Macksville

#### The School Train

With all the larger NSW mainline power centred at Taree, a number of smaller engines were to be found on Taree allotment during the 1940s and 1950s, and certainly deserve a mention.

Two, sometimes three, 13 class engines (former CC class) 4-4-2 tanks could be based in Taree simultaneously. One was usually found at Macksville, being used on the Macksville-Coffs Harbour school train, the spare engines being retained in either Taree or Kempsey as shunting engines. Even a 19 class 0-6-0 tender engine was sent to Taree for a period and used extensively on the Peters shunter, the sidings north of the town serving both milk and petrol depots. In later years, one of the shunting engines found at Kempsey (13 class) was replaced





*Macksville Loco and school train engine 1313 stands beside the coal stage on the turntable siding. The 60' diameter turntable is out of the picture to the left.*  
*H.J. Wright*

by 30 class tank engine.

Macksville was an out-depot (or sub-depot) of Taree and was controlled by the District Locomotive Engineer and Roster Clerk of the parent depot. The depot facilities consisted of a coal stage, ash pit and 60' (18.3m) turntable on a spur leading off the mainline, known as the Turntable Siding. The turntable and coal stage had been transferred to Macksville from Wauchope in June 1919, in time for the opening of the line into the town.

In 1954, a 3" (75mm) standpipe and hose-bag were provided near the coal stage, for locomotive watering purposes. The standpipe was supplied from council mains in the nearby lane.

The train crew at Macksville depot, by the 1940s, consisted of a driver, fireman, guard and an engine cleaner. One of the 13 class from Taree was used on the school train running daily between Macksville and Coffs Harbour. These school trains were once commonplace in the state, but are now a thing of the past. From Macksville, the train departed as No.21 at 7.40am and arrived in Coffs Harbour at 9.12am, returning in the afternoon as No.24, departing at 4.05pm, arriving at Macksville at 5.30pm.

Coaling and servicing of the engine in Macksville was carried out by the cleaner and during the six weeks of the school holiday break at Christmas, the 13 class returned to Taree.

In Coffs Harbour the school train or shunting engine was serviced in loco, which ran off the mainline at the north end of the station. Coffs Harbour loco consisted of a small single-road shed (transferred from Bungendore in 1918), a low coal stage and a 60' (18.3m) diameter turntable, all located on the turntable siding. Later this siding was extended and re-named the 'Banana Growers Federation Siding'. Water supply to Coffs Harbour loco and

station area was provided by a 200,000 gallon (908kl) reservoir and a weir constructed in 1926 and 1928 respectively.

The school train service commenced running in April 1944, with driver Jim McCarren. This driver saw 10 years' service with this local train, retiring from the NSWGR in 1954. A replacement driver was then sent to Macksville to work the school train, but this was short-lived and the service was discontinued with the issue of the new timetable on 1 December 1957. For a time after the school train finished up, the 13 class was sent to Coffs Harbour for shunting.

By the late 1950s two 13 class were still in regular use on the Coast, 1307 and 1308. They could be found shunting at either Taree, Kempsey, Macksville or Coffs Harbour yards.

It is of interest to note that 0-6-0 loco A5 (later to become 19 class engine 1935) was transferred from Eveleigh Depot to Macksville Depot "for construction purposes" in July 1923.

### General Notes

The utilisation of barracks accommodation (whereby a travelling crew would rest and have meals before returning to their home depot) on this particular section of the North Coast railway, during the last years of full steam operation, is interesting. Crew barracks were provided at Dungog, Taree, Kempsey, Raleigh, South Grafton and Casino, with small barracks at Wauchope for the crew of the local pick-up goods, as mentioned previously.

Taree barracks saw Broadmeadow and Kempsey crews sharing the facilities, whilst at Kempsey, men from Dungog, Taree and South Grafton could be found in barracks together. There was also a bar-





*Mid-afternoon in Coffs Harbour, the shunting is finished and 1313 attaches to the four end-platform cars in the stock siding prior to working the school train back to Macksville.*  
*H.J. Wright*

racks provided at Raleigh, mid-way between Kempsey and South Grafton. This barracks consisted of 12 bedrooms and included a meal room, kitchen, bathroom, etc. Crews from Taree, Kempsey, South Grafton and Casino would use Raleigh barracks before returning home.

In the early days of the North Coast line, when various sections of the single-track route were being opened up for traffic, Raleigh was noted as being equipped with a coal stage and a 60' (18.3m) turntable, similarly fitted to Macksville.

## **Floods and the Railway**

The New South Wales Railways have often suffered from the effects of heavy and continual rainfall. The north of the state, especially in the Maitland and Singleton area, has always been flood-prone, and rising rivers and floodwaters cause massive damage and disruption to rail services. In 1893 there was a disastrous flood in the Maitland area

and again, in 1913, the rivers overflowed their banks. In 1930, another flood, to quote *Staff* magazine, "... almost as serious as the 1893 flood, devastated the district." All trains in the area ceased running into Maitland station from 2.00pm on Tuesday, 17 June 1930, and did not resume until Tuesday evening, 24 June. At the peak of the flood, the water rose to 2'6" (760mm) over the surface of the platforms at Maitland and, even on the 24th, when trains began running again, 18-20" (500mm) of water still covered the track in many places in the High St. to Farley area. During all this disruption, the North Coast railway was also effectively cut off from the main system by the floodwaters near Maitland. Extensive transshipment of passengers and parcels between High Street, Maitland and Telarah allowed some services to be maintained.

Massive floods again hit large areas of the state in 1949, 1950 and 1955. The Singleton, Maitland and North Coast areas were again devastated. The degree of damage sustained during these floods can



be gauged by the signs placed on poles, buildings and monuments in towns like Maitland, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Paterson, Dungog and Kempsey, showing the level to which the waters rose. All floods in the north of the state over the last sixty years are compared to the '49, '50 and '55 floods - they are considered the standard.

The 1949 and 1950 floods affected the Taree/Kempsey area from a railway viewpoint like no other before or since. On Saturday morning, 27 August 1949, substantial sections of the embankments and timber approach spans of the northern end of the railway bridge over the Macleay River at Kempsey were swept away by the floodwaters. The bridge itself, a structure some 1400' long (430m), also suffered damage. This left a breach in the middle of the main Sydney to Brisbane interstate rail route. What must be remembered is the importance of the railway line in this period. The two other forms of transport between the two cities, road and air, were archaic to say the least. Old, piston-driven aircraft worked the air-route, whilst the Pacific Highway, the main road traffic path, was mostly dirt surface north of Newcastle, leaving rail transport as the main means of travel to the north.

As a result of the break in the railway line, both men and machines were seriously affected. Freight and passengers had to be transhipped around the break, the towns of Wauchope and Kempsey being the main centres for this operation. Most Brisbane-bound goods was sent via Wallangarra (involving transshipment there to the narrow-gauge QR), but local North Coast goods came to Wauchope for forwarding by road vehicles to Kempsey, or vice versa.

Passengers were also transhipped by bus between Kempsey Station and Middleton Street, South Kempsey, where a staff station had been installed. The former staff section, Kundabung-Kempsey, was cancelled and became Kundabung-Middleton Street. (For a thorough resume of the bridge damage and resultant effects on traffic, refer to ARHS *Bulletin*, No.149, March 1950).

Flood rains again hit the New England and North Coast areas of the state in mid-1950 and again a substantial section of the bridge over the Macleay River at Kempsey was washed away. As with the previous year, massive disruption to both passenger and goods traffic was the immediate result, and similar practices with regard to emergency arrangements were employed. A staff station as set up at Middleton Street and became the terminus on the south side of the river.

Ballast and work trains commenced working north from Wauchope to Middleton Street, South Kempsey, whilst repair work was undertaken on the northern side as well. A fireman from Kempsey depot gained a 'contract' to transport enginemen (using his old Ford Pilot car) around the break between Kempsey Depot and Middleton Street, in order to relieve other crews. Many Traffic Branch

employees were sent from all over the North Coast to Wauchope and Kempsey to assist with the transshipping operations. In Kempsey, these men were housed in carriages stored in the carriage sidings, adjacent to loco. Kempsey enginemen were sent from their home depot to Wauchope also. Their main duties were shunting and changeover work with crews from Taree in the South. The enginemen sent to Wauchope were housed "... in old dog-box carriage compartments, and ... cooked on a large open fire in a small corrugated iron shed nearby ...".

As a result of the break in the main line, the supply of northern coal to the far North Coast depots ceased, and all New South Wales locomotives operating between Kempsey and Yeerongpilly commenced using Queensland coal. To quote an acting fireman at Kempsey depot at the time "... *terrible stuff, only 2" (50mm) on top of the firebed could be kept alight, 90% ash content, and the more you worked on it, the larger the ash residue. On the road, it was worse. After cleaning the fire at one location, it was almost impossible to reach the next pit, and the engine would need to cut off in the section, run light to the next pit, clean the fire, and return to the train. Nine acting firemen, including myself, were placed in Kempsey Depot to de-ash and coal all engines. The ash-pans were always full on the engines on arrival. The coal was so bad, it was hard to hold enough fire in the box to build and spread and it was sometimes necessary to cut firewood to assist in the burning operation. Disposal of ash in such volume was difficult, the whole operation being carried out by three men on each of the three shifts.*"

It is of interest to note that various steel sections from the original Hawkesbury River rail bridge were used to repair the Kempsey bridge after the 1950 flood.

During the period of flooding in the Kempsey area in 1949, 1950, and again in 1955, crew utilisation and rostering 'went out the window'. Some men were offered their holidays, whilst some depot staff, labourers, cleaners and firemen, were used as fettlers to assist in the mammoth task of trackwork restoration.

During the 1955 flood, where Maitland was affected so badly, Taree crews were sent south 'in droves' to work the many ballast trains required, from Martins Creek to Maitland. Normally, the barracks at Dungog, a six-bedroom building, would accommodate one crew each week night, but with the large influx of Taree men, the barracks became fully occupied. With disruption caused by the floods, men could be at Dungog any time up to 20 hours, and, because of the limited accommodation, men were only allowed to occupy the beds for six hours, after which they were required to vacate. It then became normal for men to sleep on the floor, table and benches of the small dining room, or wherever else they could find space. One Taree driver, arriving at Dungog at 5 o'clock one morning after an





*Finally, another photograph of a train and locomotive class which typified the region: No.11 North Coast Mail, with a 35 class leading. The date is 12 April 1948 and 3503 brings the down Mail into Eungai, as the fireman prepares to change staff with the signalman.*

SRA

all-night slog on the Coast, found all available sleeping space occupied. He then demanded, and got, accommodation in the local hotel, according to him "... a practice simply not done at the time ...".

At the conclusion of both the 1949 and 1950 floods, where so much transhipment of freight and passengers took place, the commissioner received many letters complimenting the department and its men for the thoroughness of the operations.

## North Coast Locomotive Depots Epilogue

The days of glory for the North Coast depots were on the decline after diesel-electric 4001 was delivered in 1951. Through running of Sydney-Brisbane passenger and freight trains commenced and, as further diesel-electrics were delivered, the advantages of long, fast runs without a motive power change were immediately apparent. The 40-year-old steam depots did not fit into the new economics and their use declined. Wauchope remained 'as was' virtually until the dieselisation of the Coast in 1958; by then the North Coast pick-ups could complete the journey in much faster time and do away with the long-hour situation for the crews, always an industrial problem.

Kempsey Depot had its ups and downs since dieselisation. Some administrations could see a

benefit in allowing Kempsey to fade away as the crews retired and moved on, thus leaving Taree and Grafton as the main North Coast crew relay points. Still other administrations have seen Kempsey as the mid-way point between Sydney and Brisbane (613 miles, 981km) and could see it as a potential relay point in the long journey between the two cities.

By 1989 the numbers of men at Kempsey had declined to 12 enginemen and two guards. Its future was still unclear at the time of writing. Little remains of the locomotive shed and buildings at Kempsey depot. Foundations and pits can be discerned in the long grass, as well as the turntable pit.

Taree has always been a crew relay point and, at the present time, remains as such. Over the last few years the future for Taree has been a source of debate, with rumours of replacement by Kempsey, then rumours of a build-up in men and work. The depot area is virtually derelict at the time of writing; any locos standing around are usually found in the yard opposite the station. Likewise, the crews at Taree are now accommodated in rooms on the station. Duties such as rostering, etc., are also carried out from these rooms. In 1989, Taree has 105 enginemen, with 25 guards. Like Kempsey, the future of such a large depot is uncertain as single manning and longer, faster trains are proposed for the area.





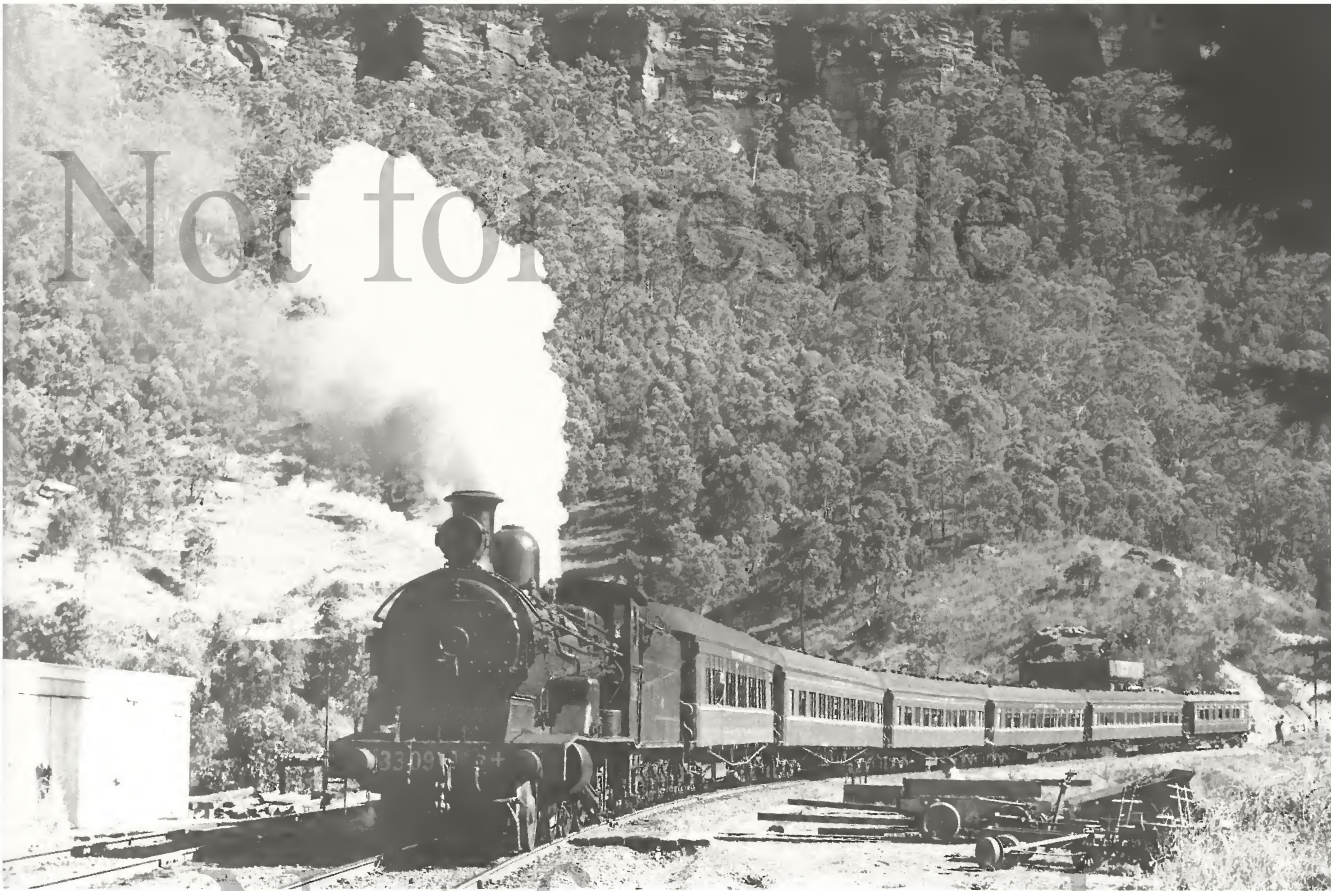
**Above:** The spectacular section of line between Carlos Gap tunnel and Brogans Creek still remains inaccessible by public road, meaning that tour trains making special stops are about the only way to photograph trains in the section. 3309 is shown heading southwards from Brogans Creek in 1960.

R.K. Booth

**Above Right:** Brogans Creek was a uniquely located stopping place on the Mudgee line. All trains waited here to take water during the steam era. From 1928 to 1974, Brogans Creek was made a crossing loop as well. 3309, hauling a special tour train bound for Wallerawang, waits beneath the sandstone cliffs at Brogans Creek in April 1960. Note the fettler's hand tricycle in the foreground.

R.K. Booth





# BROGANS CREEK

*by R.K. Booth*

The efforts of the early surveyors of railway routes across the tablelands of NSW can only be admired with astonishment. A notable example is the Mudgee line between Capertee and Rylstone. The highlight of this section of line is in the vicinity of Brogans Creek, where the track runs directly beneath imposing sandstone cliffs. The views of the Capertee Valley to the east are quite different from those in the Blue Mountains, even though the same sandstone beds are responsible for the rocky buttresses visible in both areas.

The solidness of the sandstone cliffs is not repeated in the shales and talus beneath. The section of line between Carlos Gap tunnel and Brogans Creek has been subjected to landslips and rock falls throughout its existence and there have been many relocations of the line as a result. So concerned were the railways that for many years they employed a patrolman, who accompanied each train along this unstable section of line to warn drivers of the troublesome parts which may have developed recently. Despite the heavy earthworks and sections prone to landslips, the line's route via Brogans

Creek was chosen as the easiest way to drop the line from an elevation of 805m on the Dividing Range at Capertee to 517m at Rylstone. Even then, the gradient profile is a switchback, making liberal use of 1 in 40 and 1 in 50 grades. The alternative, followed by the present Mudgee Road, has to surmount the basalt-capped Cherry Tree Hill, west of Brogans Creek but some 360m higher.

Brogans Creek was opened as a stopping place and an engine watering stop when the line was extended from Capertee to Rylstone on 9 January 1884. Originally it was simply called Tank, but was subsequently renamed Brogans Creek to define its location more precisely, perhaps in 1887 when it became a recognised passenger stop, more or less exclusively for railway staff. Since the public seldom used Brogans Creek, no passenger platform was ever provided, but the location was indicated by a standard station nameboard. Certainly from 1928 onwards, the nameboard was located on the down side of the loop, with a timber framed, galvanised-iron clad, waiting shed directly, opposite next to the up loop. Passenger facilities were complete with a





*When the line was extended from Capertee to Rylstone in 1884, a water tank was erected at Brogans Creek to serve steam engines. This view, taken not long after the opening of the line, shows how advantage was taken of a low cutting to locate the tank. Although a standard water feed pipe has been fitted to the side of the tank, a more direct supply supported by trestles has been adopted instead. This view is looking south-east towards the Capertee Valley.*

SRA

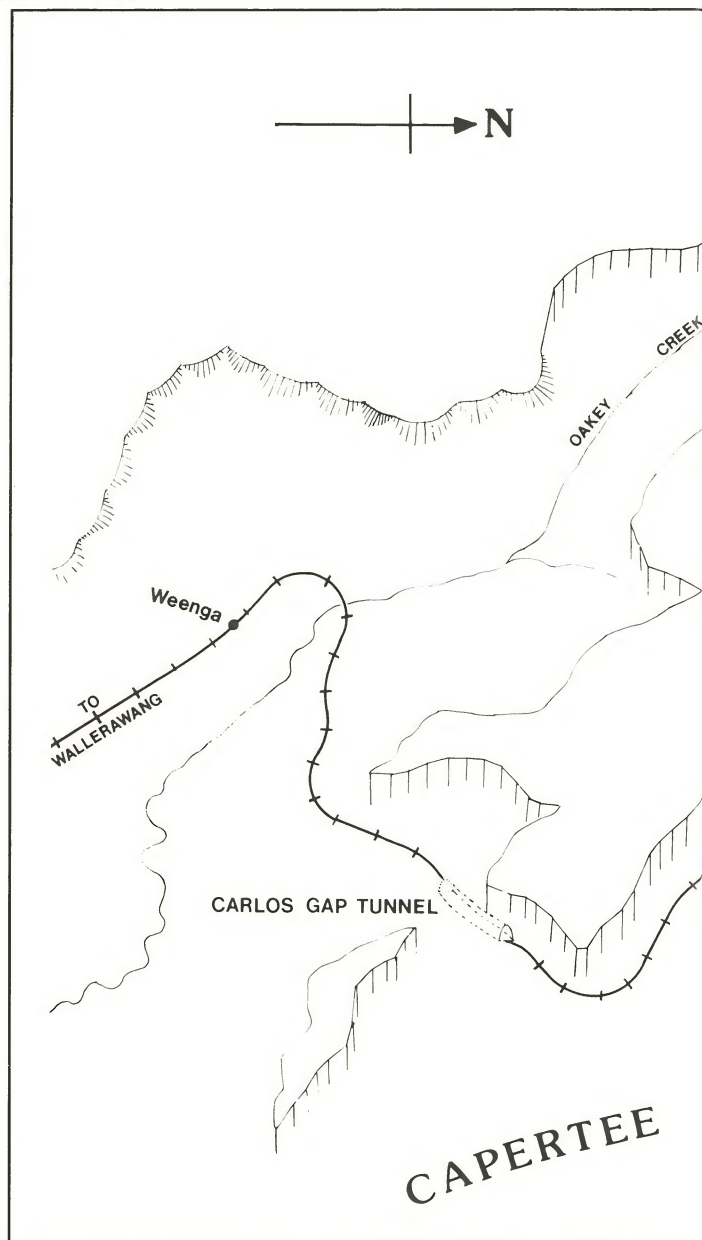
conventional platform seat.

The earliest communication with Brogans Creek was by means of telegraph using a Morse instrument. A telephone was substituted in 1894, being in circuit with Wallerawang, where all business with Brogans Creek was repeated. In the absence of a conventional platform, the telephone at Brogans Creek was fixed to the verandah of the ganger's house. The 1894 instructions required that during the day, all telegrams communicated over the phone were to be sent to the ganger, who was to contact Wallerawang when he commenced duty at 6.45am, and again when he finished at 4.30pm. During the night, the patrolman was to contact Wallerawang for any messages when he commenced duty at 7.00pm, and again when he finished duty at 5.00am. Urgent telegrams during the day were to be received by the ganger's wife.

An incidental feature of these 1894 instructions was the inclusion of the names of the personnel involved. The patrolman was a Mr Brogan, most probably a relative or descendant of the person from whom Brogans Creek got its name.

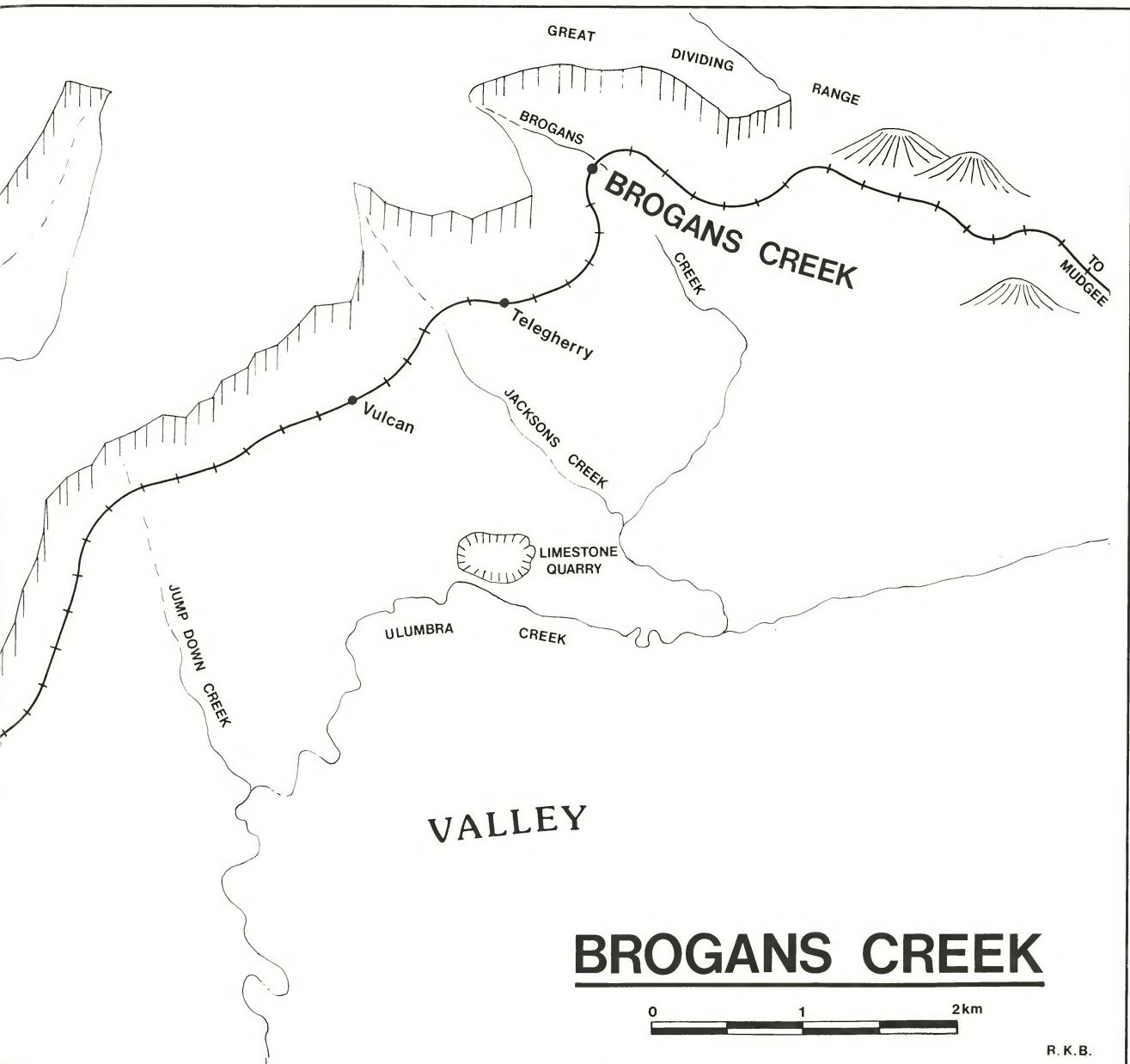
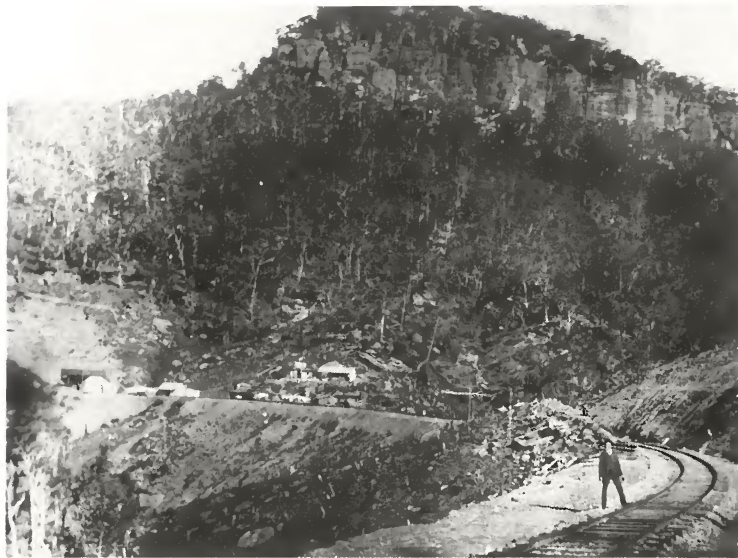
The first tank installed at Brogans Creek was the 1880s standard rectangular, wrought-iron type, resting on a shortened wooden stand placed on top of a cutting. The tank was located on the down side of the line. During the period from 1884 to 1901 when ordinary train staff and ticket working was in use, tank signals were provided to protect trains stopped for the engine to take water. The tank signals were up and down dinstants, which were operated by the train crew appropriate to the direction of travel. When the train arrived at the tank, the signal in the rear was placed in the caution position. Once the train was ready to depart, the signal was restored to its normal position of clear. This system had a distinct element of chance for two trains following in the section, but was better than nothing.

