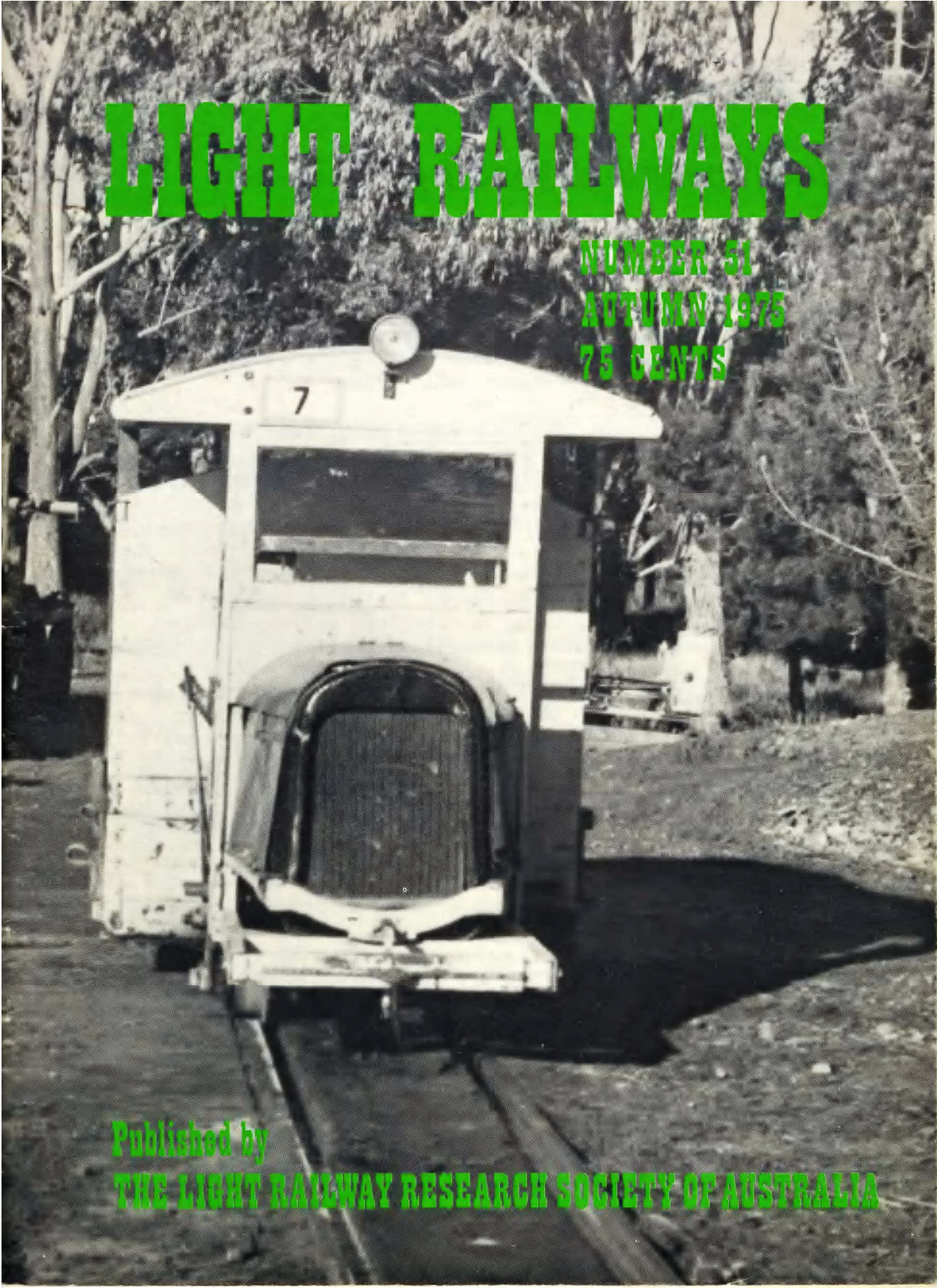
LIGHT RAILWAYS

NUMBER 51
AUTUMN 1975
75 CENTS



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Recommended reading:

THE INNISFAIL TRAMWAY by J. Armstrong and G. E. Verhoeven. A history of the Geraldton Shire Tramway and Mourilyan tramway - two of Queensland's most interesting 2 ft gauge sugar tramways. 103 pages hardbound. Numerous photographs, maps and scale drawings of locomotives and rolling stock, including passenger coaches. (ARHS publication) $6.50

THE SHALE RAILWAYS OF NEW SOUTH WALES by Gifford Eardley and E. M. Stephens. The story of a series of interesting private railways which served the shale oil industry in NSW. Numerous magnificent photographs in really rugged scenery. Extensive text and many maps and plans. 240 pages. (ARHS publication) $6.80

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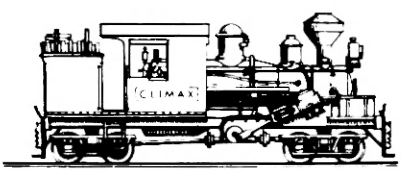

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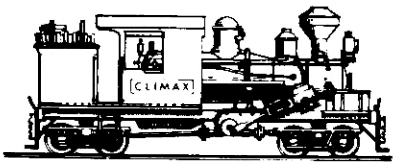

Light Railways

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Light Railway Research Society of Australia

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Meetings Second Thursday every second month at 8.00 pm, room 11, Victorian Railways Institute, Flinders Street station building, Melbourne. Next meetings 12 June 1975, 14 August 1975, 9 October 1975, 11 December 1975.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of articles published in *Light Railways* errors may creep in. Additional information is being discovered all the time, and this sometimes contradicts previous information.

If you see any errors, or can add information, please contact the editor, and so help us to record the full history of Australia's light railways.

Historical references to sums of money in *Light Railways* are in Australian pounds (£). One pound equalled two dollars on changing to decimal currency in 1966.

Articles and news items are always welcome. It greatly assists the editors if they are typed or written on one side of the paper only and double spaced.

Editor's column

FUTURE ARTICLES

We have had a good response from the request in a recent Members' Supplement for more contributions to *Light Railways* so that our aim of publishing the journal at two-monthly intervals in the coming year has some chance of success. This would get us back on to schedule. Please do not let this good news deter you from writing an article for *Light Railways*, as we always need a good selection of articles on hand to ensure 'on time' production.

We certainly have some most interesting topics in the pipeline from all parts of Australia, and a further article on Papua New Guinea's railways is on its way.

Don't forget that even if you cannot contribute an article, *News Notes and Comments* items are always very popular with our readers, and our *Letters* section is always open for members to comment on articles and express their opinions.

LIGHT RAILWAYS No. 50

I would be most interested to hear members' opinions of the layout of *Light Railways* No. 50. Being the first type-set issue some changes in the presentation have been necessary. The type-face has been chosen to give maximum clarity combined with best use of available space. I hope members find it an improvement.

AFFILIATIONS

The Soceity is pleased to advise that we are now affiliated with the Australian Railway Historical Society. The A.R.H.S. was founded in 1933 and has divisions in all states. Most divisions publish monthly news magazines, whilst the Society also publishes a monthly national *Bulletin*. LRRSA members interested in joining the A.R.H.S. should write to the LRRSA Secretary for the name and address of the A.R.H.S. Division Secretary in their state.

The LRRSA has also recently become an affiliate of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. The RHSV is interested in all aspects of Victorian history.

Front cover The 2 ft gauge Lune River railway's railmotor, at Lune River — 65 miles south of Hobart — on 16 June 1975 when the LRRSA visited the line. Photograph: Arthur Straffen

The Misima Island Railway

by R. McKillop

The Bootless Bay Railway in Papua was described in *Light Railways* No. 47. During the early 1920's a second railway was also operating in Papua. This was on Misima Island and was built by the Block 10 Misima Gold Mines Company in 1919 to serve their gold mine at Umuna.

The Misima Railway had only a short life and information about it is difficult to come by. The article which follows offers an introductory study of the railway. It is hoped that it may bring forth further information on this fascinating era of Papuan history.

THE BLOCK 10 GOLD MINES COMPANY

Misima Island is situated in the Louisiande Archipelago off the eastern tip of Papua. The island is 40 km in length and 13 km wide. Gold was discovered on the slopes of Mount Sisa (430 m) at the eastern end of the island in the 1880's. It was mined sporadically by European and native miners for the next thirty years.[1]

Following the First World War interest was revived in the Misima goldfields. One of the mining groups, the Block 10 syndicate, formed a public company, Block 10 Misima Gold Mines NL, and set about exploiting their lease. The Company had a small mill in operation by 1917 and, in 1919, an expansion programme was initiated. A Gates rock crusher was installed at the Umuna mine and a mill with twenty head of stamps and a capacity of 6,000 tons of ore per month was constructed.[2] Power was supplied by a high speed engine of 450 h.p. coupled to an electric generator. The main shaft was located on the south side of Cooktown Creek. By 1922 this had reached 220 ft with levels opened at 47 ft and 139 ft. There were also tunnels on the north side of Cooktown Creek. The ore was trucked from the tunnels to the crusher by incline railway.