Water for the tank was supplied from a dam across the stream Brogans Creek itself. The dam is on the cliff side of the railway and is sufficiently high



*The boldness of locating the Mudjee line through steep mountain country 100 years ago can be only admired today. This 1890s scene of Brogans Creek, taken from the Mudjee end, shows how the sandstone bluffs dwarf all else. The original tank is located at the extreme left. An assortment of dwellings beside the line and up the slope housed the fettlers and the patrolman.*

SRA





to feed the tank by gravity. An additional tank was provided in 1915 when a 15,000 gallon variety arrived second-hand from Glenbrook.

Initially, there was no pit at Brogans Creek, but the records show that one was authorised in March 1891 and presumably constructed soon after.

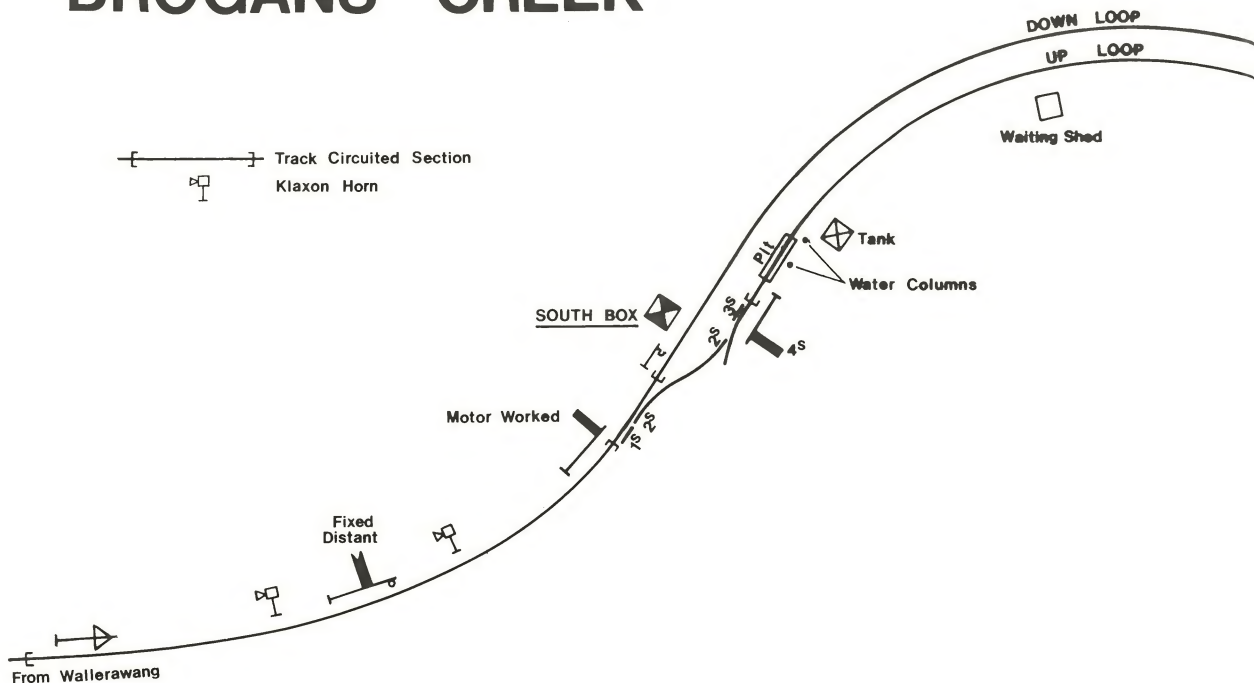
Major changes occurred at Brogans Creek on 19 January 1928 when a crossing loop was opened with improved facilities for engines to take water and clean their fires. These facilities appear to have been provided to assist with the running of trains from Wallerawang to the Kandos cement works and return. In 1928 also, a 75' turntable was connected to the Kandos cement works siding. Prior to that, engines off trains terminating at the cement works had to proceed to Rylstone to turn and take water.

A standard unattended crossing loop was provided, enabling crews of trains to work themselves through. The rugged and isolated location of Brogans Creek meant that there would never be any passenger or goods business and so there was no need to provide a station officer. The crossing arrangements had down and up working only, with the facing points at each end of the loop directed this way when in their normal position. Short runaway sidings were placed at the respective starting ends of each loop, a useful precaution since Brogans Creek is approached from either side by descending gradients.

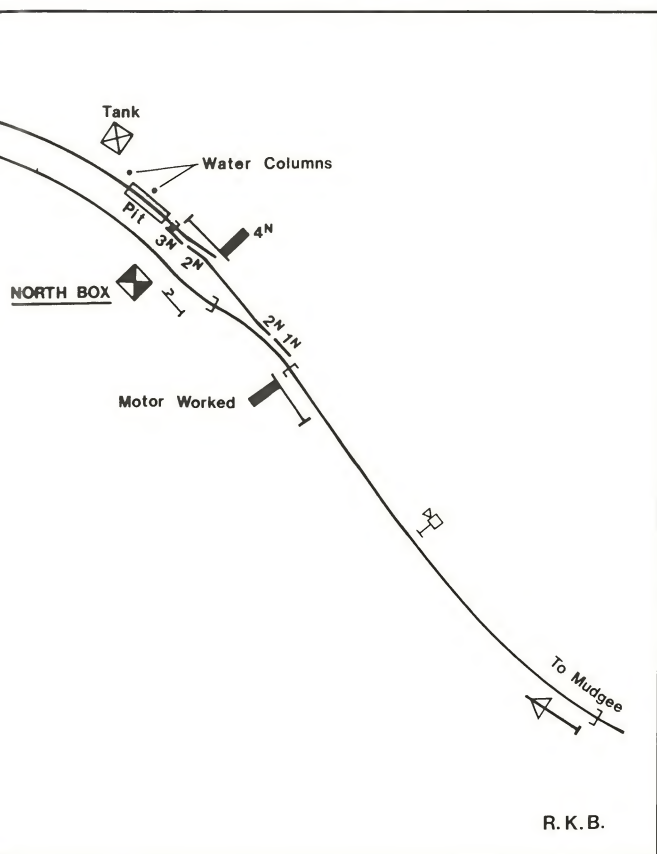
Small signal boxes, called Brogans Creek North Box and Brogans Creek South Box, were located just within the entrance points of the crossing loop. The sections of single line approaching Brogans Creek were track-circuited for approximately 3000'. The home signals at each end of the loop were the motor-worked, lower quadrant type. Once a train approaching Brogans Creek ran onto the track-circuited section, the home signal would clear. A train was required to proceed cautiously into the loop so that the electric train staff could be placed on the staff sling hook just beyond the entrance points. The train continued along the loop until the engine was over the ash pit with the back of the tender adjacent to the water column.

While the crew were reconditioning their engine, the guard took the staff off the hook and placed it in the electric staff instrument. He then walked forward to the signal box at the departure end of the loop, obtained an electric staff for the section in advance, and handed it to the driver. After reversing the points and clearing the starting signal, the train moved forward. Once the train was clear of the points, the guard restored the points and signal to normal, locked up and, having rejoined his van, hand-signalled the train to proceed. Originally, klaxon horns were provided for the purpose of communicating with drivers of long trains when the guard's view of the driver was obscured. After the

## BROGANS CREEK



5910 runs beneath the sandstone cliffs near Brogans Creek on its way north with a special train hired by the Rail Transport Museum. This section of line has been prone to landslips and rock falls, necessitating numerous minor deviations over the past 100 years. The 59s were not normally used on the Mudgee line. R.K. Booth



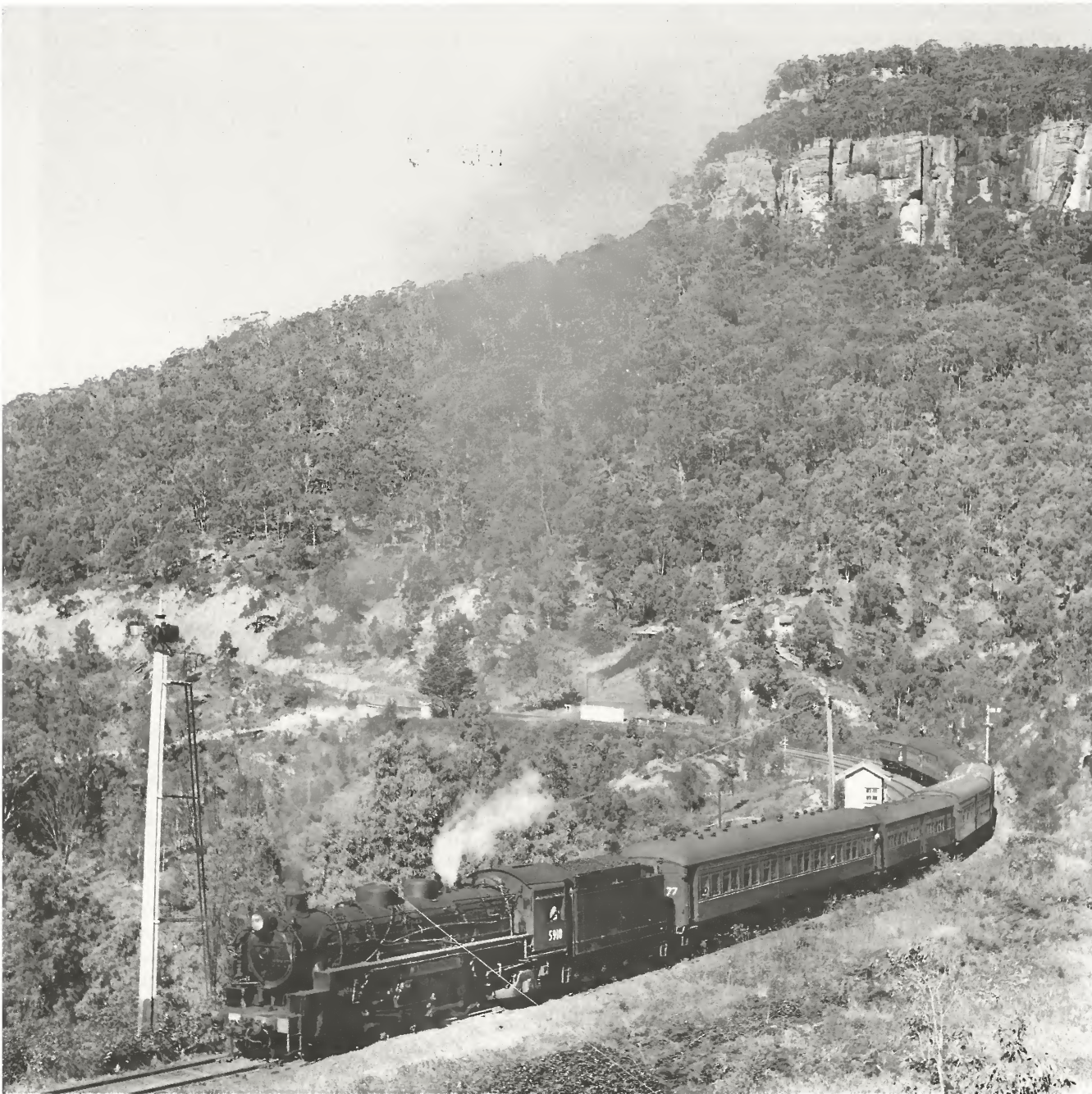
train had moved forward to a position in which the view was not obstructed, the driver was to see that he got the "right away" signal from the guard in the usual way.

Incidentally, each loop was track-circuited so that if occupied by a train, the home signal in the rear would be maintained at stop, thereby providing protection from a following train.

The time consuming procedure of working a train through a standard unattended crossing loop did tend to slow down traffic ordinarily, but it didn't matter so much at Brogans Creek since a nine-minute stop for loco purposes was allowed for mail and passenger trains. Down goods trains were allowed 10 minutes and up goods trains 15 minutes. These times for goods trains were the same for both single and double engines since double length pits and two water columns were provided.

Standard unattended crossing loops were steadily replaced with automatic crossing loops from the early 1940s. The time needed to carry out safe working procedures was now reduced to three minutes if a train was not required to make a crossing. However, Brogans Creek was not converted, being the last of its kind until closed as a safe working and crossing post on 20 October 1974. The down loop was retained as the mainline, while the up loop was converted to a way and works siding, although this has since been removed.





*In 1928 Brogans Creek was made a safeworking station with the opening of a standard unattended crossing loop here. The scene depicted here shows 5910 hauling a special train out of the northern end of the loop. The tall signal is Brogans Creek up home and is a motor-worked, lower quadrant type, mounted on a wooden post. The signal cabin above the second carriage is Brogans Creek North Signal Box.*

*R.K. Booth*

**Right:** *Two water columns and double-length ash pits were provided on both the up and down loops at Brogans Creek in 1928 to speed up the reconditioning of trains hauled by two engines. 3309 stands over the ash pit on the up loop at Brogans Creek. Railwaymen's cottages stand up the hillside.*

*R.K. Booth*









*Both water columns are in use to replenish the tenders of a pair of 30T class engines on a northbound tour train. The signal is Brogans Creek's down starter, while the troughing on the left carries wire associated with track circuits.*

*R.K. Booth*

Two tanks, each of 20,000 gallons capacity, were installed for the 1928 arrangements. One was located at each end of the loop on the driver's or left hand side of the line. These tanks carried the plate:

Makers  
Perway Shops  
Newcastle  
1927

The delivery pipeline from the dam was changed to supply the tank at the Mudgee end first. The pipe then passed under the tracks before heading to the tank at the Wallerawang end. Maintenance crews from Lithgow would go to Brogans Creek every three to four months to check the delivery pipes and water columns, and keep the dam from silting up.

To the traveller on a train stopped at Brogans Creek for safe working and loco purposes, a number of features appeared unusual. The absence of a

platform and the ground level waiting shed in its place were uncharacteristic of NSW railway practice. The two railway employees cottages up the hillside and remote from any settlement would make one muse on what life would be like here. It did reinforce the importance of the efforts and vigilance of railway staff in keeping the line serviceable and safe, no matter where it was in the state. The railway commissioners expressed appreciation of the efforts of the local fettlers to beautify the railway precincts at Brogans Creek in 1927. When on tour, attention was drawn to the improvised trolley shed constructed out of local timber in the round and covered by grape vines which not only protected the trolley from the elements, but also provided a plentiful supply of grapes in season.

The two cottages mentioned were used by the ganger and the permanent fuelman respectively.





*The nine-minute stop allowed to passenger trains for loco and safeworking purposes at Brogans Creek was a handy opportunity for photographing the Mudjee connection off the 'Central West Express'. This train was usually a two-car diesel set but was replaced by a steam train with greater seating capacity on holiday weekends. 3212 is shown with No.67 passenger on 7 September 1963. The carriage composition is BR, FL, BR, EHO.*

*R.K. Booth*

The fuelman's job was to keep the ash pits clean and the surrounding area tidy. The fuelman's house had a concrete walled swimming pool, fed by a spring. After the permanent fuelman left or had retired, the fettler performed the fuelman's duties for two or three years. Finally, when he left, a fuelman would travel out from Lithgow to Brogans Creek, clean the pits and travel back to Lithgow every day.

Today passenger trains no longer pass beneath the sandstone cliffs or make the compulsory safeworking stop. Only freight trains, especially those conveying cement and coal, wind their way along the mountainous section of line. The huge dump of ashes and disused water tanks stand as a reminder that steam trains always stopped at Brogans Creek.



# SIGNAL SURVEY

## LAST WOODEN ARM SHUNTING SIGNAL

*by R.K. Booth*

On 16 August 1988, the down refuge siding at Tarana was removed, along with its attendant points and signals. It was originally installed in 1916. The Weekly Notice proclamation of the removal was nothing extraordinary since the dismantling of redundant facilities has been commonplace over the past 10 or 15 years. What did escape attention was the fact that No.7 signal, down main to down refuge siding, at Tarana was the last wooden arm shunting signal on the NSW railways.

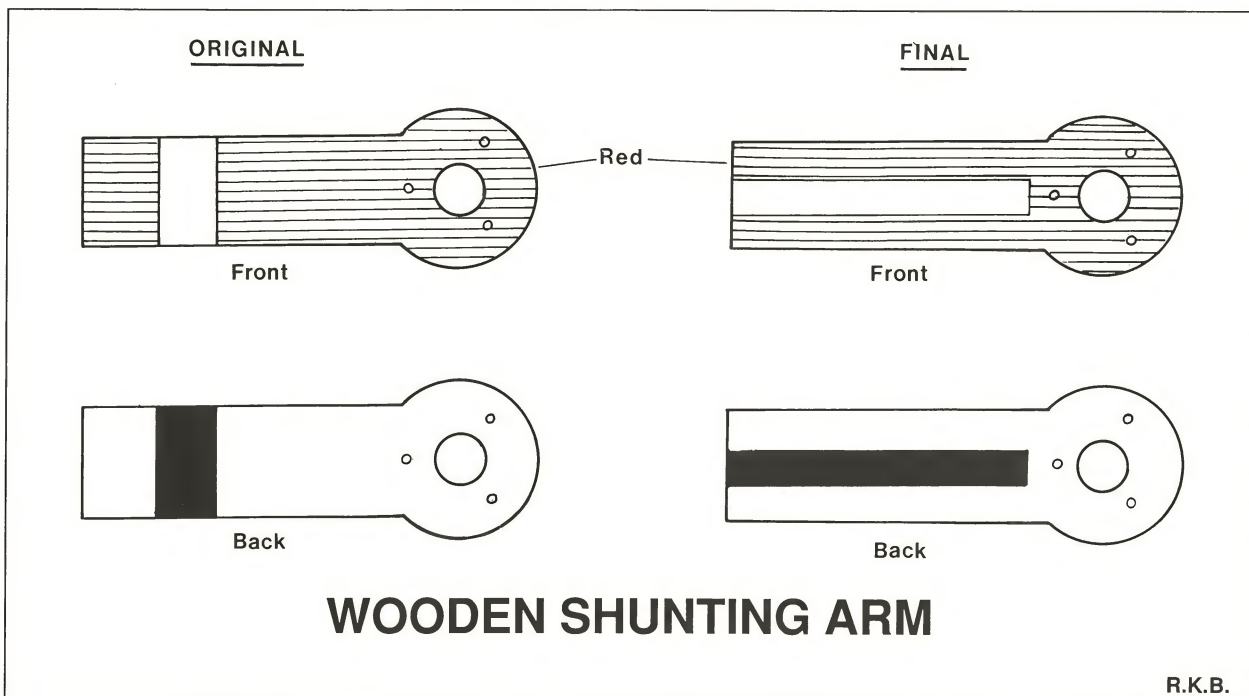
In fact, the down refuge siding at Tarana had been out of use for a number of years before its complete abolition and the first indication of this was the removal of the spectacles and lamps from shunting signals Nos 7 and 3, controlling the entrance and exit respectively. No.3 signal, incidentally, was fitted with a standard enamelled arm made of pressed steel. Both signals were mounted on wooden posts, the lengths of which were 16 feet above ground level.

Just before the signals were removed, the author climbed the post of the wooden arm signal for a closer examination. The arm was bolted to a McKenzie & Holland pattern balanced boss (or arm

plate) made of cast iron. The spectacle had been a McKenzie & Holland type also.

The arm had not been painted in many years, with the result that most of the red paint on its front had flaked off, revealing some interesting markings on its timber surface. Although the arm was painted with a horizontal white stripe, the scribe marks for a vertical stripe  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " (80mm) wide were present. The commencement of the vertical stripe was  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " (115mm) from the outer end of the arm. Corresponding vertical scribe marks were present on the back of the signal, although, like the front, it too was painted with a horizontal stripe, this time in black. The timber was more weathered along the position of the horizontal black stripe, presumably because the greater absorption of sunlight by the black colour accelerated the breakdown of the protective paint.

More obvious markings on the back were two small bullet holes filled with putty which, by now, was almost falling out. The holes could not be traced to the front of the arm, meaning that the shot was still embedded in the cedar from which the arm was made. The signal had served purposes other than





**Left:** The last wooden arm shunting signal on the NSW Railways was located at Tarana. Installed in 1916 when duplication of the line was opened, the signal lasted until 1988. It controlled the movement of trains reversing from the down mainline into the refuge siding. The arm, boss and spectacle were reclaimed parts from older McKenzie & Holland pattern signals.

**Right:** This rear view of No.7 shunting signal at Tarana shows the through-the-post bearings and cast iron back spectacle of the McKenzie & Holland pattern. Note the wire adjuster near the bottom of the wooden signal post. The finial and lamp are the Signal Branch standard pattern. Unlike mainline signals, there is no lampman's platform at the top of the ladder. This was usual practice for shunting signals.



controlling the movement of trains!

Another scribe marking present on both the front and back of the signal arm was part of a horizontal chevron or V, suggesting that the arm was once a distant signal but had been reclaimed and cut down to smaller size for use as a shunting signal.

Returning to the vertical scribe marks, the author advances the theory that 2-foot wooden shunting arms originally had vertical stripes before horizontal stripes had become standard practice. Certainly, some of the earlier installed standard pressed steel shunting arms have a vertical black stripe on their backs, as can be seen at Bargo today. There were two similar signals at Portland controlling the movement of the cement works branch into the station yard. Both the Bargo and Portland signals, however, always had a horizontal white stripe on the front.

Perusal of many photographs in the SRA Archives' collection has found confirmatory

evidence for this theory. Photographs taken in about 1916 of signal gantries over the Illawarra and (then) Bankstown lines adjacent to Eveleigh loco shed showed shunting signals with vertical stripes on the front and back of their 2-foot wooden arms. Furthermore, early shunt ahead signals had the same dimensions and markings and possessed a small white 'S' attached to the front. Incidentally, the finally evolved form of shunt ahead arms had a plain red arm with a white 'S' attached, but no stripe on the front at all.

The 2-foot wooden arm described above was an interesting link in the design of such shunting semaphores which evolved from 3'6" wooden arms, with a red circular target on their ends, to the standard 2-foot steel arms, having pressed strengthening ribs and baked enamelled surface. The lengths of the signal arms quoted have been taken from the spindle or pivot axis to the end of the arm.





*After depositing the customers for Tarana and the Oberon branch, train W25 heads away from Tarana on 29 August 1962, with 3606 in charge of a delightfully motley train: elliptical-roof BX, high-elliptical roof FG, Mansard-roof LFX and high-elliptical roof EHO.*

*R.K.Booth*

*The crew has the canvas wind-shield down as a protection against winter's chills as 1942 waits in Tarana station with a minimum-sized Oberon mixed: one S truck and HS408 composite brake van in 1956. 1942 is fitted with a high-sided, Baldwin tender from an O (Z23) class to ease its passage round the 5-chain curves, as well as to increase the water capacity.*

*R.G.Preston*





*1957 draws its train off the Oberon branch, across the down main onto the up main at Tarana, to deposit the passengers at the station to await the up Orange passenger in this 1964 scene.*

*R.K.Booth*

# OBERON OBITUARY

*by Ron Preston*

One of the most fascinating branch lines in New South Wales was the twenty-four kilometre long 'pioneer' branch from Tarana to Oberon. Constructed in 1923, it used the bare essentials of track, accommodation and equipment, together with 1 in 25 grades and 5 chain (100m) radius curves. These were almost the most severe on the system, only the Camden and Batlow lines having more demanding geometry.

Because of these design features, and in consideration of the low traffic potential and speeds, the 19 class 0-6-0 tender engines were used exclusively, and no other motive power trod the rails until diesels moved in.

Passengers were welcome in those days and most services ran as mixed trains. An elderly HS type,

side loading car was used, with compartments for first and second, smoking and non-smoking all segregated, making up most of its length. A commodious compartment for the guard had ample room for parcels, travelling quadruped passengers and the occasional coffin.

No turning facilities existed at either end of the line, although Oberon did once have a turntable, which would have allowed through funnel-first running to Wallerawang or Lithgow, but as no complementary appliance was installed at Tarana, Oberon's was declared surplus and removed for use elsewhere. One reason for this was that, because of the steep grade, it was preferred to have the engine running funnel-first up the grade (tender-first down the hill), thereby ensuring that the crown sheet of



1919, with low-sided Baldwin tender, waits in the down loop with No.1 Oberon mixed until the 36 on No.25 Orange day train clears the station. The little 0-6-0 will then reverse its train into the platform before setting off up the branch on 2 November 1946.

R.B.McMillan,  
courtesy N.J.Thorpe



### TARANA—OBERON.

Mileage from Sydney.		Week-days.		Week-days	
Miles.	Chains.	DOWN	No. 1. Mixed.	UP.	No. 2. Mixed.
123	16	TARANA† .....dep.	p m 3 40	OBERON† .....dep.	a m 11 25
129	17	Carlwood** .....{ arr. dep.	4 5 4 8	Hazelgrove** .....{ arr. dep.	11 40 11 45
134	75	Hazelgrove** .....{ arr. dep.	4 40 4 45	Carlwood** .....{ arr. dep.	p m 12 15 12 20
138	19	OBERON .....arr.	4 55	TARANA .....arr.	12 45

Nos. 1 and 2 work all stations and sidings.

† No. 1 stops at mileages 127m. 37c. and 128m. 33c. when required to set down school children travelling from Tarana.

The 'order of proceedings' for the Oberon service, as printed in the 1956 Western Division Working Timetable.

For most of the line's life, passenger accommodation was provided by an HS side-loading, composite brake van, with accommodation for first class, second class and canine passengers and the guard. HS408, in tuscan and russet livery, was the last example to work the line, seen here in 1956.

R.G.Preston







*On a crisp winter's day, 29 August 1962, 1957 rounds the curves of Solitary Creek valley approaching Tarana. Revenue seems quite healthy in this train, with eight S trucks of pit props for Broken Hill ahead of a sheeted S truck and the HS. The granite outcrops in the background form part of Evans' Crown.*

*R.K.Booth*

the boiler was covered with water. For this reason and other considerations, it was decided to leave the 0-6-0 on the branch for two weeks at a time, and all traffic was handed over to passing main line trains at Tarana. To cater for the fuel and water requirements of the 19 class, larger bogie tenders salvaged from Baldwin O or J class were used. It should also be mentioned that no water column was provided at the terminus, so sufficient fluid had to be carried for the round trip, Tarana-Oberon-Tarana, but the Baldwin tenders were more than equal to the task. Coal was replenished, when required, from strategically placed trucks in Tarana yard.

Trains were regularly scheduled on a Monday to Saturday basis, the day starting at 8am at Oberon. Time was allowed for the crew to light the fire and raise steam, but this only happened on Mondays, as on other mornings the crew simply raked over the carefully banked coals from the day before. It saved a lot of time.

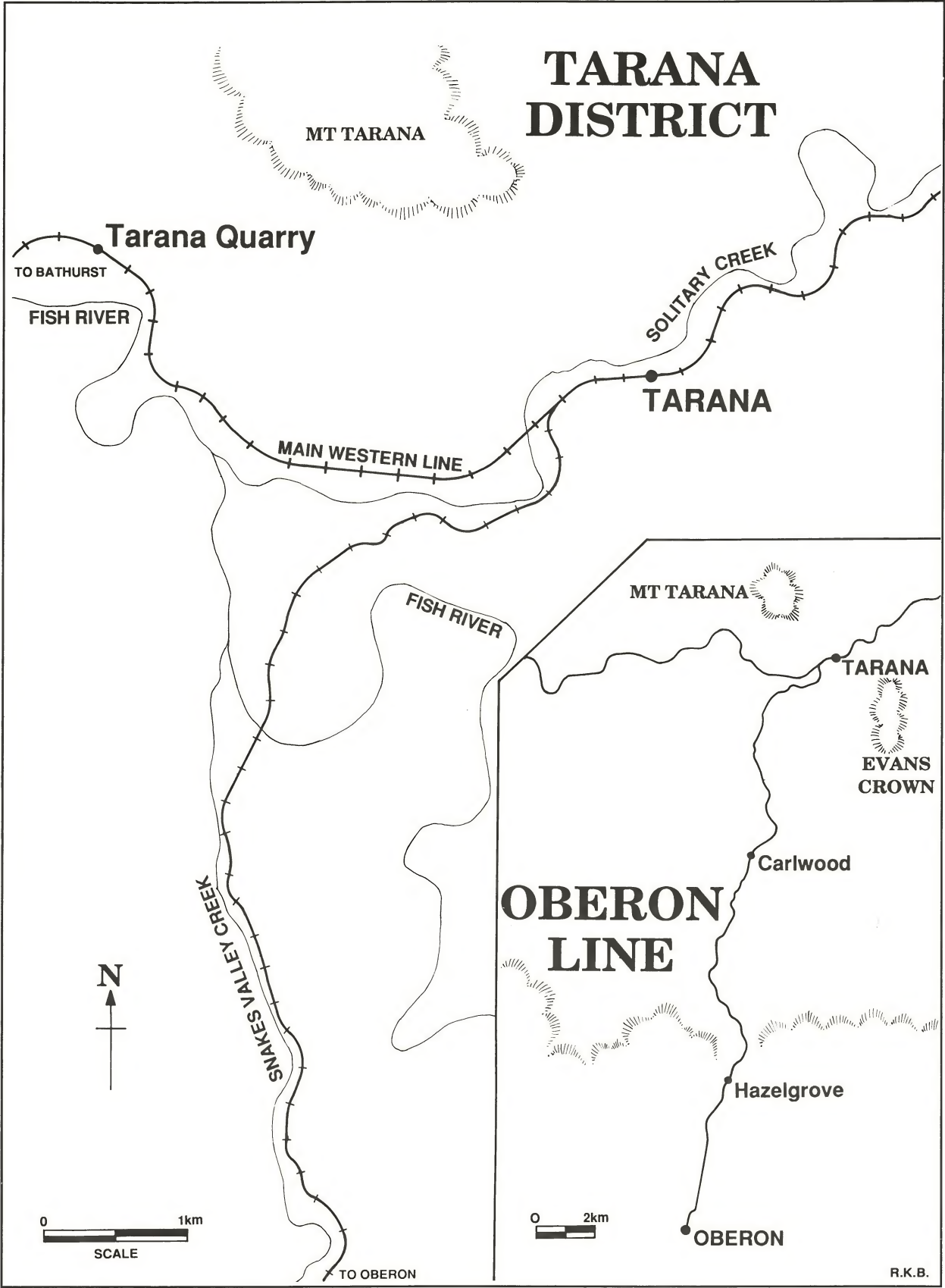
The little loco would then chuff quietly out of "loco", the siding provided for the overnight stay. All around were heaps of ashes, the result of burning Lithgow coal, noted for its high ash content. A small shed with lockers held such oils, water treatment

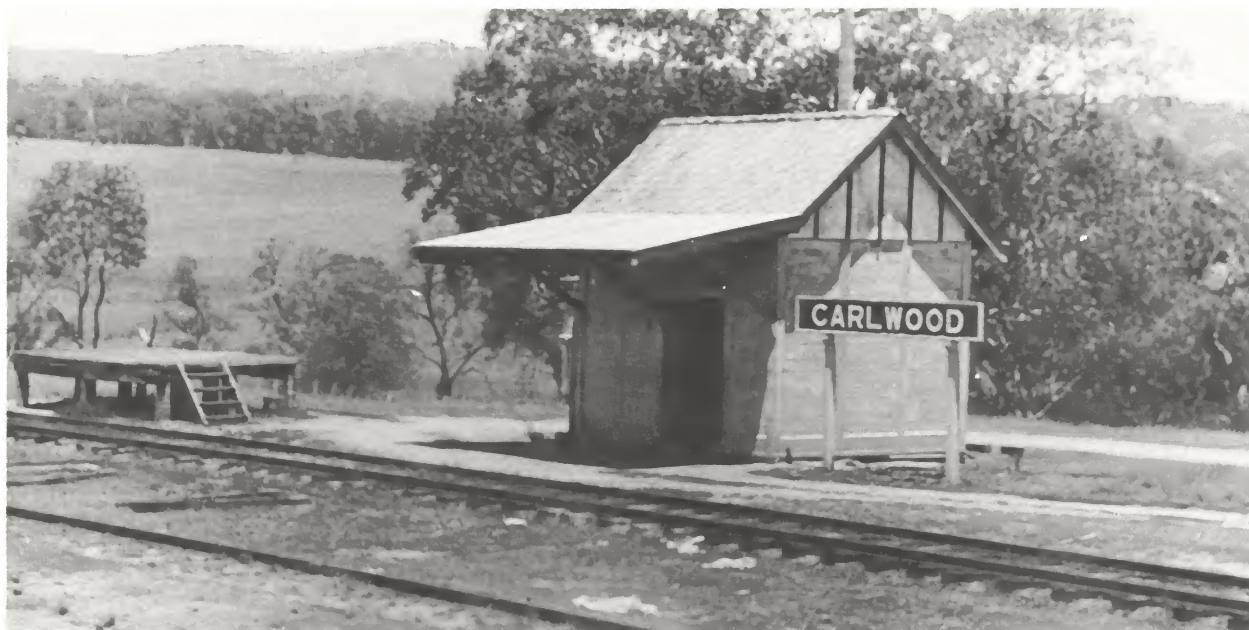
chemicals, rags and basic tools as were necessary for the crew to maintain operations.

The passenger car was always left at the platform, standing on the "main line". There were no other trains, so why shunt it away? From the parallel goods siding, vehicles loaded the previous day would be retrieved, drawn out onto the main line and pushed back onto the car. Once all couplings had been made and the air line tested, No.2 mixed was ready for its 11.25am departure. The maximum load was specified in the Working Timetable at 245 tons.

Loading for the train came from various sources. Sheep and cattle were raised in the area, and four-wheeled GSV vans for the sheep and CWs for the bovine were almost everyday fare. Timber was a local industry and pit props for the mines at Broken Hill, as well as sawn lengths for other destinations, were taken out in S and K trucks. Vegetables in season made their journeys in LV louvered vans, peas and potatoes featuring prominently. When the pea season was in full swing, it was not unusual for a second 19 class to come from the home depot, Bathurst, and double head the empty wagons up the hill. Longer trains need more air for braking, and







*Carlwood's facilities consisted of a standard concrete waiting shed and station sign, with a separate, very short, timber platform, which was a later addition.*

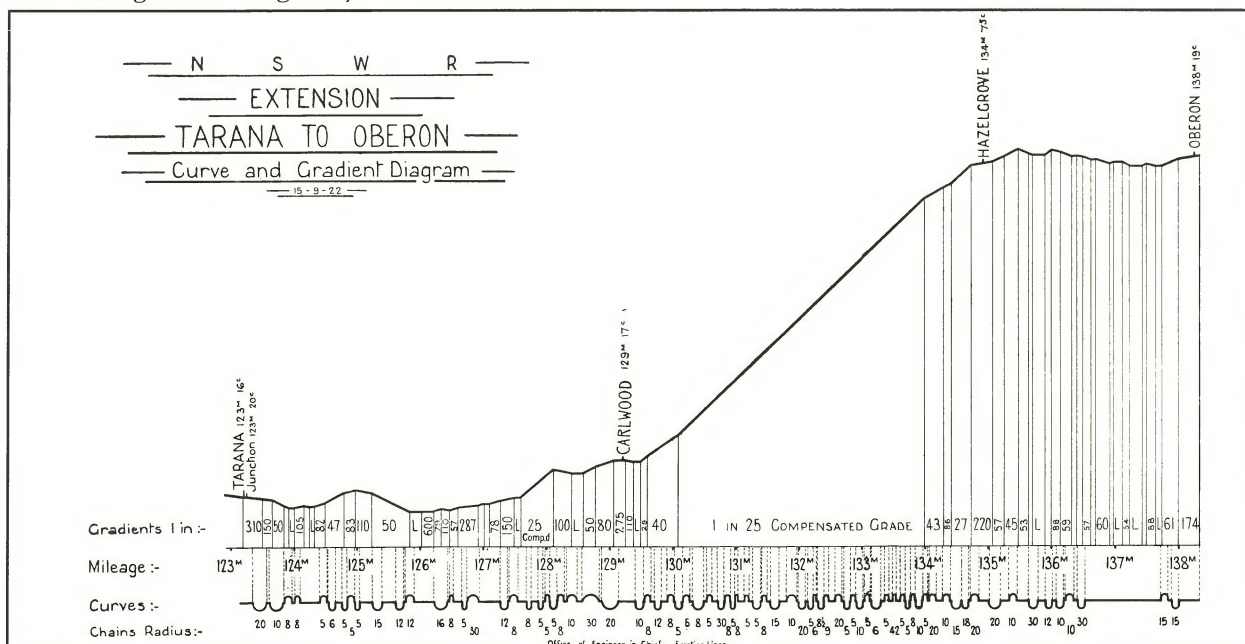
*R.G.Preston*

the demands of the 1 in 25 downgrade on the return would have been beyond one compressor's capacity to maintain pressure, so all up (Tarana-bound) trains were limited to the single engine load of 245 tons.

But back to our train. Once departure time came, the 0-6-0 would set off, tender first, its trucks and van following meekly behind. On approaching Hazelgrove, the station at the top of the hill, the

driver would sound the whistle to summon any waiting passenger from the small, ground-level, concrete waiting shed onto the timber platform. Few made the trip. On the fireman's side a loop siding held any waiting goods trucks, but business was not brisk. If such a truck was waiting, the train would halt, the loco uncouple and run forward, then set back into the siding to attach the loading. Once the couplings were made, it would steam back onto the

*Curve and gradient diagram for the Oberon branch.*







*1942 has been specially cleaned for a tour train, seen here during a pause at Carlwood.*

*R.K.Booth*

'main' and set back onto its train. After all was checked, the train would chug to the top of the grade, where it would again come to a stand, so that the guard could wind on a specified number of hand brakes, the better to hold the loads on the descending 1 in 25s.

Similarly, once the foot of 'the mountain' was reached, another stop would be made to release the now-smoking brakes. Then Snakes Valley Creek was crossed on a spindly trestle and Carlwood was reached, similar to Hazelgrove, except that the facilities were set on the opposite sides of the line. Business here in the 1950s was not brisk, and the only vehicles I ever saw in the siding were yellow-painted work vans of the bridge gang who were working on the trestle.

The grade out of Carlwood was 1 in 50, and this set the limit for up trains. Once over this rolling, open hill the line ran down again to cross Fish River on twin, under-track steel girders. Willow trees, a feature of any Central West landscape, lined the river banks. Another climb at 1 in 50 from Solitary Creek took the branch train into the main line junction, Tarana, at 12.48pm.

Now came the busy part of the day, for, once the branch train had deposited its passengers and parcels on the up platform, it set back into the goods

yard on the down side to clear the up main for No.26, Orange to Sydney day train. This all stations to Lithgow service was generally hauled by a 36 class 4-6-0 and the train was made up of centre aisle, tourist cars, such as FL, RFL and BL. Often a 'loaf of bread' MCE or MFE was used to strengthen the train's accommodation, while the obligatory EHO guard's van brought up the rear.

In the meantime, the 19 class had placed its loads in convenient sidings, with the HS at the far end of the goods siding. Coal was taken, if required, from an S truck. Now came the co-ordinated exchange, for from the east came the daily pick-up goods, hauled by a 50, or more generally a 53, class 2-8-0. No.33 arrived on the down as 1.58pm, the corresponding up service, No.368, having appeared earlier in the day at about 9am. Traffic for Tarana and the Oberon line was uncoupled and shunted into the yard, and the main line engine would then collect any trucks being despatched in its direction and add them to its train. The crews often 'took crib', the short break allowed enginemen for a meal and the time-honoured cuppa. Once these formalities were complete, the pick-up would take water and set off again on its pedestrian progress. The up train would often have cleaned ash from its fire into the pit at the Sydney end of the platform, in readiness





*The passenger accommodation for the mixed sits alone in Oberon station while the engine and crew go about the business of shunting the yard.*

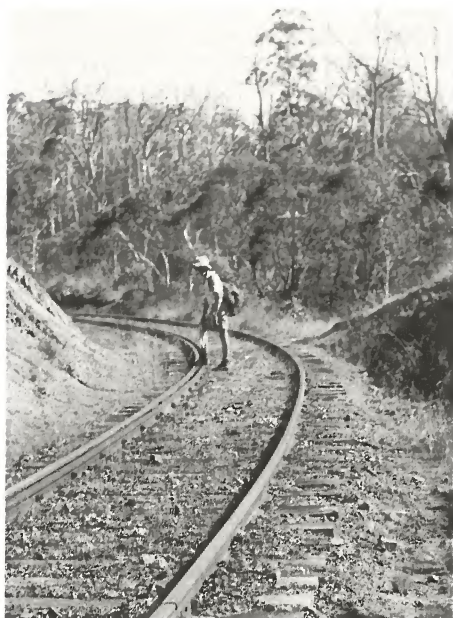
*R.G.Preston*

for the long slog up to Rydal. The ash, in time, was shovelled into a small hopper which ran on its own two-foot gauge section of track to carry the waste product to a growing, grey mountain alongside.

Quietness now descended on Tarana and the 19 class would bask, adjacent to the water column, in the afternoon sun. The crew likewise took its ease, the tender having been filled from this column before the commencement of the siesta.

Signs that life was about to restart came when

the 0-6-0 lurched into action to marshal its train for the return journey. The 1 in 25 grade limited the loading to 115 tons this time. Vehicles were retrieved from the sidings and added to the van, which had now been placed strategically at the platform end of the yard, thus ensuring its traditional place at the rear of the train. On occasions, it was necessary to push a long line of vehicles into the down platform, so that Tarana's trucks could be correctly extricated from what had arrived on No.33



*The nature of a pioneer branchline's track is well illustrated here, with the added interest of a check rail to ensure a train's uninterrupted passage around a five-chain curve.*

*R.G.Preston*



*Traffic in vegetables, particularly peas, from the Tarana-Oberon area, was at one time sufficient to need the erection of special goods sheds. This is the pea shed at Rydal, just off the end of the up platform, in 1976.*

*R.A.Gallagher*





*With its train assembled, 1942 is ready to sally forth from Oberon for the main line and connection with W26 passenger to Lithgow and Sydney, in this 1956 scene.*

*R.G.Preston*

and suitably placed in the goods siding for unloading. Some needed to be placed adjacent to the small, hand-operated crane, others alongside the loading bank, while still others required the cover of the goods shed. A truckload of ballast might be temporarily stored here, awaiting collection next day by a passing goods to meet the needs of a fettling gang further down the track.

Finally, around 3.31pm, No.25 passenger, the Orange-bound day train, similar to its up counterpart already described, would arrive from Sydney and pause at the station. Passengers would alight stiffly onto the yellow gravel of the platform, while

parcels would be handed out by the guard from his van.

Once the 36 class had steamed off into the west (to overtake No.33 goods at Wambool, only 20km down the line), the station master would set the points and signals to allow the branch mixed to set back and collect its waiting custom. So, at 3.40pm, No.1 mixed would set off for Oberon. The journey would mirror the morning's run, except that no stops were necessary for the brakes, and a lot more shovelling was required in deference to the engine's need for steam on the long, uphill grade.

As the sun set on a winter's afternoon, the short

*'Loco Oberon' was basic: just a siding with an ash pit and a shed for the engine's consumables. A makeshift windbreak has been erected by crews to shelter them, as they go about their duties of oiling, de-ashing and so on, from the icy blasts of winter winds off the tablelands to the south-west.*

*R.G.Preston*





train would arrive back at Oberon around 4.58pm. Four people were available for its post-journey ritual but only three were essential. Hence, a roster system allowed driver, fireman, guard or station master to have 'an early mark', the remainder attending to the shunting. When the passengers had gone, the loco would uncouple, run around the train, and clear the goods siding of any goods vehicles for despatch next morning. It would then haul the incoming trucks clear of the siding points, before propelling them into the goods siding. If the shunting at Tarana had been thought out, the trucks would be in correct order: stock vans opposite the stockyard, open wagons at the loading bank, any needing the crane strategically placed. Vehicles which had been loaded during the day were stabled at the end of the goods siding, in the clear within easy reach, while the van was returned to the platform, there to slumber the night away.

The 19 class finally retreated to its siding, where the crew would either fill the boiler and bank the fire for the morrow or, on Saturday night, clean out all ashes from the firebox. Silence now descended on this rural outpost. Next morning, the business would resume.

Such was the way of life until 1963, when branch line diesels, firstly of the 49 class, then of the 47 and 48 class, moved in. Strangely, 45 class 1800hp main line units were permitted also. However, the economics of modern administrations do not tolerate such niceties as branch lines without bulk loading and, without such potential, the Oberon branch slipped from this life in 1973.

Circular No. 297.

## NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS

Instructions to Station Masters, Guards, Engine-drivers, and all others concerned.

### Tarana-Oberon Line.

### OPENING of the BRANCH LINE from TARANA to OBERON.

On Wednesday, 3rd October, 1923.

The Branch Line from Tarana to Oberon will be opened for traffic.

This line is unfenced, therefore Drivers must keep a sharp look-out for live-stock that may be straying, so as to be prepared to reduce speed or stop if necessary. It is classed as a "Pioneer" line, and the maximum speed of trains and light engines must not exceed 25 miles per hour during daylight and, in the case of engines not fitted with an Electric head-light, 15 miles per hour during dark.

The following are the stations, platforms, and sidings, with mileage from Sydney.

There are Officers in charge at Tarana and Oberon only. There are no Platforms at either Carlwood or Hazelgrove, but Waiting Sheds are provided.

From Sydney.	Mileage for Rates Purposee.	From Darling Harbour.	Mile Post.	Mileage from Sydney.	Station, Siding, or Platform.	Station No.	Parcels Obliterating Stamp No.	Sheep Seal No.	Crane or Jantry.	Weighbridge.		Goods Shed.	Carriage Dock.	Sheep Race.	Cattle Race.	Loading Bank.	Engine Turntable.	Engine Shed.	Carriage Shed.	Stocking van for Fourwheeled Wagons in Siding.
										Truck.	Cart.									
No.									No.	No.	Capacity.	No.	Capacity.							
m. 123	m. 124	m. e. 123 16			TARANA†.....	93	...	...	1 5	...	1 12	ft. 60 x 30	*	*	*	*	...	...	...	58
129	130	129 17			Carlwood .....	T 1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	*	*	*	...	...	...	24
134	135	134 75			Hazelgrove .....	T 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	*	*	*	...	...	...	20
138	139	138 19			OBERON†.....	T 3	...	...	1 2	...	...	30 x 12	*	*	*	60	...	...	...	69

† Ordinary Train Staff Stations. \* Indicates that the various places shown thus are furnished with the requirements under the several headings; and, where there are blanks, accommodation is not provided.

Officers will be on duty as follows:—

Tarana—Week-days, always.

Sundays, 12.0 midnight (Saturday) to 8.0 a.m.; 8.0 p.m. to 12.0 midnight.

Oberon—Week-days, 7.30 a.m. to 6.0 p.m.

Sundays, no officer on duty.

The number of trucks of either sheep or cattle that can be dealt with without the use of an engine is as follows:—

Station.	Number of Trucks.
Tarana .....	7
Oberon .....	19

### SYSTEM OF WORKING.

The system of working between Stations will be as follows:—

Tarana—Oberon ..... Ordinary Train Staff; Color—Red; Shape—Round.

**Above Right:** An excerpt from the NSW Rail Weekly Notice of 1923 which announced the opening of the Oberon line

**Right:** The goods facilities in Oberon yard consisted of a concrete-faced loading bank, a G1b goods shed and a small hand crane mounted on a massive block of concrete.  
E.R.Davies

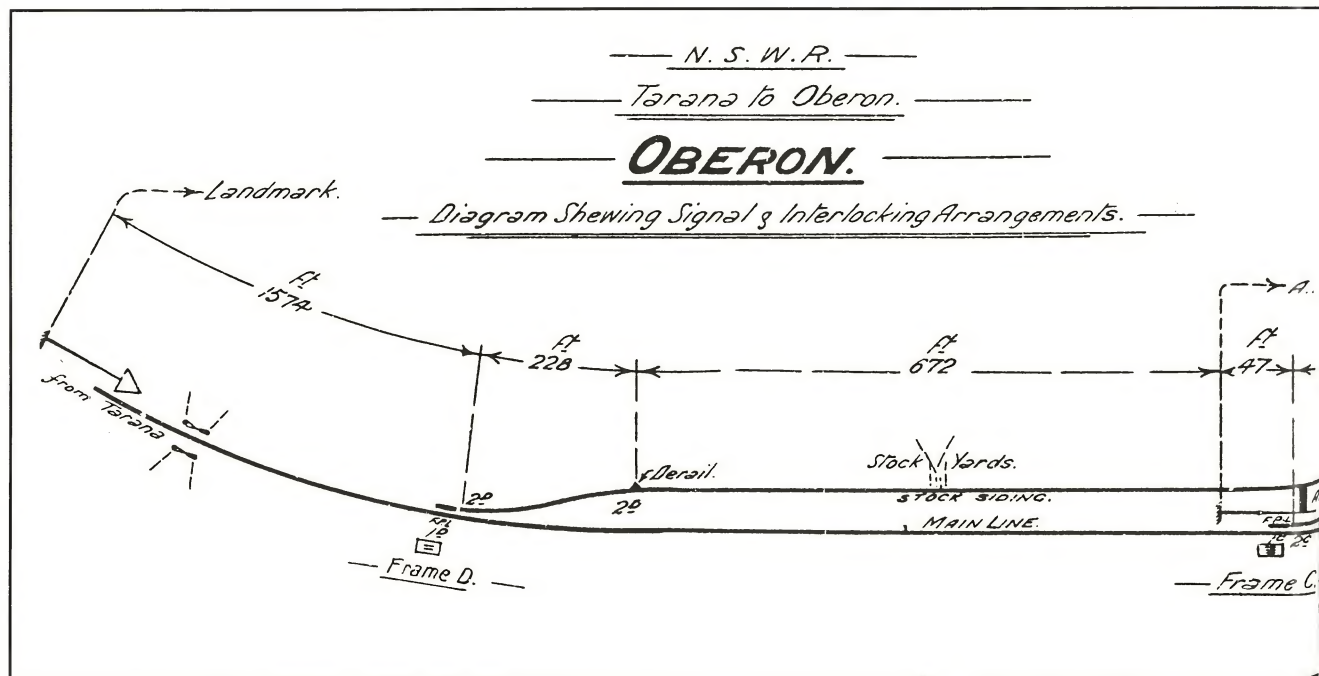






This view of Oberon yard, taken in 1976 from the southern end, shows all the salient features indicated on the diagram below. The siding in the immediate foreground was an addition from a later date. The official diagram, below, shows the original arrangements of 1923, complete with turntable, later removed.

E.R.Davies

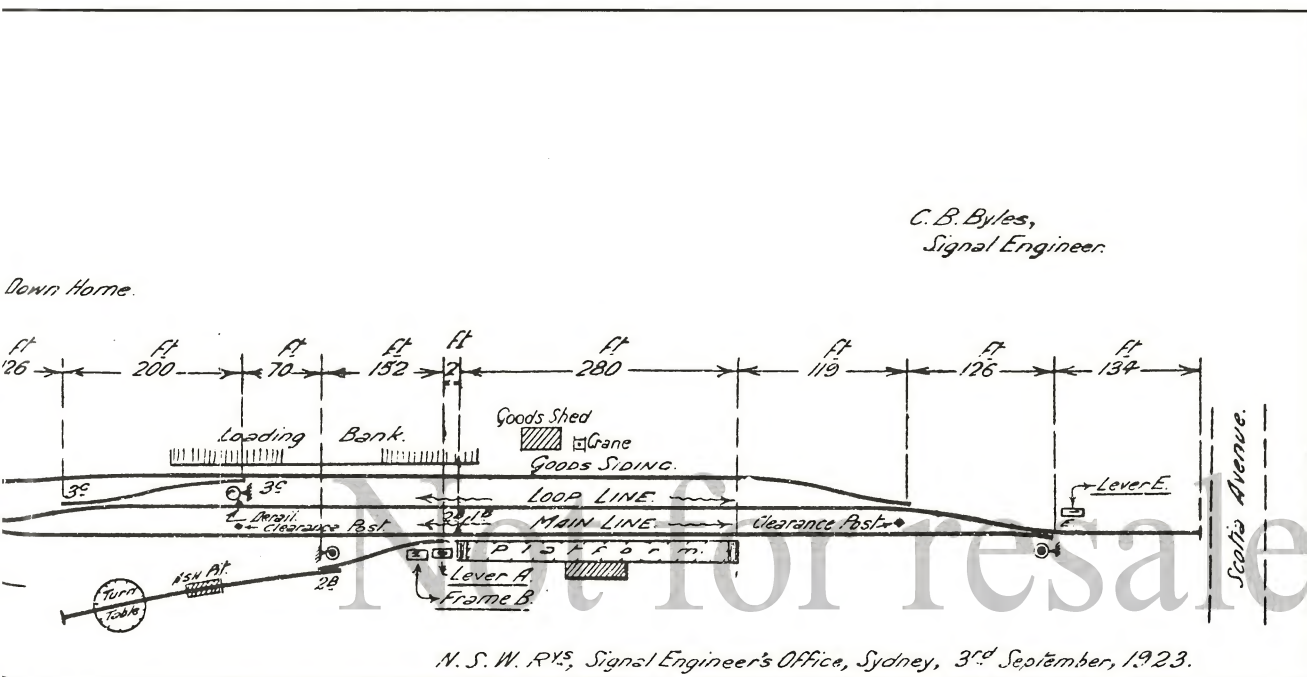


# Not for resale



For the occasion of the last steam train to Oberon, a tour was run with 1919 and 1957, Bathurst's last two 0-6-0s, both fitted with former L class Baldwin tenders for Oberon working. The train, which ran in 1963, consisted of three LFX 'dogboxes', CBC1089, CBC1090, HX2 and a guard's van. The little engines are seen here beginning the assault on the 1 in 25s up Snakes Valley Creek under a typical Central West sky, with Mt Tarana across the Fish River valley in the background.