Transport was a major problem due to the rugged terrain. Misima Island's only harbour is at Bwagaoia on the eastern end of the island. Initially pack horses were used to the mines, but in 1919 the Block 10 Company began the construction of a light 2 ft gauge railway from Umuna to Bwagaoia which was completed in the following year. With this increase in activity the Lieutenant Governor sent Acting Resident Magistrate W. R. Humphries to Bwagaoia in 1920 to open a government station there.[3]

The completion of the new mill and railway resulted in an increased mine output. In 1921-22 gold valued at £60,091 was treated and the Company employed 63 Europeans and 512 local people. This increase in production coincided with the development of the New Guinea Copper Mines near Port Moresby and caused Papuan officials, including Lieutenant-Governor Murray, to optimistically predict that the mining industry would save the colony's stagnant economy.

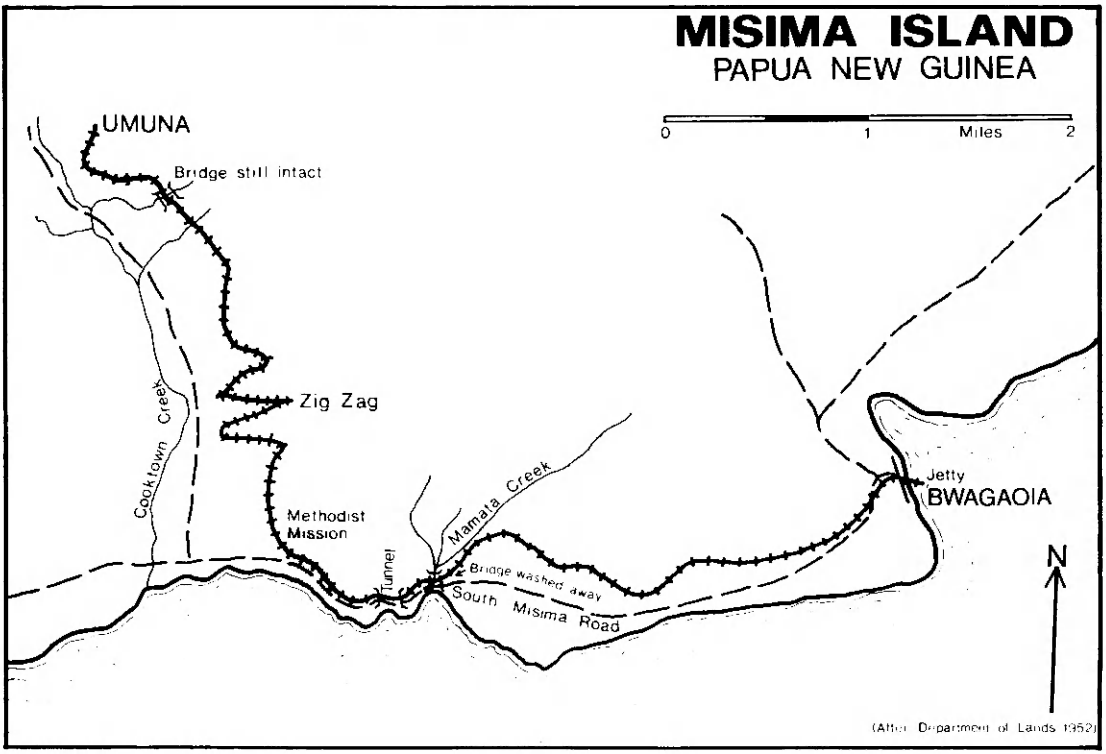
OPERATIONS OF BLOCK 10 MISIMA GOLD MINES N.L.

Year	Employees	Ore Treated Tons	Value of Gold £
1917-18	481	14,618	13,852
1918-19	256	10,070	12,538
1919-20	690	8,119	9,659
1920-21	476	11,462	12,964
1921-22	575	45,045	60,091
1922-23	550	8,589*	12,891
TOTAL	–	97,903	121,995

* Closed September 1922
(Compiled from Papuan Annual Reports)

The cost of developing the mine, however, was too demanding of the Company's capital. In November 1921 the Block 10 Company, in true Australian tradition, turned to the Government for assistance. A formal request was made to the Federal Government for loan guarantees of £60,000 to complete equipment and further development of the mine and to repay a £25,000 mortgage.[4] The Australian Government, already subjected to requests for assistance from the Papuan copper mining industry, found the Misima mines were not viable from a business point of view and the request was formally rejected in August 1922. The following month a number of mine tunnels collapsed and the mines were closed.

In 1925 an item in the Papuan Courier 'from one of the old hands' revealed to the public some of the reasons behind the closure of the Block 10 Company's operations.[5] According to the author the Company failed because of ill luck and poor management. The treatment process was found to be unsuitable for high grade ore above tunnel level and this reduced profitability. Because of the shortage of capital the stopes and levels were allowed to deteriorate to a dangerous



standard. The eventual collapse of the tunnels was not unexpected. In addition, the wet conditions of Misima presented Australian engineers with very different problems to their home environment.

THE RAILWAY

The 2 ft gauge railway from Umuna to Bwagaoia was 7¼ miles (11.7 km) in length. At Umuna the railway reached an elevation of 410 ft (125 m). From the terminus the line descended to the coast at Lapapai in only four miles (6.4 km) – an engineering feat which required a zig-zag. From Lapapai the railway followed the coastline closely, but this section required a short tunnel through a coral outcrop. On reaching Bwagaoia the line curved through a grove of coconuts to a small wharf.[6] An eight-ton travelling gantry with a 22 ft span was erected on the wharf in 1919.

The railway was laid with 30 lb rails and sawn sleepers were used. In all there were twenty-three bridges and culverts on the line. The railway cost the Company £30,000 to construct - a significant factor in the subsequent shortage of capital for mining operations.

Only one locomotive was used on the line. This was a small 0-4-0 side tank locomotive which arrived in 1919.[7] It was a Kerr Stuart, believed to have been built in 1916.

No records of the rolling stock used have been located. Photographs show a number of open trucks which were regularly used for passengers as well as freight. Dr H. Gilbee Brown, the medical officer at the mine, refers to flat trolley cars used on the line in an article in the Pacific Islands Monthly.[8] It was apparently the practice to free-wheel on these trolleys from Umuna down to the coast.

Railway operation

The railway line to Umuna provided that briefly thriving community with their only link to the outside world. It frequently carried large numbers of passengers who clung to every available vantage point, as well as general cargo to the mine. Coal for the large steam engine at Umuna was the most important commodity carried.

The operation of a railway in rugged country with a very high rainfall obviously presented many difficulties. Landslides were common and in 1921-22 the line was blocked for the first six months of the financial year.[9]

IMPACT ON THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

A colleague, Mr Michael Sakiasi from Misima Island, was recently able to contact and interview old people from Gulewa Village who remember the railway in operation. They remember the mining days both as a time of prosperity when many people came to their

A view of the zig-zag on the Misima Island railway. Photograph: H. Gillbee Brown G. Bond collection

area and provided market outlets for their produce, and as a time of fear because of the influx of many foreigners.

Isako from Gulewa was employed as a labourer at the mines when he was a young man. He remembers well the train that the white men brought to his island. People at the time described this new and strange thing as a 'man smoking pipe and pulling many children behind him'. The people were afraid of the machine because of the smoke which signified to them that the monster was angry. Isako remembers that the machine seemed very hungry because it was always being fed with a special black food.

One weekend Isako went with friends to the sheds at Umuna where the train was kept. They found the trucks outside the shed and began playing on them. Someone pulled out the blocks holding the train and the group found themselves setting off on a nightmare run down the mountain. Fortunately the trucks remained on the rails and came to a halt before the zig-zag. A very frightened group of youths ran off into the bush and left the mine officials to puzzle out the whereabouts of their missing train the next morning.

An old woman from Gulewa also remembers the railway clearly, for at that time she was living at the Methodist Mission beside the line. The coming of the train was a serious interruption to schooling activities there, for the school children would always run outside to watch the passing train. However, many of the people here were frightened of it for as it approached the Mission it would sound its whistle. This made the engine let off more smoke which made the people think the machine was very angry.