R.K.Booth







*6011 hauling failed 4510 on a relief mail train to Dubbo arrives at Dripstone, 15 December 1966. This rare occurrence was occasioned by 4510's failing on No.45 Coonamble Mail at Euchareena. A 38 class was requisitioned off the following relief mail to take the Coonamble Mail to Dubbo. 6011 was taken off a following goods train to take 4510 and the relief mail to Dubbo. Today, all that remains of Dripstone is the main line and concrete facing of the goods loading dock.*

*Peter Neve*

*6011 pictured in typical Central West countryside, hauling No.312 goods on the roller coaster grades between Wongarbon and Geurie on 3 January 1967.*

*Ray Love*





*6014 standing on No.312 goods in Dubbo yard awaiting departure time for Orange via Wellington on Saturday 28 January 1967.*

*David Allerton*

# WESTERN DIVISION GARRATT FINALE

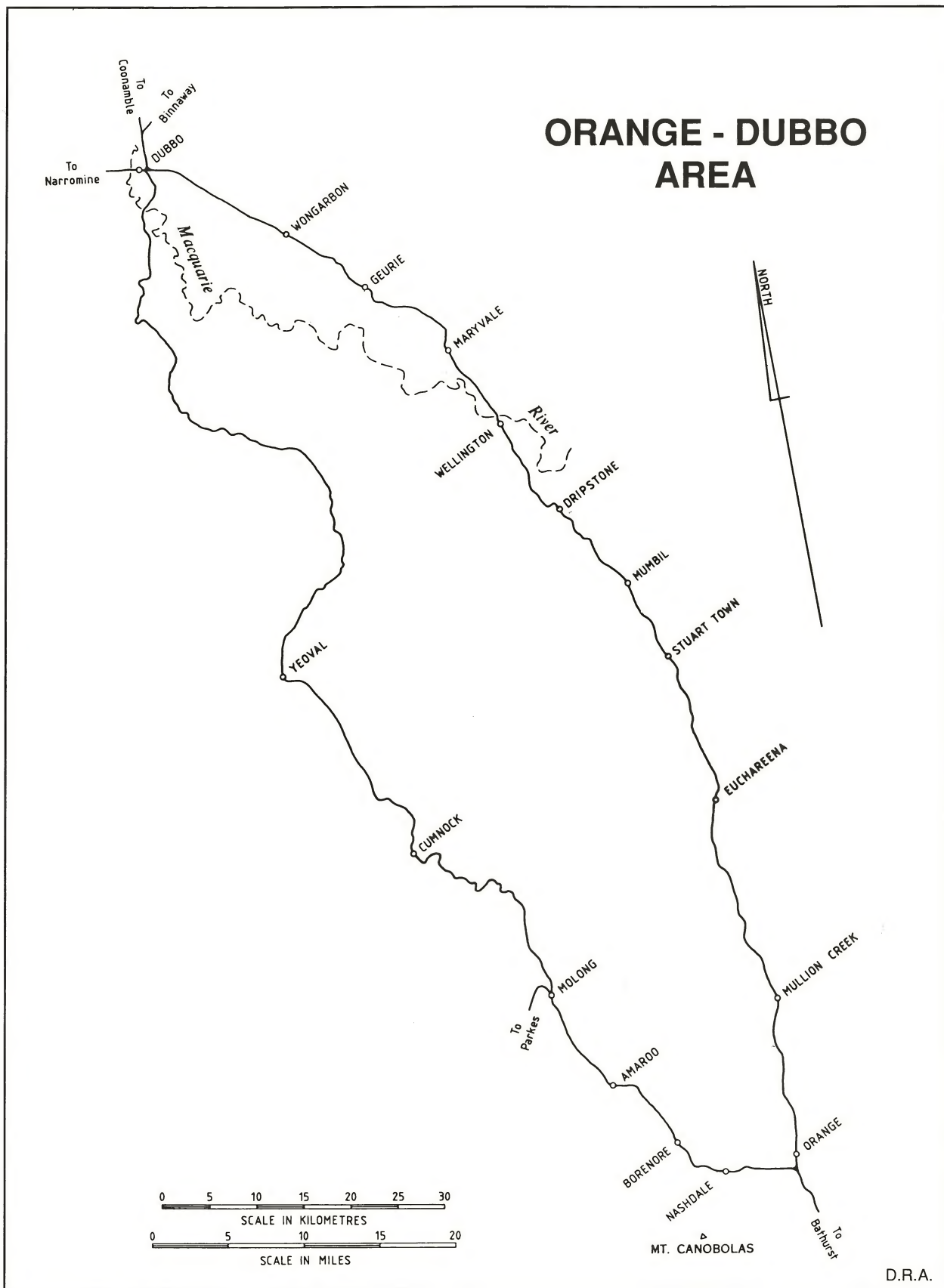
*David Allerton*

Spectacular steam action, roller coaster grades between Molong and Orange, and scenic locations combined to attract the rail enthusiast from far and wide, to ride and photograph mainline steam's Indian Summer in the Central West of New South Wales.

This is a resumé of the five 60 class sent to Dubbo during late 1966 for the 1966/67 wheat season up until the cessation of mainline steam in mid 1967.

The 60 class were associated with the Central West soon after their introduction into New South Wales in July 1952, with 6017 allocated to Bathurst







*View of No.312 goods climbing away from Dubbo East Junction, taken from brake van NHG 31798 on Saturday 28 January 1967. The train includes a good variety of bogie and four-wheel goods wagons, the 'dogbox' LFX1776 being marshalled against the guard's van.*

*David Allerton*

*6040 on No.699 goods pauses at Mumbil to collect the staff before proceeding to Dubbo. 6014 on No.312 goods is refuged in the loop on Saturday 28 January 1967. Mumbil was originally opened as Burrendong in 1885, renamed Mumbil on 21 December 1885, and closed on 29 October 1975. The station buildings, platform and loop are now totally removed.*

*David Allerton*





## 42 Dubbo-Lithgow (via Wellington)—continued

UP	162	82	312	22	28	8	2	84	38**
WEEK-DAYS	Empty Rail Pay Bus	Pick-up.	Pick-up.	Diesel Train	Central West Express.	Goods.	Goods.	Pick-up	Goods.
	Alt. Fri. p m	Sat. a m	Fri. Sat. Ex. a m	MW F a m	p m	c p m	p m	Arrive p m Depart p m	c p m
Dubbo dep.	...	7 25	8 35	11 40	...	...	...	...	...
Dubbo E. Jct.†††	...	7 29	8 39	11 42	...	...	...	...	...
Wongarbon†††	...	8 2	10 12	...	...	...	...	...	...
Geurie†††	...	8 12	10 30	11 58	...	...	...	...	...
Geurie†††	...	8 26	10 44	12 0	...	...	...	...	...
Mary Vale†††	...	8 41	10 54	12 9	...	...	...	...	...
Wellington†††	...	8 55	11 18	12 21	...	...	...	...	...
	...	9 16	11 28	12 30	...	...	...	...	...
	...	9 30	11 43	12 30	...	...	...	...	...
	...	10 20	1 20	12 32	...	...	...	...	...
Dripstone†††	...	11 10	1 42	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mumbill†††	...	11 15	1 55	12 44	...	...	...	...	...
	...	11 39	2 19	...	...	...	...	...	...
Stuart Town†††	...	11 55	2 56	12 57	...	...	...	...	...
	...	12 15	3 16	...	...	...	...	...	...
Farnham**	...	12 35	3 40	1 9	...	...	...	...	...
Store Creek**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Euchareena†††	...	1 16	4 20	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kerr's Ck.**	...	1 40	4 35	1 31	...	...	...	...	...
Mullion Ck.†††	...	2 30	5 28	...	...	...	...	...	...
Clergate*	...	2 58	5 43	2 0	...	...	...	...	...
Cullya**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Orange†	...	3 24	6 24	2 16	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	Fruit Express. 7 50	...	...	...	...	...	...
Orange E. F. Jct.	...	...	...	2 40	...	...	...	...	2 57
Bloomfield**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Huntley**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Spring Hill†††	...	...	...	2 55	...	...	...	...	3 20
Millthorpe†††	...	...	...	3 2	...	...	...	...	3 29
Polonast†††	...	...	...	3 8	...	...	...	...	3 36
Wombiana*	...	...	...	3 17	...	...	...	...	...
Blayney†††	2 43	...	...	3 18	...	...	...	...	3 46
Murrobo	3 2	...	...	3 22	...	...	...	...	3 53
Newbridge	3 16	...	...	3 39	...	...	...	...	4 14
Gresham†††**	3 23	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4 26
Wimbledon†††	3 27	...	...	3 49	...	...	...	...	4 31
Tumulla†††	3 34	...	...	3 57	...	...	...	...	4 42
George's Plains†††	3 41	...	...	4 2	...	...	...	...	4 50
Perthville**	...	...	...	4 2 a	...	...	...	...	5 6
Bathurst†	3 55	...	...	4 16	...	...	...	...	5 23
	...	...	...	4 24	...	...	...	...	5 30
Kelso	...	...	...	4 29	...	...	...	...	5 55
Raglan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6 4
Brewongle	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6 15
Wambool	...	...	...	4 53	...	...	...	...	6 26
Locksley	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6 33
Gemalla*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tarana Quarry*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tarana	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sodwalls	...	...	...	5 a 14	...	...	...	...	7 1 5
Rydal	...	...	...	5 35	...	...	...	...	7 25
Wallerawang	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7 42
Marrangaroo*	...	...	...	5 49	7 1	...	...	...	7 57
Bowenfels	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cooverwull*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lithgow	...	...	...	6 15	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	6 13	...	...	...	...	...
Goods Stn.	...	...	...	...	...	7 27	8 3	8 58	8 25
Coal Stage Box arr.	...	...	...	...	...	7 30	8 5	9 4	8 28

\*\* See page 39

† No. 28 stops when required to set down passengers from beyond Orange and is allowed additional sectional running 1 minute Polona to Blayney, 1 minute George's Plains to Bathurst, and 2 minutes Rydal to Wallerawang, to cover intermediate stops between Orange and Wallerawang.

6014 refuged on No.312 goods at Mullion Creek, having crossed No.9 goods to Dubbo, hauled by a 45 class diesel electric on Saturday 28 January 1967. Mullion Creek was opened on 1 June 1880 and closed as a staff station and crossing loop during April 1987. Station staff were withdrawn in April 1976. The station building, platform and loop are now totally removed.

David Allerton

Having taken water, 6014 brings No.667 goods forward to collect the staff at Molong before proceeding to Dubbo via Yeoval on 29 January 1967. David Allerton

Extract from Western Division Working Timetable of 17 October 1965, showing No.312 pick-up goods' timetable.





on 17 August 1953 and 6019 and 6023 to Dubbo on the same day.

The number of 60 class allocated to western depots reached a maximum of 15 during 1965, declining dramatically in mid-1966 to 6015 only at Parkes, this being brought about by the coincidence of increasing dieselisation and a severe drought.

With the breaking of the drought in mid-1966 and a bumper wheat harvest forecast for 1966/67, the following five non-dual control 60 class were transferred from Enfield to Dubbo for goods working:

6011 - August 1966  
6005 - September 1966  
6014 - November 1966  
6015 - November 1966  
6040 - November 1966

These Garratts were part of the group which had not been modified with increased main axle loading and enlarged cylinders, as the majority of the class was in the late 1950s. Since they maintained their 16 ton axleload, they were commonly known as 'light Garratts', although their total weight was the same as the other group, about 263 tons.

These five locomotives generally worked goods trains on the Dubbo - Molong - Orange - Wellington - Dubbo circuit, singly or in combination with other classes, with occasional trips on the Coonamble branch, and Dubbo - Narromine - Parkes section, working on an 'as required' basis.

In January 1967 a trip was made from Dubbo to Orange via Wellington on No.312 pick-up goods hauled by 6014. On the Saturday morning of the

Australia Day long weekend we arrived at Dubbo on No.45 Coonamble Mail behind 3827, which had worked the Mail unassisted from Lithgow.

A quick breakfast at the Dubbo Refreshment Room, preceded a dash out to Dubbo East Junction for a photo of No.59 (holiday extra) Through Mail hauled by 3290, then a walk back to 'loco' to note the following on shed:

3004T 3144T  
3282 3290 3313 3326  
3651  
3827  
6014.

3028T and 3040T were the yard shunters.

Enquiries revealed that 6014 was to work No.312 pick-up goods to Orange via Wellington, departing at approximately 9.30am.

The guard was approached to see if we could ride in the van to Orange and, this being OK, we boarded NHG 31798 and were off.

Part of the consist of No.312 was LFX 1776 (empty car) going to Orange, its reason for being in the Dubbo area being unknown; it is now preserved in running order at the New South Wales Rail Transport Museum, Thirlmere.

Wongarbon and Geurie were shunted, 6015 on No.65 goods was crossed at Mary Vale and 6040 on No.699 goods at Mumbil.

Having sat up all night on the Coonamble Mail, we had become very drowsy by early afternoon in the 40°C heat and sought the comfort of the LFX for a sleep.

**Above Right:** 5364 and 6005 on No.604 goods from Dubbo put on a spectacular display as they climb Borenore bank, bound for Orange East Fork Junction on Monday, 30 January 1967. 5364 was not to survive 1967, being withdrawn during April and sent to scrap in July.

David Allerton

**Right:** 6005 on No.632 goods from Dubbo turns into the loop at Nashdale to cross 4910 and 4909 on No.243 empty wheat for Parkes. 6005 was refuged to allow No.243 to proceed, followed by 6011 on No.5 goods to Dubbo on 1 February 1967. Nashdale was opened as Cargo Road on 21 December 1885 and renamed Nashdale during March 1930. Closed as an electric train staff and crossing station during March 1987, the station, signal box and loop are now totally removed.

David Allerton

**Overleaf:** This sequence of four photographs illustrates one of the last occasions when two double-headed steam-hauled trains crossed at Borenore on Good Friday, 24 March 1967.

**Top Left:** 3649 and 6040 shunt four wheel S trucks of superphosphate into the goods siding. Note vintage hand operated crane beside goods shed.

**Lower left:** 3649 and 6040 propel back onto their train in the loop as 3652 and 6005 wait patiently at the home signal.

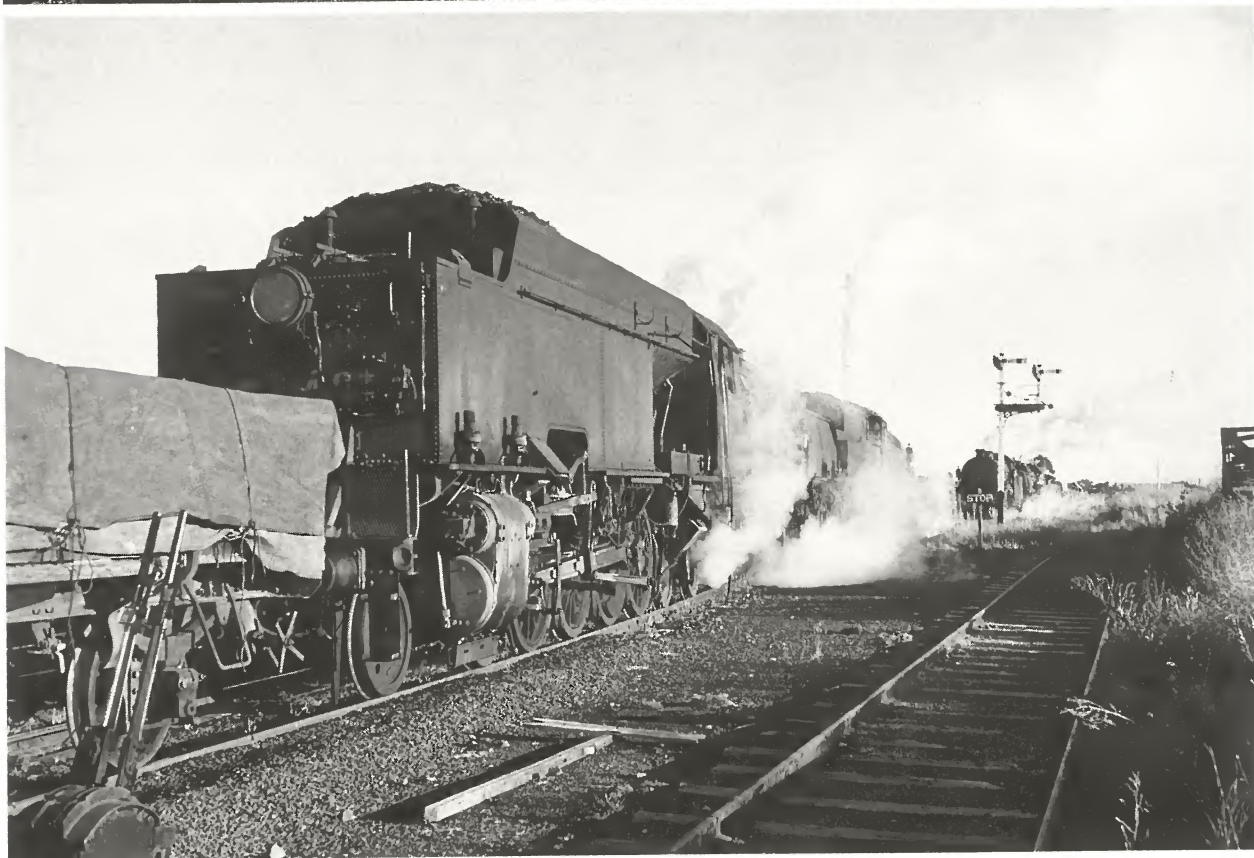
**Top Right:** 3652 and 6005 have the road and continue to Orange East Fork with their wheat train from Dubbo.

**Lower Right:** 3652 and 6005 pass 3649 and 6040 refuged in the loop. Borenore was closed as a crossing station on 21 November 1989.

David Allerton











# Not for resale



**Above:** 6040 hauling a Dubbo-bound block load of superphosphate in tarpaulin-covered, four-wheel S trucks, crosses 6014 on an up general goods at Cumnock on Good Friday, 24 March 1967. The railway line from Molong to Dubbo is now open only from Molong to Yeoval for seasonal wheat traffic. David Allerton

**Above Right:** Hauling an assorted load of four wheel and bogie vehicles, 6005 labours up the short pinch of 1 in 40 grade approaching Nashdale Station. This goods - No.637 bound for Dubbo via Molong - was the only steam-powered train scheduled to run during daylight hours in the Orange-Dubbo area on that day, Easter Sunday, 26 March 1967. Graham Pegg

**Right:** A rare sight on the Molong-Orange East Fork Section, 3823 and 6040 work an Up goods to Orange, as pictured here on the roller coaster grades between Amaroo and Borenore, Saturday 13 May 1967. As Molong's turntable was too small to turn a 38 class, 3823 was sent tender-first light engine to Molong from Orange East Fork to assist 6040. John Ward

As a consequence, the cross at Stuart Town with No.27 diesel passenger to Dubbo, worked by the spare 'Silver City Comet' set, was missed.

The guard was helped to unload small lots from an S truck at Euchareena, No.9 goods hauled by a 45 class diesel was crossed at Mullion Creek, then we made the final run into Orange, arriving at approximately 6pm, in all 87 miles (139km) in 8½ hours.

With the end of the wheat season, and increasing dieselisation, four of the 60 class were returned to Enfield during May 1967, these being 6005, 6014, 6015 and 6040, leaving only 6011 at Dubbo to work

a June long weekend tour for the Australian Railway Enthusiasts' Society between Dubbo and Orange via Wellington on Saturday 10 June 1967.

6011 was forwarded to Enfield the following week, bringing to an end 60 class allocation to Western depots.

This was not to be the last time the Central West would see a 60 class work a train. On Saturday 30 June 1979, 5367 and 6042 worked a tour from Blayney to Parkes via Orange, transferring both steam locomotives to their new home (at the time) in the Lachlan Vintage Village at Forbes.









**Above:** By the 1970s, engine 5367 was one of the few remaining former NSWGR steam locomotives retained in running order, operating under the care of the Lachlan Valley Railway enthusiast group. In the 1950s and 1960s, however, it had important work to do in regular service. In 1967 the old TF banks a goods up the Liverpool Range from Murrurundi towards Ardglen tunnel. A.J.Eyre



**Left:** Bruce Griffey joined the railway service in 1941 and retired as Special Class Driver in 1986. His last official trip, on 31 January 1985, was on XP2013 'Municipality of Casino', working train NT23, the 'Northern Tablelands XPT'. In the days of two-man operation on these trains, Bruce (on the left) and second-man Geoff Skewes prepare for departure from Werris Creek. John Currey



# LIFE of an ENGINEMAN

*Bruce Griffey*

## Part I - The 1940s

I was born in 1924 in the North Western town of Inverell, some 400 road miles (640km), 509 rail miles (815km) from Sydney. In 1940, whilst I was attending high school in Inverell, my family home was in George Street, right opposite the railway station. I would spend a lot of time on the front verandah, watching shunting operations, since the siding into the flour mill crossed the street only metres from our house. Our next-door neighbour on the left side was George Monaghan, the only Inverell guard, whilst on the right side lived Harry Arnold, who was a shunter. The station master at the time was Mr Fisher whose daughter was in my class at school. Another shunter was A.E.(Snow) Duggan, whom I later came to know very well as a shunter, guard and special class guard at Werris Creek. The Inverell fireman at this time was Sam Downes and we used to watch him cycle to work about 8.30 each morning, prepare the engine and whistle out and perform the shunting. He would then pick up the carriages and get the passenger train ready. About 10 o'clock the driver, Harold Cooper, would cycle to work also and they would work the train to Warialda and change over with the Moree crew on the passenger train coming in the opposite direction. After arriving back at Inverell and putting the train away, I would see Harold Cooper cycle home, then an hour or so later, Sam Downes would also go home, no doubt after 'banking' the fire for the overnight stay of the engine (this is to save it being relit next morning) and

de-ashing, etc. Sam would go back to loco during the late afternoon to check the engine.

At this time, I had no ambitions of joining the railway, as I intended to be a schoolteacher but, being the eldest of ten children, with the war on, and having experienced the worst of the depression, there was little money to educate and feed the younger ones, so it was decided I would have to get work. In 1941 there was a newspaper advertisement by the NSW Government Railways for a sub-station junior. I had no idea what this entailed but assumed it was on the railway station, so an application form was obtained from Mr Fisher and sent away. Prior to this I had enjoyed only one train trip from Inverell to Moree and return, on a school sports excursion, the only time I had been away.

Early in October 1941, I was requested to attend at Central Station in Sydney for medical and education examinations. I joined the train at Inverell, which comprised a 12 class loco, one dogbox carriage and brake van. The porter on the station was Leo Parkins, whom I later came into contact with at Werris Creek, as well as his brother, John and parents. His father was a fettler and lived at the Gap (near Werris Creek), in the days when there used to be a small town there. At Moree, the carriage was attached to some more before the mail train left and I can remember looking out the window with awe every time we stopped at a station, not realising that, some years later, I would be driving trains over this line and stopping at the same stations. On

### Introduction

In October 1986, driver Bruce Griffey retired from the State Rail Authority after 44 years' service, 43 of which were spent in 'Loco'.

I first met Bruce Griffey at Broadmeadow Station in 1966. He was the driver of locomotive 3664 at the head of No.13 *Glen Innes Mail* and I requested, and received, permission to ride with him from Broadmeadow to Werris Creek. Twenty years later, just after his retirement, I met him again. At my request, Bruce has agreed to document his long railway career, which commenced with his joining the service in 1942.

He spent the major part of his duty at Werris Creek, one of the largest steam depots in the State, the town where he has now retired.

The presentation of his railway experiences will include the documentation of his career with unusual and amusing incidents and will be en-

hanced by the addition of relevant photographs and diagrams. In addition to train-running experiences, Bruce will give an insight into the day-to-day running of a locomotive depot, locomotive preparation and summaries of various depot facilities, such as barracks, etc. from an engineman's viewpoint. From this, it has been decided to divide the article into a number of sections, but the continuity of the story will be preserved.

To assist in maintaining interest in the article, Bruce has explained the meaning of some terms and jargon used amongst railwaymen, the meaning of which may not always be clear to the uninitiated. I hope the explanations serve the intended purpose.

*Ray Love,  
August 1990.*





*The town of Inverell was served by passenger trains hauled by a variety of steam locomotives over the years. A particularly pleasing combination of 12 class 4-4-0, CX express lavatory car and MHO brake van performed the service for many years during the 1940s and 1950s and in this 1955 scene, 1231 is ready to depart on the trip to the junction and the Mail connection at Moree. Such was also the means of travel when ex-schoolboys joined the railway service in 1941.*

*Jim Hampson*

arrival at Central, I followed the crowd off the platform, not knowing where I was going, and I remember looking up at the 36 class that had brought in the train and the realisation of how big it was. At 9.00am, I lined up with some thirty or so nervous hopefuls to do a medical examination, then, after lunch, it was maths and spelling, etc. After it was all over, I again boarded the train for the long haul back to Inverell via Moree and the long wait for any reply.

Just before Christmas 1941, I received notification to report to Prince Alfred Substation at 7.00am on 12 January 1942. Fortunately, I was able to arrange board with some friends at 53 Baptist St, Redfern and so reported for work as requested on 12 January at Prince Alfred Substation, near Central Station. On each shift were a shift electrician, an electrician and a junior. My duties were to read the meters every hour, clean the commutators on the rotary converters, plus wipe them over and clean the floors. In addition to this, I had to do a Tech course at the Railway Institute in Castlereagh Street. On 13 July 1942, I turned 18 and was immediately called up for the armed ser-

vices and on 30 July reported for enlistment at Victoria Barracks. However, this was deferred on application by the railway, which was classified as an essential service.

In March 1943, I was notified that, due to staff shortage and the fact that the substations could be manned with fewer staff, I was to be transferred to the Loco Branch at Werris Creek, so I went home to Inverell to clear my holidays. After the holidays, I travelled to Werris Creek on No.8 Mail and became a boarder at Mrs Johnston's boarding house and began my career as a cleaner. The head cleaner was Barney Dugan and each morning we would sign on and report to Barney for our duties. Some would have to 'black oil' the boilers whilst others would be put on 'rods and motions'. The black oilers would go to the store and obtain their kit which was cotton waste and 'black oil' in a special container with two compartments. They then proceeded to the allotted engine and black oiled the boiler, cab sides and tender. Those on 'rods and motions' would supply their own nondescript scraper and the same type of container filled with kerosene and cotton waste. They would have to scrape the grease and dirt off



*5185 and 5212 depart Werris Creek yards early one morning in January 1961 with an up Broadmeadow-bound goods. In 1943, seventeen years earlier, Bruce Griffey was rostered for his first tuition trip to Gunnedah on 5185.*

*R.D.Love*

the side rods and the under side motions then wipe them over with kerosene-soaked cotton waste till they were shining. The enginemen had to be able to oil the engine up without getting their clothes dirty.

The next promotion was to 'front' cleaner. The front cleaner had to clean the cab, pick up all surplus coal off the floor, hose the cab out, wipe over and dry cab sides, seats and gauges, and make sure it was dried out before the crew signed on. This entailed shift work, with one man being rostered each shift. The back shift was the worst, as there were always more engines going out of loco, especially on stock nights (Tuesday and Saturday nights), when up to a dozen stock trains per shift would run, some being double-headers. Quite a lot of 32 and 35 class passenger engines were green at this time (and one seemed to appear on either the Mails or the passenger trains on most days at the 'Creek') and had to be wiped over with a milky-looking liquid, then polished with waste cotton. There was no slackness and a continuous watch was kept for the steam shed inspector, chargeman or head cleaner. The head cleaner only worked half a day on Saturdays, so with only a chargeman to contend with, Saturday afternoon became playtime. This was mostly a water fight in the summer, using buckets and washout hoses. Any unsuspecting person walking through the shed had to watch out, because there were likely to be cleaners up in the roof rafters, in pits or behind beams with water buckets, but every care had to be

taken not to hit the mechanical staff or enginemen, as the poor old cleaner was a class below them.

Another duty for the cleaner was to go up to the station to shovel coal forward in the tenders of the engines on passenger trains when the fuelmen were busy elsewhere. This happened practically every time, due to the hard yakka involved. The 35 class working from Armidale worked through Werris Creek to Broadmeadow. At Werris Creek, the engine was detached and ran to the Narrabri end of the North West platform, where the incoming fireman took water and the outgoing fireman dashed the fire if necessary. The two drivers oiled the locomotive. Two men were employed to shovel coal from the back of the tender to the front in order to fill the hole left by the coal used between Armidale and Werris Creek. All this had to be done in 12 minutes, which included coupling and uncoupling the locomotive and running to and from the water column. One cleaner, Ross, who later became a well-known loco inspector, was a bit of a lair, who would wear white overalls and walked with a haughty air. He loved this job, because he would prowl up and down the platform in front of the passengers before the train arrived, making out he was important, and would go in for a yarn to the refreshment room girls after it had departed. He was also a good sleeper! One chargeman, Roy Belinger, was a bit of a hard case and Ross was asleep on a seat in the loco meal room and Roy set to and





**Left:** *The tuition trip to Gunnedah in 1943 involved 5185 on a slow goods train and a fast return on No.8 Mail, with 3376 in the lead. Nineteen years later, 3376 still displays the attributes of a racehorse, as it rests in Cowra depot. R.D.Love*

**Right:** *Narrandera locomotive depot, viewed from the eastern (June) end of the shed in 1954. The goods shed and yard are on the extreme left, behind the two-road rail motor shed. A 'forty-two footer' and a 500 class trailer stand outside, while BPH38 'Creamy Kate' lurks within. Various buildings associated with the depot are obscured behind the rail motor shed. SRA*

painted his face, with a bit of help, then woke Ross up and sent him to the station. When he returned, Roy asked him if he had checked the passengers and called on the 'ref' girls. When Ross affirmed this, they sent him to look in the mirror. On another occasion, when he was asleep on the stool, they carried him outside the chargeman's office into the frost and he still didn't wake. They had to wake him up or he would have frozen to death.

Unlike today, there were no classes or instructors to teach and qualify cleaners and enginemen for promotion, and all the cleaners were handed a Safe Working Book, General Appendices, Rules and Regulations, etc. and told to learn them. Being novices to the railway system, no-one had even heard of the different types of signals, let alone was able to identify them, so it was not unusual to see half a dozen cleaners armed with Safe Working Books around the railway yard trying to work out the shunting and mainline signals in order to identify them.

Then it happened. After five weeks, we were called up to be examined by Mr Jack Carmichael, the loco inspector, to qualify in safe working. Having passed this, the next step was what is known as a 'tuition trip'.

In late May 1943, I found myself rostered for 2.20pm to work No.55 goods and change over with the crew on No.8 Mail at Gunnedah. My driver was Arthur Thompson, the locomotive was 5185. Mr Carmichael instructed me how to spread the fire on the engine, from the bank under the door, being sure to clean the corners out with the dart (one of the shaped fire-irons), otherwise it could start to clinker early. In that case, the fire would liquify and set like

concrete, and air could not get through to burn the freshly applied coal. While the engine would now make steam, it was underneath with the oil can to oil the motions, and check that the pin feeds were clear to allow the oil to circulate and prevent wear. Then it was along the footplate to oil the pump (compressor), open the smoke box door to check that it was free of ashes, and that the spark arrester was clean. The driver, meanwhile, had oiled the outside and examined the loco for defects. When all this was done, and with a full head of steam and boiler full of water, the driver opened the blow-down cock to remove dirt, sludge and salts from the boiler. The injectors were once again turned on to refill the boiler, and the tender was filled from the water column. The engine then left loco for the goods yard, where it was coupled to the train and the brakes examined.

Then I was on my way. Mr Carmichael showed me how to fire the engine flat: first shovelful to left front, second to right front, third to left middle, fourth to right middle, fifth to left back, sixth to right back and seven sprayed down the centre. Sounds easy, but the tender was always going a different way to the engine and the fire hole door was never in the right place. In those days the North West line, and the Breeza Plain in particular, had the track laid on the bare ground with some smoke box ashes pushed in by the fettlers when a hole was found, but the whole track was rough and full of holes. Anyway, I was just getting used to it when we arrived at Gunnedah and, after a quick cup of tea and a sandwich, No.8 North West Mail arrived with 3376 in the lead. If I had trouble standing up and firing the goods train, I had an even greater surprise when





the mail climbed up the hill out of Gunnedah and then let loose on the downhill run across 'Bog-a-Duck' flat between Gunnedah and Curlewis. I thought "... You've got to be mad to ride these ...".

After my first tuition trip, the next thing I had to do was to spend 80 hours on the shunter, followed by a 'trial trip' to Armidale, to see if I was qualified to fire a locomotive. This trip was an even greater shock. On 11 June 1943, I was rostered as fireman on No.65 Goods, to return on No.34 Goods for the 105 mile (168km) trip to Armidale. It was an unbelievable amount of work compared to that on the shunter, with mile after mile of rising grades.

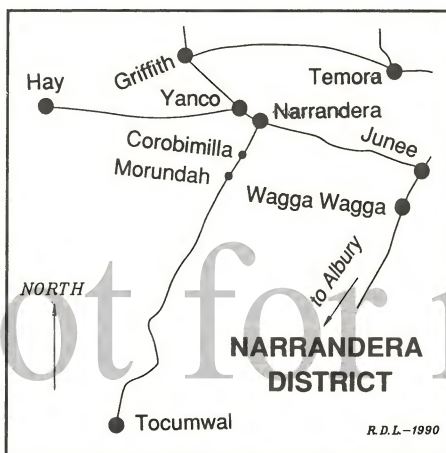
With that trip over, I was now a fully qualified, acting fireman and my next shock came immediately. I was to go to Junee on loan. On 26 June, together with Bob Sinclair, I set off. Our stop at Junee was short-lived, as no accommodation was available, so we went all the way back to Werris Creek. Without even signing on at Werris Creek, we were again sent off on loan to Narrandera Depot, where I spent the next six months. I stayed in a boarding house owned by a Mrs Byrne and managed by herself and her daughter, Mrs Sharman, wife of the legendary Jimmy Sharman of boxing troupe fame. Most of my time at Narrandera was spent as a shed fireman's mate, and our job was to prepare engines and knock down fires.

One day, when working as mate to shed fireman Tim Somers, we were having a break in the meal room when a fireman who was about to sign on, came in and said, "Have you got a 12 class anywhere about?" Tim replied, "Yes, out on the preparation pit."

The fireman said, "I don't think so; it's down near the north-end jackpoints ready to whistle out without a crew." Apparently, it had not been secured properly and had rolled towards the Junee end of the yard. The fireman had secured it and left it there.

Occasionally, we were given a firing job to Junee or Temora and bank engine working from Corobimilla (on the Tocomwal Line) in to Narrandera. When we worked to Temora, we traversed the triangular connection at Griffith, which meant it was not necessary to enter Griffith yard. Servicing pits and water columns were also provided on this leg of the triangle. The engines at Narrandera were mostly 30 (S) class tender engines. All five of the 34 class were regularly working in the Junee-Narrandera area, although they were 'Junee' engines at the time. In 1943 the first four had round windows but 3405 had just been overhauled and had the modified square window fitted, which later became common to them all. The 400 class rail motors and CPHs were also used for passenger working in the

area. On one occasion in 1943, lightning struck an electric light pole and injured five mechanical staff who were working on the rail motors in 'loco'. In the same year, one of the shunters came over to loco to get as many containers and billy cans that were available, as a keg of beer had sprung a leak in a truck following an 'accidental' bump. As beer was in short supply, all sorts of containers including the new kit-buckets from the store were found to preserve the precious dregs.







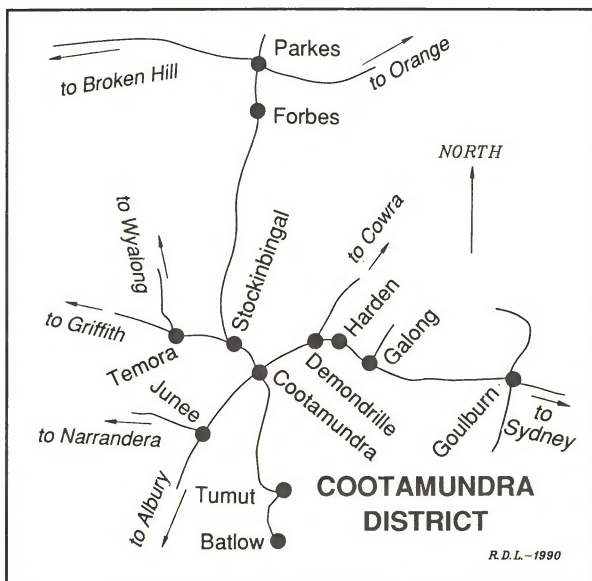
*Narrandera depot viewed from the western (Hay) end, also in 1954. The road on the left of the photograph leads to the turntable, with coal stack sidings in the middle distance to the left of the shed. The carriage sidings are on the right, with the main goods yard and station out of picture to the right.* SRA

In November 1943, my stint at Narrandera ended and I was sent to Cootamundra on loan. What a difference! The mighty 57 class lumbered in from Goulburn whilst 55 (K) class and an occasional 53 (TF) class ran to Junee. The 36 class engines worked the Mails, but did not stop at Cootamundra loco, the one exception being the loco off the Temora Mail. One job we had was to prepare the 32 class for the Cootamundra to Temora leg of the Temora Mail, 'whistle out', and be relieved. We would then relieve the crew of the 36 class engine that had brought the Mail in, re-prepare it in traffic, and stand pilot for the remaining Mails and Expresses as they came through. When the last Express departed, we would take the 36 class around the triangle at Cootamundra West, so it would be ready to work back that night on the up Temora Mail. We would work round trips to Junee, sometimes two in the one shift, mostly with 55 class. The same engine would be used on a round-trip to Junee, 35 miles (56km) each way, with the crew cleaning their own fire at Junee, whilst the local fuelman would shovel forward. If a second round-trip was required, a fresh engine would be worked from Coota'. No goods engines were fitted with electric headlights at this time, except for some of the 50 (T) classes. All we had were two kerosene lights on the front and a kerosene light

(which mostly went out) on the water gauge. There was also a war on and we were made to keep the canvas flap down between the engine and tender to reduce the reflection from the firehole door at night time. This made the cab unbearably hot but we had to endure it. At this time, several American military trains were running each day and, as well as having guards riding on the wagons, there were also two on the loco, in each corner of the tender. What a nuisance they were, since with southern coal you had to swing the fire irons to level or assist with the burning of the fire to maintain steam.

There was, however, a light-hearted turn which I never was rostered to take part in, because I was not in the 'elite' circle. At Batlow, hundreds of Land Army girls were being used in the fruit industry.

Due to accommodation shortages, some railway carriages were made available for them, being placed in a siding at the station for this purpose. On one occasion, a well-known hard case crew went to Batlow and saw a lot of merriment coming from a carriage. They got a number of detonators, placed them under the wheels, then released the handbrake and sprags and, with the aid of a pinch bar, started the carriage rolling. As soon as the detonators started exploding, bodies in various stages of undress came jumping out



*Cootamundra in 1945. As described in the article, 55 class engines were used in significant numbers on southern goods workings during this period. 5533 and two sisters occupy the shed roads with a 32 class.*

SRA

of the doors. Needless to say, these two fellows (one of whom, Reg Gillham, later became a driver at Hornsby Electric Depot) were supposed to be banned from going to Batlow again, but somehow they seemed to keep going back. At Christmas time, there were so many girls wanting to go home they could not fit in the two carriages and brake van of the passenger train, so it was nothing to see a train load of about a dozen S trucks loaded with female passengers arrive at Cootamundra from Batlow.

At Cootamundra, I had my first brush with the childish administration of a locomotive inspector. I had only been there a few days and was working on the shunter when I was relieved just before my shift expired and told to report to the inspector at the chargeman's office. On doing this, I was accused of reading a newspaper when all I had in my hand was a sweat rag. I denied it, and I asked him to wait till the driver came, as he was just coming into loco, but he would not do this. He then asked me if I was qualified in double line working, to which I replied in the affirmative. I think that is all he wanted to find out in the first place. From Cootamundra, I ran to Temora, Forbes and Parkes (30 and 32 class), Junee (55 and occasional 53 class) and Goulburn (53 and 55 class). I was qualified to fire 57 class engines



for yard and 'loco' working, as well as turning on the Cootamundra West triangle. However, I was called on for firing a 57 from Harden to Cootamundra on one occasion, in an emergency, due to the train crew being on 'long-hours'.

After nine months, I returned to Werris Creek, where I worked as a shed fireman's mate, then went out on the road permanently.

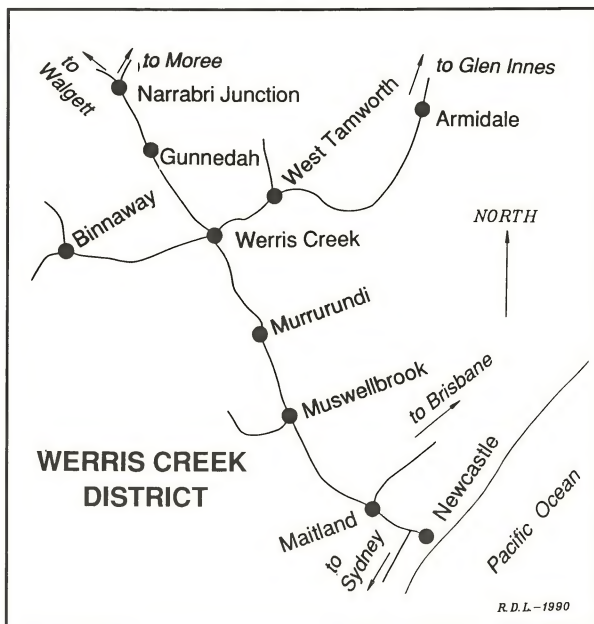
My first job to Narrabri was No.69 Goods, on a 50 class engine, with a load of empty sheep wagons. The driver was Fred Cowan and guard Alec Morrison, and there was a strong headwind blowing, which meant we had to steam downhill, as well as on the flat, to keep the train mobile. This used more

*The south end of Cootamundra, viewed from the station footbridge in June 1950. Part of the loco yard is on the left, with the overhead sanding bin straddling 5404. The depot is in the middle distance. The main lines are on the near right, with the large goods sheds on the far right of the photo.*

SRA







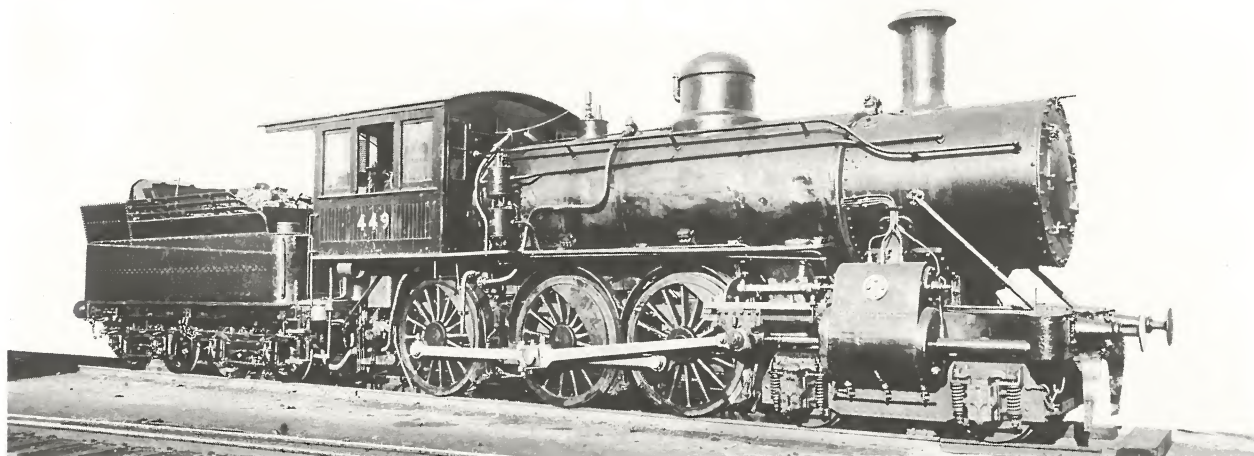
coal and water than normal, and between Curlewis and Gunnedah, the injector started blowing off. A quick check of the tender revealed it was almost empty, so the train was detached and left in the section and the engine taken light to Gunnedah. The idea was to keep the injector on going downhill whilst the water was in the front of the tender because, when going uphill, the water was in the back and the injectors would not pick it up. After filling the tender in Gunnedah, we returned in the section to pick up the train and continue the journey. Between Emerald Hill and Boggabri, just before Cox's Creek, sparks from the ash pan ignited the grass beside the line. Together with the driver

and guard, we tried to put the fire out but were 'not in the race', so we proceeded into Boggabri for assistance. Coming back the next day, it was seen that quite a large area had been burned out before the fire was extinguished.

As the war was still on, most of the work was to Muswellbrook and Armidale, with lesser work to Binnaway and Narrabri. My roommate at the boarding house was Jack Patterson (later State President of the A.F.U.L.E.) but I actually did not meet him for about six months, as our shifts meant he was in bed when I was getting up, or vice versa, although he spent a lot of his off-duty time at Tamworth with his mother.

One of the most memorable and hardest jobs I worked was on the hospital trains to Armidale. These would mostly come via Binnaway on their way to Wallangarra, and would be worked by a 50 class loco. They comprised about 12 cars, worked at a fairly fast timetable. Another memorable occasion was when I worked 2304 (old O class 4-6-0) with Driver C. 'Splinter' Mathieson on No.1 Pick-Up from Binnaway to Werris Creek. It was en route to Cardiff Workshops on its last trip. The driver sat on the right side of the firebox with the regulator up on the top. The fireman's seat was on the left and you could hardly see each other, let alone talk. The footplate was down a step and I seldom had time to leave this area, except when we were shunting, and then I had to go up to the fireman's side of the cab to watch for signals from the guard. In addition, it was raining and, as was customary with the wooden cabs, the roof leaked badly and we got soaking wet. During this period I qualified as a passenger train fireman on 32 and 35 class engines, the main passenger locomotives working in the area. I was 'travelled with' by a locomotive inspector on 12/13 September

*Twelve O446 class 4-6-0 passenger engines from Baldwin of Philadelphia entered service during July and August 1891, six months before the introduction of the P6 class engines. By 1946 all the 23 class (as the O class became) were withdrawn, but all the 32 (P6) class remained in service until 1956. O449 (later 2304) displays its classic American heritage and was the last of the old Baldwins to be withdrawn, in 1946. SRA*







*The last strongholds of the 23 class were Lithgow and Dubbo depots, and in this photo Dubbo plays host to three varieties of 4-6-0: 30T, 23 and 32 class. Old 2304, as described in the text, probably commenced its one-way trip from Dubbo shed, to Cardiff Workshops via Binnaway and Werris Creek.* SRA

1946, on Nos 23/22 "Northern Tablelands Express" to Armidale and return, in order to qualify, and the 'Qualification Form C' was issued by Inspector Cundy.

One of my first firing jobs on a regular passenger train after qualifying, was to Broadmeadow on the No.48 passenger on a Monday morning (Public Holiday) with Driver Eric Hawke. He had not long transferred from Broadmeadow, so when we got there he went to visit his brother instead of going to barracks. Our return job was on No.7 down Moree Mail and it was worked out of Newcastle Station where it stayed for a lengthy mealstop of 30 minutes. We would usually sign on at Broadmeadow Loco, and run tender-first into Newcastle, to work this train. Eric told me not to bank the fire on the 35 class till we got into Newcastle from Broadmeadow to prevent the engine blowing off at the safety valves and creating unnecessary noise. Normally, the train would pull into the platform from Sydney where the engine from Sydney would be detached. Our engine would go tender-first from Broadmeadow loco and attach to what had been the rear of the train on arrival and now became the leading end, all possible due to the triangle at Islington Junction. However, the train was running late and our run from Broadmeadow to Newcastle was delayed by suburban train running, so we arrived just in time to couple up and depart. Chief Staff Examiner, Mr Tregea, came to the engine and Eric said to me, "My gosh, he is going to ride with us and I have not had much sleep." However, Mr Tregea apologized, saying he was too tired and would be in the first carriage if we required him. Hurriedly, I built up the bank but it was still 'green' (unburnt coal) and not burnt through when the right-away came.

Eric was one of those drivers who 'arrived before he left' and the fire had been 'pulled' before we got

to Civic, so I was in strife trying to rebuild the bank. I collected the staff at Bransxton and we were in full flight up the hill to Pothana, trying to make up time, when I missed the staff. There were no electric lights in those days, only a faint glimmer from the kerosene light on the platform and the handlamp at the signalman's feet, so it was always done with the hope that I could catch it, especially on a passenger train at speed. Before we stopped, we must have travelled half a kilometre, so all the time that Eric's rushing had regained was lost! So now it was 'into it' again. Mr Tregea came up at Muswellbrook to see how we were going and Eric said, "Fine!". I did not get a chance to voice my opinion, as I was practically exhausted and it was only half way home.

At Muswellbrook in the 1940s, the milk factory was on the other side of Aberdeen Road, opposite where the present building is located. The old factory was later turned into a motor garage and is now a veterinary clinic. The milk was taken by road truck into Muswellbrook station, where it was loaded into the rail trucks in the dock to be picked up by No.80 Goods. The bonus came if you happened to be on a train there while the loading was taking place; you then scored a billy of cold milk off the truck driver. One Werris Creek driver always carried a large bottle which he would get filled and bring home, to save buying it.

Towards the end of 1946, the new locomotive depot at Muswellbrook was completed and an increase in the staff was required. I accepted my promotion as fireman at Muswellbrook Depot, along with five other acting firemen from Werris Creek, but a few days before I was to transfer, in December 1946, I had an accident which delayed my starting there for a month. On 22 November I was working No.76 Fast Stock from Narrabri West to Werris Creek with driver Bill Boehme on engine 5367 (now the LVR engine) and we were having a pretty hard



trip, due to the engine priming badly. Whilst working ourselves through the crossing loop at Breeza (known as 'automatic working'), I decided to clean the spark arrestor. As it was in the early morning hours and still dark, I used a flare lamp to see where I was going. I had placed it on the footplate and commenced to open the smoke box door when the gas exploded, blowing the door open, hitting me on the chest and knocking me to the ground. I fell onto the rail on my back and my ankle struck the buffer. There was no way to get relief in those days, so I had to work the engine home. Medical attention revealed a bruised back and badly sprained ankle, so I had three weeks off work.

In January 1947, I took up at Muswellbrook. From here we ran to Broadmeadow, Werris Creek, Port Waratah and Merriwa. Whilst at Muswellbrook I was firing for Jack Leddon on the No.187 Goods one Monday morning with a very light load. Going up Wingen bank, we caught up to a fettler on a motor trike and Jack, renowned for his practical jokes, sneaked up towards the trike and blew the whistle. The fettler jumped off and left the trike going on its own until it stalled on the long grade.

In 1947, driver Charlie Brown was instrumental in getting an ex-army hut placed at the northern end of Muswellbrook Station to serve as a Railway Institute and he conducted classes for enginemen in their spare time, for which they were not paid. I attended these and was passed by Staff Examiner, Mr Tregea, for Acting Driver and was presented with my certificate by the then Commissioner for Railways, Mr Hartigan, when he officially opened the Railway Institute. By a strange coincidence, this was the only time in my career that I personally met a commissioner, although in my later years I drove nine Commissioner's Trains, but was never once introduced to, nor met, any of these chiefs.

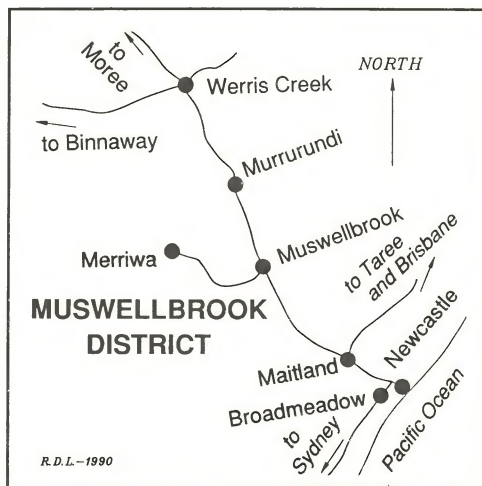
One Sunday morning in 1947, I was working No.206 Pick Up with driver Joe Campbell (Muswellbrook) and going down Wingen bank when the brake gear collapsed under the 32 class. I had to crawl into the narrow space between the driving wheels and lift the heavy rods clear of the perway and secure them up, clear of the track, with fencing wire obtained from a nearby fence. The brakes had to be cut out on the engine to prevent the rods operating, and we had to go carefully over points and crossings and check the gear did not foul and fall down again. In this case, the engine brakes could be isolated, but the brakes on the tender and the rest of the train were fully operational. The en-

gine had to be detached at Muswellbrook for repairs to be carried out.