CLOSURE OF THE RAILWAY

The operational life of the Misima railway was a very short one indeed. It opened in 1920 and closed in September 1922. Over this period it was often closed by landslides.

With the closure of the Company's mining operations the machinery and plant (including the railway) were dismantled by Miller & Co. over the following twelve months.[10] The locomotive subsequently reappeared in Victoria. It was converted to 3 ft (914 mm) gauge and used on Russell's timber tramway at Gembrook, and was eventually cut up at Gembrook in 1953, after being out of use for many years.

In 1924 a local syndicate formed the Misima Gold Mining Company which took over the Block 10 lease and purchased much of the machinery and plant. It operated successfully for many years on a reduced scale, but there were no moves to reopen the railway. The Misima goldfield continued to be an important source of wealth for Papua until the mine was finally closed in 1950.

In the 1960's interest in the Misima goldfields was revived and prospecting drives were put in by Pacific Island Mines and the Canadian group, Cultus.[11] The latter group used diesel powered tunneling equipment which is still at Umuna. It is stored in the shed shown in the photograph of the railway at Umuna (p.7)

The railway tunnel is now used by the south coast road which was constructed in the 1960's. Some of

the original bridges are still in existence, but the largest, over Mamata Creek, was washed away some years back. The local people use the railway roadbed from the Methodist Mission to Umuna as a walking track. The old railway jetty at Bwagaoia has been demolished to make way for a larger wharf on the site.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank the following people who assisted in the collection of information for this article:
Mr Michael Sakiase of D A S F, Konedobu who undertook field interviews,
Mr E. D. Ryan of Bwagaoia for information on subsequent mining developments.

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2. *P.A.R.* 1922-23, p.89
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5. *Papuan Courier,* 6 March 1925
6. *P.I.M.* July 1962, p.37
7. *P.A.R.* 1918-19
8. *P.I.M.* July 1962, p.39
9. *P.A.R.* 1921-22
10. *Papuan Courier* 19 December 1924

Top A view of the tunnel on the Misima Island railway
Right Umuna depot, showing the Kerr Stuart 0-4-0T locomotive.
Both photographs: H. Gillbee Brown
G. Bond collection

3 ft 6 in gauge Andrew Barclay locomotive *Ashburton* and train preserved at Onslow, Western Australia, November 1974

North west Coastal Tramways

Onslow

by Ian Crellin and Frank Stamford

Onslow is a small town 917 miles (1476 km) north of Perth. The bitumen North-West Coastal Highway bypasses Onslow and the town is reached by 51 miles of well-graded but featureless road, entirely devoid of shade....a decided disadvantage in the heat of November!

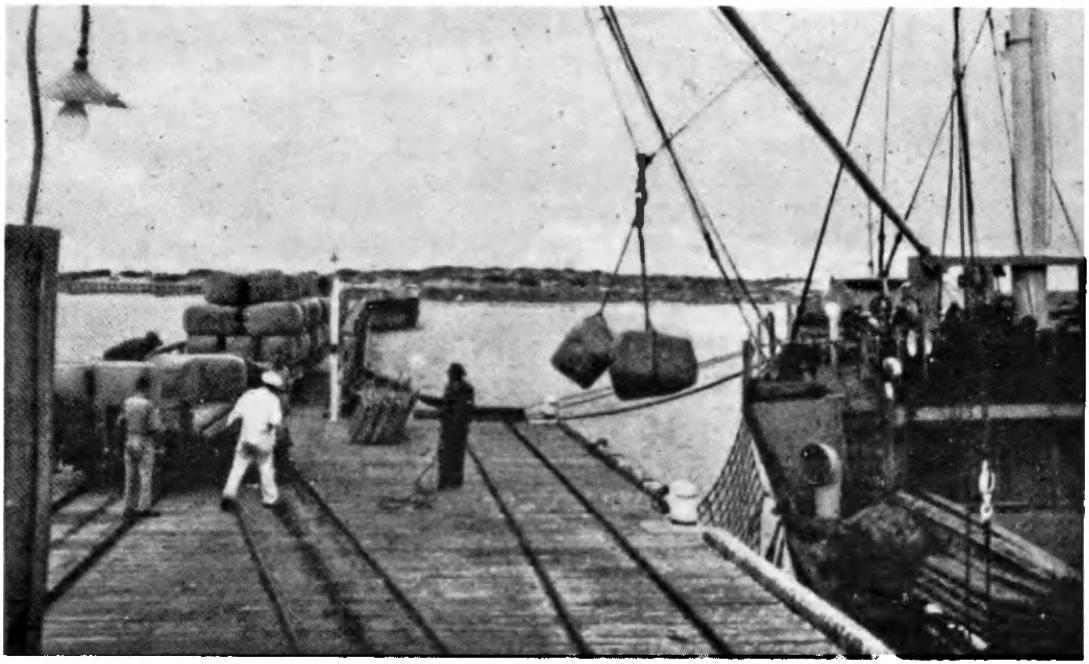
Onslow was first established near the mouth of the Ashburton River during the mid-1880s, being named after Chief Justice A.C. Onslow. It was moved to its present location on Beadon Bay in 1925-26; the original site having proved to have many natural disadvantages[1].

The town exists as a supply point for surrounding wool growing areas but in the early days, was also a rollicking pearling port. In the first days of settlement, the port was dependent on lightering by small boats to ships offshore but by the late 1890s plans were in hand to build a proper jetty and a tramway to link it to the settlement. The official opening[2] was on 20 February 1903, but it would appear to have been in use earlier than this, possibly even during the construction period. The W.A. Year Book for 1900-01 states clearly that the jetty had been constructed and connected to the town by a 2 ft gauge tramway. The 1898-99 edition however, merely states that jetty and tramway are proposed. The 1900-01 edition also gives details of the early facilities and rolling stock. Sheep handling facilities were provided and for the handling of goods, there was a two ton crane on the jetty and eight rail trucks. The tramway ran 4½ miles to Onslow where a customs and goods shed was located. Later editions list the length of the line as 4 miles 16 chains. Richardson[3] states that when the line was opened, there was one passenger car, horse drawn, and that in 1909 it was destroyed in a storm. It was subsequently replaced in the following year with three larger vehicles, including one transferred from Broome.

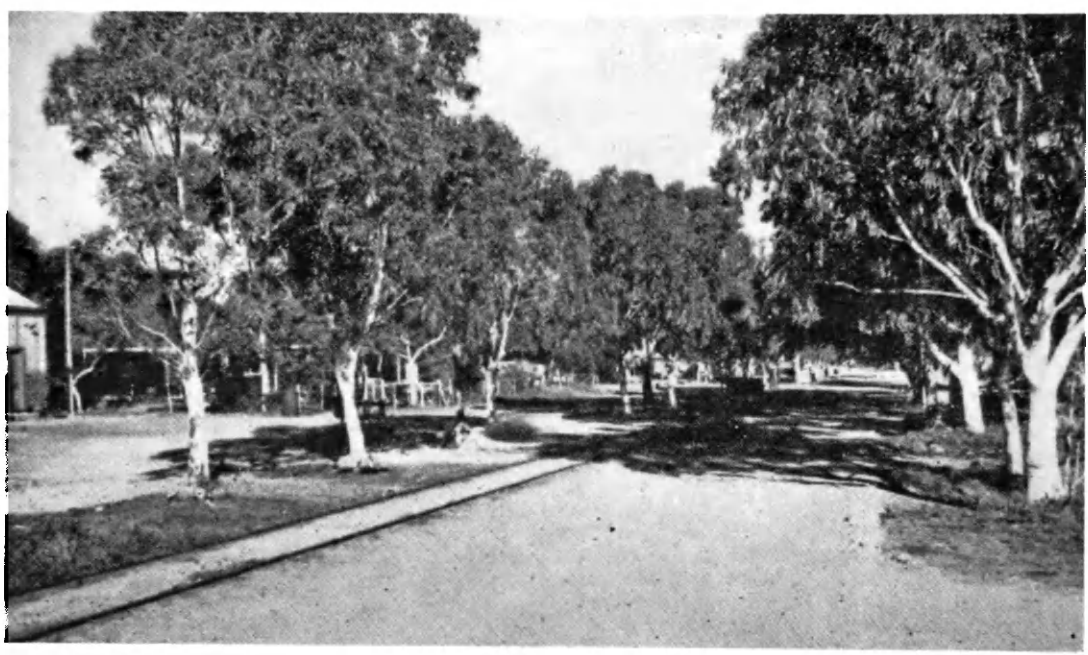
This arrangement continued for many years but by the 1920s was proving unequal to the demands of increasing tonnages and larger ships. Surveys were made and construction of a new port at Beadon Point, some miles to the northeast, was commenced in the mid-1920s. This project also involved moving the whole town to a new site near the new facilities. The old site was some eight miles west of the new site and was at the mouth of the Ashburton River, whereas the new site was on Beadon Bay. These plans were set-back by a cyclone in 1925 which half-destroyed the nearly completed jetty and much of the town. It is of interest to note that the Point Sampson jetty near Roebourne, many miles to the north and site of a tramway to be featured later in this series, was also destroyed in this cyclone.