One night, together with Driver Bill Nix, we signed on at 11.15pm at Werris Creek to work No.206 up Pick-Up to the point where it was overtaken by No.238 up meat train, which departed Werris Creek at 3.05am. This meant we had 3 hours 35 minutes start ahead of No.238. This was a regular roster because of the long hours on No. 206 Pick-Up and short shift on No.238. The change-over allowed the two crews to have a balanced time on the Werris Creek to Muswellbrook section, rather than one crew being on a short shift and the other requiring relief after being on excessive hours. We arrived at Wingen and waited in the loop for No.18 Brisbane Mail to run through us. A 50 class was on No.238, as well as some four-wheeled vehicles, and this train was following No.18. Now, Driver Nix resided in the single men's quarters up near the barracks at Muswellbrook and his home was in Newcastle. His aim was to catch No.18 home to Newcastle from Muswellbrook. In addition, he had to get up to the quarters to pick up his belongings. As stated before, No.238 Meat Express followed No. 18 out of Murrurundi. After No.18 Mail departed from Wingen, No.238 arrived, changed over crews with us and then we set sail. I still do not know what speed that goods engine and four-wheeled vehicles did that day, but it took 40 minutes to go from Wingen to Muswellbrook and Bill had time to go up to his hut, get his case and still catch No.18 to Newcastle. Admittedly, the Brisbane Mail stayed there for 25 minutes for breakfast. I estimate that I changed the staff at 60mph (100km/h) at Parkville and, had I missed it, we would have gone almost to Scone before we could have stopped! Similarly, the turnouts at Scone and Koolbury were taken at about five times normal speed. The distance travelled was 26 miles (43km) in the 40 minutes. The normal running time was 59 minutes. Guard Eric Studdert said he stood up with his hand on the emergency air tap but was not game to 'pull the tail' because he

feared what might happen if the drawgear had broken. He still brings it up whenever we meet, although it was over forty years ago!

On a slightly different note, one Christmas while I was at Muswellbrook, a job (No.67 Goods) had to be worked to Werris Creek on Christmas Eve night. This would result in a crew being in barracks at Werris Creek for Christmas Day, so it was decided that Percy Hanshaw and myself would be rostered, as we had ties in Werris Creek. No.17 Brisbane Mail came into Mus-







*The sector roundhouse at Muswellbrook was opened in 1946, replacing sparse facilities near the northern end of Muswellbrook station. As a result of the new depot's opening, extra enginemen were transferred to Muswellbrook, including a few from Werris Creek.*

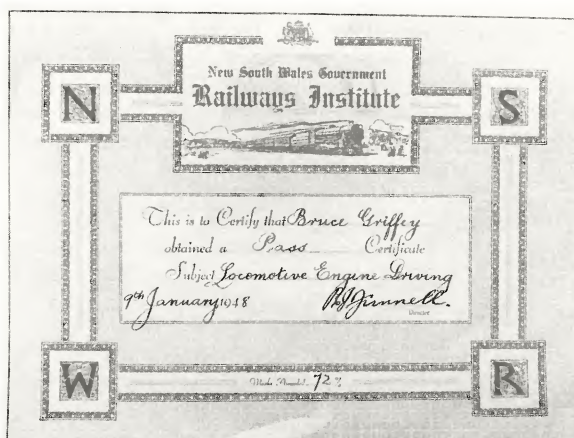
*R.D.Love*

wellbrook first and it stopped for Refreshment Room purposes for 25 minutes. After it departed, No.67 Goods came in and we had to de-ash the fire and take water before departing. Whilst up on the tender taking water, I glanced to the nearby staff room window of the Ref Room. Being a hot night, the girls were relaxing and had removed their uniforms and were in very brief forms of undress. Percy could not resist a "cock-a-doodle-doo" on the whistle which created a mild panic. To make things worse, we were all young and single at the time and knew these girls very well.

After all this, I was then 'travelled with' by a Loco Inspector for road knowledge over the various roads and passed as competent to drive the trains. I then became a shed fireman at Muswellbrook, whereby I worked with an acting fireman as my mate. Our job was to stable every engine that came into loco, examine it for defects, knock the fire down for the fuelman to rake the ashes out and assist the fuelman to shovel the coal forward on the tender, or top it up out of an S truck if required. In addition, we had to be chargeman and roster clerk by answering the telephones and making alterations to the roster. These alterations were extensive, because very few trains ran to time and crews had to be advised of their altered sign-on times. This was the job of the shed fireman's mate, who had to pedal off on his bike after the Control Officer at Newcastle or Werris Creek decided the approximate time the train would arrive at Muswellbrook. The shed fireman's mate, acting as callboy, would cop all the abuse, although it was not his fault the sign-on times had to be altered. In addition to all this clerical work, all engines leaving Loco had to be prepared as well.

After a few months of this, perhaps the hardest work I ever did on the railway, I then went out on

the road as an acting driver at Muswellbrook. On 3 July 1948 I was married and, late in 1949, I transferred back to Werris Creek where I had to do the compulsory three trips over each road in order to learn them, prior to being 'travelled with' by Travelling Inspector Rex Cundy to qualify me to drive over these roads. I then became a shed fireman again at Werris Creek, but what a difference in the working. There was a fresh crew signing on every two hours, which meant there were mostly three shed crews overlapping. The work consisted of preparing locos and relieving crews who were on duty long hours, and this meant perhaps half the shift would be spent out on the road. In addition, there was a 6.00am coal shunter shift, which was to shunt the coal trucks up and down the coal chutes on the stage and, at lunchtime, run the 'meal van' from Loco to the station so employees could go home for their meal. In mid-1950, after a few months of this working, I went out on the road full time as a driver.







*Superheated engine 3001 departs Temora with the passenger service to Griffith, using cars from the down Temora Mail, which arrived shortly before behind 3260. Note the fireman's spare shovel near 3001's number on side of cab and one of the uncommon aluminium-bodied MLVs behind the engine. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

*Saturated loco 3083 makes a fine sight in the cool morning air as it departs Temora with the Lake Cargelligo passenger connection from No.5 down Temora Mail. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*





*The roundhouse at Temora loco, where recently stabled 3260 shares the accommodation with 3285 and 3014. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

## STEAM WORKING IN SOUTH-WEST NEW SOUTH WALES IN 1961

*by Ian Wallace*

On the evening of Tuesday, 16 May 1961, a school friend, Geoff Percival, and I set off on a long rail trip to the south-west of NSW. We were both active members of the Railway Club at Homebush Boys High School and this was our final year at school. Later in 1961 we were to sit for our Leaving Certificate exams and this trip, in the May school vacation, was to be our last before our major studies for the exams. Neither of us had been to Temora, Griffith, Tumut, Batlow, or Cowra, so our itinerary was planned around these centres.

A great deal of planning went on beforehand, mainly by Geoff who was the timetable expert. Some weeks before our departure we went to the railway booking centre at Challis House in Sydney, where a helpful railway officer spent some considerable time issuing us with the one shared ticket to cover our entire journey, at very reasonable excursion rates. Because we were still school students we were unable to afford much in the way of accommodation so we left several nights unplanned. However, to satisfy our parents, we booked one night at the railway bedroom accommodation at Junee. The uncertainty

of how we were to spend the remaining evenings added to the sense of adventure. We knew the weather could be cool, so warm clothing was taken. We travelled with minimal luggage as we knew we would be attempting to get as many engine cab rides as we could. Sleeping bags and overalls were a must. So, too, was a liberal supply of tinned fruit, packets of biscuits and other foodstuffs to help sustain us at reasonable cost.

Recording the steam action by photography was one of the important aspects of the trip, so we were each armed with cameras and a supply of film. We each had an ADOX Golf camera which used 120 film to produce 2¼ x 2¼ inch (6 x 6cm) negatives. These cameras were primitive by modern standards but, at our age, they were all we could afford and they took reasonable quality photographs. They were relatively small and compact, a necessity for our type of travel as they were almost invariably hanging around our necks, ready for action. The film I preferred then was ADOX R17, of only 40ASA (17DIN), which was excellent in good light, but limited the opportunities for photos in poor light,



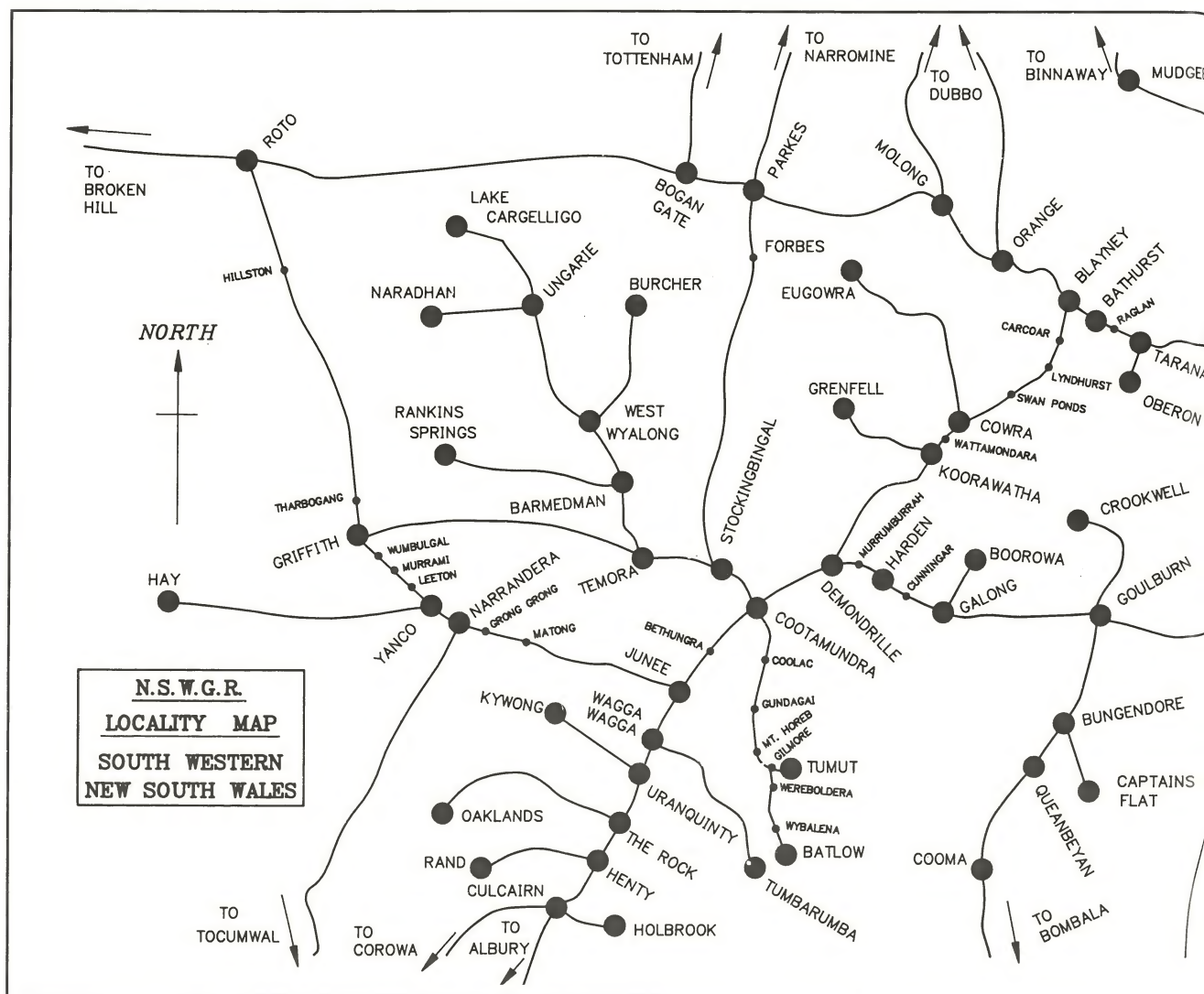
particularly with the f6.3 lens on my camera. Nearly all the photographs accompanying this article were taken using that film. I also had some Kodak Tri-X, a much faster film intended for use if light conditions became very poor. This latter film had been given to me by a neighbourhood chemist as its expiry date had long been passed. I regret now that I used this expired film as it did not respond well to my processing technique and produced a very grainy image. Unfortunately, I had to learn the hard way! All the photo processing was done by the writer under very basic conditions.

Each of us was also fairly handy with a fireman's shovel. We had practised our technique many times on previous trips and during the many cab rides we obtained before and after school in the nearby Flemington stock yards. We found that some locomotive crews took us a bit more seriously if we were appropriately dressed in overalls and offered to fire. Some were amused by it.

We departed from Strathfield station with great expectations on a fine cool autumn evening, on

board No 5 down Temora Mail with streamlined 3803 in the lead. The cars were EHO, MHO, MHO, CS, LAM, CR, ACS 7/270 tons (274t). The ACS composite sitting/sleeping car was to be detached at Harden for the Cowra line connection. The leading EHO was probably in lieu of the KP van which normally travelled between Sydney and Cootamundra on the down Temora Mail to be transferred to the following No.23 Through South Mail at Cootamundra for transit to Junee.

The relatively light load, for holiday times, did not really extend the 38 over the grades between Picton and Mittagong, and we arrived at Moss Vale at 11.17pm, two minutes early. We noted 3829 at Moss Vale, cooling its heels overnight, waiting to return the Moss Vale passenger service to Sydney next morning. This engine would also stand pilot for all mail and express trains overnight. This meant that the engine was kept in steam, ready to take over from any ailing engine on one of these late night/early morning trains between, say, Picton and south of Moss Vale. We departed Moss Vale at



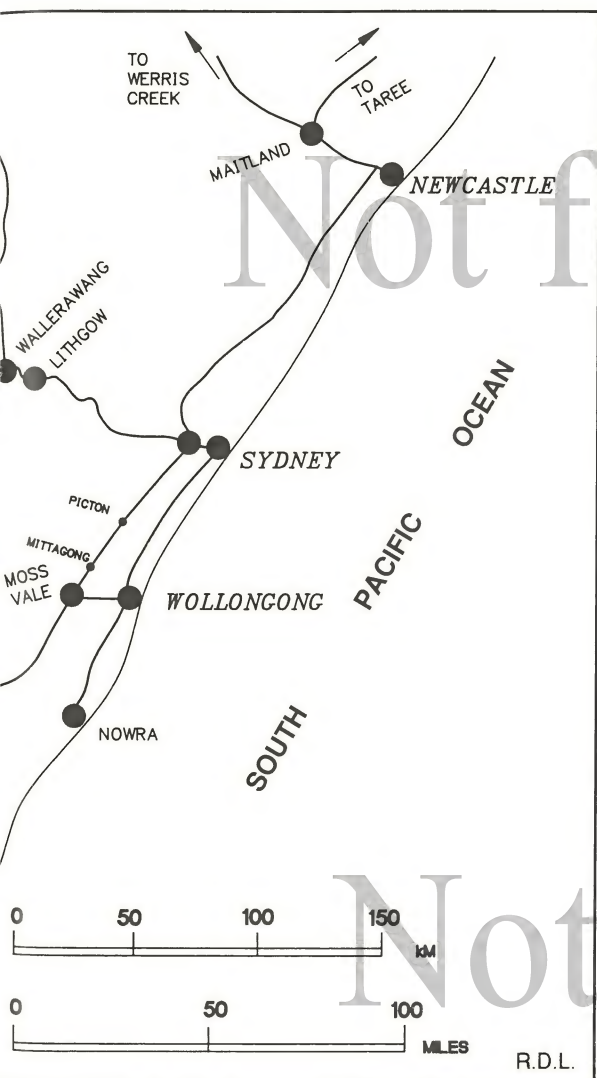
11.29pm, after the refreshment stop and time for 3803 to be serviced.

I have little recollection of the rest of the journey between Moss Vale and Cootamundra and my records are also limited. My notes do record an arrival at Goulburn at 12.39am and a departure at 12.53am. Noted as we passed Goulburn yards and loco were 5614 and 5616. One could usually see a K (D55) class at Goulburn in those days. We arrived at Harden at 4.24am, again two minutes early, and departed at 4.35am, one minute late after detaching the ACS. Our eventual arrival at Cootamundra, at 5.45am, was four minutes late but we didn't mind because we had steam all the way. My previous trip to Cootamundra on the Temora Mail, four months earlier, had been behind a new 4904 on its delivery run to Parkes. That had been a dreadfully slow trip with much late running. Unlike on that previous trip, which was in mid summer, our arrival at Cootamundra in May was in complete darkness. On arrival, 3803 and the EHO were uncoupled from the rest of the train. Almost immediately afterwards,

3211 departed Cootamundra with the goods train to Forbes which connected with the down Temora Mail at Stockinbingal, providing spartan passenger accommodation.

I can still recall vividly the walk from Cootamundra station down to 'loco' in the cool pre-dawn morning, and standing amongst the warm steam issuing from one of the cylinders of a Standard Goods engine standing outside the small iron locomotive shed. In loco at the time were 1058, 3004T, 3051T, 3065T, 3260, 3345, 3669, 3674, 5258, 5276, 5364, 5444. 5276 was under repairs in the shed and 3803 joined the other engines in loco while we were there. Shortly after, 3260 proceeded from loco, collected an MLV authorised for passenger speeds, added an EHO van and a CR composite sitting car and coupled on to the Sydney end of the re-formed Temora Mail for the journey to Temora.

We departed Cootamundra, still in darkness, at 6.15am, ten minutes late, behind 3260 hauling MLV, EHO, CR, CR, LAM, CS, MHO, MHO, 8/292 tons (297t), quite a good load for a P class on this



DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS, NEW SOUTH WALES.

No. 1468

**S. P. R. TOUR TICKET S. P. R.**  
*Second Class*

Fare, £ 5 : 7 : 8

Issued to Messrs G. Percival and R. Wallace.

Date of Travel.	Journeys Available for—	
	From	To
1961 May 16	Sydney	Temora
17	Temora	Junee
18	Junee	Narranderra
	Narranderra	Griffith
	Griffith	Narranderra
	Narranderra	Cootamundra
19	Cootamundra	Gilmore
	Gilmore	Batlow
	Batlow	Tumut
	Tumut	Cootamundra
	Cootamundra	Harden
20	Harden	Blayney
	Blayney	Sydney

Any slight variation from the above dates may be permitted.

This ticket will be accepted only for the journeys specified and on the dates shown.  
 If ticket has any alteration or erasure, it will not be honored.  
 Issued subject to the provisions of the Government Railways Act, 1912, as amended,  
 and the by-laws thereunder.

*The tour ticket issued for the trip over five days in 1961. How far could two people travel in 1990 for \$10.77?*



train. The run to Temora passed over numerous sections of 1 in 75 grades making it hard going for the old P class, which often appeared to be plodding along at a pedestrian pace. A slow run was made in pea soup fog to Stockinbingal, junction for the cross country line to Forbes and Parkes. It had just become light when we reached Stockinbingal, where 3211 was waiting with the goods to Forbes. The slow, almost ponderous journey, still in fog, continued to Temora. I was surprised at the slow progress, but the train was maintaining time. The fog lifted just before we arrived at Temora at 7.37am.

After the train drew to a halt at Temora station we removed ourselves and luggage from the train and proceeded quickly to the front of the platform to photograph 3260 on the Mail. Alas, we were beaten by a very fast uncoupling of 3260 and had to be satisfied with a view of it as it moved off to loco. Then followed some very fancy shunting as the trains to Griffith and Lake Cargelligo were assembled at Temora station, using most of the cars brought in on the Mail. The LAM sleeping car was detached at Temora and stored in a nearby road, while an MLV was added to the consist.

While the connecting services were being marshalled, we took up a position just beyond where the lines to Griffith and Lake Cargelligo diverge, so we could photograph the respective trains departing. I can still clearly remember the monotonous sounds coming from the old flour mill opposite our photo spot.

At 8.03am, superheated 3001T departed Temora for Griffith with MLV, CS, MHO while, at 8.13am, saturated 3083T departed for Lake Cargelligo with a more substantial load comprising EHO, CR, MHO, CR, MLV. The locos on both trains presented a magnificent sight as they steamed out of Temora, each with steam and smoke highlighted by the crisp, cool morning air. We wondered why the more powerful, superheated locomotive was on the lighter train. In common with all 30Ts we saw at Temora, both 3001 and 3083 had bogie tenders.

When we inspected Temora loco, 3260 was being turned and stabled in the roundhouse. Also in loco were 3014T, 3088T, 3285, 3356 and, surprisingly, 5602, an Enfield engine, a long way from home. Saturated engine, 3061T was stored near the roundhouse.

Temora was an important, but relatively small depot, with a roundhouse of nine roads, comprising the main construction of six roads and an addition of three more roads. There were many other roads in the open, radiating from the 60ft (18.3m) turntable. Coaling was facilitated by an elevated electric coal grab. At the time, Temora had an allotment of 10/30T (5 superheated, 5 saturated) and 5/32 class, for working the numerous branch lines and connecting links centred on Temora. These were the branch lines Barmedman - Rankins Springs, Wyalong Central - Burcher, Ungarie - Naradhan, and the Lake Cargelligo line as well as the cross country line to Griffith.

At 9.33am, 3356 departed for Griffith with a

goods train partly composed of loco ash in S trucks. Again, 3356 presented a superb sight as it stamped out of Temora with a plume of smoke and steam. Was it a function of the particular weather conditions or did Temora crews like creating lots of steam and smoke? Whatever the reason, we appreciated the spectacle.

We travelled back from Temora to Cootamundra on the diesel train connection to the up *Riverina Express*, departing Temora 11.15am, arriving Cootamundra 12.16pm. My notes say it was a rough ride!

On arrival at Cootamundra, we moved immediately to the northern end of the yard to photograph No.36 up *Riverina Express* departing. Beyer-Garratt 6014 was waiting in the yard with a lengthy up goods and 5258 was shunting the northern yard. At 12.30pm, 3827 departed Cootamundra with the *Riverina Express*, making a fine sight as it passed under the large signal gantry, quickly gaining speed for its fast run north. I had always wanted to photograph the up *Riverina Express* departing Cootamundra after admiring the photo of green 3826 on this express in *A Century of Locomotives*, published in 1955. I knew I wouldn't encounter a green 3826 but was very happy to accept a black 3827. It looked great! Shortly after, 6014 departed with the up goods and 3613 arrived on a down goods.

A further inspection of Cootamundra loco revealed the presence of 1058, 3004T, 3065T, 3345, 3613, 3803, 5276, 5364, 5369 and 5444. It appeared that, on this day, the 19 class engines were out at Tumut. Cootamundra's normal allotment at the time was: 3/19, 4/30T, 3/32 and 2/50. The three 19 class were for Batlow working, though it was normal for one engine to be at Cootamundra while the other two were at Tumut. All the 30Ts had six-wheel tenders for turning on Tumut's 50ft (15.2m) turntable. The Tumut branch was the main working for Cootamundra's 30T class engines. At the time of our visit 3082T, one of Cootamundra's saturated 30Ts was on loan to Narrandera depot, being swapped with 3345 while Cootamundra's 3269 was in Eveleigh Workshops. Cootamundra's P class engines mainly worked to Temora and Parkes, but saw some service on the main line between Goulburn and Junee. Of the two 50 class, one (5102) was superheated, the other (5197) was saturated. Generally used for shunting the yards, I always found 5197 rather elusive at Cootamundra. While we were at Cootamundra, 6007 arrived from Junee on an up goods and 3630 + 3229 came into loco, coupled together, having worked in from Goulburn on a down goods. It occurred to me that both of the goods trains we saw at Cootamundra which were worked by a 60 class locomotive may well have been worked by a 57 class several years, or even months, earlier. Times were changing and not for the better from my viewpoint, as I had hoped to see some 57 class working on this trip. I was to be disappointed.

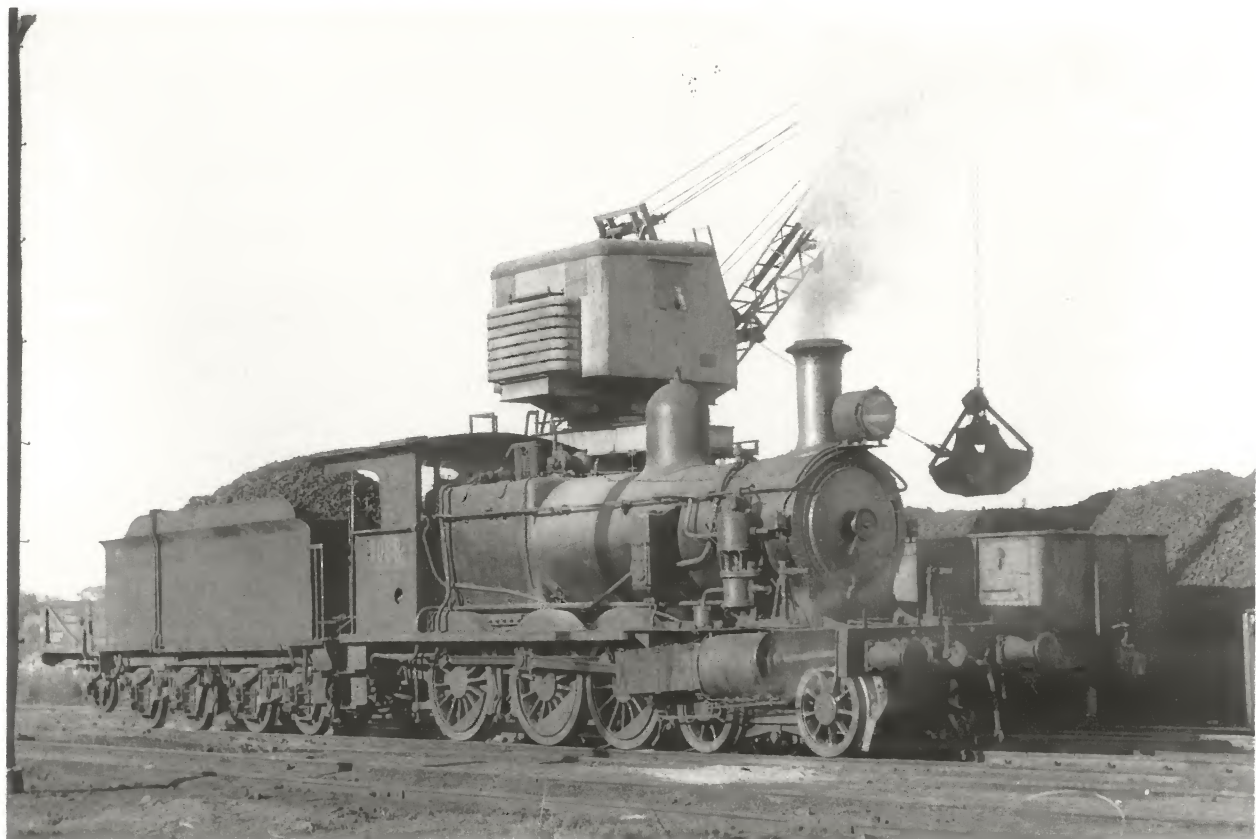
We travelled from Cootamundra to Junee on the diesel-hauled (42 class) No.65 down *Sydney-Melbourne Daylight Express*, departing Cootamundra 2.08pm, arriving Junee 2.56pm. I remember little





*3260 on the turntable at Temora loco prior to being stabled. Earlier, 3260 had worked in No.5 Temora Mail from Cootamundra. To the left of the picture is stored 3061 and, to the right, the tender of 3285. Note 3260's original Beyer, Peacock low frame. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

*3088 at Temora loco adjacent to the elevated coaling facility. All the 30Ts seen at Temora were fitted with bogie tenders, giving extra capacity of coal and water for branch line working. 3088 was the first 30 class to be converted to a tender engine, in 1928. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*







*Keeping up the good smoke custom, 3356 takes the left fork onto the line to Griffith with a mixed goods, the leading trucks of which were laden with loco ash. 3356 was a Temora engine at the time. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

of the journey except looking out of the windows of the air-conditioned train near the Bethungra spiral and noting the extensive growth of mistletoe on the eucalypt trees near the line. It's strange what one remembers after nearly 30 years!