The new townsite was linked by a 3 ft 6 in gauge tramway to the nearby jetty. It ran down the tree lined main street to the depot and goods shed, with an extension to nearby Ashburton Hill. The port functioned for the succeeding years shipping sheep and

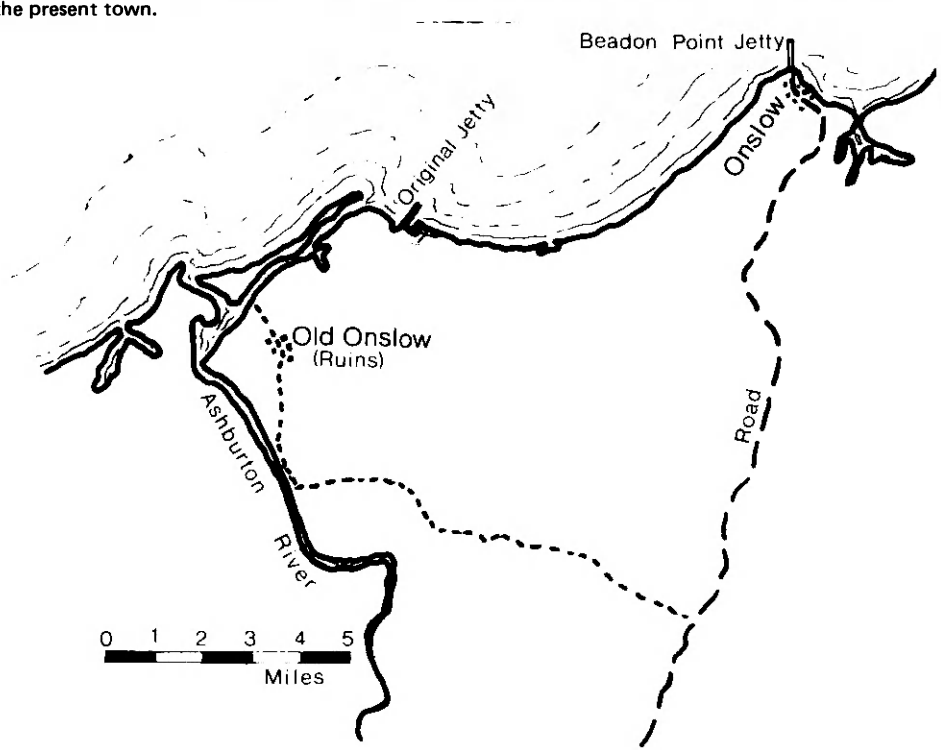
Hand crane derelict at Onslow, November 1974. The marks in the sky, and similar marks on other photographs in this series were caused by heat damage to the film.

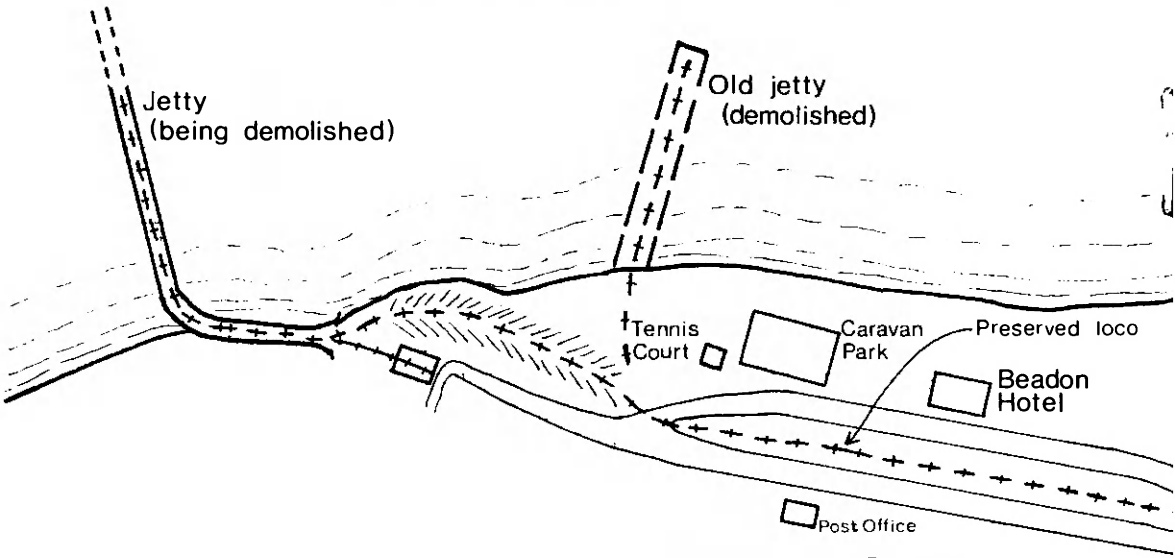


Above Loading operations at Onslow's Beadon Point jetty, looking back towards the town.
Below The tramway in Onslow's main street when the tramway was still in operation.
Both photographs: Ian Crellin collection.



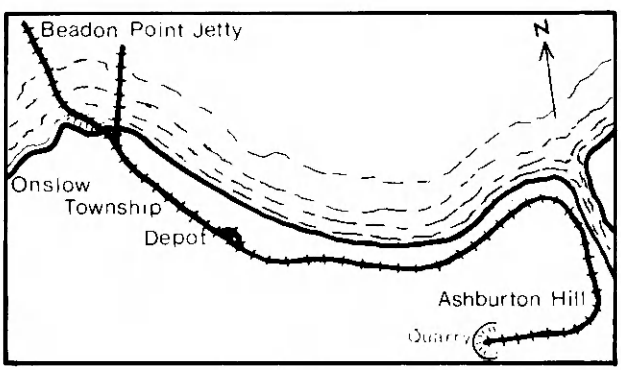
Rolling stock derelict at Onslow depot in November 1974. The map below shows the relationship of Old Onslow and its jetty to the present town.





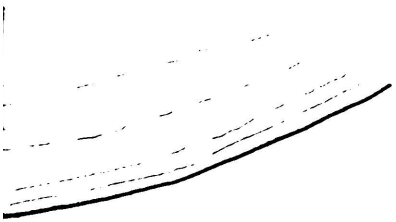
ONSLOW

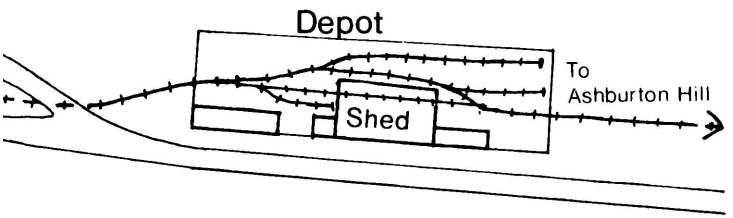
as at November 1974



Left Map showing location of Ashburton Hill extension which served a quarry and explosives factory.

Below The builder's plates on the passenger brake van and Andrew Barclay locomotive preserved at Onslow.





Below The passenger brake van preserved in the main street of Onslow, November 1974

wool out on the fortnightly visit of the State Shipping Service vessels. This continued until 1961 when another cyclone demolished the jetty[4]. As the port was declining in importance, repairs were not made and the service was continued as best it could using lighters. Although a special berth was constructed in Beadon Creek for lightering, tonnages declined to such an extent that the port was officially closed in the year ended 30 June 1973[5]. The section of track from the depot to Ashburton Hill is thought to have closed many years before this but the balance of track removals have occured only in recent years.

Another cyclone in 1934 severely damaged the port. The old 'Onslow Jetty' shown on the map may have been in use prior to this and the 'Beadon Point' jetty built to replace it.