Junee loco is situated some distance south of the railway station. We walked down there, after noting saturated engines 5084 and 5178 shunting near the station. Junee normally had five saturated 50 class on its allotment, for shunting at Junee and Albury. In 1961 these engines were 5084, 5099, 5120, 5178 and 5188. Generally there were three at Junee (5084, 5099 and 5178) and two at Albury (5120 and 5188).

Junee was a big depot and had an impressive, modern-looking roundhouse. Junee's normal allotment at the time was 2/10, 6/30T, 8/32, 5 saturated 50, 6 superheated 50 and 5/53. Junee's 10 class comprised No.23 (actually 1036), which was used around the depot for moving 'dead' engines, and 1080, a 50 ton (50.8t) heavy accident crane, commonly seen working near the coal stage lifting coal hoppers containing coal for locomotives. The 30T class locomotives were mainly employed on the branch lines south of Junee, namely Wagga Wagga - Tumbarumba, Uranquinty - Kywong, The Rock - Oaklands, Henty - Rand, Culcairn - Corowa and Culcairn - Holbrook. Out-depots at The Rock and Culcairn generally had a couple of Junee's 30Ts for these workings. Refer to Ray Love's article in the October, 1988 issue of *Roundhouse* for further

details on the out-depots at Wagga Wagga, The Rock and Culcairn.

The line between Junee and Narrandera also saw some working from Junee-based 30Ts, commonly as assistant engines. Junee's 32 class engines worked mainly to Narrandera and on the main line, commonly to Cootamundra and to Wagga Wagga (or beyond).

Superheated 50 class and 53 class engines based at Junee worked on the main line between Goulburn and Albury as well as to Narrandera. Only the 50 class were permitted on the abovementioned branch lines, the 53 class being too heavy. Most of Junee's 53 class were fitted with specially balanced driving wheels, permitting faster running, and saw a good deal of work on fruit expresses and fast stock trains as well as on normal goods services.

In Junee loco on this Wednesday, 17 May 1961 were: 23 (1036), 1080, 3033T, 3119T, 3129T, 3218, 3270, 3308, 3617, 3624, 3632, 3638, 3647, 5118, 5163, 5197, 5224, 5256, 5342 and 5390. Cootamundra's saturated 50 class, 5197, must have been helping out at Junee. The major change since my previous visit in January 1961 was the replacement, by 36 class locomotives, of several Standard Goods engines, particularly 53 class engines fitted with specially balanced driving wheels. The 'Pigs' were much faster and more versatile, even if they didn't have quite the hauling capacity of the TFs. These 53 class engines were a feature of deep south working and it was a shame to see them reduced in



*Enfield engine 5602 is a long way from home as it simmers away beside one of the coal stages at Temora depot. The roundhouse is in the background. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

*3827 stamps out of Cootamundra at the head of No.36 up 'Riverina Express', an eight-car, air-conditioned RUB set weighing 348 tons (354t). Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*







After the up 'Riverina Express' has cleared the section, 6014 lifts its long load out of Cootamundra yard on an up goods, passing beneath the impressive signal gantry. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.

number. Later in 1961, all five of Junee's 53 class were transferred to Enfield depot, 36 class engines taking their place.

Stored at Junee were 5177, 5532, 5581, 5588, 5713, 5714, 5717 and 5725. The three K class were frames only; all were former oil burners. Some of the 57 class locos had been withdrawn from service only recently. It saddened me to see these huge locomotives, apparently still in reasonable working order, relegated to uselessness, rusting away in sidings and being scavenged to keep the remaining member of the class (5711) in service. I held then, and still do, very vivid memories of 5713 and 5714 in steam, working on the south.

In the roundhouse, 3129T had been in a minor front end collision requiring straightening of the buffer beam and frame. 3270 and 5342 were also undergoing repairs. Later in the afternoon, as shadows lengthened, 5227 brought in a long goods from Albury, the loading of which included many new Ford Falcon motor cars.

We made our way back to the station, the last part at running pace after we saw from a distance the arrival of No.15 down *Riverina Express*, hauled by a streamlined 38 class which we soon saw was 3805. Shortly after the express came to a stand 3218 backed the three car 'rail motor' connecting service to Griffith alongside the northern end of the platform behind the express. It was not uncommon for this service to be loco-hauled in holiday times and 3218 departed with FR, BR, EHO shortly after 5pm, followed by the 38-hauled *Riverina Express* itself at

5.10pm, heading for Albury. We were very pleased to see this working, but reflected that it would have been even better to witness and photograph the *Riverina Express* service to Griffith on Mondays or Fridays, when the entire air-conditioned RUB set, usually 348 tons (354t), was worked by a P class from Junee to Griffith.

It is disappointing for me to reflect back on this afternoon at Junee and recall that I elected not to photograph No.15 at Junee as it was hauled by 3805, a locomotive that I had previously photographed several times on this train in the Sydney area. At the time, 3805 was almost a nuisance as it appeared to follow me around wherever I went. In our rush to photograph 3218, on the 'rail motor' service, at the northern end of Junee station, we ran past 3805 on the express. After the departure of 3218, I simply could not summon the energy to walk to the other end of the station to photograph the departure of the express. How I regret that short-sighted decision now and how we used to take for granted the everyday sight of a 38 on the *Riverina Express* at Strathfield station as we travelled to school. What I would give for the opportunity to take that photograph now!

After dark, we retired to the railway bedroom accommodation, above Junee railway station. This accommodation was spartan, but it was clean and comfortable and, importantly for us, inexpensive and so close to the railway action.

Next morning, Thursday, 18 May 1961, we looked forward to our trip to Narrandera and Grif-



*Goulburn-based 5444, fitted with specially balanced driving wheels, denoted by the 'X' on the front buffer beam, stands outside the shed at Cootamundra loco on Wednesday, 17 May 1961. 3345 lurks behind 5444 and the jib of Cootamundra's steam coal grab 1058 is in the background, on left of photo.*

*Saturated T class engine 5178 rushes past the camera whilst shunting Junee yards in the afternoon of Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*





fith and awaited the arrival of the P class to couple onto the cars of No.23 down Through South Mail which had left Sydney at 9.50pm the previous night. For some reason which I cannot recall, I missed the precise arrival of the Mail from Sydney, hauled by a 38 class, with six cars: KP, MHO, MHO, CS, FS, TAM. Unfortunately, the 38 was quickly uncoupled from the Mail and proceeded off to loco before it could be photographed.

Our eagerly awaited P class turned out to be 3643. This was not expected and was my first experience of 'Pigs' working to Narrandera. As much as I admired the 36 class, I would have preferred a P class on this trip. The first of its class to receive a Belpaire boiler and new cab in 1953, 3643 was coupled to the Sydney end of the Mail after some shunting to reassemble the cars for the trip to Narrandera. The five car train finally assembled was EAM, TAM, CS, FS, MHO, 212 tons (215t). The EAM sleeper had been added to the other cars brought into Junee, presumably for balancing purposes. The KP and an MHO were detached at Junee. At 8.15am, 3643 departed Junee for Narrandera and proceeded along at a moderate rather than fast pace. I must admit I expected more from the 'Pig' with such a light load but probably the timetable did not demand faster running. At Matong, 3382 was crossed on the up 'rail motor' service, hauling EHO, BR, FR. Also at Matong, we crossed 5256 on a down goods. For a few minutes Matong was chock-a-block with railway working. At Grong Grong 5390, which must have worked out to Narrandera during the night, was crossed on an up goods. 5390 was fitted with specially balanced driving wheels and had been a Junee stalwart for many years.

We had a 23 minute stop at Narrandera to visit loco while engines were changed. Thankfully, Narrandera loco was adjacent to the station. Narrandera depot's normal allotment at the time was: 1/25, 10/30T (5 superheated, 5 saturated), 2/32. There was, however, some swapping and loaning of engines between Junee, Narrandera, Cootamundra and Temora depots, particularly with 30T and 32 class engines. Narrandera depot supplied 30T and 32 class locomotives and crews to work to Hay, Tocumwal and Griffith, as well as some working back to Junee. Griffith out-depot used Narrandera engines to work to Hillston and Roto and to Temora. Present at Narrandera on the day were 2543 (stored), 3028T, 3082T, 3209, 3218, 3241, 3245, 3647, 3651 and 5056. 3241 was yard shunter. Soon 3643 joined these in loco and 3082 whistled out to couple onto the Griffith passenger. The cars had been modified to CS, FS, MHO, EHO which really looked great behind the saturated 30T with six-wheel, ex-P class tender. The two sleeping cars were left at Narrandera.

At 10.32am, 3082 set off in earnest on what was a beautiful autumn day. We had a cab ride from Leeton to Wumbulgal. A superheated 30T was shunting the Letona cannery siding at Leeton, but its number was obscured. After leaving the irrigated land, the countryside became more monotonous. At Wumbulgal, a lengthy signal check just before the

platform saw 3328, complete with cowcatcher, enter the loop on a short up goods. After crossing this goods at Wumbulgal, a slow but steady trip brought us to Griffith where we arrived at 12.42pm.

The railway complex at Griffith was much larger and busier than I had expected. An out-depot of Narrandera, Griffith loco is quite picturesque with jacaranda trees and weeping willows adding to its appeal. In loco were 3131T and 3285 to which was added 3082. Busily shunting the yards were 3047T, 3059T and 3089T. It was at Griffith that 2543 finished its working life, shunting the yards which served a thriving community based on irrigated produce. It is a pity we missed 2543 in action as it had been withdrawn from service only months before. At 1.15pm, superheated 3089 left, tender first and with a four-wheel water gin, on a shunting trip to Tharbogang, some 7km towards Hillston. During our stay at Griffith, 3082 was serviced and made ready to work the afternoon passenger service back to Narrandera.

Around 3.25pm, superheated 3131, with attached bogie water gin, was coupled to a fairly lengthy goods train with passenger accommodation that had been marshalled by the shunting 30Ts and departed Griffith for Hillston and Roto. This train, No.39 goods, made a fine sight as it rounded the large curve just outside Griffith station. We wished we could have gone along for the ride. The Working Timetable showed an arrival time at Roto some seven hours later for this goods service.

At about 4.25pm, 3082 departed with No.10 passenger, connecting with the up Through South Mail, hauling EHO, CS, FS, MHO. Again, we rode back in 3082's cab between Griffith and Yanco with the same crew and took it in turns to do the firing. At Murrumbidgee, against a background of the large grain handling terminal, this train made a great sight with the last of the sun's rays brilliantly illuminating the side of the train. This was our last photo for the day. It was dark by the time we reached Leeton and the driver asked us to leave the engine at Yanco so he could arrive back at his home station, Narrandera, and not be 'copped' for having a couple of young blokes in the cab. We were happy to oblige as we had been given two really good cab rides during the day. We trundled into Narrandera at 6.45pm and 3082 was detached. There appeared to be several more 30Ts in and near the shed at Narrandera loco, so we set off to investigate. Again, 23 minutes were allowed for refreshments, engine changing and recomposing the train. This time in loco were 2543 (stored), 3022T, 3028T, 3082T (just arrived), 3086T, 3108T, 3209, 3218, 3328, 3643, 3650, 5056 and 5256. Arriving back at the station, we noted that 3643 had been coupled to the Mail for the journey to Junee. Its load was EHO, EAM, EAM, TAM, CS, FS, MHO - 7/283 tons (288t), already quite a reasonable consist. We were too tired to seek a cab ride in 3643. In retrospect it is easy to regret that, but I can remember how tired we sometimes felt on these trips due to lack of sleep and often spending many hours firing steam locos.

On arrival at Junee at 9.15pm, after a good,



*The afternoon shadows are lengthening as 5227 arrives at Junee with an up goods from Albury, conveying a substantial number of new Ford Falcon motor cars. The two tracks to the right of the photo lead to Junee loco depot. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*

*The down 'Riverina Express' stands at the southern end of Junee station with 3805 at the head. At the northern end of the platform, Junee engine 3218 has backed the three cars comprising the 'rail motor' service to Narrandera and Griffith to stop behind the express. Included in its train is FR1643, the only elliptical roof FR. Commonly loco-hauled in holiday times, the connecting service departed before the express continued its journey to Albury. Wednesday, 17 May 1961.*







*The scene at the western end of Narrandera loco showing the two road, iron shed and the coal stage at left. Standing outside, left to right, are 3028, 3082 and 3218, the P having an electric headlight fitted to the rear of its tender. 3082 is about to depart loco to take out the down passenger service to Griffith. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*

uneventful run from Narrandera, 3643 was uncoupled from the Albury end of the train and proceeded to loco while a 44 class was coupled to the Sydney end to convey the Mail northward. We expected a 38 but were pleased we only had to travel as far as Cootamundra behind the 44. We hated diesels, as we could see the extent to which their introduction was displacing steam working.

We arrived at Cootamundra at 10.42pm and had to wait until 7.00am next morning for the scheduled departure of the Tumut passenger, which would convey us to Gilmore for the Batlow branch. It was quite cold by now so, as we again visited Cootamundra loco, we warmed ourselves in the cab of any engine in steam. After getting reasonably warm, as well as more tired, we returned to the station where we dosed down in a CR composite sitting car standing in the dock platform at Cootamundra. We thought it would be one of the cars to go to Tumut next morning. We slept poorly as we had the gnawing feeling that if we slept too soundly and were in a carriage destined for some train other than the Tumut passenger, we may wake up anywhere. Early on the Friday morning, we were wakened by a station hand who brought foot-warmers into the carriage for the journey to Tumut. Startled to see us there, he confirmed that our carriage would be going to Tumut. We felt some relief at that and also at the fact that he didn't ask us to leave.

We were vaguely aware of various trains coming and going during the night. Apart from goods trains and shunting activity in the adjacent yards, the following trains passed through or stopped at Cootamundra: Nos 1 & 4 Melbourne expresses (both 38-hauled), Nos 2 & 3 Melbourne Limited expresses (diesel-hauled) and No.5 down Temora Mail (3821). We finally woke up with the arrival at 6.27am of No.23 down Through South Mail, on the morning of Friday, 19 May 1961. After its departure at 6.40am, our passenger service to Tumut was marshalled behind 3065, a saturated engine with a six-wheel, ex-P class tender. The three-car train was composed of ACS and EHO, which arrived from Sydney on the Mail, in addition to our CR.

The Tumut passenger train duly departed at 7.20am, twenty minutes late, and proceeded at a leisurely pace to Coolac where the first photographs were taken. We then travelled through very attractive countryside, particularly near Gundagai in the picturesque valley of the Murrumbidgee River. I recall the apparent confined space of the Gundagai railway station where we stopped for ten minutes for refreshments and loco servicing. Also, I was most impressed with the very long timber trestle across the Murrumbidgee River flood plain and the steel span bridge over the river itself. A three-minute stop at Mt Horeb enabled me to join the cab of 3065 for a cab ride to Gilmore. The driver would allow only one of us in the cab and I was the lucky one.



*On loan to Narrandera depot from Cootamundra, 3082, a saturated engine with six-wheel, ex-P class tender, stands at Leeton station at the head of the down Griffith passenger connection from No.23 Through South Mail. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*

*A view from the cab of 3082 on the down Griffith passenger service as it prepares to cross 3328 on a short up goods at Wumbulgal, a crossing loop between Narrandera and Griffith. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*

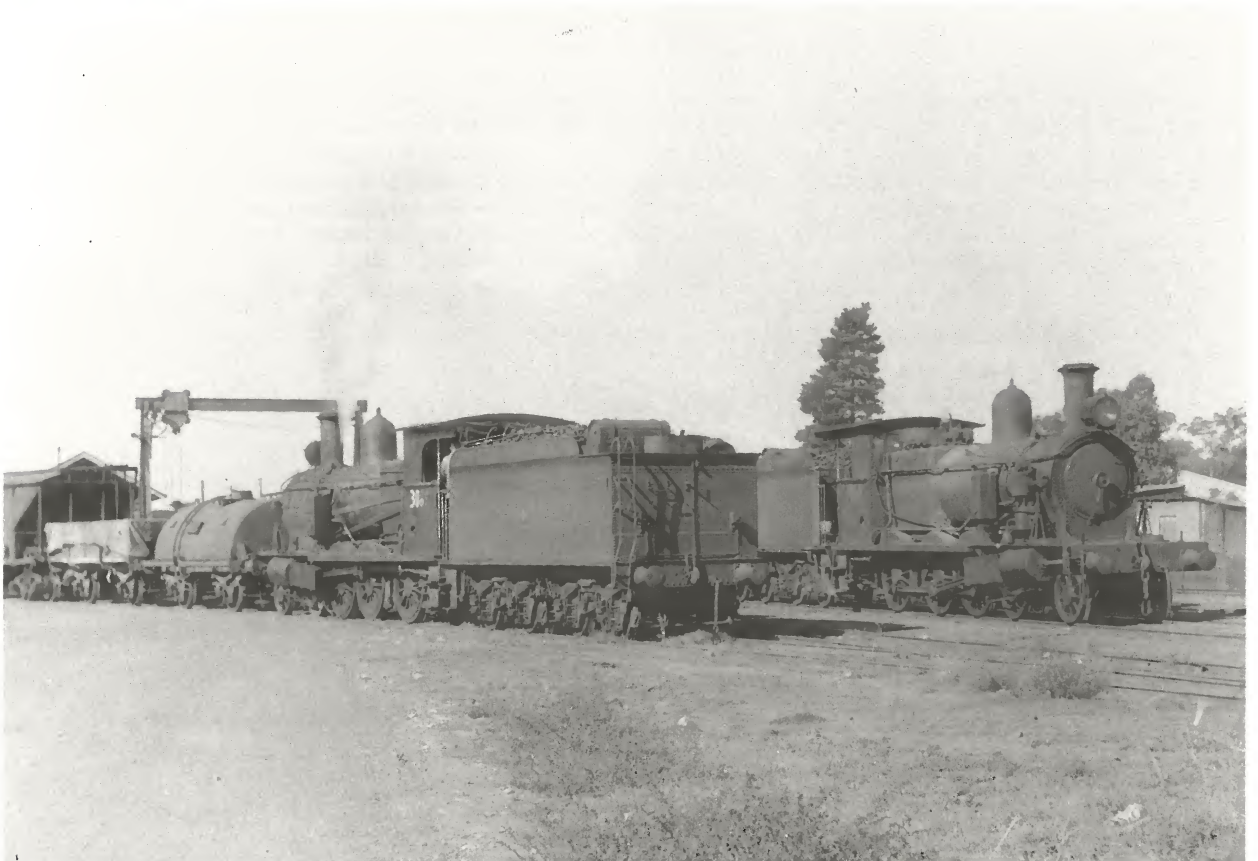






*At the head of an up goods, Narrandera based 3328, one of very few P class at the time fitted with a cowcatcher, stands in the loop at Wumbulgal to allow the down Griffith passenger service, hauled by 3082, to cross. The Narrandera P class engines worked over many unfenced lines, thus warranting a cowcatcher. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*

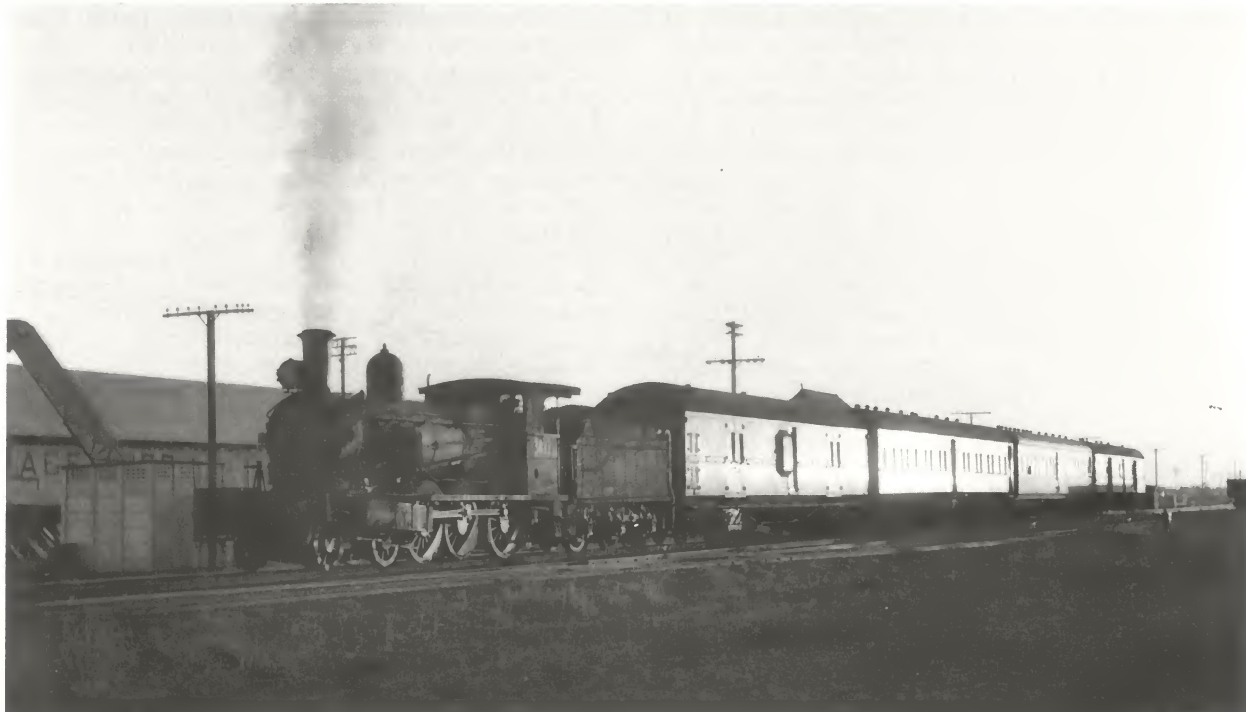
*Superheated engine 3089 with four-wheel water gin prepares to depart Griffith for Tharbogang, on a shunting trip, while 3059, a saturated engine, goes about its shunting duties. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*





*Superheated 30T class locomotive 3131 departs Griffith on No.39 goods (with passenger accommodation) for Hillston and Roto. The bogie water gin behind the tender should ensure that 3131 does not run out of water on the long trip across remote, often windswept, plains with limited watering facilities en route. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*

*The grain handling centre of Murrumbidgee, near Leeton is the location for this late afternoon photo of 3082 on the passenger service between Griffith and Narrandera, connecting with No.10 up Through South Mail. 3082 is standing at Murrumbidgee platform with EHO, CS, FS, MHO. Thursday, 18 May 1961.*





There were good opportunities on the many curves to take photos out of the engine. The train moved along fairly slowly on the light track, with the engine steaming hard over the grades between Mt Horeb and Gilmore. Shortly, we arrived at Gilmore, the junction station for the Batlow line. Waiting in the island-platform was 1938 with the Batlow mixed, a great sight in the still-cool morning air. In common with all six 19 class engines then used for branch line working, 1938 had a bogie tender. However, in contrast to the others, 1938 was the only one not fitted with an electric headlight. As far as I can ascertain, the tender on 1938 was a hand-me-down Baldwin-built tender from a scrapped L(Z21) class locomotive.

Before 3065 departed Gilmore for the short trip to Tumut, there was much activity on Gilmore platform, unloading parcels and mail and transferring some of it to the HS, a composite side-loading car with guard's compartment, at the rear of the Batlow mixed. The mixed was quite an impressive train leaving Gilmore, comprising LV, MBC, MLV, MLV, S and HS. The louvre vans were empty, being returned to Batlow for fruit loading. The S truck contained metal drums. The MBC was left at Wereboldera, slightly higher in altitude than Gilmore, but still at the floor of the valley before the steep climb to Batlow. It was normal practice to leave one or more trucks at Wereboldera in order to reduce the load to Batlow to no more than 100 tons (101t). Such trucks would be picked up by a subsequent train.

The trip to Batlow was leisurely and beautifully scenic. Wereboldera itself is in a beautiful setting, with weeping willows forming a most attractive background to the small, well kept platform which was provided with a substantial shelter shed. The climb was soon on in earnest, the 1 in 25 grade being really noticeable as one looked out the window of the HS at the track ahead. The 5 chain (100m) radius curves were tighter than one would think possible for a train to negotiate. The wheels on the rolling stock groaned each time a tight curve was negotiated, the tightest curves being supplied with a check rail on the inside rail. Throughout all this, 1938 performed superbly, lifting its little train so surely towards Batlow. In fact, for most of the time, 1938 was blowing off, so effortlessly was it maintaining its steam pressure.

Excellent accounts of the workings of the 19 class on the Batlow branch can be found in Ron Preston's book *Tender into Tank* and his article in the October 1979 issue of *Roundhouse* entitled 'Batlow Revisited'. A measure of the slow pace of the trip can be gained from the timetable which allowed 86 minutes for the 10.3 mile (16.6km) journey between Wereboldera and Batlow. However, over this relatively short distance, the line rose about 1500 feet (455m).

On arrival at Batlow, 1938 was detached from its train, turned and serviced. It then engaged in some shunting, placing the louvre vans into the fruit sidings and collecting two S trucks loaded with sawn timber and one tarpaulin-covered S truck to which

was added the HS for the return journey.

While all this was happening, we went down town and bought some lunch. I can remember having one of the original Chiko rolls as we headed back to the station and made a brief inspection of part of the Kunama line, still intact. It was in 1961 that class-leader 1901 worked the last train over the Kunama extension to recover construction materials.

We spoke to the friendly crew of 1938 at Batlow and organised a cab ride for the return journey. They were a colourful pair. The driver was a young middle aged man in navy boiler suit and peaked cap, while his mate, the fireman, was an older man, almost at retirement age it seemed, wearing khaki bib-and-brace overalls and a Stetson hat. They conversed freely with us and answered the many questions we asked. I think they found it a little unusual, and perhaps amusing, that we would be so interested in what to them was a routine job. They had experienced several railway enthusiasts before.