Locomotives

The early history of Onslow's motive power is obscure. The 2 ft gauge line was apparently horse worked, but the 3 ft 6 in gauge line was worked by internal-combustion locos from early in its life. Its first locomotive (and apparently its only steam locomotive) was *Kia Ora.* She was a Baldwin 0-4-0ST, loaned temporarily from Carnarvon[6] (See LR 50,p.8). Her stay at Onslow was about two years, after which the tramway became the exclusive preserve of the internal-combustion locomotive. One or two petrol-engined locos arrived to replace *Kia Ora*[7] but subsequent loco movements are not known. The final loco at Onslow was NW.1, named *Ashburton.* This was an Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 petrol locomotive (B/No. 320 of 1928)[8]. *Ashburton* was rebuilt with a Perkins diesel engine in 1959[9]. She had previously been used at Point Sampson (Roebourne), but details of transfer are not known[10].

Rolling Stock

Few details are known of the 2 ft gauge rolling stock used on the original line. The 3 ft 6 in line provided a passenger service until withdrawn on 1 January 1940[11]. According to *Destination Subiaco,* stock included several de-motored Perth electric tramcars.

As of 1966, freight rolling stock at Onslow consisted of 33 vehicles:[12]

1 mobile wool crane,
24 'H' class open wagons,
1 pair of timber wagons (i.e. two flat-top trucks with bolsters),
1 passenger van,
6 flat top trucks.

Onslow today

During November 1974, Frank Stamford visited Onslow. He found no trace of the wooden 'Onslow Jetty' shown on the map, whilst the concrete 'Beadon Point Jetty' was in process of being demolished. All track from the jetty to the depot had been dismantled, with the exception of a short stretch outside an empty galvanised iron shed near the jetty, and a similar short stretch in the centre of the town. *Ashburton* (NW.1), the 1928 Andrew Barclay internal-combustion locomotive stands on this track along with a low-sided wagon and the 'passenger van'. They had been freshly painted in green and although in the open, showed no signs of the sort of vandalism one would expect in less-remote places. All track at the depot was still in-situ along with the following rolling stock (in very derelict condition):

4 flat trucks, (Nos 27, 28, 29 and 31),
15 low-sided (two plank) wagons, (Nos 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19, 23 and 24),
1 crane wagon.

During his stay at Onslow, he did not visit the 1 mile 64 chain stretch of formation from the depot to Ashburton Hill as at the time he had no knowledge of its existence.

Early in 1975, Cyclone Trixie made an unwelcome visit to Onslow, causing extensive damage. It is to be hoped that the carefully preserved exhibit in the main street survived intact.

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11. as for 2.
12. as for 9.

A REMINDER... Subscription renewal forms are enclosed with this issue

Above The remains of the Onslow jetty, November 1974. It was once much longer, as can be seen in the picture on page 7.

Below Derelict rolling stock bakes in the above-century midday heat at Onslow depot in November 1974.

Two Northern Territory Tramways

by R. K. Morgan

THE COSMOPOLITAN GOLD MINING CO.

About one mile to the south-west of Pine Creek on the North Australia Railway in the Northern Territory, a reef of gold-bearing quartz was discovered about 1880, and was called the Eleanor Reef.

A claim was pegged by one Jensen, and it was known as Jensen's Gold Mine. A Sydney and London syndicate was formed and took over from Jensen in 1892, the name of the mine then becoming the Jenson Gold Mining Company[1]. Plans included the immediate construction of a tramline to link the main shaft with the battery. It was reported that this would be a big job involving about 17 chains of tunnelling.[2] This meant that a large proportion of the one-and-a-half mile line was underground.

In 1894 the mine was purchased by an English company, called the Cosmopolitan Gold Mining Co. By that time, 380 ft of tramline had been laid from Bennett's Tunnel to connect with the shoots. (I assume 'Bennett's Tunnel' would be a mine shaft).

During the year a locomotive with the necessary trucks, rails, etc., had been imported from England. Lines were laid, with sidings, to connect with the Eleanor and Kohinoor Reefs, the total length of track being one-and-a-quarter miles. It is mentioned that this line had been laid at considerable cost, no doubt due to the tunnelling that was apparently involved. However, it was pointed out that it would be well worth it, as ore could now be brought to the treatment plant all year round, the wet season now presenting no real problem to transport.[3]

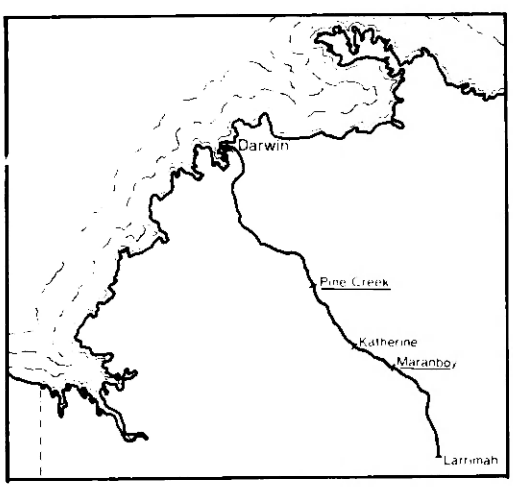
The Chief Mining Warden at the time was a Mr E. Copley Playford. He reported on 29 January 1895, that the steam tramway leading from the Cosmopolitan Gold Mining Company's claim at Pine Creek had now been completed. The value of gold treated by the company for the year 1894 was £14,913.[4]

The tramway was apparently laid to 3 ft 6 in gauge, and a physical connection made to the NAR at Pine Creek. I have not been able to confirm the gauge of the line, but Mr George Bond of Queensland says the line 'was really like a glorified siding of the NAR'. The locomotive that worked the line was an 0-4-0ST of diminutive proportions. It is reputed to have been built by Beyer Peacock, but this is not confirmed. It is also reported that Commonwealth Railways stock was used on the line from time to time.

There is a photograph extant of the locomotive on the line, although in both places where I have seen it published it is erroneously captioned as the Mount Ellison Iron Blow tramway. The photo shows a small 0-4-0 saddle tank (the Mount Ellison engines were 0-4-2 side tanks built by Kerr Stuart) on what appears to be 3 ft 6 in gauge. It is hauling at least thirteen four-wheel hopper trucks. The loco depicted has a simple cab with two circular windows in the front plate, and a tall, lean chimney with a nicely flared cap. Immediately in front of the cab is a low steam dome, and the saddle tank sits between that and the chimney. Judging from some men standing nearby, the engine would be about nine feet high. The outside cylinders are slightly inclined to the horizontal, and the valve motion is between the frames. An oval builders plate is evident on the cab side-plate, which, below waist level, extends forward about two feet. What appears to be the whistle projects above the roof of the cab, and is the highest object on the engine.

The sides of the smokebox extend vertically down to the running plate, and what appears to be a tool box is mounted on the front above the buffer beam. The engine is very narrow, seemingly under six feet wide. The cab has no back plate, simply a rail at waist height.

The warden's report of 3 January 1899 (for the year 1898) shows the Cosmopolitan Mine using machinery which included two steam engines for crushing ore, and four other steam engines, two operating



double, and two working single winding gears. Five steam pumps were also used by the mine, and two tramways had a total of 5,000 yards of line. This amounted to more than half the total length of the nineteen separate tramways listed in the report, which was for District A of the Northern Territory Goldfields.[5]

By 1902 the mine was owned by Associated Finance Corporation. 1904 may have seen the closure of the mine, as the 1906 warden's report shows the mine as having 1½ miles of tramway, but it is not listed as an operating mine. In 1909 the mine is again listed by the warden, but with the note that the mine had been closed for some years. It was still in position, however, in 1912.

In the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* of 23 March 1916, an advertisement appeared as follows:

'Tenders: for carting from Pine Creek to Maranboy: one mile steel rails; 10 iron ore trucks; 1 six ton locomotive engine; total weight about 35 tons. W. Pearce, Maranboy.'

THE MARANBOY TIN MINES

The Maranboy field, about a hundred miles south-east of Pine Creek was tin, discovered in 1913, and two claims were known as 'Star of the East' and 'Osman'.[6]

On 13 April 1916, the *N.T. Times and Gazette* reported that the claims were owned by three men who had previously been carpenters, and that they had acquired a locomotive and tramway for hauling the ore from the claims to the battery.

Things must have moved slowly, because one report states that Messrs Pearce (apparently the name of at least one of the three) received an advance from the Government of £900 to purchase the loco and line about 1917-18.[7] (In view of the newspaper reports, I query the years quoted here).

Reports of this operation are sketchy, but one letter to the editor of the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* from a disgruntled miner reads: 'The tramway is laid on what puts one in mind of the Darwin jetty at low spring tides. This structure is fully twenty-four feet from the ground near the battery, and is the standing joke of the district'[8].

In June 1924, a report was made to the Commonwealth Parliament, as follows:

'The construction of a 2 ft gauge tramline, 90 chains in length, from the main shaft on Pearce's leaseholds, was completed, and 270 tons of material for the battery was conveyed over it at a cost of from three shillings to five shillings per ton.

'Having grades of up to 1 in 10, which are difficult to negotiate, the tramline is not altogether a success.'[9]

Unanswered questions are: What locomotive was used on this line? And was the gauge really 2 ft? The obvious loco at Pine Creek, where the Maranboy loco was said to have come from, was the 0-4-0ST from Cosmopolitan, but it was apparently of 3 ft 6 in gauge. Could one of the two Kerr Stewarts from Mount Ellison have been used? It is stated that both these locomotives were sold to Cameron & Sutherland, Melbourne, about 1907,[10] but the further history of one of them, (Kerr Stuart 797) is shrouded in mystery.

However, this raises another query: The Iron Blow-Mount Ellison mine was a further thirty or so miles north-west of Pine Creek, and if KS 797 was the loco concerned, then it must have been brought to Pine Creek and stored there. All of which means that someone else must take up the story from here.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr George Bond of Brisbane, who supplied the information from which the above has been gleaned, and who suggested that I might put it together as an article.

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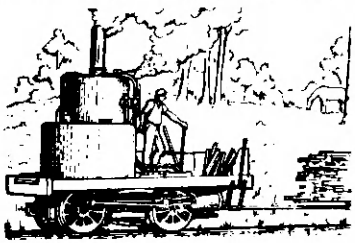


News, Notes & Comments

NEW SOUTH WALES

ANOTHER HISTORIC VILLAGE LIGHT RAILWAY KARINGAL VILLAGE, Bathurst

The then Minister for Lands and Tourism, Mr Lewis, opened Karingal Village at Mount Panorama, near Bathurst, on 29 April 1973. The project attempts to reporduce a mining village of the last century, based on the local Bathurst, Hill End and Turon goldfields. It joins a growing group of similar ventures throughout Australia. A mineshaft, adit and stamper are in operation and work on the town is well underway. A short tramway supplies ore to the working three-head stamper. A four-wheel metal side-tipping wagon is used, running on steel rails (appears to be 3 ft gauge) and man-powered. Plans are in hand for an expansion of the village project. This would be the ideal site for a museum collection of tunnel and mine locos, with the prospect of authentic underground running, (albeit a short adit). Do we have any takers, or any loco donors?

The steam-buff and industrial archaeologist will find other things to interest them including a Fowler steam tractor, a Ransome, Simm and Jeffries portable steam engine and a collection of old machine tools.

(Ian Crellin)

NORTHERN TERRITORY

TENNANT CREEK MINING TRAMWAYS

The Tennant Creek mining field was discovered by prospectors in the 1930s and developed by the Peko Wallsend Company in the 1950s. Operations on the field, at least in later years, have been characterised by the use of trackless mining techniques (using rubber-tyred equipment). Recent information from the Company indicates that the development of further ore bodies will be done using mine tramways, at least in the development phase. The individual mines on the field are:

Peko The original mine development, developed in the early 1950s, believed to be wholly worked 'trackless'.
Orlando Located 40 km north-east of Peko. Development commenced in 1959 with production from 1962, believed to be also wholly worked by trackless methods.
Ivanhoe This mine worked from 1965 to 1972, believed also to be a 'trackless' mine.
Juno Located 6 km south-west of Peko. Shaft sinking commenced in 1965, with production from 1967 by trackless mining.
Warrego Located 22 km west of Orlando. Development commenced in 1966 using tramway equipment (an eight tonne Gemco battery loco, two Hagglund cars, drill jumbo and loader). The mine is now in production but although tramways were used for development of the mine, operations will be carried on by trackless mining methods.
Gecko This mine is still in the development phase and is being developed for rail haulage of ore underground from the ore body to the transfer point for transport to the surface.

The mines are not the only location with railway interest. The large Flash Smelter built in the early 1970s, but unfortunately closed recently because of a market downturn, also has internal railways for items such as hot-metal cars. This is strictly a specialist application of rail transport to short distance cartage of dangerous substances and certainly not a *light* railway.

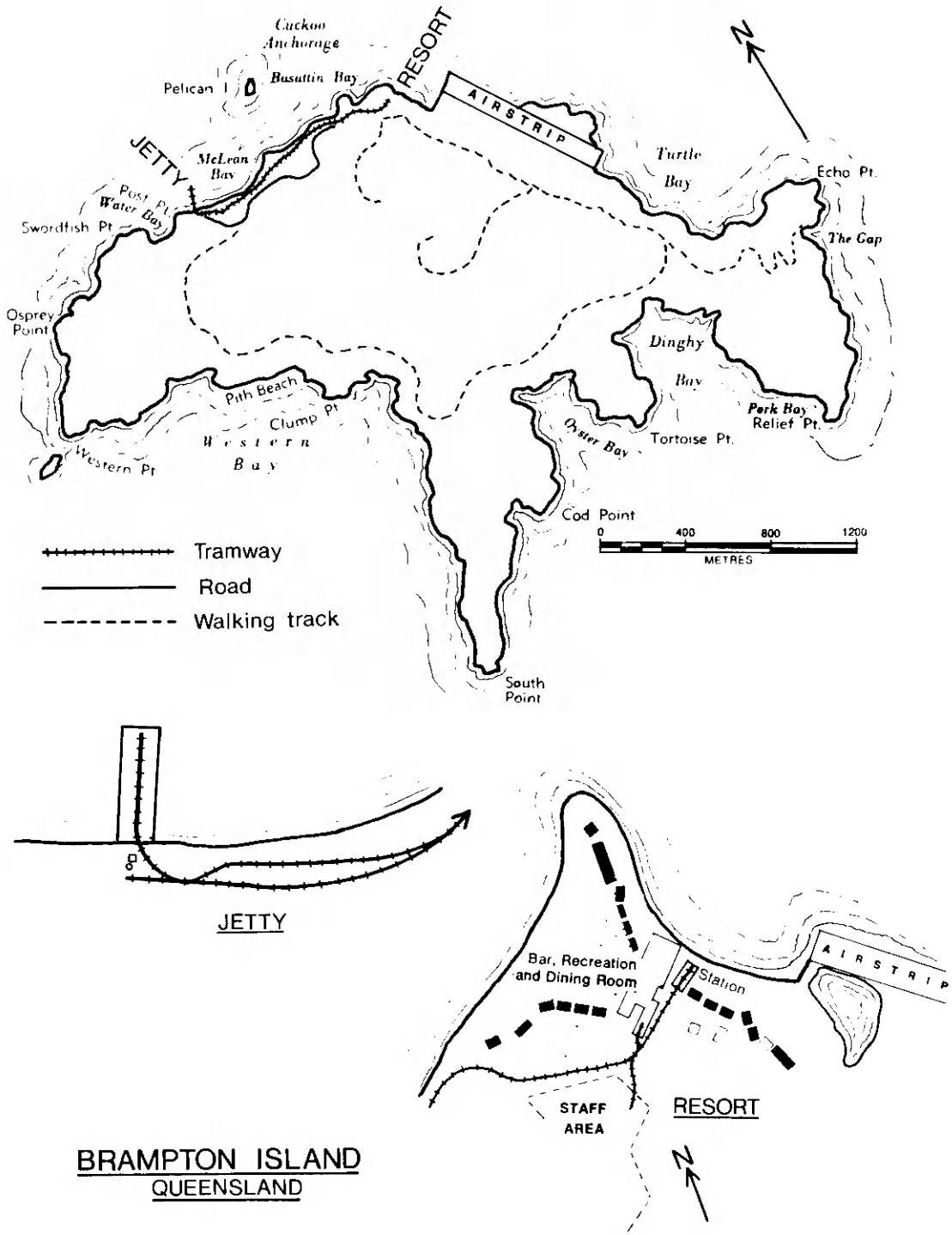
(Ian Crellin)

QUEENSLAND

AUSTRALIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY MUSEUM, MOURILYAN

This ambitious project to set up a complete museum dedicated to the history of the sugar industry, came a step closer to reality on 9 May 1975 when, in the presence of the Queensland Premier, *Project Heritage* was launched at the museum site. This project is to raise funds for the establishment of the collection, now that the site has been acquired with funds provided by both the Queensland and Australian Governments. Further money for development has been provided under the RED scheme of unemployment relief, to get the site into shape for the museum.