It is perhaps appropriate here to reflect generally on the crews we encountered, on numerous trips. When approaching a crew to ask for a cab ride, we often made first contact with the fireman, generally a younger man more our age. He usually replied, "You'd better ask my mate [the driver]." On several occasions, this was immediately followed by a curt "... but watch out, he's a cranky old b\_\_\_\_\_!" Some drivers refused point blank, others were guarded saying, "OK, but wait until we get to the next station". On the odd occasion, permission was granted for just one to join the cab.

We were fortunate in that many drivers did allow cab rides, with or without conditions attached. Some crews were enthusiastic and talkative, others were quiet and restrained. Generally there appeared to be good camaraderie between driver and fireman and only rarely did we experience otherwise. Most crews were happy for us to do some firing, in fact some thought it a huge joke that we could actually derive pleasure from firing a steam engine. To them it was just a job, often involving hard, dirty work. I noticed that many firemen had different techniques for laying a fire. What you learned from one particular fireman was not necessarily appropriate for the next. Some didn't care too much, others were very pedantic, and one can understand this as steam pressure had to be maintained and the engine had to perform properly, particularly under exacting conditions. It was all an education for us, sometimes tiring, but always enjoyable.

The up mixed departed at 1.50pm and, after a brief stop at Wybalena at the brakes landmark to apply hand brakes before the steep descent, we proceeded down the beautiful valley at a leisurely pace. Again the wheel flanges groaned as they pressed against the rails on the tight curves. Occasionally the crew had to sound the whistle and slow down even further for sheep that found the railway track an irresistible resting place. Rabbits darted from rock outcrop to burrow. There was just no way that the train working on the Batlow line could be compared with the *Newcastle Flyer* or an



*The down Tumut passenger service stands at Coolac station in early morning sunshine. The fireman of 3065 is putting on a fire while the driver 'spends a penny' in the station convenience on right, having thoughtfully left his tucker box outside. Friday, 19 May 1961.*



*A view of the Tumut branch line between Mt Horeb and Gilmore as 3065 works hard up a grade with the down Tumut passenger train on Friday, 19 May 1961.*





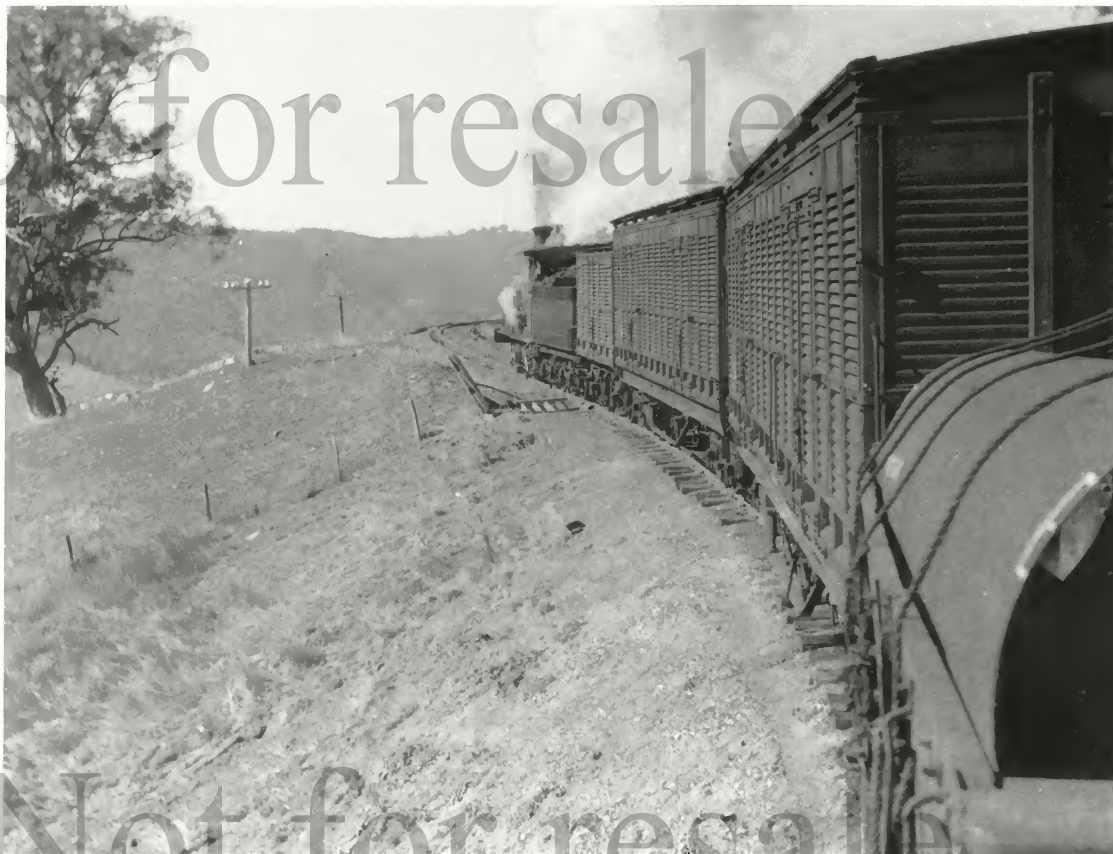


*There is much activity at Gilmore station, junction for the Batlow line, after the arrival of the down Tumut passenger service from Cootamundra and Sydney. While the crew of 3065 go about their work, the guards of both trains and 1938's fireman convey mail and parcels from the Tumut passenger to the down Batlow mixed standing on the opposite side of the island platform. All around is evidence of railway works in progress. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

*Just before detaching the MBC and leaving it in the siding, 1938 stands at Wereboldera station with the down Batlow mixed. Between Gilmore and Wereboldera, the load of the mixed was LV, MBC, MLV, MLV, S and HS composite car. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

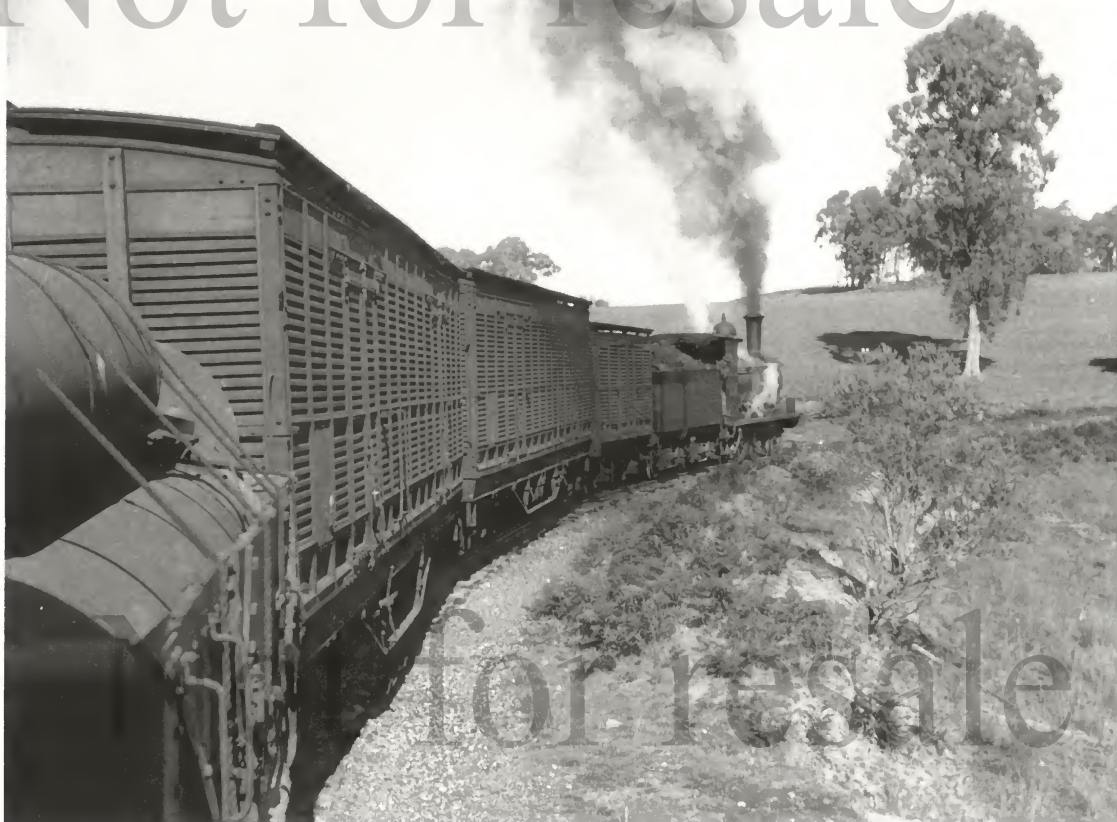


*The simple, steep and tortuously winding character of the Batlow branch can be seen from this photograph, taken from the HS car at the rear of the down mixed as 1938 proceeds up the hill to Batlow. Friday, 19 May 1961.*



Not for resale

*1938 is doing it easy at the head of the down Batlow mixed as it rounds one of the sharp curves on the uphill journey. Friday, 19 May 1961.*



for resale





*At the end of its uphill journey, 1938 with the down mixed stands at Batlow station. The water tank at right will soon be used to replenish 1938's tender. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

interstate express. The crew were happy to stop at several locations to allow us to take photographs. After a journey of about ninety minutes, we stopped briefly at Wereboldera to release the hand brakes and then arrived at Gilmore quite early. It would be very difficult to run late on this service!

The cab ride in 1938 was a great experience. The little engine seemed so primitive compared to the mainline engines that I was more accustomed to riding in. I had been in the cab of a 19 many times before, but never in circumstances quite like this.

After a brief stop at the junction, we proceeded on to Tumut where we noticed that superheated 3051 was in loco and would haul the passenger service back to Cootamundra, as 3065 was preparing an up goods train which was to follow the passenger service to Cootamundra. We felt that there may be another 19 class, probably 1901 or 1957, in the small iron shed at Tumut loco, but were disappointed to find it empty. Obviously, 1938 was doing it all on its own at this particular time. Where were 1901 and 1957?

It was late in the afternoon as 3051, with the same cars as we had in the morning, departed Tumut for the return journey. The crew, who had worked in to Tumut from Cootamundra with 3051 on a goods train earlier in the day, allowed us a ride in the cab. Our last photos were taken at Mt Horeb before darkness descended. As we took the last photo for the day 3051's safety valves lifted and the noise of the escaping steam shattered the silence of this small hamlet. A spirited trip back to

Cootamundra followed, with 3051 handling the task with ease. Geoff and I did most of the firing, while the young fireman worked the injectors on 3051 and kept a watchful eye on the quality of the fire. I particularly remember the experience of crossing the long trestle bridge over the Murrumbidgee flood plain in darkness from my position in 3051's cab. I remember hanging on extra firmly to the engine's cab rail during this seemingly endless crossing lest I fall out. We enjoyed the cab ride in darkness but it was not easy to keep uniformly warm, either feeling cold from the sharp night air or overly hot close to the firebox. We arrived back in Cootamundra after a three hour journey, feeling very tired but pleased about a really good day on the Batlow line. Almost thirty years on, that day stands out in my mind as an unforgettable experience.

Yet another quick inspection of Cootamundra loco in the dark revealed the presence of 1901 in the shed. It would seem that 1901 had returned from Tumut during the day. I would have loved to have had the old class leader on the Batlow branch but was not at all disappointed with our trip behind 1938. It was a relief to know that there was at least one other 19 class to help out 1938. We still wondered where 1957 was.

We did not have long to wait at Cootamundra for the departure of No.6 up Temora Mail which left at 7.50pm behind 3821 with quite a load, namely EHO, CX, CR, LAM, FS, CS, MHO, MHO, ACS, ACS 10/372 tons (378t). The fact that it was Friday night and the end of the school holidays possibly explains



*1938 shunts the yard at Batlow as the loading for the up mixed to Tumut is composed. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

*The fireman has laid a good fire on 1938 just before departure of the up mixed as it stands at Batlow station on Friday, 19 May 1961.*







*1938 on the up mixed pauses at the brakes landmark at Wybalena while hand brakes are applied, prior to the steep descent down the 1 in 25 grade to Wereboldera. At the extreme left of picture is a simple level crossing with its 'Beware of Trains' sign. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

the big load. In contrast to other through steam-hauled passenger trains, the up and down Temora Mails did not generally take on coal at Demondrille as coaling facilities were available at Cootamundra, not very far distant. Steam coal grab 1058 was provided at Cootamundra for engine coaling. We arrived at Harden around 9pm. This was my first leisurely visit to Harden loco but the timing was not ideal. It was pitch black and very cold indeed as we looked over what had once been a thriving locomotive depot, particularly in the days before the advent of the 57 class locomotives which substantially changed the mode of southern line goods working. In fact, Harden depot had declined to such an extent that it had only one working engine, 5415, on its allotment. Yet it was still a significant staging depot. Noted in loco were 3204, 3378, 5415, 5418 and 5612, while stored were 2420, 2510, 5703 and 5708. We suspected that one of the P class engines would work our passenger service to Cowra, while the other would probably work next morning's Boorowa mixed.

At that moment at night, our number one priority was finding a warm comfortable place to rest and to while away the time until our train to Cowra departed at 5.10am on the Saturday morning. We could neither find a suitable carriage nor be certain that we would wake up in time to catch our train in the morning. We chose to bed down on the floor of the waiting room at Harden station where there was a warm fire burning. The floor was hard and cold but it was much better than sitting outside in the freezing night air.

Around 11pm I remember becoming aware of the sound of a distant steam train as I dozed in my sleeping bag on the floor. The sound became louder

and louder, filling the cold night air. I climbed out of my sleeping bag and went to the door of the waiting room to investigate. The now very loud noise was clearly coming from the west, probably around Murrumburrah. The engine on the train sounded quite unlike anything I had heard before. It sounded like a big engine, possibly a 38, it was going fast and was being worked really hard. As far as I was aware, no passenger train was due. I was puzzled as to what class of engine it was as the exhaust beat sounded unusual. Soon the electric headlight came into view and, in a deafening roar, green 3813 came out of the dark into the light of the station and raced past on a short express bogie stock train. It was being absolutely thrashed and did not sound happy at all. In 1961 it was not all that common for 38s to work goods trains. The sound remained for quite a while as 3813 battled on towards Cunningham and then the noise dissipated. Back to the sleeping bag on the waiting room floor.

The next thing I knew was waking up to the sound of voices around me. The down Temora Mail had arrived and many of the passengers had come into the waiting room for some very welcome warmth. We were surrounded by a forest of legs and I felt a little embarrassed to have been asleep on the floor amongst so many people. Quickly we got up and collected our gear to make more room for the horde seeking warmth. It was just after 4.30am and still pitch black outside. In the mad rush, I did not record the engine on the Mail. Shortly, 3378 eased the cars for the Cowra connection alongside the platform and, still half asleep, we entered. The cars on this small train, No.6 passenger, were ACS (off the mail), EHO, CR, an easy load for the P class. Departure from Harden was ten minutes late at





*At a specially arranged photo stop on the steep grade between Wybalena and Wereboldera, the fireman poses in the cab of 1938 as his engine, untaxed by its downhill run with a light load, blows off. The track is simply ash ballasted. Friday, 19 May 1961.*

*1938 pauses briefly at Wereboldera platform, amidst picturesque surroundings, on the up Batlow mixed, en route to Tumut on Friday, 19 May 1961. The substantial shelter shed is no doubt provided to afford protection against the chilly blasts off the Alps.*







*Cootamundra based 3051, a superheated engine fitted with six-wheel, ex-P class tender so it could be turned on Tumut's turntable, basks in the mellow, late afternoon, autumn sunshine amongst beautiful surroundings in Tumut loco on Friday, 19 May 1961. Six weeks later, 3051 was scrapped.*

5.20am. We crossed 3273 on an up goods at Monteagle as 3378 kept to its rather pedestrian timetable. The light improved as we passed Koorawatha, junction for the Grenfell line, and was barely good enough for photographs when we reached Wattamondara, where we crossed the down Grenfell mixed. Superheated Cowra engine 3006 with six-wheel, ex Z16 class tender and an attached water gin was working the mixed. Interestingly, we were held in the loop while the mixed was allowed a clear trip past.

Cowra was reached in bright morning sunshine. The train terminated at Cowra, and 3378 proceeded to loco after stowing the cars. Shunting the yards was 3321. An inspection of the very neat and tidy Cowra loco depot revealed the following engines present: 3016T, 3058T, 3092T, 3102T, 3233, 3376, 3378, 5243, 5461, 5487, 5606 and 5616. Some of the Standard Goods locomotives had worked in from Bathurst and Goulburn depots. Cowra depot's allotment at the time was 6/30T (4 superheated, 2 saturated), 7/32, 2/50 and 2/55. Reference should be made to Robert Booth's article in the January, 1980 issue of *Roundhouse* entitled 'Byways of Steam: Cowra'.

It was noted that all 30Ts at Cowra depot at the time were fitted with six-wheel tenders. Many of the engines at Cowra on this Saturday were in steam. Superheated 3016, fitted with an electric headlight on the rear of its tender, was being prepared for service, along with 5243 and 5487, which were already on the departure road. 5243 worked No.35 goods to Harden while 5487 was rostered to work No.338 mixed, which we intended catching to

Blayney to connect with No.28 up *Central West Express*.

I liked Cowra depot. I always felt welcome there. This positive feeling developed on this, my first visit in May 1961, when the District Locomotive Engineer noticed our interest in steam locomotives and invited us into his office for a chat. In the half hour or so we spent with him he showed us many of his official documents which, to us, represented a treasure trove of information. He showed us a list of steam locomotives which would be withdrawn from service over that current twelve month period. We took down what details we could. In so doing, we were shocked to find that 3051, the engine we had ridden in and fired from Tumut to Cootamundra the evening before, was to be withdrawn. We found this very hard to accept as 3051 appeared to be in excellent condition. We felt this must be a mistake. Maybe it would go into workshops and be repaired. We were wrong! Several weeks later 3051 became the first 30T to be scrapped. In fact, our trip from Tumut may well have been one of its last workings, as it was condemned several days later. This was the harsh reality which, at the time, was only just sinking in to us. Steam was gradually but surely on the way out.

There were not too many passenger services in NSW that were regularly hauled by a Standard Goods engine but the mixed trains between Cowra and Blayney were regularly worked by such engines, often a Bathurst-based 53 class. They shared this working with the Cowra-based 32 class engines. On Saturday, 20 May 1961, Bathurst engine 5487 coupled on to our mixed to Blayney. The timetable



*It is after 5pm on Friday, 19 May 1961 as the up Tumut to Cootamundra passenger service pauses at Mt Horeb. The sun has gone down and, as the light is failing, the peace and quiet at Mt Horeb is shattered by 3051's safety valves erupting in spectacular fashion.*

*Hissing steam from many locations attracts the attention of both driver and fireman as 3378 stands at Cowra station on the morning of Saturday, 20 May 1961 having just arrived on the passenger service from Harden which connected with the down Temora Mail.*







*Cowra was a pleasant, compact locomotive depot. Here, from left to right, 3376, 3058, 3233 and 5487 stand out in the open on Saturday, 20 May 1961. Note the timber-constructed ash truck on right, beside the departure road. The roundhouse can be seen on right.*

for these trains was generous and the loads varied from minimal to substantial, depending on the amount of goods traffic to be conveyed. However, a conservative maximum loading was specified to facilitate timetabled running. The load this day was light, comprising three CW cattle trucks, five tarpaulin covered S trucks possibly containing wool bales, EHO and CR, approximately 175 tons (178t).

As we left Cowra, 3321 was still shunting the yards. Our TF plodded along through the picturesque countryside, crossing 5445 at Swan Ponds on a goods to Cowra and 3262 at Carcoar on the mixed to Cowra, which was the connecting service from No.31 down *Central West Express*. The leisurely pace was characteristic of much country rail travel in steam days, particularly before the widespread use of the motor car in the 1950s and early 60s. There was less emphasis on speed and time-saving. The occasional stops for engines to take water were accepted in steam days, as no alternative had been experienced. People were generally less impatient then, particularly country people. Regrettably, this is not the case now and this partly explains the demise of such services as our Cowra-Blayney mixed.

On arrival at Blayney we noted 5394 was waiting on a down goods destined for Cowra. Soon 3667 rolled into Blayney station with No.28 up *Central West Express* with quite a load behind it. In addition to the seven-car, air-conditioned HUB set, two FS cars had been added to the rear of the train to cope with the holiday loading. Altogether the nine cars, almost fully laden with passengers, would have comprised a load of about 390 tons (396t), a good load for a 'Pig' on this express. We knew we would

certainly require assistance between Bathurst and Raglan and were glad to find we were allocated seats in the FS at the very rear of the train. This enabled us to open the windows, lean out to take photos and to savour the sound effects.

The 'Pig' kept reasonable time to Bathurst, where we rushed off to loco to see what was there in preference to photographing the assistant engine, a P class, being attached. According to the timetable, we had only eight minutes at Bathurst so we had to hurry. In loco at Bathurst were 1056, 1919, 1942, 2532, 2603, 2606, 3124, 3143, 3240, 3604, 3606, 3608, 3660, 3671, 5311, 5349, 5353, 5379, 5417, 5440, 5476, 5484, 5486, 6023 and 6031. Stored were 2602, 2615, 2618, 5055 and 5383. It was a bit disappointing to see that the two 30 class tank engines 3124 and 3143 were replacements for withdrawn saddle tank 26 class engines which used to be such a feature of a visit to Bathurst. In the late 1950s, Bathurst depot had 6/26 class engines on its allotment of which four regularly shunted the busy yards, along with 2532. With both the Bathurst 19 class in loco at Bathurst, we wondered what was working the Tarana-Oberon line.

The sun was low on the horizon as we raced back to the station and boarded the *Central West Express*, departing Bathurst at 4.32pm after a nine-minute refreshment/locomotive servicing stop. We looked forward to the sight and sound of the P and the 'Pig' tackling the grade to Raglan with the heavily loaded express. We were not disappointed. After crossing the Macquarie River the two engines set about the grade in earnest, the exhaust beat of both being quite distinctive, even from our position at the rear of the train. Looking out the window of the FS on





*5487 and 5243 face each other on the departure road at Cowra depot ready for action. 5243 is about to leave loco and couple to a Harden-bound goods train, while 5487 will work the mixed to Blayney. In the roundhouse behind can be seen the tender of 5606. Saturday, 20 May 1961.*

*3016, a superheated 30T, was based at Cowra for many years and was employed substantially on branch line working to Grenfell and Eugowra. It had an electric headlight fitted to its six-wheel, ex-P class tender. Here, standing in the shade on one of the turntable roads at Cowra loco, 3016 is being prepared for service on Saturday, 20 May 1961.*







*In steam days Swan Ponds was an important crossing loop between Cowra and Blayney where locomotives could take on water and de-ash. Here Bathurst engine 5445 on a Cowra-bound goods crosses No.338 Cowra to Blayney mixed, which is standing at the station at left of photo. Saturday, 20 May 1961.*



the curves, it soon became clear that the two engines were working hard. Appreciating his task, the fireman on the P class was really laying on a good fire and producing a great deal of smoke. In contrast, 3667 was simply working hard with virtually no smoke. What a great sight! To me, this was steam working at its very best, the likes of which I hadn't experienced since steam assistance on Cowan Bank ceased in 1959. On arrival at Raglan, the P class was uncoupled and set back into the crossover while 3667 took the express alone to Lithgow. On passing the P we saw it was 3271, a Dubbo engine at the time, sporting its original low frame with curved footplate front and timber buffer beam. I particularly liked the lines of these 'old' Beyer, Peacock built Ps, preferring their appearance to that of the newer, 'high framed' engines.

As we passed Tarana in failing light, we noted that 1957, normally based at Cootamundra for Batlow working, was marshalling the Oberon Mixed. That answered a number of our questions earlier on the trip. We found out later that 1957 was on loan to Bathurst while 1942 underwent repairs. It was later transferred to Bathurst. At Lithgow, 3667 was replaced by a 46 class for the trip to Sydney. It was more than a little sad to see the 'Pig' uncoupled and

*Bathurst engine 5487 is at the head of No.338 Cowra to Blayney mixed photographed passing through the rolling countryside near Lyndhurst. The mixed connected with the up 'Central West Express' at Blayney. Saturday, 20 May 1961.*



*3667 wheels No.28 up 'Central West Express' into Blayney station on Saturday, 20 May 1961 at the end of the May school vacation. Bookings on the express this day were heavy, requiring nine cars.*

move off into the darkness, shortly to be replaced by a newer, more efficient form of motive power. In a way, it was symbolic of what was happening in the New South Wales Government Railways.

Steam has now gone but the memories remain. I always loved to see a 36 class working the *Central West Express*; it seemed to signify the purpose of their original design, namely express passenger working. To me, an unabashed admirer of the 36 class, they looked at their best at the front of an air-conditioned express or the older timber-bodied, twelve-wheel passenger cars such as the NCR sets used on Nos 13 and 14 South, the Goulburn day train.

An uneventful and unexciting yet efficient trip behind the 46 returned us to Strathfield station at 8.53pm, twenty minutes late. So ended a very good trip which has provided me with so many irreplaceable memories of steam working on the southern and western rail systems of NSW, at a time when steam was well and truly king - albeit very close to being toppled.

*The late afternoon shadows are lengthening as the up 'Central West Express' heads uphill towards Raglan. The heavy holiday loading on the express required the assistance of 3271 between Bathurst and Raglan. In an effort to provide as much assistance as possible to train engine 3667, the fireman of 3271 is laying on a good fire, making plenty of smoke and showering the plains around Kelso with hot cinders. Saturday, 20 May 1961.*





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### Signal Survey and Brogons Creek

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State Rail Archives records.

## Ray Love:

### Taree Locomotive Depot

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It should also be noted that it may be possible to update or improve a previously presented article sometime in the future, and the author welcomes the receipt of any historical facts, details or photographs pertaining to any depot for possible inclusion in a future update, addressed to the author, via the editor.

## Recommended Reading:

'Crossing the Clarence', by R.T. Bremner (*Roundhouse*, July 1982 and October 1983).

## David Allerton:

### Western Division Garratt Finale

My thanks to Ray Love and Graham Pegg for encouragement, supply of photographs and assistance with the text; to Laurie Anderson for notes on our ride on 312 goods; to Peter Neve and John Ward for photographs; to Alan Travers for information on the RTM/LVR tour; to Keith Brauer for access to Western Division working timetables of the era; and to Danny Morgan for cartographic assistance.

For further reading on steam working in the Dubbo - Molong - Orange area, readers are referred to the following editions of *Roundhouse*:

July 1984: 'Byways of Steam: Molong' by R.K.Booth.

October 1985: 'Byways of Steam: Dubbo' (Part 1) by R.K.Booth.

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### Steam Working in the South-West in 1961

The writer would like to thank his travelling companion, Geoff Percival, for checking the manuscript and filling in several gaps in his memory and records.

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