Advertisements have been placed in the national press for the position of Museum Officer, responsible for assembling and displaying the collection. This person will have the fascinating task of literally building up a museum from nothing, collecting relics and documents from all over the north. No specific mention has been made of a collection of light railway locos and equipment, but surely no collection of relics could truly tell the story of sugar without



including the tramways, punts and carts that carried the cane to crushing over the last century?

(Ian Crellin)

BRAMPTON ISLAND TRAMWAY

Brampton Island, a pleasure resort north-east of Mackay has its own 2 ft 6 in gauge tramway connecting the jetty with the tourist area. The one locomotive is a 'Planet' four-wheel diesel, B/No. 3475; whilst rolling stock consists of four four-wheel passenger carriages (Nos 6, 7, 8 and 9), four four-wheel flat wagons, one BP tanker, and another tanker (purpose unknown). The base colour of the loco is black, but it is decorated with many cartoon characters.

The passenger cars are apparently normally stored in the open sided, creeper covered 'Railway Station'. I saw two trains, both of which were hauled onto the jetty and propelled off, the loco running around the train at the run-round loop near the jetty.

At 'block 5' (bar, recreation and dining room) one siding goes inside, with a roller door for security of supplies (mainly food?).

(Ray Graf)

TASMANIA

MOUNT LYELL MINING & RAILWAY CO

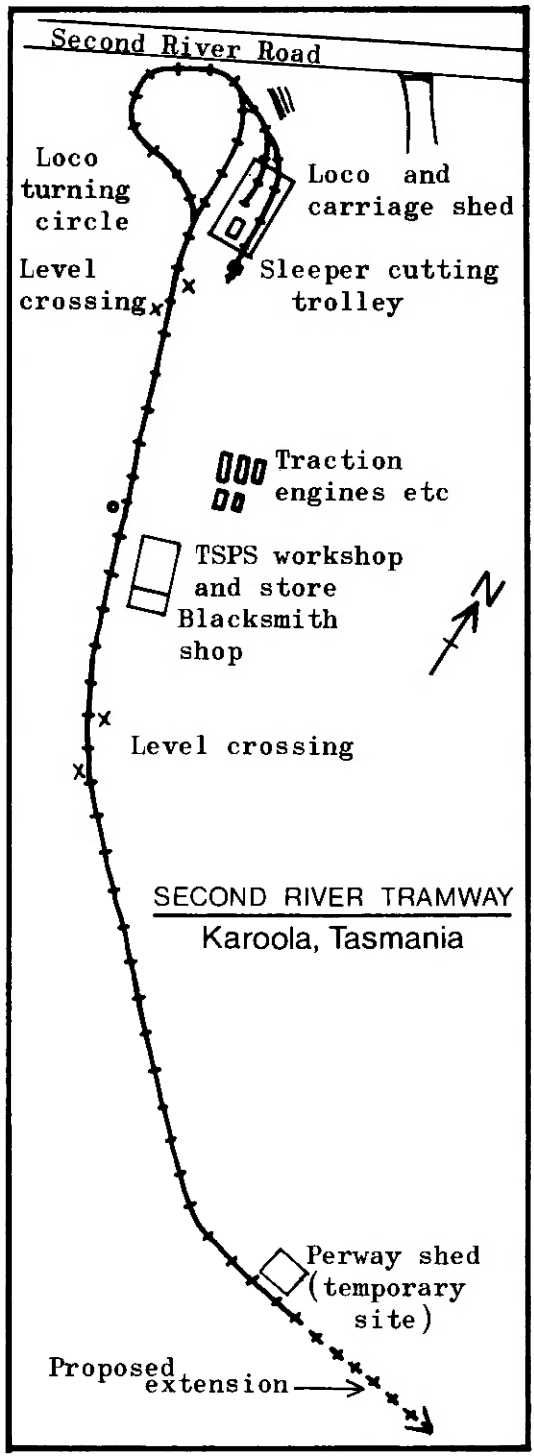
By the middle of this year the Mount Lyell mine at Queenstown should have put into service a new electric railway haulage system on the seventeenth level. Ore will be carried in a rake of 25 'end hinged' bottom-dump trucks of 15 tonne capacity, with a locomotive at each end of the rake. Three locomotives will be supplied by Siemens AG of West Germany, two for service and one for reserve. The 30 tonne locos will have alternative battery/pantograph power supply with two 83 kw DC series motors, axle-mounted and fully enclosed. The control system is very advanced incorporating DC thyristor chopper control which enables instantaneous and stepless braking and acceleration. The comfort of the driver is not forgotten with heated and ventilated cabs.

The seventeenth level haulage goes from the ore body to the rock crusher, from where the ore goes up the shaft to the surface. The line is laid with a maximum grade of 1 in 200 and the 375 tonne net load should present little trouble to these locos.

(Ian Crellin)

SECOND RIVER TRAMWAY, Karoola

The Tasmanian Steam Preservation Society was formed in 1958 to save a number of traction and portable steam engines from the cutter's torch and to restore them where practicable to working order, and to operate them at the Society's site at Karoola, eighteen miles from Launceston. The five members have since then collected a total of twelve engines; being four traction engines, one steam roller, five



portable engines, and two locomotives. Of these units ten are capable of operating under their own steam.

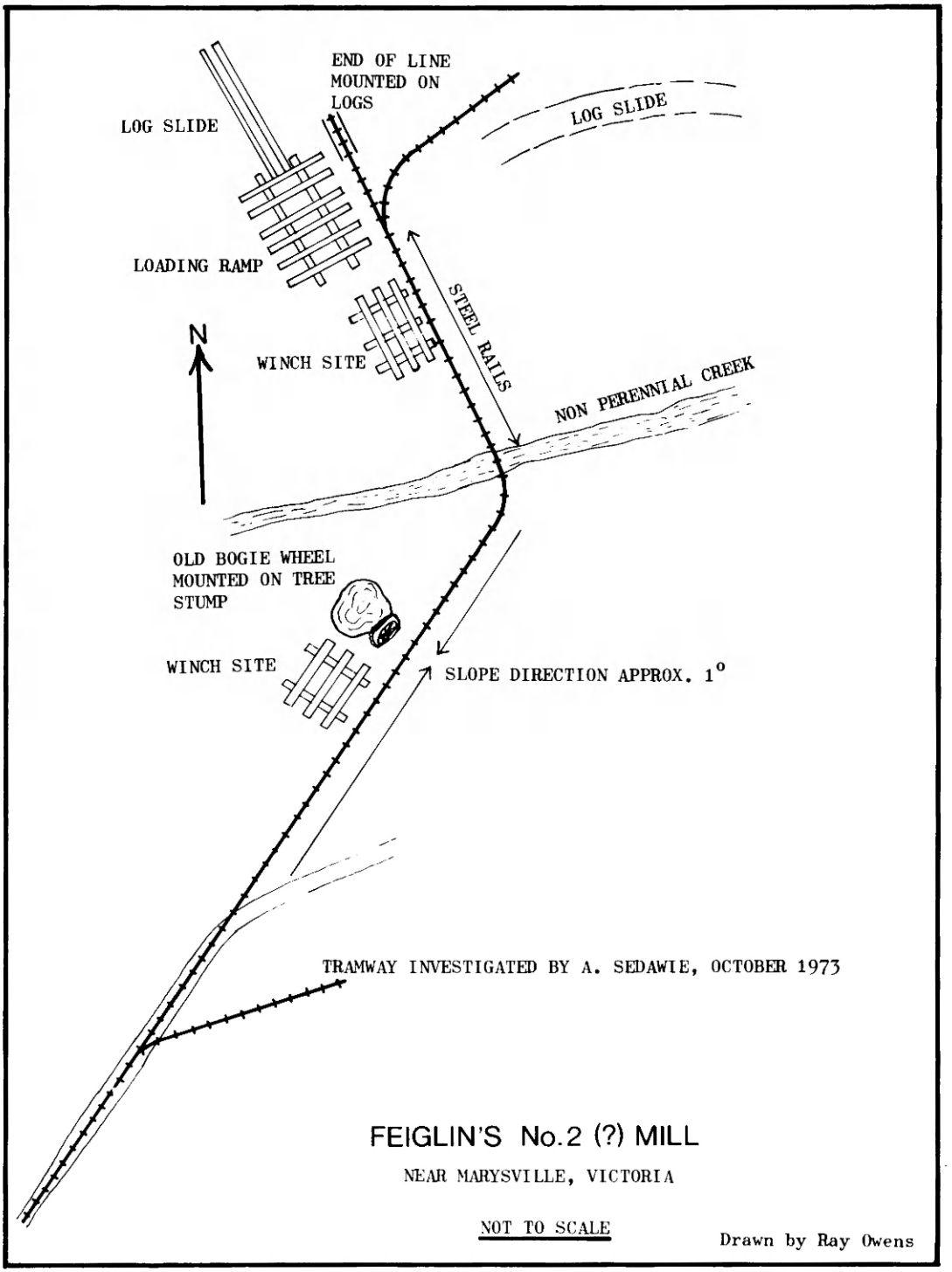
It was in December 1962 when it was decided to do something to preserve part of the fast disappearing 2 ft gauge tramway scene, which had been quite common in various parts of Tasmania. As one complete steam loco could not be obtained, it was decided to build up a working loco from a disused Krauss underframe off the scrap heap at Renison Bell and obtain a good boiler from the Ida Bay Tramway in southern Tasmania, and some minor parts from the Mount Lyell stores at Queenstown.

After 4½ years of weekend work at the Karoola workshop, a complete working loco was produced. As the majority of the new loco carried parts from the ex-Ida Bay (Lune River) loco it bears the Krauss builder's plates No. 5682. As No. 5682 was originally a 2-4-0T *outside* frame loco, many problems were posed when rebuilding to fit the inside 0-4-0T frame. However the result is a reliable working locomotive of quite neat proportions.

During this period work was undertaken laying the railway, building a loco shed and restoring an ex-TGR North-East Dundas flat top bogie wagon. Due to the location of the site which is on private farmland adjacent to the Second River Road, it was decided to name the railway side of TSPS activities as the Second River Tramway.

Top Rebuilt Krauss loco takes water on the Second River Tramway, Tasmania.
Photograph: R. Proctor

Bottom On the same tramway the rebuilt Krauss loco is seen with Krauss loco B/No. 6067.
Photograph: R. Herron



The Society also has custody over ex-Mount Lyell No. 10, (Krauss B/No. 6067) and has housed it under cover on behalf of the Launceston Museum. This loco has also been steamed on a few occasions at Karoola.

An old bogie passenger car which last worked on the Boulder Tramway at Renison Bell has now been rebuilt on a steel underframe as an open end platform car, and is also housed in the loco shed.

The locomotives are watered from an ex-TGR cast-iron water stand-pipe which has been installed near the workshop area.

The five members of the TSPS work at Karoola each Saturday fortnight, and on these days visitors are quite welcome to inspect the area. As mentioned previously the site is on private property and it is requested that any LRRSA members or other interested interstate visitors should contact the Honorary Secretary, Ralph Proctor, 12 Melbourne Street, Launceston, Tas. 7250 if contemplating a visit.

(Ralph Proctor)

VICTORIA

FEIGLIN'S TRAMWAY, INGLES CREEK, near Marysville (LR 42, pp 4-11; LR 46, pp 23-24)

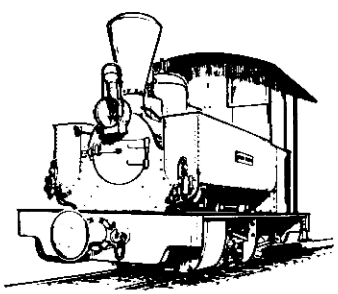
After a hairy drive to Feiglin's No. 2 (?) Mill (at the top of the incline, as described by A. Sedawie in LR 46, p.23) and a short look around the mill site we set off to explore the line inspected by A. Sedawie. There is not much I can add to this as his inspection seems to have been quite thorough.

Wanting to break new ground I thought I would make an attempt at checking the line ending in a question mark (LR 46, p.23). Although this line is very overgrown at the mill site it thins out after a few hundred metres. Having no means of slashing through this it was a case of heads down and charge. After a few hundred metres we came across a winch site, unfortunately only the foundations still remaining. About ten metres further on we found an old bogie wheel on a broken axle mounted into the side of a tree stump. Up until this spot the tramway formation had been rising at about one degree, and from here it dropped away at a similar slope. At several places along the track to this point steel rails were found, the same size as on the other line. However most were bent, presumably because large trees fell on the line when it was left unused for a considerable time before its ultimate dismantling. At all stages along the line steel cable was visible. After leaving the bogie wheel the track continued along until it did a turn of about 120 degrees heading north-west after crossing a dry depression of creek bed. At this point a length of rail about 100 metres long stretches out towards the loading ramps (see plan). At the winch site near the end of the line a number of wooden brake blocks were found as well as 44 gallon drums and a four gallon drum of grease. At the end of the loading ramp were two logs up which the logs to be milled were winched, the cable still being in place between the two logs.

At this point the track forks, one line running along the front of the loading ramp, the other turning off in a north-easterly direction for another fifty metres where apparently logs were also loaded. A depression in the ground up to this point would seem to suggest a log slide.

(Ray Owens)

(This item earns the $2.00 Field Report Award for this issue – Ed.)



LETTERS

THE PORTLAND TRAMWAY (LR 22, pp 3-9)

The current admiralty chart of the *South Coast of Australia, Rivoli Bay to Cape Otway* is based on a survey carried out in 1872. The title block of my copy claims the map to be 'with corrections to 1955' and in the margin the dates of correction are given as 'printed 1965, inserted by hand 1966'.

The interesting point about this map is that it shows the Portland tramway even though it has been recorded[1] that 'Messrs Crouch and Fetters sold all the posts, rails, sleepers etc belonging to the tramway in May, 1865'.

The chart also errs in showing the tramway running an irregular course just to the west of the railway, whereas it has been stated[2] that the course of the old tramway was followed by the railway except for two main deviations. This is confirmed for one specific location by a map[3] which shows the tramway reserve running diagonally from the intersection of Townsend and Blair Streets to the intersection of Bruce (now

Browning) and Gordon Streets, which is the alignment later taken by the railway.

One possible deviation is shown in the map for the Portland planning scheme of 1957, which shows the tramway reserve to swing to the west of the railway north of the latter intersection, until it picks up the line at Cashmore Road. Unfortunately recent development in the area means that traces of the tramway are unlikely to survive.

Acknowledgment is due to Brendon Jarrett and Ted Meissner who provided the maps mentioned in this note.

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Dr I. A. Cutter
Doveton, Vic

THE SHALE RAILWAYS OF NEW SOUTH WALES LR 48, p.21; LR 50, pp 23-24

Having read your review of *The Shale Railways of New South Wales* I would like to comment on the statement regarding the credibility of the work in the absence of references. Whilst one must agree with this in theory I feel that from a practical point of view it can be a little naive.

In dealing with dedicated aged railway historians one would soon realise the need to take into account the conditions that existed when those men began their hobby. The prolific recording of information in this country is a recent event and very few records existed or were accessible in those days. Most records were confidential (goodness knows why) Departmental or Company documents which because of their limited circulation could identify the sources when a leak occurred with very serious repercussions to the divulger. Even today many officials are still very wary and some information is only obtained with a guarantee of a disguise. Much evidence still existed on the ground when these men made their notes and by often risky trespassing, diagrams, numbers, etc were obtained to produce an original file of notes as compared to the 'second-hand' data many use today.

These aged historians avoided the bibliography to which they could 'pass the buck', rather taking a pride in their reputations and leaving no stone unturned, visiting sites etc, to confirm that at least 'it was possible'. Admittedly there have been dreamers of fairy tales, but detection is inevitable and any reputable historical publisher refuses further copy. To those who cannot see beyond the bibliography, it would be simple to add a fictitious list of references as checking is seldom attempted and many of the most valuable documents are rare and not readily available.

Then again, if one must supply a list of references, then one must also add a reliability factor to each of them. Probably the most unreliable source of information is the newspaper. The copy is often supplied by people ignorant of the technicalities of the subject, people who have not checked their facts, with political axes to grind or who just weren't there. The editor then all too often replaces these dull notes with something more sensational and saleable. It can be a rather interesting, if not confusing, pastime comparing reports in different papers.

Official documents too, are often doctored for political effect or requirement. Accountants used to money have been known to have difficulties adding bogie stock to four-wheeled wagons. And what of the poor school children being fed the story of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson going as far as Mount York when indeed they went further.

I wonder too, if we were ruthlessly to force bibliographies on to these men, would we not stand also to lose some of the history yet to be recorded, the sort of things only remaining in the memories of the men who were involved?

It has been my pleasure to have known some of our late historians such as G. H. Eardley, C. C. Singleton and M. Park and let there be no doubt, I would have far more confidence in their (uncorroborated) writings than I would in any collator of acknowledged newspaper reports.

A. Grunbach
Pennant Hills NSW

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